



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

Delegation of the European Union to the  
Republic of Tajikistan

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PRESS RELEASE

### **COOPERATION OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS WITH THE CIVIL SOCIETY**

The Civil Society Seminar EU - Tajikistan on "Cooperation of National Human Rights Institutions and Civil Society" was held on September 17-18, 2013 in the conference hall of Hyatt Regency Dushanbe.

Organized by the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Tajikistan in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the two day workshop served as an open forum to address issues relating to the activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan and its cooperation with the civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The workshop brought together over 50 participants, including representatives of the civil society from all regions of the country, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan and its regional public reception offices, international organizations and diplomatic missions. Experts of international NGOs such as the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Penal Reform International («Penal Reform», PRI), NGO "Transnational International Center" (Russia) and the Moldova Institute on Human Rights.

The workshop covered various aspects of national human rights institutions and the improvement of their role in promoting and protecting human rights, legal drafting activities, and raising public awareness in the field of human rights. In particular, the workshop covered the issues of cooperation of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan with the civil society institutions to analyze and promote policies on protection of human rights, the rights of children, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups, as well as the promotion of the recommendations of the UN and other international human rights bodies. In addition, participants highlighted the need for monitoring of closed institutions by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, together with the Coalition of NGOs against torture in Tajikistan. In this regard, a review of international best practices on the effective implementation of national preventive mechanisms was carried out.

Civil Society representatives adopted a number of recommendations to improve the work of the Human Rights Commissioner in Tajikistan. In accordance with the regular practice, the EU Delegation will then submit these recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for further discussion during the upcoming round of the EU - Tajikistan Dialogue on Human Rights, which is scheduled at the end of this year.

The Civil Society Workshop EU - Tajikistan is part of the annual Human Rights Dialogue held between the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan to discuss a range of issues in the field of human rights. The dialogue was initiated after the adoption of the Strategy "The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership" by the European Council in June 2007 and aims to promote respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the principles of democracy.

The European Union, composed of 28 Member States, is the world's biggest aid donor. Tajikistan gets the main share of bilateral assistance in the Central Asian region (€66 million for 2007-2010 and 62 million for 2011-2013) in support to sector programmes, technical assistance and grants. It focuses on social protection, health and private sector development, underpinned by public finance management. Tajikistan also receives regional and thematic assistance in areas like border management and drug control (BOMCA/CADAP), education (TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus), water / environment, migration, human rights and democracy (EIDHR), non-State actors (NSA) and SME development (CA-Invest). The EU is active in Tajikistan since 1992 and provides approximately EUR 25 million annually in development assistance.

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