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Delegation of Kyrgyzstan

**STATEMENT BY MS. LYDIA IMANALIEVA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TO
THE OSCE, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

6 May 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

Permit me to warmly welcome Ambassador Knut Vollebaek, High Commissioner on National Minorities, and to thank him for his detailed and comprehensive report on the results of his trip to Kyrgyzstan.

Your statement, Ambassador Vollebaek, despite the mandate calling for “quiet and confidential diplomacy”, was infused with a particular feeling of compassion for the fate of the people of my country. And we sensed this.

Let me say straight away, distinguished colleagues, that Ambassador Vollebaek’s visit was eventful and productive, but most significantly it was important and extremely timely during this difficult period for Kyrgyzstan.

The results of the High Commissioner’s visit revealed the problems that have accumulated over recent years, and we welcome his determination to provide all the necessary help that Kyrgyzstan requires at this time.

Despite the enormous difficulties it is facing, the Interim Government is taking all necessary measures to stabilize the situation, including with regard to inter-ethnic relations.

Today there is no evidence of confrontation between ethnic groups. The situation is returning to normal. Men and women of the most varied ethnic backgrounds and religious faiths have joined together in order to rebuff the rioters and pillagers.

The events that have occurred were the consequence of the actions taken by provocateurs intent on destabilizing the situation and inflaming inter-ethnic discord in the country. Criminal proceedings have been instituted in respect of all instances involving violations of the law, and investigative measures are under way. The law enforcement authorities of the Republic intend to take all necessary steps in order to put an end to the provocations, to educate the public and to bring to bear the most rigorous measures against the criminal elements. The primary task is to implement preventive measures and to see to it that inter-ethnic conflicts do not arise.

As regards the question of expanding the ethnic composition of the law enforcement authorities, there are no barriers standing in the way of any ethnic groups. On the contrary, representatives of all nations and national groups in the country enjoy equal rights to education in the specialized institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, continuing on in a professional career.

We fully agree as to the need to step up the role of the Assembly of Peoples of Kyrgyzstan and to renew that body so as to maintain its general values and authority among the population and to provide it with mechanisms for influencing the resolution of issues of an inter-ethnic nature.

All things considered, the ethnic minorities enjoy equal rights to education, social welfare, medical care, television and the press. The former Parliament, for example, included representatives of virtually all national minorities. There are no obstacles to the participation of minorities in elections, nor will there be.

The head of the Interim Government, Ms. Roza Otunbayeva, has noted that the creation of ethnic parties would be a welcome development. Nothing will be done to prohibit the activities of such parties. The need now is to conduct an expert analysis, making use of available international experience, to determine what ethnic parties might genuinely exist and play a role in the political life of the State.

In addition, during their meetings the interim leadership assured the High Commissioner that all the interests of the minorities would be taken into account in the Constitution and the Electoral Code. The 15 per cent quota for non-titular ethnic groups will be maintained and the regional barrier will be removed.

Also, under the new Constitution the heads of local self-government bodies will be determined by elections and many national minorities, considering that they tend to be concentrated in certain areas, will have the opportunity to elect their leaders from among the representatives of their own ethnic group.

There will soon be established a State television channel broadcasting in the Uzbek language not only on the territory of Kyrgyzstan but throughout the entire Fergana Valley.

All this clearly shows that the Kyrgyz interim leadership is deeply committed to maintaining inter-ethnic concord and harmony in the country and will do everything possible to that end.

The main thing today is to ensure the security of the population and the observance of legal norms and fundamental human rights, including those of the ethnic minorities. And Kyrgyzstan intends to pursue a balanced and measured policy for that purpose.

In conclusion, we should like to emphasize that Kyrgyzstan is prepared to continue dialogue and co-operation in this particularly sensitive area in the work of our Organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.