

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AT THE SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR CIVILIAN CONTROL OF POLICE WORK

Podgorica, 25. November 2019. - A session of the Council for Civilian Control of Police Work was held today at the Parliament of Montenegro, dedicated to the cooperation of civilian oversight of the Police with the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and to discussing the reforms implemented so far. The session was chaired by **Aleksandar Sasa Zekovic, MA**, President of the Council.

By invitation, the session was attended by the Minister of the Interior, **Mevludin Nuhodžić, PhD, Assistant Professor Danilo Ćupić**, Director General of the Directorate for Supervision and **Milan Adžić**, Head of the Department for Internal Control of the Police MoI Montenegro.

Cooperation between the Council for Civilian Control of Police Work and the Ministry of the Interior was discussed openly and in detail, in the light of the joint obligation to supervise the work of the Police Directorate of Montenegro. **It was jointly assessed, taking into account cases in the work of internal and civilian control of the police work, that the police behavior was significantly improved and that the exercise of police powers in this year was mostly professional and without serious violations of human rights.** Compared to previous years, there has been improvement in reporting to the MoI on the implementation of the proposed recommendations of the Council. It was noted that progress should be made in reporting, especially with more specific supervision comments by the MoI.

Minister Nuhodžić also used this meeting with the Council to strongly **condemn any exceeding of authority and to communicate the professional view that there will and cannot be place in the Montenegrin police for those who do not respect the law, and are not worthy of the police profession and do not care about the fundamental rights of citizens.**

The Ministry of the Interior and the Council have jointly pointed out the need for an effective criminal policy that should not be below the legal minimum either in the case of attacks on an official or in cases of abuse of citizens by police officers, which is of great importance.

The report on the work of the Department for Internal Control of the Police of the MoI Montenegro for ten months of this year was presented by the head of this Department Milan Adžić. **The improvement of the work of Internal Police Control was jointly noted, and the Council pointed to cases which confirmed the determination of internal police control to carry out effective and thorough review of legality. The Council recommended to Minister Nuhodžić to consider the possibility of a spatial separation of officers of the Department of Internal Control at the local level from the regular Police, believing that this would contribute to more transparent work and greater confidence of the public and police officers in**

internal control of the police. It was noted that the communication and cooperation between civil and internal police controls should be improved and in that sense, mutual periodic consultations will be established.

The case of citizen **B.V.** was discussed, being a minor, who was, by his own admission, abused by police officer **M.Z.** **It was concluded that in the specific case, internal police control acted on the basis of an analysis of the assessments and recommendations of civilian police control. Minister Nuhodzic announced further strengthening of police supervision and internal control.**

The implementation of the CPT recommendations was also discussed. **The improved attitude of the Police Directorate to the CPT's recommendations was recognized,** and the standards of certain seaside and border crossings detention facilities were discussed. The Council recommended that, for the sake of dignity and respect for citizens' rights, the detention facilities in Tivat should be withdrawn from further use and that the premises in the Kotor Security Department should be used for this purpose, instead.

Part of the Session was also dedicated to marking the International Day against Violence against Women. The Council and the Ministry of the Interior of Montenegro have expressed support to all non-governmental organizations, especially women's groups, who are dedicated to working with victims and contributing to the professional institutional environment and treatment. In particular, the work of the Operational Team for Combating Domestic Violence and Violence against Women has been supported, at which more than 35 complex cases have been considered since its establishment.

A joint appeal was sent to the Legislature to ensure a harsher criminal policy for returnees and multiple returnees in the commission of drug trafficking offenses, carrying weapons, rape and domestic violence.

Minister Nuhodzic briefed Council members on his efforts to improve safety in the school environment and with children. A joint project with the Ministry of Education has been announced, which will include lectures by police officers in schools on the safety of children in traffic, peer violence, prevention and protection of children from drugs and alcohol, safe use of the Internet and social networks; prevention and protection of children from trafficking in human beings and juvenile delinquency.

The Council also got acquainted with the activities and results of the Mol in communication with citizens. **It has been stated that numerous services have been established and developed that are of interest to the citizens and which facilitate and accelerate communication and exercise of different rights.** The efforts and results of the Mol of Montenegro in providing electronic services to citizens, extending working hours for issuing documents and working with clients were recognized and commended. The Council particularly praised the service "Cameras at Border Crossings", which facilitates the movement of both local citizens and guests residing in our country, as well as the introduction of video surveillance in Podgorica, Bar, Budva, Niksic, Herceg Novi and Kotor, with previously obtained consent of the Personal Data Protection Agency. The Minister announced that a project of production of new personal

identification documents is underway, in order to make business and other forms of communication of citizens better, simpler and cheaper.

The members of the Council noted in the discussion that the overall relationship of the Minister of the Interior since he took the office has significantly contributed to the visibility and recognition of civilian control in the police and in society as a whole. The Council noted that, unlike before, there is now a continuous registration of an increase in the number of police officers being contacted for violating their rights. Earlier, police officers did not turn to the Council, which means that a positive and supportive climate was created in the Ministry of the Interior and the Police Directorate for civilian supervision, which is primarily the merit of the Minister and the Director of the Police Directorate.

They discussed the capacity building of the Council and the support of the MoI to the creation of expert literature related to torture prevention. The possibility of providing more logistical support to the work of the Council was discussed. In this regard, Minister Nuhodzic expressed his readiness for the MoI to provide adequate space for receiving citizens.