

PC.DEL/1537/15
12 November 2015

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1076th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 November 2015

**In response to the
Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Ambassador Sergey Kapinos, and
the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Maxim Ryabkov**

The European Union and its Member States welcome Ambassador Kapinos and the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Mr. Ryabkov, to the Permanent Council and thank them for their detailed reports.

In our view, Central Asia should remain a priority area for the OSCE, particularly with regard to the development of the regional security situation.

We support the five priority focuses of the mission: strengthening relations between communities, promoting good governance and combating corruption, combating transnational threats, promoting the rule of law, and protecting human rights and gender equality. We appreciate the quality of the dialogue with the host country and the strengthening of dialogue with the OSCE's autonomous institutions – the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) – and the international organizations in the field.

We stress that all field operations require an effective evaluation to promote efficiency and help to elaborate best practices and learn from experience. We thank Ambassador Kapinos for describing the influence of the Centre in Bishkek through its programmatic activities during the period under review.

We also support regional co-operation and co-operation between the OSCE missions and welcome the rapprochement in this regard between the Centre in Bishkek and the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

The legislative elections on 4 October marked a step towards parliamentary democracy. However, the final ODIHR report noted certain shortcomings and gave a list of recommendations for Kyrgyzstan. We strongly urge the authorities to take account of these recommendations in view of the municipal elections in 2016 and the presidential election in 2017 with the support of the Centre in Bishkek.

Regarding the politico-military dimension, the European Union recognizes the importance of issues connected with transnational threats and border security. In spite of the general stabilization of the security situation at the borders and the reinforced co-operation between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there are still occasional incidents. The border delimitation and demarcation work should continue in order to improve integrated border management. We welcome the increased co-ordination on these issues with the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe. Combating terrorism, early warning and conflict prevention are also essential components of the work of the Centre in Bishkek, particularly through “Peace Messengers”. The involvement of youth councils is an effective way of ensuring the sustainability of these activities.

We attach great importance to the Community Security Initiative, which is of benefit both to the Kyrgyz police and the communities in the south of the country and has played an important role in improving dialogue and the level of confidence between ethnic communities and the police. We therefore regret the decision by the Kyrgyz Government to end this Initiative. This decision could take away from the positive results achieved so far in police work at a time when inter-ethnic incidents are still being reported in the south. We would be interested in knowing more about the strategy to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the results of the Initiative and the way in which the financial aspects are taken into account.

We support the emphasis placed on good governance, combating corruption and money-laundering in the economic and environmental dimension. Progress in implementation of the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force has resulted in Kyrgyzstan’s removal of the “grey list” of non-co-operative States. We also welcome the emphasis on good governance of natural resources, including water, to prevent conflicts.

In the human dimension, which is a priority for the European Union, we appreciate the continued work of the Centre in co-ordination with the ODIHR to help the Kyrgyz authorities improve the criminal justice system. We should like to encourage the Kyrgyz authorities to continue the implementation of reforms, particularly the prevention of torture and the prison system. We welcome the rejection by Parliament of a draft law on “foreign agents”, which would have considerably weakened civil society in Kyrgyzstan. The European Union also encourages the Kyrgyz authorities to continue their co-operation with the HCNM on the elaboration of reforms in the education system.

Mr. Chairperson,

We also support the Academy in Bishkek, which enjoys an excellent reputation in the region. It helps strengthen regional co-operation in Central Asia and with Afghanistan. Its mainly extrabudgetary financing nevertheless jeopardizes its long-term sustainability. We hope as well that its lease can be extended beyond July 2016.

We urge the Kyrgyz authorities to respect their commitments within the OSCE to exempt members of the field mission from tax or to reimburse the funds taken from the Unified Budget. As a long-standing partner of Kyrgyzstan, the European Union will continue to support the new Kyrgyz Government in its work to foster socio-economic development, good governance, the rule of law, democratization and respect for human rights.

We thank Ambassador Kapinos and Mr. Ryabkov for their support of the reform process in Kyrgyzstan and wish them every success in the continuation of their work.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,¹ Montenegro¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.