

## PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE CO-CHAIRS OF GENEVA DISCUSSIONS

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The participants in the Geneva Discussions have completed their ninth round.

The two parallel working groups met to discuss, respectively, security and stability in the region and humanitarian matters. They agreed to continue their discussions in the same format on 30 March 2010.

Working Group I reviewed the overall security situation since the last round of Geneva Discussions. Whilst the situation was assessed as relatively calm, sporadic incidents, in particular shootings and detentions, remain a matter of concern. Co-Chairs noted that these incidents should be addressed through the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRMs), established on 18 February 2009. Further work is underway to facilitate the full functioning of these mechanisms.

In this regard, the Co-Chairs also stressed the importance of the understanding on detentions, which has been reached upon by all participants at the IPRMs in the course of last summer, notably, that any unintentional crossing by local residents outside the established crossing points should be handled under administrative rather than legal/criminal procedure, in order to allow for a quick resolution and prompt release of such detainees. The Co-chairs further recall that the common objective with regard to the other detained persons imprisoned under conditions to be reviewed, must remain the final release of "all against all".

Based on the draft agreements put forward by the participants on the document of the Co-Chairs on "Basic elements of a framework for an agreement on the non-use of force and international security arrangements" discussed at Geneva VIII, and the Co-Chairs' paper on "Interim steps", circulated ahead of the present session, participants exchanged views on a framework for a non-use of force agreement and international security arrangements. They recognized that these major subjects are the aim of further work of Working Group I and will need further committed efforts and consultations. At the same time they recognized the need for a good functioning of the mechanisms in order to work on non-use of force and international security arrangements.

Participants supported a bottom-up and step-by-step approach as the way forward.

In Working Group II, participants continued their discussion on a proposal of the co-moderators for 'Agreed Undertakings'.

The resumption of gas deliveries is being addressed as a matter of urgency. A series of projects on the rehabilitation of water distribution networks has been discussed. Work on these issues will intensify under the aegis of the Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship.

In order to facilitate further work on the proposed 'Agreed Undertakings', the Co-Moderators will invite experts for a preparatory information session of Working Group II.