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STATEMENT

**On behalf of the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Tajikistan Abdullo Yuldoshev at the 16th Meeting of Council
of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of OSCE**

Helsinki, 5 December, 2008

**Distinguished Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to join to the welcoming words of our colleagues addressed to the Finnish Government, and to the Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Alexander Stubb for the hospitality, and also for the effective OSCE Chairmanship which was not so easy period for all of us in 2008. At the same time, I would like to congratulate Her Excellency Mrs.Dora Bakoyannis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, the next Chairman-in-Office of our organization, and wish her success.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

OSCE with its encouraging cooperation and comprehensive security concept, definitely, is a unique organization. Based on the principles of equality, rule of law and democracy it continues to generate positive transformations in all its areas. In the modern globalizing world the implementation of these norms and principles not only creates favourable conditions for the wide cooperation of states and regions, but also it is a key to the different aspects of security, conflict prevention as well as sustainable economic development in our states.

Today the OSCE Participating States continuously face the unprecedented threats and challenges that could not only to weaken established over decades political system of states, but also to cause the unpredictable consequences. The potential dangerous threats of the modern world, first of all, are the energy, food, climate and financial crises.

Dear colleagues,

The development of international cooperation in the sphere of terrorism combating inseparably linked with fight against illegal drug trafficking and border security. With the great regret, today the counterdrug efforts against narcotic threat from Afghanistan as one of the main financial sources of terrorism, is acquiring weak and ineffective character.

We can not confirm that Tajik – Afghan border is becoming more safe and transparent. The fact that the minimization of the drug aggression could be achieved only by intensification of the collective efforts of the

world community, including OSCE is obvious.

Subject to the fact of increasing flow of narcotics from the neighboring state, we believe it is expedient to focus the border related projects of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan on real financial, material and technical assistance to state anti-narcotic and national border security agencies, including the implementation of the national project on the establishment of centralized system of visa registration and border control.

In this regard, once again we draw the attention of the OSCE and member states to the actuality of providing support to the initiative of the President of Tajikistan on establishing in Dushanbe the Special Counter-terrorism Center of Shanghai Cooperation Organization(SOC), creation of the "security belt" all around Afghanistan and making joint efforts targeted at decisive fight against drug aggression in Central Asia.

Tajikistan welcomes the decision of the Organization regarding the opening of Border Management College of the OSCE in Dushanbe. We also emphasize our interest on the establishment of specialized training and retraining centers for security structures of Afghanistan.

At the same time, we express our deep disappointment in regard with the failure by the OSCE Participating-States to reach consensus this year on the implementation of Madrid decision N^o4/07 on Afghanistan . We hope that in 2009 Greek Chairmanship and Participating-States will make maximum efforts to implementation of all projects, in particular those to be implemented in the territory of Tajikistan.

We still pay great importance to our cooperation with the OSCE on further realization of the programs related to the Light Conventional Weapons and Conventional Arms. Therefore, I would like express the appreciation of my Government to friendly European States that are continuously assisting Tajikistan to overcome the consequences of these risks.

Dear colleagues,

The issue of anti-personnel mines is a matter of extreme concern for us. According to expert's evaluation monthly several hundreds of people in the world perish or get injured due to the anti-personnel mines. As a result of irresponsible use of this kind of weapon the demining process is slowing down, huge territories are becoming useless, the inter border cooperation is declining and social problems are becoming acute.

Issues collectively discussed and aimed further strengthening of security and stability will lose any sense until the states initiate the activity aimed at transforming the region to the zone free of the anti-personnel mines. Only the active cooperation between relevant agencies of interested states in the region and international organizations would settle this problem.

Dear colleagues,

Strengthening democracy and fundamentals of the civil society, rule of law and respecting human rights still remains for us as perpetual value and are at the Center of attention of the Government of Tajikistan.

We intend to continue the process of democratic reforming of the state and society, stemming from our international obligations, including within the framework of OSCE. The good example is adoption of the law in March on establishment of Ombudsman in Tajikistan as well as the last assessment of the international nongovernmental organization “Reporteurs sans frontières”, according to which the Republic of Tajikistan has the best position in the Central Asia on the freedom of speech.

We strongly condemn all forms of xenophobia, islamophobia and discrimination on the different basis that not only humiliate human dignity, but also create serious threat to the society and statehood. Therefore, we express our firm support to the “Civilization Alliance” initiative aimed to combat extremism and protect diversity of the world.

It is important, that the participants of this meeting had a clear understanding of the necessity of joint cooperation and efforts for providing stable conditions for the development of the society. In fact, the past events in number of the regions of the world proved that we – the politicians are responsible for the peace and stability, for decisions and obligations taken in order to make security firm and lasting.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Tajikistan expresses its firm support to the decision on the role of OSCE in strengthening the security aspects of climate change and calls upon the Organization to approach with more responsibility the working out of mutually beneficial ways, related to the ecological challenges, including water and energy issues in Central Asia. We are deeply confident that mutually beneficial cooperation among the states of the region and also joint development of the water energy resources and implementation of

joint projects is the only right way, allowing us to minimize the detrimental consequences of future nature cataclysms, to avoid energy collapses and cardinally solve the shortage of drinking and irrigational water in the region.

