

**ADVANCING MINORITY RIGHTS**

A Regional Project for Europe

These visitors are invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Their program is arranged by Mississippi Consortium for International Development (MCID Washington).

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**Accompanied by**: Mr. Daniel Moya, International Visitor Liaison

**June 5 ‑ 23, 2017**

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**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The protection of universal human rights is a core tenet of U.S. foreign policy. This project will focus on U.S. and international efforts to raise awareness and acceptance of human and civil rights for ethnic, cultural, gender, racial, and religious minority communities. The project will explore U.S. advocacy efforts at the local, state, national, and international levels to elevate the equality and dignity of minority communities. Participants will examine political, legislative, and judicial perspectives on supporting and advancing minority rights.

*The Department of State has outlined the following specific objectives for the project:*

* Examine U.S. and international initiatives to promote and protect the human rights of minority communities;
* Explore equal access to educational, economic, and healthcare opportunities for citizens from minority communities;
* Analyze the legislative framework that ensures equal rights for minority communities;
* Present different political and social perspectives on ethnic, cultural, gender, racial, and religious minority community rights; and
* Observe how organizations monitor, influence and advocate for human and civil rights policy at the local, state, national, and international levels.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

**Albania Mrs. Edlira ZEQO**Diversity Specialist, Albanian State Police

**Belgium Ms. Isabelle DIEPENDAELE**Commissioner, Diversity Unit, Federal Police of Belgium

**France Mr. Aurelien Jordane MAZUY**Parliamentary Assistant to Virginie Rozier, Member, European Parliament

**Germany Ms. Saba Nur CHEEMA**Head, Education Department, Anne Frank Educational Center

**Poland Ms. Dorota Maria PUDZIANOWSKA**Head, Anti‑Discrimination Program, Helsinki Human Rights Foundation

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

**Albania**

*Name:* **Mrs. Edlira ZEQO**

*Present Position:* Diversity Specialist, Albanian State Police

*Previous Positions:* Specialist, Domestic Violence and Minors Section, Albanian State Police, 2014-2016
Chief, Illicit Trafficking Section, Albanian State Police, 2013-2014
Chief, Criminal Assets Investigation Section, Albanian State Police, 2011-2013
Training Specialist, Albanian Police Training Centre, 2010-2011

*Education/Training:* Master’s Degree, Security Studies, Albanian University, Tirana, 2011
Graduate Degree, National Senior Police School, France, 2006
University Degree, University of Caen, France, 2005
University Diploma, French Language and Civilization, Tirana University, 2001

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*Languages:* Albanian (primary), English

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* France, Kosovo, Serbia, Turkey

*Professional Background:* Ms. Zeqo was nominated in 2016 to serve as the Albanian State Police’s first Diversity Specialist. Her role entails raising awareness and acceptance of human and civil rights for ethnic, cultural, and gender minority communities. She is also responsible for sustaining diversity strategies, including those related to recruitment, hiring, promotion, diversity training, and policy advising. Prior to her nomination, Ms. Zequo was the lead project committee member for the Women’s Operational Command Project, an initiative designed to prepare Albanian State Police female officers to assume operational supervisory positions.

**Belgium**

*Name:* **Ms. Isabelle DIEPENDAELE**

*Present Position:* Commissioner, Diversity Unit, Federal Police of Belgium

*Concurrent Positions:* Federal Police Liaison Officer, Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum, and Documentation Center on the Holocaust and Human Rights

*Previous Positions:* Commissioner, Local Police Herent‑Kortenberg, 2006-2012

*Education/Training:* National School for Law Enforcement Officers, Gendarmerie‑Brussels, 2002
Secondary School Teacher Training, University of Ghent, 1999
Postgraduate Degree, History and Languages, University of Jerusalem, 1998
Master’s Degree, Languages and Cultures of the Ancient Middle East, University of Ghent, 1997

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*Languages:* Dutch (primary), English, French

