

### *Developing Practical Cooperation through Science*

**Tajikistan has been engaged within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme since 1996.**

The NATO SPS Programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner nations by facilitating international efforts to meet emerging security challenges, supporting NATO-led operations and missions, and advancing early warning and forecasting for the prevention of disasters and crises.

The current SPS Key Priorities include:

- *Counter-Terrorism;*
- *Energy Security;*
- *Cyber Defence;*
- *Defence against CBRN Agents;*
- *Environmental Security;*
- *Security-related Advanced Technology;*
- *Border and Port Security;*
- *Human and Social Aspects of Security.*

Additionally, the SPS Programme helps to promote *regional security* through scientific cooperation among partners. The Programme also helps to *prepare* interested eligible nations for NATO membership. SPS activities often have a high *public diplomacy* value.

## **TAJIKISTAN**

Leading areas for cooperation between Tajikistan and the NATO SPS Programme include **Environmental Security** and **Disaster Forecasting and Prevention**. Below are some examples of completed activities led by scientists and experts from Tajikistan and NATO member countries under the framework of the SPS Programme.

### *Cooperative Activities*

#### **SPS INFORMATION DAY IN DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN ON 9 DECEMBER 2015**

An SPS Information Day – the first event of its kind in Tajikistan – took place on 9 December 2015 in Dushanbe. The event helped foster new opportunities for further development of SPS initiatives through contacts established with the delegates from Tajik institutions and active non-governmental organisations in the region.

Discussion centred on security challenges in Central Asia, such as the fight against terrorism and border security issues with Afghanistan. Participants identified promising potential activities in both fields that could be of strategic importance to Tajikistan. Additionally, participants discussed possibilities for deepening cooperation on issues of environmental and energy security.



## **ASSESSING TRANSBOUNDARY WATER POLLUTION IN CENTRAL ASIA**

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic jointly utilise the Syr-Darya river basin and share common issues with regards to industrial, agricultural and municipal river pollution. The problem is further complicated by the poor maintenance of closed or still operating industrial plants. As a result, joint monitoring and management of water pollution in the transboundary area is of crucial importance. Towards this goal, this Multi-Year Project (MYP), concluded at the end of 2013, brought together these Central Asian republics to conduct an in-depth study of contaminants in the basin of the Syr-Darya River. Ultimately, the aim was to establish a continuous and self-sustainable monitoring activity to be used as a basis for stronger regional cooperation to tackle water pollution. *This activity was led by scientists and experts from Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Norway.* [ref. 983945].

## **CENTRAL ASIA'S STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTIONS ON AFGHANISTAN**

This Advanced Research Workshop (ARW), conducted from 17-18 May 2012, created a lively forum for exchange of knowledge between Western and Central Asian experts on security perceptions and strategies concerning Afghanistan's future in relation to the region's security. The workshop provided an excellent opportunity to benefit from the competencies of Central Asian scholars and fostered dialogue with Western experts. The workshop's goal to better incorporate strategic expertise was based on the notion that the future security and stability of Afghanistan, as the central goal of NATO's ISAF mission, cannot be ensured without understanding the strategies and perceptions of the neighbouring Central Asian states. *This workshop was led by scientists and experts from Tajikistan and the United States.* [ref. 984416].

## **SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TOXIC POLLUTANTS IN CENTRAL ASIA**

This Multi-Year Project (MYP), initiated in 2011, brought together a group of scientists and experts to partake in a regional study to examine the major sources of contamination and the associated environmental consequences in Central Asia. One of the goals of the project was to establish a sustainable regional infrastructure for high quality environmental monitoring for the sustainable control and management of toxic pollutants. *This project was led by scientists and experts from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Germany and Turkey.* [ref. 983931].

## **VIRTUAL SILK HIGHWAY**

Since 2002, Tajikistan and neighbouring countries in Central Asia have benefited from internet connectivity for academic institutions and universities. This internet connection was provided via the high-visibility SPS "Virtual Silk Highway" initiative. The connectivity was initially delivered by satellite and has been switched to a system based on optic fibre since mid- 2010. [ref. 978777].

## **THE SPS PROGRAMME IS OPEN TO COOPERATION WITH TAJIKISTAN**

The SPS Programme is open to all activities with Tajikistan, in line with the political guidance from Allies in the form of the 2012 SPS Key Priorities and the 2013 Overarching Guidelines, as well as Tajikistan's national priorities.



The NATO Science for Peace  
and Security Programme