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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Office in Tajikistan supports expert conference on water management in Central Asia

DUSHANBE, 9 October 2008 - Improving water management in Central Asia is the focus of an expert conference organized today in Dushanbe by the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), with the support of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

Over 80 participants, including representatives of Central Asian countries and Afghanistan, will discuss national views on regional water management as well as a policy paper on water management in Central Asia, drafted by IFAS as part of an OSCE project on "Water Management Improvement for Sustainable Development in Central Asia".

"We believe that the presence of leading experts from Central Asia and Afghanistan provides a solid platform to discuss and solve pressing water problems in the region," said Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin, the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

"It is important that the conference is focusing on the discussion of the first draft of the policy paper developed by the IFAS with the support of OSCE," said Kamol Nuraliev, Tajikistan's Deputy Minister of Water Resources and Land Reclamation. "It is the first step, but very important. I hope in the future the paper will be pushed forward on the regional level."

On the basis of the conference recommendations, a background document will be compiled for a regional water management conference in 2009 that is intended to serve as an impetus for the development of appropriate tools for water management in Central Asia.

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