

## PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION DISCUSSES SITUATION OF JUVENILES IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Wednesday, 11 March 2009

Tirana, 11 March 2009 – The Sub-Parliamentary Group for Juveniles and Equal Opportunities together with the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania (CRCA /DCI Albania) and UNICEF Office organized jointly a public hearing on the "Situation of Juveniles in conflict with the law in Albania SHOQMI N session, took place at the Offices of the Albanian Parliament, and continued for more than an hour.

The aim of the public hearing was to review the governmental reform on juvenile justice in Albania, measures taken so far to improve the legislation and their implementation by the law enforcement agencies, while focusing on the general situation of children and juveniles in conflict with the law.

The session was attended by 3 members of the Commission and representatives of the Government and NGO's working on the administration of juvenile justice in Albania.

The hearing session was officially opened by Mrs. Lajla Pernaska, member of the Albanian Parliament and Chairwoman of the Sub-Parliamentary Group for Juveniles and Equal Opportunities with the participation of two other MP's, Mrs. Arenca Trashani and Mrs. Angjelina Kola. In her opening speech Mrs. Pernaska focused on the importance that the Albanian Parliament has shown towards children and juveniles by approving all the proposed laws and bylaws related to administration of juvenile justice. Mr. Viktor Gumi, vice-Minister of Justice, presented shortly the main elements of the juvenile justice reform, which is under way in Albania, while mentioning all the major achievements of the last three years. The Chairwoman passed then the floor to the representatives of the civil society in Albania asking them to focus on the specific aspects of the situation of juveniles in conflict with the law. Mr. Leon Shestani of UNICEF described shortly several issues of concern, based on the latest regional report on juvenile justice in CEE/ CIS countries. Mr. Altin Hazizaj, Director of CRCA / DCI Albania on his speech mentioned the difficulties for the rehabilitation and re-integration of juveniles in prison, while Mrs. Edlira Papavangjeli focused her presentation on the prolongation of pre-trial detention period of juveniles in conflict with the law. Two other representatives of civil society, Mr. Klodian Gega of Legal Clinic for Minors and Mrs. Merita Bala of Foundation for Conflict Resolution, separately stated the importance that the application of alternative measures and the restorative justice has to juveniles. The MP's posed several questions and proposals to the representatives of the Government and NGO's. At the end of the Hearing Session, Mrs. Pernaska thanked the representatives of the Ministry of Justice and civil society for the presentation of their achievements and concerns related to the improvement of the situation of juveniles in conflict with the law, while proposing that the concerns of the civil society are all joint in a single document and be presented to the Commission during the next coming days.