

STATEMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CENTER FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN ON THE SITUATION IN KHOROG, TAJIKISTAN

The United Nations has been monitoring the events unfolding in Khorog since 24 July, when the Government of Tajikistan launched a special operation in Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast. The UN regrets loss of life and expresses its concern about the possible humanitarian impact of the reported operation on the civilian population of Khorog and its surroundings.

While appreciating that a ceasefire has been prolonged in Khorog the UN calls on the Government to take necessary measures to protect the life and the rights of the civilian population. In particular, we ask all parties involved to exercise restraint and ensure safe access for civilians to medical services, food and essential commodities. The UN stands ready to contribute to providing humanitarian aid and assistance to the affected population.

Given lack of communications and access to Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, forming an objective assessment of the impact of the events that have unfolded since the start of the Government's special operation remains a challenge. Due to these restrictions, the UN is not in a position to assess the needs for humanitarian assistance that may have arisen as a result of the violence. We ask the Government of Tajikistan to facilitate the United Nations and other humanitarian organisations with access to Khorog and surrounding areas to conduct a rapid humanitarian needs assessment.

The obstacles to communication with this region are also a source of great anxiety to many people with relatives, friends or colleagues residing in this region of Tajikistan. For that reason, we appeal to the Government of Tajikistan to ensure freedom of speech and fully restore communication with Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast as soon as possible.

The United Nations will continue to monitor developments in Khorog and currently prepares to provide humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, should this be required. The UN hopes the current situation can be resolved peacefully.

UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia