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PRESS RELEASE**OSCE Office co-organizes third annual Preparatory Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Tajikistan**

DUSHANBE, 7 August 2009 - A meeting co-organized by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan to support Tajik government and civil society representatives, ahead of the OSCE's annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) in Warsaw in September, ended in Dushanbe today.

The two-day Preparatory HDIM brought together more than 100 people from Government, civil society and international organizations to discuss human dimension topics. This is the third consecutive year that the Office has supported such an event.

"Our preparatory meeting in Dushanbe is a unique initiative and the results of the previous two annual meetings were visible in Warsaw last year, when a well-prepared, cohesive and active delegation represented Tajikistan, and this was noted by other participants," said Klaus Rasmussen, the Deputy Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

This year's event was co-organized with the Tajik Foreign Ministry, the newly-established Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Tajikistan, a local non-governmental organization, the Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

"To fulfill its obligations, the Government of Tajikistan is trying to adjust its national legislation and its implementation in compliance with international norms and standards. This reform refers to military and judicial aspects, education, health and other relevant spheres," said Muzafar Huseinov, the Head of the Foreign Ministry's International Department, adding that "the number of women holding key posts in the Government is increasing".

The participants discussed freedom of conscience and religious associations, refugee rights, the right to a fair trial, rights of national minorities, prevention of violence against women, democracy and elections, free media and freedom of expression, property rights, access to prisons, rights of military recruits and conscientious objectors, access to information, environmental rights, rights of migrant workers, and legal and judicial reform.

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan is the only OSCE mission which holds a Preparatory HDIM each year. The Office is supporting a delegation of some 20 Government and civil society representatives to the HDIM, which will be held from 28 September to 9 October. In addition to taking part in the main Human Dimension Implementation Meeting sessions in Warsaw, the delegation is expected to host a side event on human rights in Tajikistan.

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