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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Media in Tajikistan elect first self-regulation body at meeting supported by OSCE Office in Tajikistan**

DUSHANBE, 30 October 2009 - Delegates from Tajik media elected the country's first media self-regulation body today at a meeting in Dushanbe supported by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

The delegates, representing two-thirds of all media outlets in Tajikistan, elected a nine-member Tajik Media Council. The creation of the Council at today's constituent assembly follows long-term support by the OSCE Office for an initiative by leading media associations, media co-operative endeavours and journalists.

That support included a series of training seminars and discussions in which media representatives drafted and endorsed a Code of Ethics, by-laws and regulations for the Media Council. Media self-regulation specialists from Bulgaria and Germany provided advice. The German Federal Ministry of Economic Co-operation and Development provided financial support.

"Every community is strengthened by defining, sharing and imparting common values. Today, Tajik media professionals have done this. They have established a strong basis for a shared concept of professionalism based on strong commitments," said Michael Unland, the OSCE Office's Media Officer, at the opening session of the Council's constituent assembly.

Nuriddin Karsheboev, chairman of the National Association of Independent Mass Media in Tajikistan, added: "It is necessary to answer the call for moral responsibility of the media appropriately: with a mechanism that reacts with moral sanctions from our peers, not criminal prosecution. This will promote freedom of expression."

In discussions at the meeting, journalists noted the importance of shared, internally-negotiated standards to improve the credibility of Tajik media and the level of trust between independent media and state officials.

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