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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Office presents research on corruption in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE, 9 December 2011 – The findings of an OSCE-supported study on perceptions and attitudes towards corruption in Tajikistan were presented today in Dushanbe in the first of a series of events for government, civil society and international organizations.

The research was conducted by the Presidential Centre for Strategic Research and supported by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

“It is important not to underestimate the problem, but also not to overestimate it and get discouraged. The survey identifies significant parts of society that are not involved in corruption. It shows the challenges ahead but also points to significant potential support for an efficient anti-corruption policy,” said Ambassador Ivar Vikki, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan to participants.

“I hope that the results of this research will be useful for the government of Tajikistan in strengthening its anti-corruption policy, especially as the Strategy for the Fight against Corruption in Tajikistan comes to an end in 2012 and the country will need to review its national anti-corruption programme.”

“The research showed that more than 50 percent of citizens in Tajikistan did not give bribes during the last year,” said Sukhrob Sharipov, the Director of the Presidential Centre for Strategic Research. “This, together with the fact that more than one-third of respondents were ready to participate in anti-corruption activities, allows us to be optimistic about the possibilities of anti-corruption efforts in Tajikistan.”

The research presents the various attitudes towards corruption of different societal groups and the potential for anti-corruption activities and their support through civil society. It was conducted through focus groups as well as a quantitative survey among 1,000 respondents in five cities in Tajikistan.

The report found that the average value of bribes was comparatively high – more than 1,000 somoni, or 200 US dollars, compared with an average monthly salary in Tajikistan of 70 US dollars. Anti-corruption expert Aleksandras Dobryninas, who advised on the survey, said the figures made clear that corruption created more obstacles for the poor in obtaining access to services like education or healthcare. “Corruption is the cause of poverty rather than poverty being conducive to corruption,” he said.

The research also revealed insufficient skills and resources to effectively engage media in raising awareness of the issue.

The OSCE Office supports Tajikistan in building its capacity to promote good governance and combat corruption through capacity building, reviewing legislation, anti-corruption education and awareness raising.

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