

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment Ambassador Mr. James Collins for organizing this meeting. The purpose of our meeting is to discuss the issues of Central Asia.

In my report I would like to focus on several key security issues, which are important not only for our region but also for the international community. I will underline **regional security** in the context of military-political stability and threats and challenges, **environmental security** and **energy security**.

In the beginning of my report, I would like to describe briefly the current political and socio-economic situation in our country, so you can understand better how and to what extent Kyrgyzstan influences the processes of intergovernmental cooperation on issues of regional security. Our country has been conducting consistent domestic and foreign policy, aimed at addressing issues of internal and regional security and stability, as these are the main preconditions for sustainable and comprehensive development of Kyrgyzstan. We proceed from understanding that the level of political, economic, social, cultural, educational and democratic development of any country is inseparable and dependent on general state of regional cooperation, especially in issues of regional security. In this context, Kyrgyzstan does not have sharp political contradictions with the neighboring states. We have been building our relations with them on the principles of good neighborhood and mutually beneficial cooperation on a wide range of issues of common interests.

Today radical transformations of the state management system are underway. The main slogan of these changes is “Authority for people”.

The national economy has been affected by the global economic crisis. However, we forecast an economic growth at a level of 1.5% according to the results of this year.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is taking measures to create favorable conditions for improving investment climate. We have been conducting the work on elimination of administrative barriers for business. We intend to raise trust and increase stability of financial and banking system. The country is steadily moving forward in liberalization of the customs and tax regimes.

Liberal investment regime is established in the Kyrgyz Republic and provides equal rights to foreign and domestic companies. In accordance with the Kyrgyz national legislation, the freedom of repatriation of capital, dividends and profit is guaranteed for investors. No restrictions exist for all kind of operations in national and foreign currencies.

Situation in Afghanistan directly affects the setting in Central Asia.

Discussing problems, opportunities and prospects, which are common for the Central Asian states and Afghanistan, is timely and necessary. Provision of stability and security, especially in the context of the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, is one the most important issues for

Central Asia. Everyone understands that destinies of the countries in the region are interconnected. Everyone understands that conflicts and instability in Afghanistan and deteriorating situation in Pakistan undermine stability of the whole region and pose threats far beyond the region.

We consider the efforts of the international community in rendering support to Afghanistan as a very important mechanism for strengthening security and stability, assisting in reconstruction process, and building decent life for Afghan people.

The main transit corridor for trafficking drugs to Central Asia, Russia and then to Europe and the United States is passing through Kyrgyzstan. We understand that terrorism, illegal drug trafficking and organized crime are serious obstacles for the development of Afghanistan and not only for this country. Therefore, we consider the problem of Afghanistan in a regional context, the region to which the international community should compel its attention.

As far back as in the end of the 90s of the last century, Kyrgyzstan called upon the world community to draw attention to Afghanistan with full seriousness, but appeal of my country was not heard. Nevertheless, Kyrgyzstan has taken feasible part in the antiterrorist operation 'Enduring Freedom', which however showed that the problem of Afghanistan could not be solved solely by military methods.

Kyrgyzstan supports the efforts of the International Security Assistance Force and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, and we believe that today systematic and complex approach should prevail which will include political, economic and humanitarian aspects besides military component.

Taking into account the current reality, international community under the aegis of the UN should make amendments in a long-term program of economic development of Afghanistan. All concerned countries and international organizations, including neighboring states, should take part in the realization of this program.

Being a member of authoritative global and regional international organizations such as UN, OSCE, SCO, SCTO, Kyrgyzstan does not stand apart from common efforts of the global community in provision of peace and stability in the region and in the world as a whole. It is enough to mention that the Kyrgyz Republic since 2001 has been making significant contribution in counteracting the forces of religious extremism and terrorism. After the tragic events of the 11th September of 2001 Kyrgyzstan provided its territory for the International Forces of Antiterrorist Coalition and in June this year the military base was transformed into the Center for Transit Shipments.

As a sovereign and peaceful state with constant interest in settlement of potential civil and military conflicts in the region, Kyrgyzstan is always ready to make adequate contribution to common efforts aimed at supporting regional stability and peace. In this context the President of our country Kurmanbek Bakiev, as you all may know, has put forward a new initiative, which was entitled as the 'Bishkek Initiative'. We propose to establish a platform for a permanently acting international conference on security and stability issues in Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan.

We believe that creation of a permanently acting platform at the very heart of Central Asia, in direct proximity to Afghanistan, will promote rapid reaction and taking decisions. I am confident that the agreements, which were reached at conferences on Afghanistan in Bonn, London, Paris, Moscow and The Hague, will find their adequate continuation and development in Bishkek. The presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan, which are considered by us solely as a will of Afghan people, will also test the commitment to their principles of those states and international institutions, which are interested in fast stabilization of social and political situation and revival of peaceful life in this country.

