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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Office in Tajikistan co-organizes week of events to mark Universal Declaration of Human Rights anniversary

DUSHANBE, 10 December 2009 - A multilingual arts event and a conference on integrating human rights in Tajikistan were held in Dushanbe today as part of events co-organized by the OSCE Office to mark the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948.

The events, concluding on 14 December, are part of a week-long celebration of human rights organized by the OSCE Office in co-operation with the UN Development Programme, Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, the Open Society Institute, Helvetas, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation, the UN Children's Fund, the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Tajikistan and members of the local civil society.

"The collective effort of Human Rights Week was undertaken to reflect our commitment to the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms, all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the individual and are essential to free and full development," said Ambassador Ivar Vikki, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

"Co-operation among states and the active involvement of individuals, groups, organizations and institutions are essential to ensuring continued progress towards these shared goals."

The conference, titled "Toward an Integrated System of Human Rights Promotion, Protection and Implementation in Tajikistan", brought together representatives of government and civil society to discuss Tajikistan's international human rights commitments. It was followed by a multimedia, multilingual arts event in which the Human Rights Ombudsman, civil society and cultural figures, children, elderly and differently-abled persons presented the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with an accompanying live performance by a graphic artist and musician.

Other events include nationwide television and interactive radio programmes, a parliamentary debate camp on youth participation in elections, educational events for the families of the disabled, conferences on freedom of information and political participation, a government-civil society dialogue on international human rights commitments and multimedia cultural events.

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