Unfortunately, lately, the water energy resources of the Central Asia and proposed ways of their rational usage often become the subject of misunderstandings, and sometimes creation of tensions due to their wrong interpretation.

The measures taken by the Government of Tajikistan in constructing hydro energy facilities, first of all, aimed at balancing the water and energy problems of the region, solving ecological problems of the basin of the Aral Sea and mobilizing its sources for achieving persistent and stable development of the whole Central Asia.

In hydro-power engineering unlike irrigation systems water is not used irretrievably, it only passes through the turbines of hydroelectric power stations. Irrigated agriculture uses the water flow irretrievably and returns drainage flow of bad quality.

Many developed and planned for the construction small and medium HPPs, including Zarafshon have daily storage reservoirs. They do not have negative influence on ecology and the security. It is known from the practice that construction of a cascade of HPS's and water reservoirs in the upstream countries is an effective way for seasonal and long-term accumulation of water with the purpose to supply Central Asian countries with water during the vegetation period. Facilities constructed under sound projects do not represent threat to the interests of the downstream countries. At present if we had a water reservoir of the Rogun HPS available on the Vakhsh River and Kambaratin reservoir in Kyrgyzstan we could have avoid consequences of the arid periods.

The regulation of the flow by Rogun reservoir will allow supplying more than 90 % of irrigated area in Amudarya basin on more than 4.6 mln hectares. It also allows irrigating 480 thousand additional hectares including 140 thousand hectares in Turkmenistan and 240 thousand hectares in Uzbekistan, it will also improve water supply to currently irrigated lands.

The global Aral Sea tragedy evokes extraordinary alert in this sphere. It is well-known that the short-sighted intensive irrigation policy having place in Central Asia in 1950-1980 is the only cause of the disaster of the Aral Sea. The policy directed at racing the economic benefits from developing new

irrigating lands in Central Asia on cotton and leaving out the ecological nature, which led to the Aral Sea catastrophe.

Since 1960 until now the area of the irrigated lands in the region has increased in 1.74 times and water off take in 1.9 times. The discharge of the Aral Sea year by year decreased and in some arid years almost all water resources had been used in irrigated agriculture.

Consequently, wasteful attitude to water resources, extensive water policy, and rush for raising agriculture, especially cotton-growing caused a nine-fold reduction of water level in the Aral Sea during last 35 years.

Water of the Aral Sea has gone nowhere it just converted to hundreds of new waterlogged ponds in Karaqum and Kizilqum deserts. Total volumes of appeared lakes exceed a level of water in the Aral Sea. Therefore, any allegation on insalubrities of constructing hydropower plants in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan is something as systematic mislead of the world community and concealment of ecological crimes committed in a second half of the 20th century in the Central Asia, and, unfortunately continuation of this policy in the future.

Because of salinization and desiccation of the Aral Sea, the huge areas of saline soil have been formed in the Central Asia, which move to the mountain glaciers of Tajikistan by monsoon wind, causing their intensive thawing.

During last century, a volume of glaciers in our country has been cut down to 10 – 15% that is one of the main reasons of perennial desiccation in the region. Today, we should put a question to the compensation for ecological catastrophe in the Central Asia and try to wake up the downstream countries to take urgent measures on improvement of situation in the region.

Dear colleagues,

The unprecedented cold of the last winter which was registered in the region, especially in Tajikistan, hardships and deprivation of the citizens due to the energy deficit clearly showed the insufficiency and ineffectiveness of existing level of regional cooperation in this vitally important sphere. Unfavorable climatic forecasts for the upcoming winter period also firmly dictate the actuality of developing of small and alternative hydro-energy for provision of electricity to the citizens of distant mountainous districts of the country.

We believe that it is one of the spheres, where OSCE Office in Tajikistan in the framework of economic and ecological activities should

make necessary efforts thereby rendering addressed and practical assistance to the Government of the country.

Taking into account the urgency of the solution of the complex of the issues, related to water and management of water resources in upcoming years not only for countries of the Central Asia, but also for the most of the planet, I am appealing to all OSCE Participating States to support the initiative of the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, repeatedly mentioned during the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly on the convocation of the UN special session on water, and also the proposal on the establishment of international consortium on construction of water pipeline from the unique Sarez lake, which is able to provide ecologically clean water to the people of the region for many years.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to point out the fact that Tajikistan is still one of the active supporters of international integration and strengthening regional cooperation in the Central Asia. On the assumption of this, and also subject to the regional context of renewed mandate of OSCE Office in Tajikistan adopted in 2008, our proposals with regard to stationing in Dushanbe regional representations of the OSCE institutions and agencies, such as Center on degradation of lands, Center for crisis management under the Committee on emergency situations, Center on transit traffic and the Branch of water institute, are still in force.

It is important, that the participants of this meeting, would have a clear understanding of the necessity of joint cooperation and efforts for providing stable conditions for the development of the society. In fact, the past events in number of regions of the world proved that we – the politicians are responsible for the peace and stability, for decisions and obligations that we undertook in order to make security firm and lasting.

In the conclusion, I would like to reconfirm the commitment of Tajikistan to the basic principals and ideals of OSCE and its endeavors' towards effective and multidimensional cooperation with the Organization. I hope that in upcoming year of 2009 under the Greek Chairmanship we could be able to make a step forward with regard to the settling the agenda of the Organization and its implementation.

Thank you .