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**STATEMENT BY MS. LYDIA IMANALIEVA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TO
THE OSCE, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 July 2009

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

I should like to express my gratitude for the interest that is being shown in our country. It is most unfortunate that this interest comes in the wake of a tragic event having occurred in Kyrgyzstan.

The demise of a human being, whatever the cause, is always a tragedy for the person's family and friends, indeed for all of us. We condemn violence in any form, wherever it occurs.

According to the preliminary information available, on 4 July the journalist Tashiev was not going about his professional duties, although a journalist's activities do not necessarily follow a set schedule. He was having a few drinks with a friend in a café when he was approached by police officer Nurmatov, who was also off duty and on his own time. I repeat: he was off duty. As it turned out Tashiev and Nurmatov were old friends. For some unknown reason, they got into an argument, which then escalated into a fight. There is therefore no political motive for this crime, what we have here is an ordinary crime. We are dealing with a simple fight and not an attack on a journalist.

An investigative group has now been set up consisting of staff from the district prosecutor's office; furthermore the investigation is under the control of the Prosecutor General and the Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs responsible for the southern region of the country. This case is being given the most careful and serious consideration.

Moreover, the police officer who admitted beating up the journalist Almazbek Tashiev is being held in police custody. Criminal proceedings have been initiated against him.

I should like to point out that in line with a decree issued by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Internal Affairs the head of the internal affairs department of the district where the incident in question happened and police officer Nurmatov, who actually beat up Tashiev, have been

removed from their posts for neglecting their professional duties. The OSCE Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs remain in close contact.

As for the other crimes against representatives of the media mentioned by our colleagues, we have sent detailed information on the investigation of recent attacks on journalists to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti.

In conclusion, I should like to assure you that Kyrgyzstan unfailingly maintains a position of supporting and implementing all its commitments regarding freedom of the media.

Thank you for your attention.