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**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

PRESS RELEASE

OSCE/ODIHR to observe parliamentary elections in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE, 18 January 2010 - The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) today formally opened an election observation mission for the 28 February parliamentary elections in Tajikistan.

In line with its commitment as an OSCE participating State, Tajikistan has invited ODIHR to monitor the elections.

The observation mission is led by Artis Pabriks, a former Foreign Minister of Latvia. It comprises 17 international experts from 16 OSCE participating States based in Dushanbe, and 20 long-term observers to be deployed across the country. In addition, ODIHR requested 150 short-term observers.

The mission will assess the overall framework and conduct of the elections. This includes the legal framework, the political campaign, the role of the media, the work of the election administration and the complaints and appeals process. On election day, observers will follow the voting, counting and tabulation process.

The observers will meet with relevant governmental authorities, candidates, political parties, the judiciary, civil society and the media.

A media monitoring component will follow the coverage of the elections by major public and private broadcast networks.

For these elections, the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission will join efforts with the delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

A statement of preliminary findings and conclusions will be issued on the day after the elections. A comprehensive final report on the overall findings of the mission will be published approximately two months after the completion of the election process.

The ODIHR election observation mission and the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan operate separately under their specific mandates.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:

<http://www.osce.org/item/42371.html>