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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Counter-narcotics training for Afghan police starts with OSCE support**

DUSHANBE, 17 February 2010 - Thirty-five Afghan police officers started counter-narcotics training in Dushanbe today in courses organized by the OSCE with Tajikistan's Interior Ministry and National Drug Control Agency.

The two train-the-trainer courses, which were developed and organized by the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit and the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, were specifically designed for the Afghan police officers. The one-month courses focus on practical exercises on the planning and organizing of drugs search operations and employ modern training methods. The participants will examine the entire process of prosecuting drugs-related criminal cases, starting with the police investigation and ending in the courts.

The two projects were developed in response to an OSCE Ministerial Council decision adopted in Madrid in 2007 on enhancing engagement with Afghanistan, an OSCE Partner for Co-operation country.

Ahead of the training courses, the OSCE refurbished two classrooms at the Interior Ministry and the National Drug Control Agency and provided training-related equipment to both agencies. As part of the projects, experts from the Turkish Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime held a two-week refresher course for the Tajik instructors late last year.

"These two courses are an important effort that aim at creating a cadre of trainers for the Afghan National Police in combating illicit drug trafficking. They have been developed in response to the OSCE Madrid Ministerial Council Decision on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan and complement other international assistance rendered to the Afghan National Police," said Kevin Carty, OSCE Senior Police Adviser.

Ambassador Ivar Vikki, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, said: "These training courses present an important opportunity for police officers to exchange best practices in the field of counter narcotics and expand their network of experts."

The OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit has helped to organize a range of training courses for police practitioners in the OSCE region. This includes training for the Afghan National Police, with a particular focus on fighting drugs trafficking.

The government of Japan, also an OSCE Partner for Co-operation, financed the projects. "I am particularly happy that Japan as an OSCE Asian Partner country can support these two training projects for the Afghan police, which will be implemented by the OSCE. I expect that through the projects the cordial relations between Tajikistan and Afghanistan will be enhanced and also the stability of the region will be further strengthened," said Yoshihiro Nakayama, Charge d'Affaires at the Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan.

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