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**PRESS RELEASE****Tajikistan is an important contributor to the security of the OSCE region, says OSCE Chairperson**

DUSHANBE, 19 May 2010 - The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's State Secretary and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev today stressed the importance of Tajikistan as a key partner for OSCE in the region in his meetings with the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon and Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zarifi.

The OSCE, including through its Office in Tajikistan, supports the country in strengthening security in all three dimensions: human, economic and environmental, and politico-military.

Following his meetings, Saudabayev said: "I expressed our appreciation for the support from Tajikistan to the OSCE, including the initiative of Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev to convene a summit this year. I stressed that this country has a key role in promoting stability in Central Asia and is contributing to the security of the whole OSCE region. I also welcomed the close co-operation of Tajikistan with the OSCE on strengthening border security, and commended the Government for its recent adoption of the Tajik National Border Management Strategy, which was developed in collaboration with the OSCE."

Tajikistan hosts the OSCE Border Management Staff College, which trains senior officers from OSCE countries' border security agencies with particular focus on the Central Asia region, introducing new skills and working methods. In co-operation with the government and civil society, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan assists in enhancing democracy, especially through its active contribution to strengthening political dialogue and promoting judicial and legal reforms. It co-operates with the Human Rights Ombudsman, and is engaged in projects aimed at good governance, development of free media, promoting gender equality, and combating human trafficking.

"Comprehensive security also means addressing economic and environmental issues. Since last year the OSCE has been working with the Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources to address water management and energy security issues at the national and trans-national level and supporting the Ministry in organizing an International Water Forum in June this year," Saudabayev said.

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan employs 40 international staff from 19 OSCE participating States and 156 Tajik nationals.

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