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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AT THE 540TH MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

13 January 2005

In response to the statement by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Mr. Dimitrij Rupel

Mr Chairman,

The delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic would like to associate itself with the words of congratulation and welcome addressed to the distinguished OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Mr. Dimitrij Rupel, and would like to thank him for his report today, which may be viewed as a programme for the Slovenian chairmanship.

We should also like to welcome distinguished Ambassador Lenarčič in his capacity as Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council and wish him and his team every success. Given the energetic preparations of the Slovenian delegation in Vienna headed by Ambassador Janez Lenarčič last year, we trust that our Organization will work effectively in 2005.

In support of the plans of the Slovenian chairmanship set out in the report just presented, we should like to focus briefly on certain areas of the OSCE's activities in 2005 that we believe are especially important.

Without any doubt, the main task at the moment is the adoption of a mutually acceptable scale of contributions and budget for our Organization. We hope that the chairmanship will succeed in finding a solution to this problem as quickly as possible.

The process of reforming the OSCE remains one of the key priorities at the present time. We believe that the work currently under way in this area will continue to be effectively carried out by the new chairmanship and that this work will deliver practical results this year for the entire range of problems under discussion. We believe that as we carry out this work, we must also not lose sight of the thoughts expressed last year by the heads of a number of OSCE participating States regarding the activities of our Organization. The key areas of the programme of the Slovenian chairmanship announced today, relating to all dimensions of the OSCE, make us hopeful that progress will be made in this matter.

As we see it, the priority task in the economic sphere is to further strengthen the mechanisms for permanent dialogue among participating States on current economic and environmental problems. We hope that the Slovenian chairmanship will be able to exercise a notable influence on the transformation of the OSCE's activities in this "basket", by taking full advantage of the mechanisms of the Strategy Document for the Economic and

Environmental Dimension, adopted in Maastricht. This is referred to in the report by the distinguished Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Rupel.

We also agree with the view that work should continue within the framework of the Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. In our view, the fact that these last two documents were aimed at developing important internal work to improve the mechanisms of the OSCE in accordance with the tasks set in the aforementioned strategies is an additional advantage. Work of this kind also involves more active and closer co-operation between the OSCE and international organizations, something that is certainly of benefit to us all.

Also noteworthy is the chairmanship's intention, as set out in the report, to step up efforts aimed at solving "frozen" conflicts, as well as a number of existing problems in the OSCE area.

The policy of the OSCE in Central Asia is in need of further reappraisal. We believe that, as it has been 13 years since the countries of the region gained independence, the time has come to take a fresh look at the changes that have taken place and that continue to take place in these countries. Real and positive changes have occurred in many of the vital areas of work in our countries, in Kyrgyzstan as elsewhere. In recent years, there has been an increase in ethnic unity as well as inter-ethnic and interconfessional accord in our Republic, and the conditions have been put in place for a fundamental shift in peoples' mentality in favour of the ideas of freedom, democracy and democratic values.

Mr Chairman,

Some important political events are due to take place in Kyrgyzstan in 2005, namely the parliamentary and presidential elections. The leader of our country, President Askar Akaev, has emphasized on more than one occasion that the country's leadership will make every effort to hold the aforementioned elections in full accordance with national and international law. We should like to note that work of this kind is already under way in Kyrgyzstan and that our delegation reports regularly to the OSCE Permanent Council about its progress. One of its main achievements, which is of the utmost importance at the present time, is the adoption of a new electoral code, which has been prepared, *inter alia*, on the basis of the proposals and recommendations of the OSCE and other international organizations.

To build a genuinely democratic State with a free market economy - that is the conscious choice of our country and its people, and we do not intend to deviate from our chosen path. In that connection, we are hoping for and counting on a balanced and sound assessment on the part of the OSCE and the international community of the forthcoming political processes in Kyrgyzstan, without hasty or hurried conclusions, which would only strengthen the hand of the destructive forces in our country and the radical opposition. We hope that the OSCE will take a balanced position at this crucial time and will not allow itself to be dragged into an unfair and dishonest political game.

In conclusion, allow me once again to wish the distinguished Minister and his team every success in carrying out the difficult tasks facing the Slovenian chairmanship of the OSCE this year.

Thank you for your attention.