

**ADDRESS BY OSCE HEAD OF CENTRE TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN POLICE OF KYRGYZSTAN: 1 OCTOBER 2010,
BISHKEK**

Distinguished Madame President, Distinguished Minister, distinguished guests and participants,

I am delighted to participate at today's important event to mark the creation of the Association of Women Police of Kyrgyzstan. It is a great privilege for the OSCE to support such an outstanding initiative which, I am deeply convinced, has a promising future. I sincerely believe that this Association will strengthen the impact of women police and their professional and social links nationally and internationally.

The creation of this Association is one important commitment announced by the participants of the International Women's Police Conference, which was held in Bishkek on 12 November last year. If I may repeat what I said at that Conference. Legal and administrative provisions do not guarantee that they are actually delivered in practice. Rather it is the combination of political will and an administrative culture and conditions that will promote the professional growth of women in the Police. The Association seems to be a good vehicle to achieve results.

As you may know, the Organisation of OSCE is committed to gender equality across the 56 participating States, including in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan has made significant progress in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men. I hope that momentum will continue, including in the law-enforcement sector.

The role of women is without doubt crucial in building a modern service-oriented police service and in raising public trust in the police. This impact can make itself felt in two key areas.

Firstly, in the current context when there is a real need to restore the public's confidence in the police, I believe that the role of women police will be significant in achieving post-conflict rehabilitation and reintegration in Kyrgyzstan, notably in the South.

Secondly, I also hope the role and impact of women police in realizing police reform will be profound in the longer-term. There appear to be three areas where the public look for improvements. In English, I can summarise them as "ABC" : "accountability, behaviour and corruption". In Russian, accountability, behaviour and corruption. This is to say, the Police must be fully transparent and open to Parliamentary and public scrutiny ; that treatment in police custody complies with Kyrgyzstan's international and national obligations ; and that both petty and serious corruption within Public Service, including the Police Service, is dealt with robustly by their respective Managements.

To conclude, I hope that the potential of the Association will be fully used in the future to ensure equal rights and opportunities for Women within the police. The OSCE will support such efforts. I close by, once again, congratulating all police officers, male and female, who in the line of duty put their lives in jeopardy for the sake of public safety and welfare.

Thank you for your attention.