



STATEMENT

by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, dr. Dimitrij Rupel concerning the situation in Uzbekistan

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Dimitrij Rupel:

- calls on Uzbekistan as a participating State of the OSCE and a member of other international organizations to allow an independent investigation into the events that started in Andijan on 13 May 2005;
- is persuaded that such an inquiry is necessary to bring clarity into the events and to properly address them in the interest of the stability in the region, while the OSCE stands ready to be actively involved in this sense;
- is deeply concerned over the reported refusal of the Uzbekistan authorities of an UN led independent investigation into the Andijan events;
- expresses deep concern over the rejection of contacts of Uzbekistan authorities with representatives of the international community;
- emphasizes the importance of a shared analysis and common assessment of the events in Andijan;
- expects that normal communication between the international community (OSCE Center in Tashkent and the Chairman-in Office) on one side, and the Uzbekistan authorities on the other side, be re-established immediately;
- expects that the Uzbekistan authorities will honor international standards regarding protection of human rights, status of asylum seekers, and territorial integrity of sovereign states regardless of their ethnic composition;
- appeals to Uzbekistan as a partner state of the OSCE community to honor all other democratic standards and commitments to which all 55 participating States subscribe.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office also:

- expresses deep concern regarding the asylum seekers who have escaped the turmoil in Andijan and are currently sheltering in the Kyrgyzstan;
- acknowledges that their safety and welfare are being ensured by the Kyrgyz authorities, with assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

- emphasizes the relevance of international treaties and commitments regarding refugees (Convention related to the Status of Refugees 1951 and its Protocol 1967: Kyrgyzstan is a signatory to these documents; even though Uzbekistan is not a signatory the Chairmanship expects it to uphold the standards contained);
- supports the Kyrgyz authorities' efforts towards the stabilization and democratization of Kyrgyzstan after the March events in that country; and
- emphasizes the readiness of the OSCE and the international community to assist Kyrgyzstan on its path towards stability, prosperity and democracy.

The OSCE Chairmanship will bring this issue up again, and together with our partners from the UN and the EU, we will discuss the policy and action of the international community. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office reiterates the OSCE's offer of assistance to address both the immediate and the deeper causes of the unrest in Uzbekistan, in order to find a sustainable solution to achieve lasting stability through reforms and democratic standards.

Ljubljana, 20 May 2005