Passing on to the next issue, I would like to underline that the issues of environmental protection, provision of ecologic security, rational use of exhausting important resources pose new threats and risks in the 21st century. These problems require continuous attention and adoption of complex, well-coordinated and timely preventive measures at all levels - international, regional and national.

From such perspective, Kyrgyzstan identifies its priorities in the sphere of environmental protection as fundamental basis for sustainable human development and maintaining balance between human rights, society and preserving unique natural complex for our future generations.

Kyrgyzstan has more than 90 tailings and mountain dumps with total area of 6.5 thousand hectares containing 286 million tons of uranium and other highly toxic waste. The condition of the majority of tailings does not meet modern safety standards. During decades after closing of the production facilities, protective installations have seriously deteriorated and continue to collapse under the influence of natural factors including precipitation, torrents, landslides and earthquakes. Protective installations cannot duly provide ecological security in the long-term perspective.

As high priority, the Kyrgyz Republic views the conduction of proactive preventive measures in regard to tailings while using existing multiple opportunities including a number of the UN ecological conventions. Numerous tailings, containing large volumes of highly toxic waste from production of uranium and other very harmful technological waste, pose significant risks of potential ecological and humanitarian disaster in a wider region of Central Asia.

We have to take into account another important problem - providing the Central Asian states with water resources. In case of possible contamination of a water basin of Central Asian rivers with radioactive and highly toxic waste the problem of water shortage will become even sharper and insuperable.

Kyrgyzstan as a member of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone has been steadily following the provisions of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other norms of international law regarding nuclear non-proliferation and illegal transportation of uranium-containing materials, which can be used for terrorist purposes. In this context liquidation and reclamation of uranium tailings is an important component in the joint activities of the Central Asian states with assistance of the international community.

I touched upon the issue of providing the Central Asian states with water resources not by accident. Water-energy problems in the region are not only vital but rather sharp as well. Historically and geographically it developed in such a way that two Central Asian states (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) are located upstream of the two largest mountainous rivers in Central Asia - Syrdarya and Amudarya. These rivers bundle the five Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) into a single vital water-energy junction (Afghanistan has very direct relation to this junction).

The Central Asian states are interdependent on reciprocal supplies of water-energy resources. At present we do not have joint long-term planning and longstanding mechanism of secure water- and energy-supply. Despite activities on increasing the effectiveness of water-energy regulation in Central Asia in the framework of integration organizations and regional structures (with support of international organizations), agreeing on this issue is still one of the most important problem in the region.

We believe that an object of cooperation should not be simply "water resources management" but "rational and effective use of water-energy resources in Central Asia as a whole".

During the meeting of Heads of the Central Asian States in the framework of the International Fund for Preserving the Aral Sea on the 28th April, 2009 the President of Kyrgyzstan Kurmanbek Bakiev proposed to create intergovernmental commissions between neighboring states on each separate river.

In existing conditions, we believe that consideration of each country's interests and finding mutually acceptable compromises can be a coordinated approach to increasing the effectiveness of use of water-energy resources. Mechanisms of interaction should foresee a set of economic, technical, institutional and political measures.

We think that long-term mutual benefit is a basis for long-term intergovernmental cooperation in water-energy field. It is necessary to create conditions, which will give a stimulus to accumulate water in reservoirs in wintertime and supply it for field irrigation in summertime. Then the largest Toktogul water reservoir of over-year regulation will have enough water reserves during low-flow periods and will be able to provide at least food and energy security in the Central Asian states.

As you know, the lack of long-term cooperation led to the crisis of electricity supply in our country in 2008 due to insufficient water reserves in the largest Toktogul reservoir and low level of deposition of sediments and sharp decline in water flow. We had to impose restrictions for consumption of electricity by the population. Partially the problem was resolved due to increase of electricity generation at heating stations thanks to assistance of international organizations and concrete agreements with Kazakhstan.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that there is great progress in relations with Kazakhstan on water resources. In particular, we are resolving the issue of mutually beneficial supplies of water-energy resources with the aim to accumulate water resources in the Toktogul reservoir in wintertime.

The forthcoming winter will not be easy as well, and we hope for further support from the international community in overcoming existing energy crisis.

Kyrgyzstan sees only one way to resolve water-energy issues - through multilateral negotiations, compromises and mutual concessions for full-scale and mutually beneficial cooperation on a long-term basis.

Thank you for your attention