

Side-event

“Tajikistan Continues Severe Violations of Human Rights”

By TAJIK CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHT, Vienna

Date: 14.09.2018

Time: 18:15-19:45

Venue: Meeting Room 1, Sofitel Hotel, Warsaw

Voice of Negotiations Echoed for the First Time

It was for the first time, an official voice on suggestion to start of a dialogue and negotiations between the Tajik government and opposition was echoed. Fortunately, it happened at the side-event held by the Tajik Centre for Human Rights, based in Vienna, Austria during OSCE annual human rights HDIM 2018.

Also it was for the first time that members of Tajikistan official delegations and opposition delegation sat side by side, exchanging greetings, smiles and warm and friendly discussions.

The side-event “Tajikistan Continues Severe Violations of Human Rights” has started and a few later the official delegation of Tajikistan government led by Saifullo Safarov, deputy director of the Strategic Research Center of the Office of the President of Tajikistan, entered the room and Mr. Safarov sat next to Mr. Muhiddin Kabiri, chairman of the newly emerged opposition alliance (National Alliance of Tajikistan). The atmosphere was very friendly and constructive.

After the speech of Steve Swerdlow, a Central Asia researcher at Human Rights Watch and Muhiddin Kabiri, opposition leader, Saifullo Safarov, highly ranking member of Tajikistan delegation offered dialogue and negotiations to Tajik opposition. He said: “We are ready to start negotiations with Tajik opposition as we had done it before”, referring to a series of negotiations led to the Tajik Peace Accord signed by the government and opposition in 1997 in Moscow.

Mr. Muhiddin Kabiri replied him that the Tajik opposition is not against start of negotiations. He said: “Release the political prisoners. My deputies, Husaini and Hait are in Dushanbe and you can start negotiations with them.”

It was just one day after a member of Tajikistan official delegation (Murod Saidzod, Tajik diplomat, adviser to the Tajik ambassador in Germany) has beaten up opposition activists outside

the Sofitel Hotel, where the HDIM 2018 has been taking place. An accident strongly condemned by human rights defenders and activists as well as it was considered hooliganism done by official supposed to be representing his government.

Violations of Human Rights Discussed

Although the whole atmosphere was friendly and constructive, many problems in Tajikistan, especially political prisoners, pressures on relatives, etc were raised by opposition activists.

Mr. Jannatullohi Komil, an IRPT activist, whose mother has died of heart attack following security services' pressures and whose two brothers were sentenced to long-term years in prison, Shukhrati Rakhmatullo, a journalist, whose father Rahmatullohi Rajab sentenced to 28 years in prison, Muhammadjon Kabirov, Alim Sherzamonov, Abdusattor Boboev, etc have narrated their own stories about the violations of human rights in Tajikistan.

Recommendations

The Tajik Centre for Human Rights based in Vienna, Austria, urges OSCE and friendly countries and organizations:

- To provide more platforms such as HDIM annual conferences, where the Tajik government and opposition discuss the problems face-to-face and constructively. Failure of the Tajik Peace Accord brokered by United Nation led to deepening of political crisis, more radicalization among the youths, new waves of refugees coming to Europe, etc.;
- To arrange a high level conference on Tajikistan's current political crisis and its dangerous consequences;
- To call Tajikistan to stop its crackdown on activists and their family members and implement its OSCE commitments and obligations.

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