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Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan to the OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ERKIN KASIMOV,  
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN,  
AT THE 510TH MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 8 June 2004

Mr. Chairman,

Continuing the discussions in the Permanent Council on the death penalty, our delegation would like to inform the Council that on 2 June the Lower Chamber of the Parliament of Tajikistan passed a law on the introduction of a moratorium on the death penalty, replacing it by 25 years' imprisonment.

This step was dictated by Tajikistan's endeavours to create a more humane punishment system based on the model of the European Union and other countries that have abolished capital punishment as an inhumane punishment that is degrading to human dignity.

The law still has to be approved by the Upper Chamber and the President of the Republic, but the death penalty has not been applied in the Republic since 30 April 2004 when the President, in his annual message to Parliament, announced the introduction of a moratorium.

We should like to mention in particular that this political decision by Mr. Rakhmonov, the leader of Tajikistan, was not easy. Most of the population of Tajikistan is in favour of the death penalty and the decision to introduce the moratorium also entails additional financial outlay for prisoners' upkeep.

While accepting responsibility for implementing the moratorium, Tajikistan appeals to the OSCE participating States to provide assistance in strengthening and reforming the country's penitentiary system.

Thank you for your attention.