

**Prohlášení**  
Statement  
Déclaration

Vienna 7 May 2009

**Permanent Council No. 760**  
**EU Statement in response to the Head of the OSCE Centre in**  
**Bishkek, Ambassador Andrew Tesoriere**

The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Tesoriere to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his comprehensive report. We continue to support the “6 hub-strategy” as outlined, as well as the ongoing commitment to promote outreach into all of the 7 provinces of the Kyrgyz Republic through the Osh office and the 5 local provincial coordinators. We appreciate the Centre’s valuable work in all three dimensions.

The EU attaches great importance to the conduct of the upcoming presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan, and encourages the Kyrgyz authorities to ensure that the elections take place in an atmosphere that allows for a free political debate. The Centre’s assistance in the development and strengthening of political institutions, especially in the run-up to the presidential elections of 23 July, is highly welcome in this context. A free media landscape is equally crucial for a smooth and democratic election process, and therefore the EU values the Centre’s activities to this end. We are concerned about recent trends in legislation which could restrict the exercise of fundamental freedoms, as well as by a series of incidents involving journalists and members of the opposition. In this context, we recall the EU statement on March 19. We note with regret

recent reports on notable setbacks regarding the freedom of expression. Attacks on journalists, opposition figures and other critical voices have a damaging effect in creating a climate of intimidation.

We welcome the Centre's increased cooperation with Kyrgyz authorities on border management issues, contributing to improved border security, including countering terrorism and preventing the illicit trafficking of human beings and narcotics. In this context, we appreciate the Centre's involvement in realising a customs training facility in Bishkek in support of the OSCE's activities in delivery of Ministerial Council decision 4/07.

We thank Ambassador Tesoriere for his detailed description of the Police Reform Programme and its contribution to bringing the police service's performance in line with Kyrgyzstan's international commitments. These comprehensive and long-term activities help to establish a much-needed link between local communities and the police. Recent inter-ethnic incidents in Petrovka demonstrate clearly the relevance of such issues.

With regard to economic and environmental issues we underscore the important work undertaken by the Centre in good governance and anti-corruption against the background of dramatic and increasing corruption. The Centre has offered much needed assistance to the government in strengthening transparency and in reducing corruption and money laundering. We encourage the Centre to continue its valuable work in addressing water resource management, an issue that is very important to the region. As to the management of radio-active waste we appreciate the Centre's efforts in developing a co-ordinated approach together with other international organisations in this area and we look forward to hearing further details on this pertinent problem in the framework of the

special meeting of the Economic and Environmental Committee this afternoon.

As for the human dimension, the EU appreciates capacity building and training efforts on electoral, judicial, penal and human rights issues. In this context the EU recalls its aforementioned statement and repeats concern about recent legislation that appears to undermine Kyrgyzstan's international commitments, notably with regard to NGOs. In this respect, the EU welcomes the dialogue recently established between the Kyrgyz government and relevant NGOs and expects that the opinion issued by OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) will be taken into due consideration. We encourage the Centre to continue to work with all national stakeholders to seek further adjustments in line with shared OSCE commitments. We are also grateful to the Centre for providing updates on prominent court cases.

Finally, we note with satisfaction that the OSCE Academy continues to serve as an excellent example of regional cooperation and has maintained a high reputation as an international training and research centre. We also commend the long-standing, former Director for his excellent work in building the Academy and hope that a qualified successor will be found and appointed soon.

We commend the OSCE team in Kyrgyzstan for its strong and productive relationship with the host country. We encourage you and the government of the Kyrgyz Republic to continue this close cooperation in further democratisation, improving respect for human rights, strengthening civil society, and in addressing some continuing challenges. To conclude, the

EU would like to thank you, Ambassador Tesoriere, for your efforts and engagement, and to assure you of our support.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA\* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area ICELAND, as well as UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

\*Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.