



Media Monitoring

Situation Report January 5

- *Oesterreich* publishes an interview to the Governor of Lower Austria, Mr. Erwin Proell, who insists that asylum matters should be competence of the *Bundeslaendern* instead of the Federal State.
- The Chef of the BZÖ (Coalition for the Future of Austria) and Human Rights Speaker of the Party, Parliament Member Mr. Gerald Grosz has issued a press release asserting that Austria does neither need a new reception center nor an administrative detention center: "The existing institutions are absolutely sufficient, if the government finally implements quickly and coherently the Dublin Convention (SIC). Austria has since long satisfied its obligation and responsibility in hosting asylum-seekers and is no more a classic asylum country after this convention is in force as well as the enlargement of the European Union with Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic has taken place. The obligation to host asylum seekers belongs now to the new EU members. Asylum seekers from safe third countries are to be deported on the basis of the Dublin Convention." In addition, the same press release asserts that according to Mr. Grosz, since the entry into force of the Dublin Convention, the Geneva Convention on Protection of Refugees is not more applicable to Austria and is in contradiction to an efficient and *rechtsstaatlich* asylum proceeding: "The Refugee Convention is to be modified and to be adapted to the new requirements of a united Europe. We should denounce the Refugee Convention and start new negotiations on this topic." He also advocates for a modification of the asylum law as to deport asylum seekers: the first crime should lead to an immediate deportation.
- The Governor of Carinthia, Mr. Doerfler (BZOE), appeared at a press conference in the capital city, Klagenfurt, as to underline that no reception center for asylum seekers will be created in his

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- province, affirming that the people does not want "Traiskirchen II" in Carinthia. Moreover, he has asserted that Carinthia is behind the quota of hosting asylum-seekers due to the lack of assignment of them to the province by the federal government.
- Mr. Scheuch, leader of the Freedom's Party in Carinthia, has also reinforced the idea that no reception center will be built in the province. Similar ideas were expressed by Mr. Trettenbein concerning Lavanttal, in Wolfsberg, Carinthia.
 - The General-Secretary of the BZOe, Mr. Petzner has asserted today that "the BZÖ insists, that we do not need any third reception center, if we would apply the legislation strictly and coherently deport. We should analyze denouncing the Geneva Refugee Convention, as to stop the abuse of the asylum."
 - Mr. Koessl, security speaker of the People's Party, issued a press release asserting that one of the reasons as to need a third reception center is to separate "ethnic groups" of asylum-seekers among which there would be tension, as to avoid problems among them. No concrete information about this "tensions" is provided.
 - The Chancellor, Mr. Faymann (SPOe) insisted to *Oesterreich* with the performance of referenda in Burgenland concerning the creation of the asylum reception center.
 - Mr. Korentschnig published an article in *Kurier* insisting in the idea of placing asylum and integration issues outside the Home Ministry, proposal that has already been made by the Green Party and by the Governor of Vienna, however, without any chance of seen real life.
 - Mr. Leitner, leader of the Social-democratic party in Lower Austria and Vice-Governor of this province has advocated for counting with a reception center in each province of Austria.
 - The Vice Chancellor, Mr. Joseph Proell has requested today the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of the Defense to list adequate places for the reception center; this list could be presented for advice to the conference of governors.
 - Mr. Kurzmann, Parliament Member from the Freedom's Party in Upper Austria is now calling the Home Minister and the Governor of Upper Austria to stop the plans concerning the administrative detention center in Vordernberg, referring to a manipulated

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referendum through suggestive questions, that should not affect the “security” and “quality of life” of the people of Upper Austria. In his press release he asserts that “Vorderberg and the neighbouring Upper Austrian villages should not support illegal and criminal administrative detainees.” (SIC). He considers that the administrative detention center is not necessary, because Austria is surrounded by safe-third countries, where refugees should seek asylum. The Home Minister should “energetically and finally apply the existing legislation for the quick deportation of criminal foreigners and illegals” (SIC).

- UNHCR has issued a press communiqué, encouraging to return to objective discussions, considering that the public discussions of the recent days are contrary to the asylum tradition of Austria. The discussions forget that asylum seekers are mostly victims no criminals. Politicians were requested to act responsibly in this topic and the related tasks. Moreover, it was reminded that the roots of the indisposition of the public is the link of the topic criminality and asylum, what impedes the integration of persons that need protection, with negative consequences for the country and the persons concerned. UNHCR has encouraged to make all possible to eliminate fear from people.

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