



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

1090 Vienna, Austria, Universitätsstrasse 8\1a Tel. (+43-1)-4098266 Fax: 409826614

Statement

**by Ambassador Nuriddin Shamsov, the Permanent Representative
of Tajikistan to the OSCE at the 852th Permanent Council Meeting
(Vienna, 3 March 2011)**

*in response to the statement of the US Delegation
on freedom of religion in the OSCE space*

Mr. Chairperson,

We have listened with interest to the US statement on freedom of religion in the OSCE space and would like to state the following:

First, let me to note that Tajikistan is characterized by high level of tolerance, religious co-existence and the climate of religious harmony which prevails at the societal life. Tajikistan's constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government respects this right in practice. The new amended Law of Tajikistan "On Religion and Public Associations" which has been adopted in 2009, provides the freedom of individuals to choose and change their religion and practice their religion of choice.

There are more than 3500 mosques and 84 non-Muslim religious groups operate freely in Tajikistan. It is also the home to the post-soviet area first and, so far only, officially registered Islamic political party. The state policy of Tajikistan in the field of freedom of conscience and religious associations is implemented in strict compliance with the constitutional principles for civil society based on political and ideological pluralism and relationship between the State and religious associations. These principles provide the separation of religious associations from the State, non-interference by the State in religious association's activities, except the cases provided for by the Law, as well ensuring secular nature of education for State education system, promotion of tolerance and religious harmony by different faiths and confessions. Religious associations conduct their activities in line with its own worship rules and respect to the legislation of Tajikistan.

The Law does not prefer any faith or religious institution and prevents the religious communities to impose its ideology on civil society. In the event of

violation the State bodies will then take appropriate steps to suppress such manifestation. It should be noted also that the national Law provides equal condition and protection for beliefs and secularism in the society.

We note that the Public Council established since many years by the President of Tajikistan which includes membership of majority religious and ethnic minorities, like Orthodox Christians and Koreans. Throughout this period, the Church has shown itself to be a true peacemaker in Tajikistan, demonstrating tolerance and playing an active role in the consolidation of Tajik society.

Mr.Chairperson,

Tajikistan remains committed to its international obligations, including within the OSCE in the field of human rights and freedoms. However, we stress that the human rights issues should be addressed in line with increasing violent extremism, radicalism, terrorism, transnational threat stemming from outside the OSCE areas, as well in the framework of national and regional efforts toward promotion of security and stability in the region.

In this regard, we remind that since 2006 Supreme Court of Tajikistan outlawed 12 extremist Islamic movements and organizations, such as “Al-Qaida”, “Eastern Turkestan Islamic movement”, “Taliban movement”, “Muslim brotherhood”, “Pakistan Islamic Society”, “Jam’iyati tablighot” etc. As well 134 member of banned “Hizbut-Tahrir” movement have been imprisoned.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that the human rights issues, in particular the religion conscience and freedom remain on the agenda of open and constructive dialog between Government of Tajikistan, the OSCE and its Participating states.

I thank You Mr. Chaiperson.