

**НАМОЯНДАГИИ ДОИМИИ  
ЌУМЌУРИИ ТОЌИКИСТОН  
ДАР НАЗДИ САЌА**



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

**STATEMENT BY MR. HAMROKHON ZARIFI,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
TAJIKISTAN, AT THE 856th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 31 March 2011

**Mr. Chairperson,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

First of all, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, I should like to express our gratitude to the Lithuanian Chairmanship, the Secretary General of the OSCE, Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, and all the ambassadors of the participating States for your constant support for Tajikistan in every possible way.

It is a great honour for me to address you today and to share my thoughts on the priorities and strategic vision of Tajikistan.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Tajikistan supports the OSCE agenda for 2011 announced by the Lithuanian Chairmanship and we are ready to make a contribution, together with our partners, to the efforts to turn our region into a safer and more stable part of the world.

We have consistently advocated the balanced development of all three dimensions of the OSCE, the further strengthening of the OSCE's effectiveness and the evolution of its role as a fully fledged international organization with a legal personality. We are convinced of the need to adopt an OSCE charter to regulate the Organization's work in accordance with generally accepted international practice. We are counting on the Lithuanian Chairmanship to spare no effort with a view to the further agreement and promotion of initiatives by the OSCE participating States.

The Government of Tajikistan is committed to its obligations within the OSCE as regards democratization, the observance of human rights and freedoms, the rule of law and the development of civil society. At the same time, we might mention that the problems surrounding basic human rights, including religious freedoms and freedom of the media, must be examined in a balanced manner, taking into account the interests of ensuring security and stability in society. Freedom of the media and freedom of speech should not contravene the law or run counter to the ethical and professional standards of journalism.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Countering terrorism, extremism, the illegal proliferation of narcotics, trafficking in human beings and illegal migration must remain key priorities for the OSCE's work in the future. Tajikistan is still of the view that security in the Central Asian region is inextricably linked with the situation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is our close neighbour and partner, with whom we have historical ties and share more than 1,400 kilometres of extremely intricate borders.

Tajikistan finds itself on the front line and at the most dangerous point where international terrorism, extremism and drug-related crime converge.

We are continuing to provide our friend Afghanistan with all kinds of practical assistance in restoring the economy in its northern regions on a bilateral and multilateral basis. These projects primarily involve the construction of high-voltage power lines, the training and professional development of civilian and military personnel and the construction of railways, highways and bridges linking our countries.

It is becoming ever more apparent that it is impossible to ensure stability in Afghanistan through military means alone. The OSCE participating States must understand that the formula for resolving the situation in Afghanistan can consist not only of military action but also of the active involvement of international economic and financial mechanisms and institutions with a view to rehabilitating the country.

In this regard, we should like to give particular mention to our co-operation within a four-party framework involving the governments of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Russian Federation. We are convinced that further collaboration in the implementation of joint projects, including the construction of the CASA-1000 high-voltage power line linking Central and South Asia, will be of mutual benefit to all and will make a significant contribution on the part of our countries to the rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

We attach great value to the OSCE's assistance to the Government of Tajikistan in strengthening the country's southern borders. The implementation of the National Border Management Strategy and the activities of the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe are already bearing real fruit. We are grateful to all the donors for their active support for the OSCE College and urge them to continue their efforts towards its ongoing financing.

We tend to regard our border with Afghanistan not simply as our own frontier but as a boundary shared by the countries of Central Asia and the OSCE participating States.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

I should like to take this opportunity to outline in greater detail one of the difficult issues associated with the environmental and water and energy problems in Central Asia.

In his report on the environmental situation in Central Asia, the former personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Ecology and the Environment and Member of the European Parliament, Mr. Struan Stevenson, provided a detailed analysis and

authoritative assessment of the water and energy issues in the region. In our view, the recommendations in the report on improving the system for water use and introducing effective measures for integrated water resource management merit particular attention.

