



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Tajikistan

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 13, 2012

The United States notes with concern that a court in Tajikistan ordered the NGO Amparo to close on October 24, 2012, citing alleged minor administrative irregularities in the organization's operations. We support Amparo's recently expressed intention to appeal the court's ruling, as the organization seeks to continue its important work. Amparo has worked tirelessly since 2005 to empower the youth of Tajikistan through human rights education and to monitor the human rights situation of some of Tajikistan's most vulnerable groups, including orphans and the disabled. Amparo is an integral part of the burgeoning civil society tapestry in Tajikistan. Its efforts are precisely the sort of activities that every country should encourage in its civil society in order to strengthen the rule of law, democratization, and respect for human rights.

The United States calls on the government of Tajikistan to reinstate Amparo's license to operate consistently with OSCE commitments to respect and protect freedom of association. We further call on Tajikistan to refrain from similar actions against other NGOs working to improve life for Tajikistan's people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.