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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE and Tajik Interior Ministry sign memorandum of understanding on police reform

DUSHANBE, 8 April 2011 – Ambassador Ivar Vikki, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, and Interior Minister Abdurahim Kaharov signed a memorandum of understanding on police reform in Dushanbe today.

The signing ceremony was attended by the heads of the ministries and agencies of the Republic of Tajikistan as well as heads of diplomatic missions and embassies in the country.

“The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the OSCE Office in Tajikistan enjoy a solid history of co-operation,” said Vikki. “We co-operate together in the overall process of the police reform, and the memorandum of understand will focus on reforming police along universally recognized democratic principles of policing.”

In 2008, the Government, on behalf of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, addressed a request to the OSCE Office in Tajikistan to assess police reform needs. Based on a joint needs assessment conducted by the OSCE assessment team, as well as on the results of an assessment workshop held in 2009, international and national experts developed a draft memorandum on police reform.

At the signing ceremony, Minister Kaharov expressed gratitude to the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and to the Organization as a whole “for assistance rendered in reforming and developing the police in Tajikistan, including in such important areas as ensuring human and civil rights, combating human trafficking and domestic violence, and training, education and professional development”.

“Today, when Tajikistan has achieved peace and national accord and moves towards the further development of a democratic constitutional state with a market economy, there is a need to reform and develop the police at the same time. However, this large venture requires assistance from the international community and international experts,” he said.

According to the memorandum, a Police Reform Steering Group will be established to develop the programme. In addition to government agencies, representatives of donor countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations will be also involved in the development of the programme, which will comprise complementary projects to be independently implemented. The scale, duration, timeframes and budget of each project will be agreed by the OSCE and Interior Ministry.