

OSCE Chairman travelled to Central Asia

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, made a tour of Central Asia from 10 to 14 April.

The OSCE Chairman met top officials in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Fully engaging Central Asia in the 56-country Organization's activities is a priority for the 2007 Spanish OSCE Chairmanship.

OSCE Spanish Chairmanship ready to support Kazakhstan's commitment to implement political reforms

ASTANA. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos said, on 10 April, that Kazakhstan's aspirations to hold the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009 would be well served by the country showing concrete democratic reforms that positively affect its citizens' lives.

Minister Moratinos held meetings with top officials, including President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin, in which the Chairman-in-Office welcomed the establishment of a State Commission on Democratization and the country's reform programme.

The agenda for the visit to Kazakhstan also included meetings with non-governmental organizations.

OSCE Chairman encourages Turkmenistan to intensify co-operation with Organization

ASHGABAD. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, encouraged Turkmenistan, on 12 April, to intensify its co-operation with the Organization and the rest of the international community.

Minister Moratinos met with top officials, including President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov and Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov, and welcomed Turkmenistan's readiness to receive ODIHR's expert team and to enter in constructive dialogue with that institution.

The Spanish OSCE Chairmanship hoped the co-operation would continue, with special focus on reforming election legislation, strengthening civil society and building democratic institutions.

OSCE Chairman said Uzbekistan and OSCE could benefit from increased co-operation

TASHKENT. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, stated on 13 April that Uzbekistan is an equal partner to the OSCE's other 55 participating States, and that Tashkent could benefit by increasing its co-operation with the Organization.

Minister Moratinos met with President Islam Karimov and Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov. He also met with representatives from civil society, encouraging them to continue their important work.

The Spanish OSCE Chairmanship has put a priority on land degradation, a topic that is of crucial importance in Uzbekistan. In a meeting with Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office discussed the possibility of organizing a meeting in Uzbekistan to follow this May's OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, which will take place in Prague and focus on land degradation, soil contamination and water management.

OSCE Chairman encouraged constructive dialogue from all sides in Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, encouraged all parties in Kyrgyzstan on 13 April to engage in a constructive dialogue to overcome the political impasse.

Concerned about demonstrations in Bishkek, he said he hoped the issues could be resolved peacefully through negotiations which would include all sides.

Minister Moratinos met with President Kurmanbek Bakiev and hoped that Kyrgyzstan and the OSCE could strengthen co-operation to the benefit of both.

The Chairman-in-Office met Felix Kulov, opposition's political leader of the Unit Front for a Better Future for Kyrgyzstan, to know how OSCE can support a dialogue which benefits the political process.

OSCE Chairman stated that Tajikistan and the OSCE will work together to promote regional security

DUSHANBE. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, said on 14 April that Tajikistan's active participation in the OSCE has contributed to making the region more secure.

Minister Moratinos noted that the Organization had strengthened its activities in the politico-military dimension and in the economic-environmental field, and thanked Dushanbe for offering to host a regional conference that will focus on transit transportation and security in the OSCE area.

Minister Moratinos met with President Emomali Rahmon and with Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zaripov. The Chairman-in-Office offered the Organization's support to reshape a draft law on non-governmental organizations to ensure that it is in line with international standards.

Minister Moratinos also said that 27 June marks the 10th anniversary of the signing of the successful peace agreement that ended Tajikistan's civil war.

OSCE Chairman condemns deadly terrorist attack in Algeria

TASHKENT. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, condemned on 12 April the deadly terrorist attacks in Algeria

and expressed his deepest sympathy to the families of the victims.

The Chairman-in-Office, who was touring Central Asia, called his Algerian counterpart from Ashgabad to assure him the 56-country OSCE and its Spanish Chairmanship support.