

Press Release

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Council of Europe Anti-Torture Committee visited Kosovo

Strasbourg, 03.04.2007 - A delegation of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) has recently completed its first visit to Kosovo (from 21 to 29 March 2007). The visit was carried out on the basis of an agreement signed in August 2004 between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and an exchange of letters concluded in 2006 between the Secretaries General of the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The delegation examined the treatment of detained persons and the conditions of detention in a variety of establishments throughout Kosovo, including police stations, penitentiary establishments and psychiatric/social welfare institutions. It also visited the detention facilities at the United States military base Camp Bondsteel where persons may be detained under the authority of KFOR.

In the course of the visit, the delegation held consultations with Mr Joachim RÜCKER, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Kosovo (SRSG), Mr Steven P. SCHOOK, Principal Deputy SRSG, and representatives of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, including Messrs Sadik IDRIZ, Minister of Health, Ibrahim SELMANAJ, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Jonuz SALHAJ, Minister of Justice, and Blërim KUQI, Minister of Internal Affairs, as well as senior officials of UNMIK and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government. It also met Mr Hilmi JASHARI, Acting Ombudsman of Kosovo, and representatives of various International Organisations and NGOs.

In the context of its visit to Camp Bondsteel, the delegation met Brigadier General Albert BRYANT, Chief of Staff of KFOR.

The visit was carried out by the following members of the CPT:

- Mauro PALMA, President of the CPT and Head of the delegation (Italian)
- Andres LEHTMETS, 2nd Vice-President of the CPT (Estonian)
- Anna GAVRILOVA-ANCHEVA (Bulgarian)
- Roland MARQUET (Monegasque).

They were supported by Fabrice KELLENS (Deputy Executive Secretary of the CPT) and Michael NEURAUTER (Head of Division) of the CPT's Secretariat, and assisted by Eric DURAND, medical doctor, former Head of medical services at Fleury-Mérogis Prison, France (expert) and Michael KELLETT, former Detective Chief Inspector in the Lancashire Constabulary, United Kingdom (expert).

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 46 member states.

The delegation visited the following places of deprivation of liberty:

Police establishments

Deçan/Dečani Police Station
 Gjilan/Gnjilane Police Station
 Istog/Istok Police Station
 Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North Police Station
 Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South Police Station
 Pejë/Peć Police Station
 Prishtinë/Priština Police Station No 1
 Prishtinë/Priština Police Station No 2
 Viti/Vitina Police Station

Penitentiary establishments

Dubrava Prison
 Lipjan/Lipljan Correctional Centre
 Gjilan/Gnjilane Detention Centre
 Mitrovica/Mitrovicë Detention Centre
 Pejë/Peć Detention Centre
 Prishtinë/Priština Detention Centre

Psychiatric/social welfare institutions

Psychiatric Unit of Mitrovica/Mitrovicë Regional Hospital
 Psychiatric Clinic of Prishtinë/Priština University Hospital
 Shtime/Štimlje Special Institute (Unit for persons with learning disabilities and Unit for chronic psychiatric patients)

KFOR detention facilities

US military base Camp Bondsteel, Ferizaj/Uroševac.

At the end of the visit, the delegation provided the relevant authorities with its preliminary observations. The full visit reports will be transmitted respectively to UNMIK and NATO in due course.

A "CPT Video-kit" is available for the audiovisual press. For more details please access our page "[For the press](#)".