



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Presence in Albania

NEWSLETTER

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Celebrating democracy through #DemocracyWeek

On the occasion of the International Democracy Day, the Presence organized a week-long series of activities (15-19 Sept) promoting youth engagement, inclusion of civil society and women in decision-making and empowering the media through ethical reporting training. As part of this [#DemocracyWeek](#), Ambassador Tarran visited Tropoja, where he pledged support to civil society organizations and participated in an event with local high school students organized with the Central Election Commission. In Tirana, he hosted a meeting with civil society organizations focused on parliamentary affairs.

Head of Presence meets Assembly Speaker, SPAK Head

Ambassador Tarran met new Assembly Speaker Niko Peleshi on 25 Sept and Head of the Special Structure against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK) Altin Dumani on 30 Sept. In the [meeting](#) with Speaker Peleshi, Amb. Tarran reiterated the Presence's commitment to supporting Albania's democratic institutions, inclusive political dialogue and participatory parliamentary reforms and processes. In the [meeting](#) with Dumani, he reaffirmed the close and constructive co-operation with SPAK, highlighting SPAK contribution to advancing the rule of law.



Addressing drug trafficking-violent crime link

Law enforcement officials from across the Western Balkans came together in Durrës on 10-11 September to tackle the link between drug trafficking and violent crime. With support from the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department and U.S. Department of Justice's ICITAP, the [workshop](#) gathered senior representatives from SPAK, National Bureau of Investigation, State Police, and police services from Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and several EU countries. Amb. Tarran, U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires VanHorn, Greek Ambassador Kamitsi and SPAK Head Dumani addressed the event.



Justice inspection services meet in Tirana

Justice institutions from the region gathered in Tirana on 25 September for the two-day conference "[Justice inspection](#) services and the challenges of integration." Participants shared experiences, addressed issues related to judicial integrity and discussed their role in the integration process. This first-of-its-kind conference was organized in co-operation between the OSCE Presence in Albania, the Office of the High Justice Inspector and other OSCE missions in the region. The Chair of the High Judicial Council and the Chair of the High Prosecutorial Council also spoke in the opening of the conference.

Discussion platform of trial monitoring project



On 12 September, the Presence hosted a roundtable with judicial actors as part of its regional trial monitoring project. The meeting provided a platform to foster collaboration and transparency in ongoing justice reform efforts, ensuring that institutional perspectives are reflected in the project's analytical work. Since 2011, the OSCE project funded by the EU supports a more effective administration of justice regarding serious corruption and organized crime cases through trial monitoring. Participants included high officials from the Ministry of Justice, High Judicial Council, High Prosecutorial Council and SPAK.

Empowering women in cybersecurity

To encourage more women and girls to step into the world of cybersecurity, the Presence and the National Cybersecurity Authority organized a workshop on 18 September. This event created an inclusive space where participants shared experiences, gained new knowledge and engaged in an interactive cyber drill, where around 30 young women tested their skills in real-life cybersecurity scenarios. Ambassador Tarran, who addressed the event alongside director Tafa, encouraged young women to become an active part in shaping a safer and more innovative future.



Building cyber resilience in police forces



On 25 and 26 September, the OSCE Presence organized awareness-raising training sessions for police officers in Saranda and Gjirokastra. The training programme focused on open-source investigations, the safe use of the internet and raising police officers' awareness on cyber threats. Participants also engaged in practical exercises and knowledge testing. These sessions are part of the OSCE Presence's ongoing efforts to strengthen cyber resilience and promote online safety. Together, we build stronger defences against cybercrime!

Promoting free legal aid at local level

On 10 and 11 September, the Presence supported co-ordination meetings between the Free Legal Aid (FLA) Directorate and the municipalities of Delvina, Finiq and Saranda. These meetings build on earlier engagements this year in seven other municipalities, aiming to strengthen co-operation with local authorities and civil society organizations working on human rights and access to justice. The visits included direct outreach to citizens through on-site discussions and distribution of informative materials. To enhance collaboration, the FLA Directorate and the municipalities signed memoranda of understanding.



Support for dealing with the past



On 28 August, Ambassador Michel Tarran joined a symposium in Shkodra, commemorating the victims killed while attempting to cross the border during the communist dictatorship. While Albania has made progress, the fate of around 6,000 missing persons remains an open wound. "Dealing with the past with dignity is essential for healing wounds and building democracy based on the rule of law," Ambassador Tarran said. The OSCE Presence supports this process through co-operation with institutions, sharing experiences from other countries and helping draft a government decision to define institutional roles.