



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION
Tajikistan

AKF Co-sponsors Conference on “Good Governance in Central Asia”

Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 29-30 May, 2009- A conference on “Good Governance in Central Asia” jointly organised by Central Asia Project of the University of Giessen and Aga Khan Foundation was held in Kohi Vahdat last week. Representatives from Majlisi namoyandagon of Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, Strategic Research Centre under the President of Republic of Tajikistan, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, Institute of Economic Research, international donors and organisations and local non-governmental organisations were among the participants. Speakers of the conference also included prominent scholars from Germany, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The two day conference started with welcome notes from Prof. Mamadsho Ilolov, President of the Academy of Sciences, Prof. Seidelmann, Director of the Central Asia Project of University of Giessen and Mr Munir Merali, Resident Representative of Aga Khan Development Network. While welcoming the guest from within and outside the country, they urged the importance of discussion on Good Governance as timely as ever.



Consisting of three panels – ‘Concept of Good Governance’, Good Governance and Socio-Economic Development’ and Good Governance and the Political System, the sessions were chaired by one Central Asian and one German moderator. Each session was followed by an hour-long discussion, where participants not only addressed their questions to the presenters, but also shared knowledge with each other. The discussion of the conference highlighted broader definition of ‘Good Governance’, experience of Germany and other countries in its establishment and how to adopt such practice taking into consideration the mentality, culture and history of Central Asian Countries.



The conference brought together not only participants from different countries, but also scholars, researches and practitioners from various fields including politicians, sociologists, economists, historians and members from various NGO’s and Civil Society Organisations both within and outside the country. The variety of backgrounds enabled the participants to hear voices of different fields on the same subjects and share mutual experience of governing and governance. While explaining the field of governance, the discussion also touched upon common issues faced by different countries related to the understanding of civil society, fighting against corruption and other

current problems. Having variety of representatives present in the discussion, including member of the Parliament helped to answer questions on the spot.

Importance of regional cooperation between the European countries shared by the German presenters was proposed as a way for a better development for the Central Asian countries in the concluding remarks. “One of the aims for the future of this region could be overcoming the borders... and building a better Central Asia” marked Yodgor Faizov, Chief Executive Officer of AKF in his concluding remarks. Suggestions were also made to have a continuity of this discussion on themes such as “Enabling Environment for Investment”. Prof. Seidelmann also noted in his concluding remark that ‘I am very impressed by the involvement of the Tajik Parliament in this conference’ and further noted that ‘... there is a spirit seen and felt from this two days discussion, that is looking ahead to create a better future for the region”.



The conference ended with a reception hosted by H.E. Doris Hertrampf, Ambassador of Germany in Tajikistan, where participants further continued the discussion in an informal manner.

Notes:

Aga Khan Foundation

The Aga Khan Foundation is part of Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of development agencies founded and guided by His Highness the Aga Khan. Established in 1967 in Geneva, Switzerland, AKF is a non-denominational, international development agency with branches, affiliates and representative offices in 20 countries. In Tajikistan AKF has been active since 1993 when, with the support of the international donor community, a response was mounted in Gorno-Badakhshan to imminent food shortages caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union. In parallel with this emergency programme, AKF initiated a rural development programme with the aim of contributing to poverty alleviation in the programme areas. Programmes for reform in the social sector (Health and Education) were introduced in 1994, with the aim of assisting the government to cope more efficiently with reduced resources while at the same time benefiting from new approaches in education and health.

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