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Canadian Delegation to the  
Organization for Security & Cooperation  
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de  
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération  
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT  
BY THE HEAD OF THE OSCE CENTRE IN DUSHANBE,  
AMBASSADOR PRYAHKIN  
682<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
18 OCTOBER, 2007**

Canada joins others in welcoming Ambassador Pryahkin back to the Permanent Council in this, his first visit as the Head of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe.

We are pleased with Ambassador Pryahkin's comprehensive report, which shows considerable vision for the OSCE's activities not only in Tajikistan but in the region as a whole.

While we will go into more programmatic detail in the coming weeks during the upcoming budget discussions, we would like to highlight a few aspects of his report.

Canada is convinced that the stability of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Central Asia are closely correlated.

We note with satisfaction that the Centre in Dushanbe, in cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat and the Government of Tajikistan, is actively pursuing the development of OSCE Afghanistan border programme. We encourage the Government of Tajikistan to provide an early response to this initiative.

Canada also commends the Centre's efforts in de-mining and reducing the threats posed by small arms and light weapons. The Canadian government has made a contribution of 3.1 million dollars to assist Tajikistan's demining efforts.

Second dimension activities are an important part of the OSCE's efforts in Tajikistan. However, our delegation would like to see more focus in programming.

Economic and environmental activities should focus on developing

good governance and regional cooperation, particularly in the area of transboundary water management.

Canada notes with concern the state of democratic reforms in Tajikistan and the continued pressures on media freedom.

Canada strongly supports the Centre in Dushanbe's work in the area of democratisation and believes that rule of law programming strengthens Tajikistan's justice system in all aspects, especially in the area of fair trials and penitentiary reform.

Further, we commend OSCE-led efforts to enhance human rights and freedom of expression through human rights and gender education programmes as well as considerable programming in the area of media freedom.

We have taken careful note of Ambassador Pryahkin's mention today of the issue of local staff salaries. We strongly support a resolution of this issue in the context of the 2008 OSCE Budget discussions.

Finally, Canada would like to express its appreciation at the excellent relationship exhibited between the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe and the Government of Tajikistan. We very much hope the arrival of Ambassador Pryahkin will enhance and expand this relationship.

The strength of the programming described today is a testament to the benefits of strong cooperation from the host country. It is our hope that this will continue.