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OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid addressing Astana International Forum, 8 June 2023. (OSCE)

PRESS RELEASE

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In Ashgabat, the Secretary General met with the President of Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, the Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the Speaker of the Mejlis, Dunyagozel Gulmanova, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vepa Khadjiev, Ombudsperson Yazdursun Gurbannazarova, and other stakeholders.

She presented the international EcoPorts certificate to the Turkmenbashi International Seaport during her meeting with President Berdimuhamedov. It certifies that the Seaport meets the high environmental standards set by the European port sector. The OSCE had helped the port to meet these standards through its project "Promoting Green Ports and Connectivity in the Caspian Sea region".

“We are proud to have supported the Turkmenbashi International Seaport in achieving the standards necessary for this certification. It is a great example of how we can strengthen sustainability, connectivity, security and economic growth across the region by working together,” Schmid said.

In Bishkek, during meetings with President of Kyrgyzstan, Sadyr Zhaparov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zheenbek Kulubaev, and other interlocutors, the Secretary General highlighted the constructive co-operation the OSCE has with the country through its Programme Office and institutions.

“For over three decades, the OSCE has been committed to supporting Kyrgyzstan and working with the government and civil society on all aspects of security. Today, the whole OSCE region – including Central Asia – is facing unparalleled challenges, and we need to put even more effort into building a safer world for the people we serve,” Schmid stressed.

Opening the international conference “Women, Peace and Security: Problems and Development Prospects”, the Secretary General underlined the OSCE’s co-operation with the Kyrgyz Association of Women Police as well as OSCE-wide efforts to promote women’s empowerment, like with the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders, including Mediators and Peacebuilders.

She also met with students and alumni during her visit to the OSCE Bishkek Academy, a flagship project providing high-quality education to students from Central Asia, Afghanistan, and beyond.

In Astana, the Secretary General discussed regional challenges from climate change to instability in Afghanistan and the impacts of the war against Ukraine on the region in meetings with the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Chairman of the Senate, Maulen Ashimbayev, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Murat Nurtleu, and other high-level officials.

“I commend Kazakhstan’s commitment to deepening regional co-operation and promoting connectivity. In today’s era of increasingly polarized positions, we can only tackle global challenges and strengthen security through joint efforts. With its decades of experience and expertise, and a unique role to play in Central Asia, the OSCE stands ready to support,” Schmid emphasised.

Like the port of Turkmenbashi, the port of Kuryk has been granted the international EcoPorts certificate, and the Secretary General handed it over to Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, Zulfiya Suleimenova, commending the achievement.

In her speech to the plenary of the Astana International Forum, the Secretary General gave an overview of both the OSCE’s project work and its value as a political platform: “Despite geopolitical challenges, the OSCE continues to deliver real benefits every day – making a meaningful difference for our citizens, including here in Central Asia.”

In all three countries, Schmid met with the staff of the OSCE structures there, including the Centre in Ashgabat, and the Programme Offices in Bishkek and Astana.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:

<https://www.osce.org/secretariat/546004>

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