



Media Monitoring

Situation Report February 3, 2010

1) Treatment of asylum-seekers in Austria

Die Presse, Krone and *Der Standard* publish an article commenting on the case of the asylum-seeker who contributed to the prosecution of authors of Srebrenica [See Sitrep of February 1-2, 2010] The Coalition for the Future of Austria has issued a press release requesting the Home Ministry to review personally the decision denying asylum to this person. Ms. Korun (Green Party) calls the decision denying asylum a "scandal." Ms. Hagenhofer, from the Social-Democracy, has adopted a similar position.

Mr. Tauchner from the Freedom's Party publishes a press release referring to the need of a reform of the work market instead of the "craziness of asylum" referring to the costs of asylum-seekers in Austria.

2) Religiously motivated violence

Krone publishes an article asserting that the qualification of "religiously motivated violence" appears to originate a fight in the governing coalition. "The Justice Minister Claudia Bandion-Ortner would like to include the religious background of the crime in the future as basis for a more serious penalty. With that the courts would be obliged in case that the accused is guilty to apply a higher penalty. The Social-Democracy has rejected strictly the proposal receiving support from the Green. The Coalition for the Future of Austria and the Freedom's Party support the approach. Concretely, Bandion-Ortner thinks to include among the aggravating factors 'religiously motivated violence.' In addition, it could be also included that 'religious reasons can never constitute a mitigation factor against violence'. Aggravation and mitigation factors serve the

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courts as guidelines to determine the penalty after the determination of criminal responsibility. They could apply for the corresponding crime a higher or reduced penalty within the framework established by the law.

New crimes or higher penalties for existing crimes as for instance forced marriages or honor killings have been rejected by the Justice Minister. ... "

Die Presse also publishes an article on this issue, asserting that the concerns of the critiques of this proposal, including the Islamic sectors, is the interpretation problem that could originate, given that the harmful traditional practices are already forbidden in Austria.

The Coalition of the Future of Austria has welcomed the proposal through a press release of Mr. Stadler, who has also called for more protection of religions against vilification. Ms. Winter of the Freedom's Party has also applauded the measure, linking the "problem" to the "rampant massive immigration."

The Social-Democracy has criticized the proposal, considering that it confuses criminal law with religion, and asserting that the Justice Ministry should instead use the existing legal mechanisms as to fight the decision concerning the Turkish woman.

3) *anti-Semitism*

The Israeli Cult Society has issued a press release protesting against the use of the Jewish star through a group of friends of the dogs. "The use of a yellow Jewish star through opposition of a driving permit for fight dogs in relation with a referendum in Vienna in argumentation materials. In a description of a magazine about dogs a yellow star with the inscription "EVIL" on the picture of a Pitbull dog is argued on racism concerning dogs against fight dogs.

The society sees in this lack of good taste also possible legally criminal components, and has requested an examination in this regard. An exam for concrete races of dogs compared with the persecution, the torture and death of millions of persons, shows the spirit of those who are responsible for the production and distribution of such materials."



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