

## Visiting Lampedusa, OSCE PA delegation highlights Italy's migration efforts



The OSCE PA delegation visits Lampedusa's Favalaro Pier, 7 March

Wrapping up an official visit to Italy last week, a high-level OSCE PA delegation was on the island of Lampedusa on 7 March, where it was briefed on the situation at the Air Force base, and visited the Contrada Imbriacola 'Hotspot' managed by the Italian Red Cross. The delegation, consisting of OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland), Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Chair Daniela De Ridder (Germany), and Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy), as well as eight other members of the committee, met with representatives of law enforcement agencies, Frontex, Europol, EU Asylum Agency, UNHCR, IOM, and Save the Children.

The delegation visited Favalaro Pier, where about 11,000 asy-

lum seekers arrived over a four-day period in mid-September 2023. Meeting with Guardia di Finanza and Coast Guard officials, committee members learned about the challenges posed when an enormous influx of migrants arrives over such a short period. The remoteness of this small island of 6,000 inhabitants which is closer to Africa than to Sicily and the rest of Italy is one of the main challenges.

Italy's achievements in coping with the crisis was highlighted: migrants arriving in Lampedusa go through an efficient process, including health screenings, pre-identification and screening for vulnerabilities. The delegation also discussed lessons learned from agreements with third countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Albania, and whether there are sufficient human rights safeguards. The reforms foreseen as part of the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and their expected impact on vulnerable categories of migrants, notably unaccompanied minors, women and potential victims of trafficking, were also discussed by the delegation.

Ad Hoc Committee Chair De Ridder said that there must be closer co-operation with other frontline countries around the Mediterranean, as well as more attention paid to the causes of flight, especially conflict, poverty and climate change.

## Special Rep. Allizard discusses Mediterranean affairs in high-level meetings in Cyprus

On an official visit to Cyprus, OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France) met this week with the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Christodoulides; the Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry, Giorgos Papanastasiou; the Minister of Defence, Vasilis Palmas; Commander Andreas Charalambides at the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre; the Mayor of Nicosia, Constantinos Yiorkadjis; and the Ambassador of France to Cyprus, Salina Grenet-Catalano. He was accompanied by OSCE PA Vice-President Irene Charalambides (Cyprus).

In his meeting with President Christodoulides, Allizard exchanged views on the security challenges stemming from the current war in the Middle East as well as the shifting geopolitical balance of power in the Mediterranean. Meeting with Minister Palmas, Allizard discussed the security situation in the Eastern Mediterranean as well as in the broader OSCE area, while with the Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry he discussed energy security in the Mediterranean.



Pascal Allizard, Nikos Christodoulides and Irene Charalambides in Nicosia, 11 March 2024

On Monday, Special Representative Allizard laid a wreath at Tymvos military cemetery, in honor of the victims of the 1974 Turkish invasion. On Tuesday, he was given a guided tour of the Green Line area in the old town of Nicosia, known for its significance as a symbol of the last divided capital in Europe.

Allizard also visited the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Larnaca, which serves as a central hub for co-ordinating responses to distress calls, accidents at sea, and other maritime emergencies.

## Special Rep. Fry and SG Montella represent PA at event on human rights, gender and surveillance



Roberto Montella participates in the gender and surveillance event in Vienna, 13 March 2024.

OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) and OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella addressed the topic of gendered surveillance at today's event in Vienna, "Under the Watchful Eye: Human Rights, Gender and Surveillance," organized jointly by the OSCE HCNM, ODIHR, the RFoM, and the OSCE PA.

The event was organized with the support of the OSCE Chairpersonship of Malta to mark International Women's Day 2024 and

examine the intersection of gender and digital surveillance, as well as explore the gendered aspects of within the broader context of comprehensive security.

Speaking at the high-level panel of diplomats and experts, Secretary General Montella underlined the importance of co-operation between OSCE institutions in addressing the issues related to human rights and surveillance. He stressed the role of parliamentarians in this aspect as key decision-makers. It is important to include parliamentarians in these discussions, Montella said, and in the work of the governmental side of the OSCE, as they are the ones who draft and implement legislation.

Joining remotely, Special Representative Fry talked about the impact of surveillance and online violence on women working in the public sphere, including politicians, offering recommendations on how states can better regulate surveillance not to infringe on human rights.