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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE meeting focuses on better understanding of extremism to combat terrorism in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE, 28 April 2009 - High-level security officials, international experts and civil society representatives began a two-day OSCE meeting today to discuss how Tajikistan's law enforcement personnel can counter terrorism in line with human rights principles.

Representatives of the Tajik State Committee on National Security and the Interior Ministry are taking part in the meeting, organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE Office in Dushanbe. The event aims to give participants an increased understanding of violent extremism and radicalization.

"Acts and strategies of terrorism aim at the destruction of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Governments therefore have a duty to protect their nationals and others against terrorist attacks and to bring the perpetrators to justice," said Kelly Low, ODIHR's Adviser on Anti-Terrorism Issues.

While pursuing the legitimate goal of combating terrorism, states are also responsible for protecting the very values that terrorism attempts to undermine, she added.

"In countering terrorism, it is essential to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law - the building blocks for sustainable security," she said.

Oliver Janser, Counter-terrorism and Police Adviser to the OSCE Office in Dushanbe, added: "There is a need to understand both the complex nature of the threat and the impact of different counter-terrorism measures in every country. We are here to learn from each other by exchanging experiences and perspectives."

National and international experts, including representatives from the ODIHR's Advisory Panel on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, other international law enforcement experts and local civil representatives participated in discussions on challenges to countering terrorism, different approaches and human rights matters.

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