

НАМОЯНДАГИИ ДОИМИИ
ҶУМҲУРИИ ТОҶИКИСТОН
ДАР НАЗДИ САҲА



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN
TO THE OSCE

Report on the Fourth Annual Joint OSCE-Tajikistan Task Force

Dushanbe, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 30 March 2010

The fourth annual Task Force brought together around 80 OSCE officials, representatives from state institutions, agencies and civil society at the OSCE Office in Tajikistan on 30 March 2010. The Task Force is a unique forum for partnership and cooperation for the OSCE, jointly with the host country, to identify its strategic objectives in addressing the needs and priorities of the host country. The meeting was opened by Mr. Mahmudjon Sobirov, Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Herbert Salber, the Director of the Conflict Prevention Center of the OSCE Secretariat, Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, Mr. Doug Wake, Deputy Head of the ODIHR and Ambassador Ivar Vikki, Head of the Office in Tajikistan (OiT). Opening statements were also made by the Troika represented by Mr. Usen Suleimenov, Deputy Head of Delegation of Kazakhstan (2010 Kazakh Chairmanship) and Mr. Donatas Butkus, Third Secretary at the Lithuanian Delegation (2011 Chairmanship).

In his opening speech, Deputy Foreign Minister Sobirov stressed the strengthened co-operation of the OiT with the host country, adding that important events organized by the two sides in 2009 such as: the visit of the OSCE ambassadors to Tajikistan, the establishment of the Border Management Staff College in May 2009 and the regional conference on mine action in November 2009, which highlighted last year's collaboration. Ambassador Salber underlined the significance of the annual Task Force meetings which provide a basis for the close co-operation between the OiT and the host government. Usen Suleimenov focused on the collaboration with Tajikistan not only as that of the Chairmanship with a participating State but also that of a regional partner. Having mentioned the priorities of the Kazakh Chairmanship which include continuation of the Corfu Process, engagement with Afghanistan, water and energy issues in the region and the Aral Sea problem, the Chairmanship representative looked forward to cooperating with the OiT in all three dimensions. The representative from the incoming Lithuanian Chairmanship valued the OiT's efforts to assist Tajikistan in a number of areas such as demining, police reform, combating terrorism and corruption, radioactive waste management, support for free media and reform in the justice sector among others. He particularly underlined Lithuania's ongoing support in the implementation of the travel security project in Tajikistan.

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmudjon Sobirov delivered a key note speech in which he underscored the strengthened co-operation between the government of Tajikistan and the Office in Tajikistan. He noted the Annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting which took place in September-October in Warsaw where representatives of the government and civil society participated. The Deputy FM said that Tajikistan, having been involved in a strategic partnership with the OSCE, hoped, that the OSCE, working for the benefit of all 56 participating States, would continue to contribute to the country's economic development and help address its environmental challenges.

During the discussions, participants elaborated on the role of Tajikistan in the OSCE, new developments and achievements since 2009 Task Force meeting, activities during 2009-2010 and plans to support the country in 2011 based on the needs and priorities of the host country. They convened into three working groups based on the OSCE dimensions for practical discussions.

Working group on Politico-Military activities

Participants of the politico-military working group discussed their objectives in 2011, in particular about initiatives to further promote political pluralism and political dialogue, to support Tajikistan in implementation of its National Border Strategy, and to conduct activities related to law enforcement and combating terrorism. They also took note of the significance of the support to Tajikistan in meeting its obligations under the Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction. The participants underlined the importance to contribute to Tajikistan's ability to reduce the risks stemming from the illegal proliferation and destabilizing accumulation of SALW and CA as well as assistance to the host country in observing its commitments stemming the Vienna Document 99.

Working group on Economic and Environmental activities

Participants exchanged their opinions on the continued OSCE support for improvement of business and investment climate and creation of more small and medium-sized enterprises. In this context, the importance of continued assistance to the development of free-economic zones was mentioned. In addition, it was reported that the OiT provided expertise in the legislative process and a new law on free economic zones was drafted in 2009. Discussions in this working group focused also on the OSCE-supported youth movement "Green Patrols" where the Office contributes to the awareness of the youth on environmental issues. Other significant projects such as those aimed at implementation of Tajikistan's Aarhus commitments and promotion of rational usage of water resources drew particular attention. In the context of ongoing water and energy shortages in Tajikistan and the neighboring countries, participants found it essential to consider alternative energy sources. In addition, they expressed the need to enter into dialogue with Afghanistan on trans-border water management.

Working group of Human Dimension activities

Concentrating on the activities in this dimension, participants underlined the significance to assist the host Government in judicial reform. In this respect, during the discussions, topics such as support to the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, which was established in May 2009, capacity building of those involved in legal, judicial and criminal justice reform as well as close cooperation with the Parliament and drafters of laws were touched upon. In terms of electoral reform, participant underlined the necessity of a collaborative review of legislation and related practices. Among other issues discussed were raising of human rights awareness, combating trafficking in human beings, gender awareness and equality. In light of the parliamentary elections which took place on 28 February 2010, the Deputy Head of ODIHR Doug Wake expressed ODIHR's readiness to continue cooperation with the Government of Tajikistan in the follow-up process after the elections.

Conclusions

All the participants welcomed the dialogue and strengthened partnership between the OiT and the host country. Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmudjon Sobirov invited the OSCE to continue to work with Tajikistan. Appreciating the constructive dialogue, he looked forward to seeing OSCE-supported projects which would address energy issues and climate change. With regards to the first dimension, representatives of the Foreign Ministry said that it would be important to bear in mind that the issue of security in Central Asia should be approached beyond the context of security in the neighboring country of Afghanistan. Head of the OiT, Ambassador Ivar Vikki underlined the spirit of cooperation in addressing common challenges. Director of the CPC, Ambassador Herbert Salber concluded that the OSCE was ready to continue to support Tajikistan in fulfilling its needs across all three dimensions. Representative from the Kazakh Chairmanship Usen Suleimenov focused on the special role of the Kazakh Chairmanship in tackling issues in the areas of politico-military, economic-environmental and human rights.

Vienna, April 26, 2010