

Opening remarks of Head of Centre Andrew Tesoriere

At the National Forum on Police Reform

Bishkek, 12 October 2011

Distinguished Vice Prime Minister, Deputies of Parliament, dear members of the working group, dear participants,

As always, it is a particular pleasure and honour to speak at a meeting which addresses police reform and the broader context of criminal justice reform.

Today's meeting is very important. As my compatriot Admiral Nelson famously said before going out to the Battle of Trafalgar, England expects ! Today Kyrgyzstan expects ! But happily today's meeting is not a battle but **a shared recognition that deeper Police Reform in Kyrgyzstan is overdue**. Public cries and the tragic events of last year remind us of this.

Allow me therefore, very briefly, to recall *how and why* we all got here to this Police Forum and what collective work we understand lies ahead.

This pivotal National Forum is the **culmination** of over six months of intensive OSCE-facilitated nationwide consultations. These consultations included discussion groups between the Ministry of Interior and members of the public in all 7 Provinces as well as an interactive electronic and face-to-face dialogue, based on the draft Police Concept posted on the MVD website.

Today's Forum, led by a newly-created multi-sectoral steering group, aims to reflect the findings of this nationwide debate through **further refining the draft Police Concept**, which will be put to **Parliament** for their consideration by the end of November.

Thus the road-map is clear and the stakes are high : to realise significant reform in Kyrgyzstan's policing, in line with **“democratic policing”** : or put in more daily language, a Police Service which protects all citizens, serves them and whose public conduct and accountability is without blemish ; a Service that inspires public trust, not fear or skepticism or marginalisation.

Distinguished Madam President, Distinguished Minister, dear participants and citizens hearing this,

I shall allow experts here to speak about **the ways, the modalities** - technical, financial and operational - in which Policing in Kyrgyzstan can transform. There are important details to work out if the process is to be successful, including effective civilian oversight, external and internal safeguard mechanisms for the respect of human rights and acts of abuse of office, and more representative ethnic and gender balance within a meritocratic system of career development.

In all this, allow me also to reassure you that the **OSCE will continue to support this process of transformation** in policing management, professional skills and accountability, and behavioural etiquette. These efforts will complement the work of other international partners, represented here today, as well as our many, many national partners. The more, together, we can build into the new Police Concept the practicalities of ensuring accountability, good behaviour

and an end to corruption, the more readily I foresee the **material resources for transformation** in the Police being funded by the wider donor community.

I have been and remain very committed to this change-process. We recognize it will not happen overnight. But we must get a real momentum going in improvements, that the public can easily see and trust in.

Thank you for your attention.