

## **EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of Ministers of Justice of the European Union and Central Asia**

**Dushanbe, 14-15 June, 2010**

#### **Joint communiqué**

The Ministers of Justice and Heads of Delegations of the European Union and Central Asian countries,

*Aware* of the importance of strengthening the rule of law as an essential condition for the development of a stable political system, functioning economic structures and the effective protection of human rights,

*Wishing* to give further impetus to the implementation of the European Union's Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia adopted by the European Council on 21 June 2007,

*Relying on* the results of the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of Ministers of Justice of the European Union and Central Asia, held in Brussels on 27 and 28 November 2008, at which they launched the European Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia,

*In close coordination with* the Council of Europe and the OSCE, chaired by a Central Asian partner for the first time this year,

*Taking into account* the continued development of the European Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia over the past two years,

1. *Welcome* the progress achieved since 2008 in the framework of the European Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia, which is contributing to building a relationship of trust between countries of both regions and is giving an impulse to constructive co-operation between in this crucial sphere,
2. *Emphasise* the importance of strengthening cooperation in the priority areas of criminal law and legal training, and in this context, support the recommendations elaborated by the participants of the Regional Seminars "Compliance with defence rights in criminal proceedings" (Tashkent, 28-30 September, 2009) and "Legal Training in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (Bishkek, 26-28 October, 2009) and commend the Central Asia Rule of Law regional project implemented by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe,
3. *Reaffirm* their common wish to co-operate in all fields of law on the basis of joint projects in the framework of the concept paper on the "EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia", presented during the EU - Central Asia Foreign Ministers Meeting in Ashgabat on 9 – 10 April 2008,
4. *Recommend* to further discuss new targeted actions in additional areas of co-operation of legal reforms and judiciary systems such as access to law, the Habeas Corpus principle, commercial jurisdiction and law, and transposition of international norms and their effective application in the national context, taking into account regional synergies as well as reforms and needs of each Central Asian country,
5. *Emphasise* the importance of primary professional education and further training of legal professionals, to which the EU Education Initiative could also contribute,
6. *Express the hope* that this conference will be an impetus for increased cooperation between the Ministries of Justice and specialised agencies of the Central Asian and European Union countries on the continuing implementation of legal reforms,
7. *Endorse* the proposal of the European Commission presented at this Conference for an EU-Central Asia "Rule of Law Platform" project to step up the policy dialogue on Rule of

Law issues, in accordance with the concept paper on the "EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia",

8. *Will consider* the possibility of organising regional thematic conferences in Central Asia in 2011, as a follow-up to this Ministerial Conference,

9. *Decide* to hold their next conference in Europe in 2012 to discuss progress, review their cooperation activities, and consider practical steps to continue the implementation of the European Union's Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia,

10. *Thank* the Republic of Tajikistan for its warm hospitality and its support in organising this Conference.

---