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OF ENERGY AND WATER RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
TAJIKISTAN, AT THE SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING FOR  
THE 23rd OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Belgrade, 11 to 13 May 2015

**Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability  
through co-operation**

**Session IV: Awareness-raising on the benefits of good water governance**

Water governance and the Sustainable Development Goals

Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

High mountains and a favourable climate make Tajikistan the original “home” of glaciers and, consequently, significant water resources. In terms of water reserves, the country ranks as number one in Central Asia.

All in all, the country’s volume of river run-off amounts to 64 cubic kilometres per year, which is equivalent to 55.4 per cent of the total drainage of the Aral Sea basin.

The main consumers of water in Tajikistan are irrigated agriculture, whose share varies from 85 to 90 per cent of the total volume of water used, the drinking water supply (up to 2 to 3 per cent), industry (up to 2 to 3 per cent) and fisheries (up to 2 per cent).

Irrigated agriculture is a strategically important sector of the national economy. It provides up to 90 per cent of agricultural production, which is about 20 per cent of the national gross domestic product (GDP). Thus, irrigated agriculture makes a significant contribution to economic development and food security. The importance of irrigated agriculture in ensuring employment for the rural population, which makes up more than 70 per cent of the national population, is also significant.

Tajikistan’s recreational resources also offer great potential for the future development of the country. It has 162 natural monuments, more than 200 mineral springs and 18 mud and salt lakes. These resources are useful for the investment of national and foreign capital and may in the future become one of the main components of the country’s economic development.

Water resources also play an important role in the conservation of ecological systems, particularly wetlands and conservation areas, the most important ones being Tigrovaya Balka and the Tajik National Park, which are of biospheric value.

Along with the socio-economic benefits of water resources, they also have a negative impact. Difficult geographical conditions make the country vulnerable to natural disasters such as mudslides and floods, which occur up to 25 times each decade. In very wet years, the damage from floods and mudslides in Tajikistan can reach hundreds of millions of US dollars.

The drinking water supply and sanitation have top priority when it comes to water use in Tajikistan. In terms of importance in ensuring economic development, however, hydropower dominates.

Tajikistan's hydropower potential is estimated at 527 billion kilowatt-hours per year, which is three times the current electricity consumption in the Central Asian countries. In terms of potential reserves of hydropower, Tajikistan ranks eighth in the world, after China, Russia, the United States of America, Brazil, Zaire, India and Canada. In terms of specific indicators of hydropower potential per square kilometre of territory (3,696,900 kilowatt-hours per year/km<sup>2</sup>) and per capita (65,900 kilowatt-hours per year/person), the country ranks first and second in the world, respectively.

The current use of hydropower resources enables the production of around 17 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity per year in Tajikistan, which is about 3 per cent of the existing capacity. The share of hydropower in the overall scheme of the fuel and energy balance of the country is more than 98 per cent. Industry, agriculture, transport, communications and the household sector are the main consumers of electricity in Tajikistan. These sectors are crucial for economic development, as evidenced by the structure of the country's GDP.

Considering the existence of huge reserves of water resources and the hydropower potential for ensuring the country's sustainable development, Tajikistan is also aware of the importance of co-operation with neighbouring countries if these resources are to be developed and used effectively for the benefit of the entire region. The fact is that peace, stability and development in Central Asia depend entirely on the existence of water resources and well-organized co-operation among the States.

Accordingly, Tajikistan's policy since it gained its independence has been aimed at promoting the water issue at all levels. Ensuring a proper general understanding of the significance of water resources for sustainable development and the importance of water co-operation as a key factor in achieving this goal has always been at the core of this policy.

In pursuing this policy, Tajikistan actively promotes water issues on the global agenda and initiated virtually all of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on water during the past decade.

It was at the suggestion of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, that 2003 was proclaimed the International Year of Freshwater, 2005 to 2015 the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", and 2013 the International Year of Water Cooperation, with the idea of giving high priority to water issues and adopting

appropriate measures to resolve these issues at all levels. During this period, Dushanbe repeatedly served as a platform for the discussion of water issues at a global level and the development of recommendations and measures for their effective resolution.

Distinguished participants,

The High-Level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005–2015, will take place in Dushanbe from 9 to 11 June this year.

The main goal of the Conference is a comprehensive discussion of the issues of implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, which will later play an important role in conducting a comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade, with the results being brought to the attention of the wider international community.

The Conference will also provide an opportunity to discuss the difficulties and shortcomings in the implementation of the International Decade, on the basis of which recommendations will be drawn up for further action after 2015, including assistance in the development of Sustainable Development Goals concerned with water resources.

It is clear that solidarity, capacity, concerted efforts and the application of effective and appropriate approaches and mechanisms are the key to achieving success in this area.

I should like to take this opportunity to invite all interested parties to participate in this important international event.