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ENGLISH only
**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN
TO THE OSCE**

Statement
by the Head of Delegation of Tajikistan to the OSCE,
Ambassador Nuriddin Shamsov at the 832- th Permanent Council Meeting
(Vienna, 28 October, 2010)

*In response to Belgium\ EU statement
on freedom of media in Tajikistan*

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank Delegation of Belgium\European Union for interest in freedom of media in Tajikistan and stress the efforts of the Government of Tajikistan to make media and information communications technology a pillar of national development. Accordingly, current statistics provided by the Tajik Ministry of Transport and Communication indicate that over the last years number of independent media and Internet users, in particular among the youth are growing rapidly in Tajikistan.

Constitution of Tajikistan and national legislation guarantees the press and other mass media freedom. Each citizen of Tajikistan has the right to freely express conviction and hold opinion in any form through the press and other mass media. No censorship of the mass information shall be allowed. We would like to remind also that regarding to Reporters Without Borders 2010 Press Freedom Index, Tajikistan's ranking is one of the best among CIS and Central Asian states.

My Delegation notes that the Tajik mass media, as well as other institutions of civil society in Tajikistan are still undergoing the process of democratic formation. This process is hard and rigid as well as the modern history of the independent Tajikistan. Since a couple years ago the Government adopted the Conception on the Information Security based on a platform for proclaiming democratic free media principles and policy directions to preserve state information security. The e-strategy aimed at developing information society and employing ICT potential for spurring economic and social growth in Tajikistan also.

With regard to mentioned cases, we underline that Tajikistan does not have an official policy on Internet filtering. As for printed mass media, no newspapers were

shut down, while the suspension of some of them is temporarily and due to technical problems.

Recently the Government of Tajikistan has decided to introduce significant tax breaks for the country's newspapers and periodicals. The Government outlined a print-media expansion strategy, the central element of which is an exemption from paying the 20-percent value added tax. Meanwhile, we emphasize that the media, regardless of its ownership, is equally responsible for observing the current laws and ensuring the country's information and cultural security. It is more important also than ever before that the media should establish and uphold national and social responsibilities.

The Government of Tajikistan will continue an effective dialogue with free media community to build mutual trust between authorities and independent journalism based on recognized democratic principles, professional and ethical standards.

I Thank You Chairperson,