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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Office in Tajikistan holds preparatory meeting ahead of major human rights conference

DUSHANBE, 3 July 2012 - The sixth annual OSCE Preparatory Human Dimension Implementation Meeting for government and civil society representatives to discuss human rights issues began in Dushanbe today.

The two-day event is organized by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and the Department on Constitutional Guarantees of Citizen Rights within the Executive Office of the President, in co-operation with civil society organizations from across the country.

The meeting, held ahead of the OSCE-wide annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, which takes place in Warsaw in autumn, serves as an open forum to examine topical issues in human rights and the rule of law.

The agenda of this year's meeting in Tajikistan was developed jointly by government and civil society representatives, with the OSCE Office facilitating the process. Sessions focused on freedom of expression and new media, freedom from torture, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, access to justice, human rights and counter-terrorism, property rights and forced resettlement, democratic standards of elections and political participation of youth.

This year's meeting brings together more than 120 participants, including representatives of the Office of the General Prosecutor, the Central Commission for Election and Referenda, Parliament, the Supreme Court and the Ministries of Interior, Health, Justice and Labour and Social Protection. This year saw the participation of more than 30 representatives of non-governmental organizations and political parties from the regions alongside their national-level counterparts.

"The intensity of this year's discussion reflects the shared will of government and civil society to take measures to improve both the legal framework for human rights protection as well as the practical implementation of legislation," said Ambassador Ivar Vikki, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

Muzaffar Ashurov, the Head of the Department of Constitutional Guarantees of Citizen Rights in the Executive Office of the President, said:

"Recommendations on key human rights issues resulting from this meeting will not be left without attention. They help us to develop effective policies for improving the framework for human rights protection."

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