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**TALKING POINTS FROM THE REPORT BY MR. NURAY URAZOV,  
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THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, AT THE  
2010 OSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Warsaw, 7 October 2010

**Forward-looking discussions  
Working session 1: Freedom of media**

**Concerning freedom of the media and the dissemination of and access to information**

The fundamental principles ensuring freedom of speech and the media are laid down in the Constitution of Kazakhstan. The country's basic law guarantees freedom of speech and creativity and prohibits censorship. Everyone has the right to obtain and disseminate information freely by any means not prohibited by law.

Pursuant to commitments calling for the further liberalization of the work of the media, in 2009 a number of changes based on OSCE recommendations were introduced into the legislation.

Specifically, the registration of television and radio broadcasting organizations was lifted, the number of cases involving re-registration for print media and news agencies was reduced, and equal adversarial status for the parties in court cases involving a retraction of information was introduced. In addition, the requirement that a journalist obtain the consent of the person being interviewed to the use of audio or video recording equipment during an interview has been lifted.

This law is the result of joint work by State agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The media in Kazakhstan reflect the multiplicity of opinions and interests of all strata of Kazakh society. A further contributing factor is the existence of 2,688 media, 84 per cent (2,252) of which are independent and only 16 per cent (436) involve State participation. There are also widely circulated publications that take a critical view of the current government. Altogether, the one-time circulation of such publications as *Svoboda slova*, *Vzglyad*, *Zhas Alash* and *Vremya* amounts to over 300,000 copies, which is considerably more than the total circulation of the two main government newspapers – *Kazakhstanskaya pravda* and *Yegemen Kazakstan* (more than 200,000 copies).

The mass media of Kazakhstan also reflect the multi-ethnic structure of the country's population. In respect of the total number of media sources, Kazakh-language media make up 19 per cent, Russian-language media 33 per cent, with all the others operating in two or more languages. In addition, there are media in Kazakhstan working in 15 national minority languages (German, Polish, Uygur, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Korean and others).

What is more, foreign media can be found freely operating in the domestic information market, namely 2,644 foreign media sources, of which 2,192 are in the form of printed publications and 452 in the form of radio stations and television channels.

A matter of critical priority for the State is the question of broader access for the public to the Internet. As a consequence, there has been a steady rise in the number of users of Kazakhstan's segment of the Internet. While in 2008, a total of 2.3 million users were recorded in Kazakhstan, it is planned that in 2011 this figure will be close to the 6 million mark.

With a view to eliminating information inequality, work is proceeding on the construction of wireless access systems using the CDMA technology, something that will make it possible to ensure full access in remote regions to communication services and the Internet in villages. It is planned to increase the area covered by the Internet to 100 per cent by 2012.

Improvements are being made to the legislative basis for ensuring the Kazakh segment of the World Wide Web. The year 2009 saw the adoption of the Law on the Introduction of Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Instruments of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Matters Concerning Information and Communication Networks. This law was adopted primarily to combat cybercrime. An effective mechanism has been created for the self-regulation of Kazakhstan's segment of the Internet. Since this law was adopted, there has not been a single court order calling for the shutting down of a website, nor have there been any officially sanctioned restrictions on the dissemination of information. On the contrary, the Kazakh Internet today is experiencing a period of growth – in the domain zone “kz” alone as of the beginning of October some 50,000 names were registered.

Free access by Kazakh citizens to information is not limited to the expansion of communication channels. The country is also focusing attention on the legislative provisions in support of such access. At present, we have moved away from the drafting of a separate Law on Information and the Protection of Information, as earlier planned.

A working group consisting of members of Parliament and public associations has drawn up a draft Law on Access to Public Information. Following public hearings in Parliament, it was recommended that a draft law under the same name be put forward as a legislative initiative.

It is worth mentioning that in actual practice feedback between State bodies and the public takes place within the framework of an electronic government.

Kazakhstan will continue to move forward towards the creation of conditions for the free development of the media, freedom of speech and access to information.