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PRESS RELEASE

First print media distribution co-operative in Tajikistan established with OSCE Office support

DUSHANBE, 17 September 2010 - Fifteen key newspaper publishers, supported by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, today established a first-ever co-operative distribution system of print media for the country.

Public access to print media in Tajikistan has long been hampered by the lack of a properly functioning distribution system. The goal of the new co-operative system is to improve the distribution of newspapers and magazines. Now newspapers will be delivered every day to sales points around the country, and the number of places where newspapers are sold will be increased.

"The co-operative structure allows newspaper publishers to own the distribution system and to ensure that print media will be easily accessible," said Michael Unland, Media Officer at the OSCE Office in Tajikistan. "This system will help to establish a better link between the newspapers and the readers, and enable the people of Tajikistan get more news faster."

The country's major print media are represented in the board of directors of the newly established system.

Publisher Sharif Hamdamov, the newly-elected Chairperson of the co-operative's board, emphasized that a more efficient distribution system would improve sales and earnings in the business, which has suffered from falling advertising rates over the past two years.

"This is a very positive step because the existing distribution system is chaotic," Hamdamov said. "Our task is to make the system more organized so that it lives up to the standards of modern society. It will also help us maintain our independence and mutual responsibility."

The project to establish the print media distribution system has been implemented by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan in co-operation with the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan.

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