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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Office in Tajikistan trains officials on confidence-building in water management

DUSHANBE, October 26, 2010 - Principles for sharing water resources, best practices in river basin management and tools to prevent and solve conflicts involving water are the focus of a workshop starting today at the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

The three-day event brings together representatives of government ministries and state institutions in the fields of water, energy and agriculture from all regions of Tajikistan.

"The workshop forms part of the OSCE Office's work to assist the government in addressing water- and energy-security challenges. It also contributes to national and regional confidence-building," said Ambassador Ivar Vikki, Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

Rakhmat Bobokalonov, Tajikistan's Minister of Land Reclamation and Water Resources, said that major challenges in the area of water relations that lead to precarious economic, social and ecological living conditions for millions of people often were related to transboundary river basins.

"The Aral Sea Basin, where water is becoming increasingly in short supply due to climate change on the one hand and a higher consumption of water due to population growth on the other, does not constitute an exception. It is crucial to apply appropriate approaches and methods for solving water challenges and prevent possible tensions in such basins. This workshop will be an important contribution toward enhancing the experience of our specialists in the area of confidence-building," he said.

The workshop launches a training course series organized by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan under which local authorities and civil society representatives will learn about confidence-building.

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan organized the workshop in co-operation with the UNDP Country Office in Tajikistan as part of a UNDP project to promote water resource management and transboundary dialogue in Central Asia.

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