Unfortunately, these essentially economic problems are heavily politicized at present and are seriously hampering the development of regional co-operation. Over the past few years, the Aral Sea disaster has had a major impact on the health of the population and the economies of the countries of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya river basins. This was caused by the extensive expansion of irrigated lands during the Soviet period, the headlong pursuit of immediate economic gain from cotton production, the use of outdated irrigation methods, some going back to the Middle Ages, and the scale of the construction of reservoirs downstream. All the aforementioned factors have resulted in an increase in the man-made burden on the flow of the transboundary rivers, have created a water shortage and, ultimately, have led to the catastrophic desiccation of the Aral Sea.

In this connection, we believe it would be useful to conduct a comprehensive expert analysis of the environmental impact of the completely outdated and ineffective system for water use in the region and also the large number of artificial reservoirs.

We see a key role for the OSCE in promoting political dialogue in Central Asia with a view to overcoming differences of opinion on an entire range of problems concerned with water and energy, the creation of an integrated water resource management system. We urge the OSCE to deal seriously with these problems, using the experience already gained by European countries through co-operation in the Danube river basin. It is only through collective efforts on the part of all the countries of the region that tangible success can be achieved in this area. This was in fact the goal of President Rahmon's initiative to create an international hydropower consortium to construct the Rogun hydroelectric power station.

Each year, during the autumn and winter, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is forced to impose restrictions on electric power consumption. For example, the country's population is currently provided with electricity for just two hours per day, and this naturally has an impact on the functioning of vital facilities such as hospitals, child welfare institutions and schools. Under these circumstances, Tajikistan, which does not have significant hydrocarbon reserves at its disposal, is focusing on the development of hydro energy as a priority task for the country in the years immediately ahead.

Tajikistan's national hydroelectric projects, including the construction of the Rogun hydroelectric power station, will be carried out in an open and transparent manner, taking into account the interests of all the countries of the region, as can be seen from our idea of inviting the World Bank to conduct a comprehensive technical, economic and environmental expert evaluation of the Rogun project.

The development of hydropower in Tajikistan is in the interests of all the countries of Central and South Asia, first and foremost Afghanistan. What is more, it offers a chance for the guaranteed irrigation of more than 3 million hectares of land in the Amu Darya river basin during droughts or years with little rainfall, along with the production of cheap electricity to meet the growing needs of all the neighbouring countries.

At the initiative of the Republic of Tajikistan, important steps have been taken regionally and globally to resolve the water and energy problems. Examples include the High-Level International Conference on the Mid-Term Comprehensive Review of the

Implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” 2005 to 2015, held under the auspices of the United Nations in Dushanbe from 8 to 10 June 2010, and the United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled “International Year of Water Co-operation – 2013”, adopted by consensus on 20 December 2010.

We believe that the Lithuanian Chairmanship’s focus on the problems of energy security is justified. The energy challenges of the modern age, the sustainable use of traditional and renewable energy sources, primarily hydro energy, good governance and transparency, and regional energy co-operation are all questions that require thorough consideration and practical steps on our part.

**Dear colleagues,**

In addressing the OSCE Astana Summit last December, President Rahmon noted that the free movement of people and capital, goods and services and the efficient functioning of the existing international transport corridors in the OSCE region are the basis for the development of economic co-operation and partnership among participating States. With that in mind, we are in favour of keeping transport and transit on the Organization’s agenda.

We believe that the OSCE’s assistance in creating transport corridors to link Central Asia and Afghanistan and in making it easier for goods to be transported legally and to pass through customs and borders will help to promote the economic development of our countries.

Tajikistan is facing an unprecedented wave of drug-related crime from Afghanistan. It is well known that the territory of Central Asia and, above all, Tajikistan is used by transnational criminal groups as a transit corridor for supplying Russia, other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Europe with narcotic drugs. With a view to further strengthening Tajikistan’s capacity for countering the growing threat posed by narcotic drugs, we believe it important that the OSCE and its participating States continue to provide us with targeted practical assistance.

We remain concerned at the danger posed by mines in Central Asia, a problem which costs many innocent civilians their lives. We are therefore calling once more on the OSCE and its participating States to do everything possible to ensure that the regional mine action co-ordination council opens in Dushanbe this year and that large-scale practical activities begin in that area.

**Mr. Chairperson,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope for continued effective and constructive co-operation with the OSCE – an important partner for Tajikistan. I wish you all every success and productive work in further strengthening the stability and prosperity of our region.

**Thank you for your attention.**