

## Press release

# OSCE-supported Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan celebrates its first anniversary



The President of the International Association of Women Police Jane Townsley (l) presents a certificate of Affiliate Membership in her organization to Kaana Aidarkul, the President of the Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek, 20 October 2011. (OSCE/Svetlana Levina)

BISHKEK, 20 October 2011 – An OSCE-supported discussion on the contemporary role of female police officers took place today in Bishkek to mark the first anniversary of the Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan.

The event was organized jointly by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan’s Ministry of Interior and the Police Women Association.

Representatives of the Government, civil society, international community, state and local governmental officials and female police officers who took part in the meeting discussed the role of women in the police service, the implementation of gender balance principles within the Interior Ministry, as well as the achievements of the Association since October 2010 and its future plans.

Lilian Darii, the Deputy Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, said: “A strategic approach to security suggests promoting gender equality principles in practice, including though involving women fully and consistently into the work of the police. Women can make a significant contribution to preventing and combating crime, especially in sensitive situations involving reaching out to vulnerable categories of people who often have little trust in the work of state institutions. The Association has helped female police officers to combine their experience, and enhance their involvement and visible presence in the law enforcement structures.”

Baktybek Alymbekov, the Deputy Minister of Interior of Kyrgyzstan, stated: “Currently women make up around 25% of the total number of our Ministry’s officers. Women work in the fields which have traditionally been considered ‘men only’, and they sometimes cope with tasks better than men do. Female officers brought forward the initiative to establish the Association during a difficult period in the country, and we expect it to become increasingly helpful for law enforcement bodies, and its initiatives to take shape at the institutional level. The senior management of the Ministry is open to your suggestions and ready to render overall support to the Association.”

Kaana Aidarkul, the President of the Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan, said: “During this year, we have created departments of the Association in every province and are now

establishing units in each district. We have set up working partnerships with gender non-governmental organizations and with the network of women peacemakers.”

At the event, the President of the International Association of Women Police (IAWP), Jane Townsley, presented the certificate of Affiliate Membership in the IAWP to her counterparts from Kyrgyzstan’s Association.

"The IAWP supports the Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan in linking with similar networks across the globe. Together, we will seek to highlight and enhance the recognition of women in policing throughout the world, promoting professional co-operation, sharing experiences, learning and networking," she said.

The Association of Women Police in Kyrgyzstan is supported as a part of the OSCE Centre’s Community Policing project within the framework of the Police Reform Programme.

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