

Dear Mr.Selih

thank you once again for keeping us informed about the activities of the SEE NPM NW.
We have taken a note of your comments below.

To respond to the issue of dealing with annual reports submitted by the NPMs we would like to clarify that according to the SPT internal guidelines about communication with partners, such as NPMs, we are committed to examine thoroughly all information submitted to the subcommittee i.a annual reports and specially regarding the latter to provide also feedback. As reports are quite different by content, methodologies etc, responses submitted (either just general feedback or specific comments/questions) differ as well. Still I would like to underline that presently and at least in the European Regional Team we are providing feedback to all annual reports sent to the SPT.

Regarding the issue of following up the implementation of recommendations made by the NPM to SP, we took note of the valuable idea. Nevertheless presently SPT lacks institutional capacity to undertake this extensive project. But as the human resources improve in the future, we will certainly come back to this idea. In the meanwhile - if any members of the network face systematic difficulties with engaging into constructive and fruitful dialogue with the SP, you are always welcome to address the SPT with request for mediation and support.

Once again thank you very much for sharing those issues with the SPT and we hope to continue our cooperation also in the future.

With best wishes

Mari Amos

Head of the European Regional Team

Dear Sir/Madam,

For your information, I am sending you the minutes of the South-East NPM Network meeting which was held in Ljubljana on 26-27 May 2014. More information about the network and the meeting itself can be found at: <http://www.varuh-rs.si/o-instituciji/podrocja-dela-varuha/varuh-kot-drzavni-preventivni-mehanizem/south-east-europe-npm-network/>.

The main topic of our meeting discussions were the national preventive mechanisms (NPMs) annual reports, as they are an important weapon-tool for our work. One of the joint conclusions of our meeting was that the perspective and feedback of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) on the annual reports which we send to the SPT in Geneva are important for every NPM. The NPMs annual reports must also be submitted to the SPT, which publishes them on its website (in accordance with Guideline 29 of Guidelines on National Preventive Mechanisms, SPT, Geneva, 15-19 November 2010). We also found that some of the NPMs have already received some remarks or questions from SPT with regards to the annual reports that were submitted, while others have not. As a result, the question was raised of the SPT's (unified) approach to these matters. For example, does anyone read through or examine the reports we send in detail, or are they perhaps subjected to a critical assessment, and if so, what methodology is applied? With regards to this, the meeting participants also think that it would be important to establish unified principles of communication.

Also, the meeting participants have found that communication and dialogue of the SPT with individual countries (not only with NPM) is particularly important for the implementation of NPM recommendations. The NPM representatives who attended the meeting were convinced that an NPM's work would have greater impact if, for example, the country, as a party to the Optional Protocol, would receive a letter from the SPT (as an external authority) inquiring about the implementation of NPM recommendations. This already took place in the case of Bulgaria, which was very helpful for Bulgaria's NPM. The national competent authorities have an obligation to consider the NPM recommendations and establish a dialogue with the NPM about potential measures for their implementation. Therefore, the NPMs present at the meeting in Ljubljana of May 2014 encourage the SPT to continue with these kinds of practices and reinforce them further when necessary.

Best regards,

Ivan Šelih
SEE NPM Network