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**JOINT STATEMENT BY KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN,
TURKMENISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN TO THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL REGARDING THE EVENTS IN THE
NORTH OSSETIAN TOWN OF BESLAN IN THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

9 September 2004

The delegations of the Central Asian States — Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — associate themselves with the words of sincere and deep condolence addressed to the distinguished delegation of the Russian Federation and, through it, all the people of Russia in connection with the tragic events that have taken place in the town of Beslan in the Russian Federation. Now, in these days of sorrow, our hearts are filled with a sense of pain and compassion for the countless victims of this large-scale terrorist act, and we sincerely share with the residents of Beslan their deep and bitter sense of loss.

To us, the first of September has always been associated with the celebration of the Day of Knowledge and with the start of the school year. This day has traditionally been marked by a mood of unclouded joy and optimism. This year, however, the entire world shuddered at the dreadful news of a vile terrorist act involving the seizure of a school where hundreds of innocent children were mercilessly made targets.

The Central Asian States are well acquainted with the threats of terrorism, and we whole-heartedly support the efforts of the Russian Federation to combat international terrorism and any other manifestations of violence that visit suffering on human beings.

As the facts show, international terrorism poses a challenge to the stability and security of any State. To counter it, there must be a serious effort to intensify effective co-operation and rally together the international community in combating this evil.

The recent events provide one more confirmation of this truth.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.