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United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Detention of Mahmadruzi Iskandarov in Dushanbe

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 16, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States wishes to express its concern regarding the case of Mahmadruzi Iskandarov, the Chairman of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan, who was involuntarily returned to Dushanbe from Moscow on April 17, and who has been held in detention by Tajikistan's Ministry of Security since that date.

We further note that Mr. Iskandarov has been denied regular and unobserved access to his legal counsel, and that his family has been unable to meet with him.

The United States calls on the Tajik authorities to permit Mr. Iskandarov access to his legal counsel in accordance with Tajikistan's own laws and with international standards, and to pursue any court process in accordance with international law. Both local and international observers should be allowed to witness those proceedings.

Once again, we urge the Government of Tajikistan to demonstrate its commitment to comply with OSCE principles and with international law. The United States stands ready to provide whatever assistance might be required in helping Tajikistan to meet its obligations in that regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.