

Ministerial Conference on “Education as an Investment into the Future”

Date: 5 April 2004

Location: Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Hotel Inter-Continental

Welcome note/Introduction:

Taking into account the global interest towards security in the Central Asian region, one of the main focuses of the Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship this year it to draw the attention of participating States as well as other international organisations to the topic of education in Central Asia. This is important, as high educational standards in Central Asia can help to foster stability and security in the region and can give a further impetus to the reform process in general.

In light of the above-mentioned, a one-day conference, entitled “Education as an investment into the Future”, will be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 5 April 2004. The conference, hosted by the Uzbek government, is organised by the Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship. It will bring together Central Asian governments and institutions, international organisations engaged in the region, including international financial institutions and development agencies, as well as research institutes from within and outside the region.

The main objectives of the conference are to offer a platform to the States of the region to illustrate their achievements, to foster increased co-operation and synergies with all actors, and to take stock of ongoing supporting activities by international organizations.

More specifically, the goals of the conference are:

- to share information on the achievements and priorities of the Central Asian States within the field of education;
- to discuss national and international approaches to, and activities within, the field of education in the Central Asian States;
- to promote and enhance better co-operation among the Central Asian States as well as among international institutions active in the region;
- to map out new possibilities for international organizations – and specifically for the OSCE - to contribute to further development of the education sector in the Central Asian States.

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