*U. S. Travel:* California, Georgia, New York, Washington, Washington, DC

*Other Travel:* Hungary, Latvia, Spain

*Professional Background:* Ms. Diependaele is the head of the Diversity Unit for the Belgium Federal Police. She develops policies, courses, and tools to coordinate and implement equal opportunities within the police forces. Ms. Diependaele also works to raise awareness of discrimination, women’s rights, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability rights, and hate crimes. She is also the liaison officer between the Federal Police and Kazerne Dossin Memorial, a Museum and Documentation Center on the Holocaust and Human Rights. In her role as liaison, she is part of a training program developed by Kazerne Dossin for all police members, through which the Belgian Holocaust is used as a case study to reflect on the ethical dilemmas police officers are confronted with in the field. Ms. Diependaele is also responsible for a project, “Connecting Law & Memory,” that creates a coordinating forum within law enforcement and other civil service institutions to share expertise on preventing racism, homophobia, and other forms of intolerance.

**France**

*Name:* **Mr. Aurelien Jordane MAZUY**

*Present Position:* Parliamentary Assistant to Virginie Roziere, Member, European Parliament

*Concurrent Position:* Board Member, Rainbow Rose, 2013-2017

*Previous Positions:* Policy Adviser, Australian Mission to the European Union, 2014-2017

Trainee, European Commission, 2014
Policy Officer, Servier, 2011‑2014

*Education/Training:* Master’s Degree, Political and Administrative Studies, College of Europe, 2011
Master’s Degree, European Affairs, Sciences Po Toulouse, 2010

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*Languages:* French (primary), English, Spanish

*U. S. Travel:* California, Massachusetts, New York, Tennessee, Washington, DC

*Other Travel:* Frequent travel within Europe

*Professional Background:* Mr. Mazuy works for an elected Member of the European Parliament as a parliamentary assistant, where he provides political and technical support. Mr. Mazuy also serves as a board member of Rainbow Rose, an LGBTI rights organization that builds partnerships with other minority rights groups; seeks to influence policy at different levels of government; and promotes intersectional initiatives.

**Germany**

*Name:* **Ms. Saba Nur CHEEMA**

*Present Position:* Head, Education Department, Anne Frank Educational Center

*Concurrent Positions:* Lecturer, Faculty of Health and Social Work, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

*Previous Positions:* Human Rights Trainer and Guide, Anne Frank Educational Center, 2003‑2015
Project Co-Manager, Bridge for Burma, Germany/Mae Sot, Thailand, 2010‑2012

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*Languages:* German (primary), English, Urdu

*U. S. Travel:* New York

*Other Travel:* Canada, Israel, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey

*Professional Background:* Ms. Cheema runs the educational program at the Anne Frank Educational Center, an NGO that uses the diary and biography of Anne Frank as a tool to promote tolerance and educate people about the consequences of discrimination and racism. Ms. Cheema is responsible for developing innovative programs to train instructors and high school children at the center on intercultural issues. She is particularly passionate about empowering immigrant youth to become active and engaged citizens.

**Poland**

*Name:* **Ms. Dorota PUDZIANOWSKA**

*Present Position:* Head, Anti‑Discrimination Program, Helsinki Human Rights Foundation

*Previous Positions:* Legal Expert, Center for Migration Research, 2008-2012

*Education/Training:* PhD, Legal Studies, Warsaw University, 2011
Master’s Degree, Legal Studies, Warsaw University, 2006
Master’s Degree, Sociology, Warsaw University and Ecole Normale Superieure, Paris, 2005

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*Languages:* Polish (primary), English

*Other Travel:* France

*Professional Background:* Ms. Pudzianowska is a legal expert specializing in human rights law, with a particular focus on anti-discrimination and immigration law. Since 2006, she has worked for the Helsinki Human Rights Foundation, where she is the head of the Anti-Discrimination Program. Ms. Pudzianowska has worked on cases in the areas of gender-based discrimination, ethnicity and race, disability, sexual orientation, prison overcrowding, freedom of assembly, religious freedom, and stateless persons. Her goal is to find innovative ways to advance human rights and minority rights within the Polish legal system.