CIA CHIEF VISITS BOSNIA FOR ANTI-TERROR TALKS

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CIA chief John Brennan met Bosnian security officials on Friday to discuss security issues in the Balkan country, Dragan Lukac, head of the Federation entity's police directorate, said after the meeting.

Local experts said the visit was also an opportunity for Bosnia's security agencies and institutions to improve quality of their counter-terrorism activities.

Bosnian officials said the US intelligence director arrived in Sarajevo on an unannounced visit to meet officials but the press office of the US embassy told BIRN on Friday that it had no comment to make about Bremman's visit and could give no information.

Brennan's visit demonstrates that the US is interested and willing to help Bosnia to further develop its capacities to counter terrorism," security expert Armin Krzalic told BIRN.

He said this was particularly true when it comes to improving exchanges of information and cooperation between different agencies.

One of the main problems in Bosnia's fight authorities against terrorism is weak intelligence sharing between the different police agencies.

A more effective and timely exchange of information between the different Bosnian agencies is necessary, Krzalic, director of the Center for Security Studies in Sarajevo, said.

This is not only an exclusive problem of Bosnia … but it is true also for the EU, he added.

Meanwhile Police Directorate Lukac told the local media: We discussed the security in Bosnia and the usual topics discussed during this kind of meeting.

We exchanged views on security issues, as expected. The meeting was very constructive ☀ everything was fine, Lukac added.

Aljosa Campara, Minister of the Interior of the Federation entity, told the same media outlet, Klix, that Bosnian security services gave Brennen information on our citizens who are currently in foreign war zones, referring mainly to Islamist fighters in the Middle East.

He also said that security agencies also informed Brennen about the quantity of weapons being

smuggled from Bosnia and used for terrorist purposes.

The CIA director arrived in Bosnia from Saudi Arabia, where he met with senior officials from six Arab nations aimed at coordinating efforts in the conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

Last week, Brennan travelled to Ukraine, where, Forbes magazine reported, some speculated that he intended to open US intelligence resources to Ukrainian leaders about real-time Russian military maneuvers.

The US has thus far refrained from sharing such knowledge because Moscow is believed to have penetrated Ukraines communications systems and Washington does not wish to hand over its surveillance secrets to Russian, Forbes reported. The White House confirmed only that Brennan visited Ukraine "as part of his trip to Europe.

Bosnia's chief prosecutor and head of the country's anti-terrorism group, Goran Salihovic, said the CIA chief would be informed about how the group is coordinating anti-terrorism efforts. The group is made up of the heads of several agencies, including police, the prosecution office and border police.

According to the group, 124 Bosnians are fighting in foreign wars four in Ukraine and the others in Syria and Iraq for ISIS. A total of 51 Bosnians have died on foreign battlefields and 49 have returned from them and half of those have already been processed by courts.

Bosnian law foresees jail terms of up to 10 years for those who recruit, finance or personally participate in foreign wars.

Salihovic told reporters that so far some 70 people have been processed as suspects in some form of terrorist activity.

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