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

586th Meeting of the Permanent Council
22 December 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union I would like to say the following.

Kazakhstan has always been working and continues to work with United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees in spirit of partnership and constructive cooperation, being committed to protection of the universal humanitarian rights.

Let me remind that on 12th of July 2005 the Government of Kazakhstan took a decision to put under the UNHCR protection Uzbek citizen Shamsuddinov. This decision and subsequent release once again confirmed Kazakhstan's commitments to upholding the 1951 United Nations Convention on the status of refugees and its Protocol of 1967 of which Kazakhstan is a signatory.

I want to reiterate that Kazakhstan fully adheres to the Convention's basic principles and in particular the one, affirming that refugees and asylum seekers should not be forcibly returned to a country where they may face persecution.

I strongly call upon the European Union to be based on incontestable and proved facts while stating that, I quote: "...a number of Uzbek refugees and asylum seekers have been forcibly returned by the Kazakh authorities to Uzbekistan"(unquote), and invite to share with us this information.

We all know that such serious allegations should have indisputable and irrefutable grounds, otherwise we will all fail to improve situation in this very important area of human rights protection.

Thank you for attention.