

Royal visitors

September was a month of back-to-back royal visits to the OSCE in Vienna, with the former court of the Hapsburgs serving as an appropriate setting. Except for the Hofburg's opulent ceremonial rooms, however, there was little pomp and circumstance surrounding the auspicious events — which suited the unassuming guests just fine.

On 18 September, Prince Albert II of Monaco had a meeting with representatives of the Belgian Chairmanship and members of the OSCE Secretariat to discuss Monaco's co-operation with the Organization.

The Prince was especially interested in exploring ways in which Monaco could link up with the OSCE's efforts in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

He urged that more attention be paid to the needs of child-victims. "Monaco is particularly sensitive to the problems concerning disadvantaged and abused children," Prince Albert said.

Just a little over a week later, on 28 September, Albert II, the King of the Belgians, started his day by taking part

in an OSCE working meeting. From there he proceeded to the Permanent Council, where he listened with great interest to Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht describing some of the crucial security issues that Belgium has been tackling, nine months into its OSCE Chairmanship.

King Albert later greeted OSCE staff members and representatives of participating States at a reception. Addressing the guests at a luncheon in his honour, the King praised the Organization's efforts in the fight against trafficking in human beings. "The peoples of our continent need the OSCE and the fundamental principles and values it represents," the King said.



Prince Albert II of Monaco with Belgian Ambassador to the OSCE, Bertrand de Crombrughe (left photo), and with OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut (right photo).

After attending a session of the Permanent Council (right photo), King Albert II of Belgium meets representatives of participating States and OSCE staff members, including Belgians Valérie Crab (left) and Isabelle De Ruyt.



Photos: OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev