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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN
TO THE OSCE

**Statement by Ambassador Nuriddin Shamsov, Permanent
Representative of Tajikistan to the OSCE at the 796th
Permanent Council Meeting
(Vienna, 4 March 2010)**

*In response to Report by Mr. M. Harasti,
the OSCE Representative on Freedom of Media
on Tajikistan*

Thank you Chairman,

We join previous speakers in welcoming Mr. Miklos Harasti, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of Media and thank him for interest in media situation in Tajikistan, namely the case of three judges from Supreme Court and City Court of Dushanbe lawsuit against independent weeklies "Asia-Plus", "Faraj" and "Ozodagon" on January 29, 2010.

We stress that in accordance with national legislation of Tajikistan the judicial system is independent. Citizens are equal under the Law and have to observe the Law irrespective of their political, social and other status. According to Article 29, Part 3 of the Law on Press and other Mass-Media, newspapers and the mass media do not enjoy the right to discuss or analyze court sentences before they become effective. Judicial system and fairness of sentences taken by courts must be examined by experts and lowers, but not journalists.

National legislation guarantees the press and other mass media freedom. Each citizen of the Republic of Tajikistan has the right to freely express

convictions and hold opinions, to impart them in any form through the press and other mass media. No censorship of the mass information shall be allowed.

With regard to lawsuit against free tajik newspapers, we inform that the preliminary hearing for the case has been held twice in Dushanbe Sino district. Court. Unfortunately, the preliminary hearing ended with unsuccessful attempts to bring the trial parties to an agreement.

The Court heard arguments of the plaintiffs-two judges from the Supreme Court and a judge from the Dushanbe city court. The plaintiffs refused again to come to an agreement, insisting on their claims, while editors of the weeklies did not admit the plaintiffs' claims. As a result, Judge promised to schedule the first court hearing for early March, 2010. He noted that this decision is not connected with the February 28 parliamentary elections.

We remind that in 2009 «Reporters without Borders» (RSF) has ranked Tajikistan the best place among Central Asian countries. Tajik authorities make every efforts to promote freedom of media and ensure rights of journalists within national legislation in line with international commitments of Tajikistan

Government of Tajikistan intends to continue an effective dialogue with free media community to build mutual trust between authorities and independent journalism based on recognized democratic principles, professional and ethical standards.

We thank again Mr. M. Harasti for his good job has been done since assumption the post of OSCE Representative on Media and wish him every success in his endeavor.

Thank You Chairman,