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

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**Statement
by the the Head the Delegation of Tajikistan to the OSCE,
Ambassador Nuriddin Shamsov at the 851th
Plenary Permanent Council Meeting
(Vienna, 17 February, 2011)**

*in response to United States and Hungary\EU
statements on freedom of media in Tajikistan*

Mr. Chairperson,

We took note the US and Hungary\ European Union's Delegations statement on media freedom in Tajikistan delivered at this Permanent Council Meeting and will convey it respectively to the capital for the attention.

Tajikistan recognizes the positive role of the OSCE in the field of human rights and freedoms and lives up to its commitments, including freedom of media. Mass media in Tajikistan exercises the right to excess freely information from all governmental bodies, public associations and public officials. Over the last years according to the guidance of the President of Tajikistan governmental bodies supply the mass media through quarterly press-conferences with full information on its activity, as well as afford them an opportunity to be in the course of ongoing developments. We remind also that Tajikistan's ranking by independent media institutions is permanently the highest among Central Asian states.

With regard to the matters raised today by the United States and Hungary\EU Delegations, we would like to inform Permanent Council Meeting that Tajik law enforcement has commenced thorough investigation of recent criminal attack on Tajikistan Revival Party's activist, the editor-in-chief of weekly "Najot" Mr. Hikmatullo Sayfullozoda. Earlier, the Tajik

interior minister Mr. Kahhorov strongly condemned the attack on Mr. Sayfullozoda and instructed the prosecution of perpetrators.

We state that all Tajik newspapers that have been unable to print for several weeks since November 2010 due to technical and funding reasons, currently reappeared on newsstands. On February 8, 2011 Dushanbe district court has ordered “Millat” independent weekly to pay symbolic 1,500 somons or \$333 only against lawsuit brought by the Ministry. Mr. Muhammadyusuf Ismoilov, a reporter for the Dushanbe-based independent weekly, *Nouri Zindagi* is being held in pretrial detention facility in Khujand, the capital of Sughd province. Mr. Ismoilov is charged under various articles of the Criminal Code, including racial and religious hatred, fraudulent and blackmail.

Tajik national legislation provides media freedom and the government does not interfere in the editorial policy, except the cases provided by Criminal Code. Each citizen of the Republic of Tajikistan has the right to freely express conviction and hold opinion, to impart them through the press and other mass media. Disputes on moral damage inflicted on a citizen due to the dissemination by mass media the information distorting the facts and insulting the honor and dignity of citizens essentially should be resolved through the court trial.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is our perception that media community should strictly observe the recognized norms and principles of Media Ethic Code of Conduct within civilized democratic society. As well it is responsible to respect the rights, privacy and dignity of all citizens.

The Parliament of Tajikistan is currently discussing new amendments to the National Media Law, which would reflect best practices, including the OSCE recommendations in this field also. At this end, the Tajik Government is completely opened to continue an effective and constructive dialogue with the OSCE and its Permanent states.

I Thank You Mr. Chairperson,