

Country Assistance Program

for

the Republic of Tajikistan

Government of Japan

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Annex: Conceptual Diagram for the Republic of Tajikistan

1. Principles and Objectives of Assistance to the Republic of Tajikistan

(1) Diplomacy

i. Importance of Central Asia and Tajikistan

Tajikistan is, in geographic terms like Afghanistan, in a central position between the Middle East, South Asia and Central Asia.

Given these geographic conditions, political and economic stability in Tajikistan has the potential to lead to political stability in the Eurasian continent as a whole, and therefore the realization of the stability in this country is a pressing issue to the international community. In addition to the geopolitical importance of Central Asia, the political and economic stability of the region is also of great importance to Japan, from the perspective of energy security.

In Tajikistan, following the peace agreement of 1997, a long period was required to ensure that the fragile peace could be translated into a stable situation, and recently it can be seen that political stability has increased in relative terms. On the other hand, the current situation is one in which Islamic extremism is growing in influence, taking advantage of the people's dissatisfaction with lagging economic development and rural poverty. The current situation, in which poverty has been left unalleviated for a long period, is becoming a serious factor for political instability. The situation therefore requires continuously appropriate assistance towards poverty reduction.

Tajikistan has adopted an active foreign policy in terms of security and economic regional alliances. It is a member of a number of regional cooperative organizations and frameworks, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)¹, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC)², Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC)³, and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)⁴.

ii. Relations with Japan

Although Japan established diplomatic relations with Tajikistan following the collapse of the former Soviet Union, Tajikistan erupted into a civil war in 1992, immediately after independence. After the conclusion of the peace agreement, as part of Japanese efforts in

1 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): A multi-purpose body, comprising Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The purpose of the organization when it was originally established in 1996 was to deal mainly with border issues, but currently it has expanded its agenda to include not only security issues, but also economic and cultural cooperation. Mongolia, Pakistan, Iran and India are observers. Belarus and Sri Lanka are dialogue partners.

2 Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC): A regional economic cooperation framework organized in 1997 on an initiative of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which focuses actively on such areas as infrastructure, energy and trade facilitation, with the aim of contributing to improvements in living standards and poverty reduction. Members are Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, China, Afghanistan, and Mongolia, with the participation also of international organizations such as the ADB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank. The group also cooperates with the SCO and EAEC.

3 Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC): When first formed in 1998 this grouping played a role as a customs union, but now functions as an economically-oriented organization for the promotion of uniform economic policy, and formulation of tariffs and pricing policies. Members are Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia and Belarus.

4 Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO): Formed in 1985 by Pakistan, the Republic of Turkey and Iran as an organization for the purpose of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation. Since then Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan have also joined.

“Diplomacy to the Silk Road Region”⁵ and to contribute to conflict resolution, Japan dispatched the late Dr. Yutaka Akino⁶ to Tajikistan as a civil affairs officer of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), who was sadly killed on duty. Japan has continued to provide post-conflict peace-building assistance, by accepting a large number of trainees from Tajikistan, dispatching experts to Tajikistan and providing humanitarian assistance.

In 2004 Japan launched a framework for dialogue and cooperation with the entire Central Asia region, called the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue. At the Second Foreign Ministers’ Meeting for this Dialogue in 2006, Afghanistan was invited as a guest, and regional cooperation with a broad-based perspective was discussed, including Afghanistan. It can thus be seen that Tajikistan’s economic development is essential for and inextricably linked to ensuring that Afghanistan’s reconstruction is sustainable.

In June 2006, then Foreign Minister Taro Aso announced in a speech concerning policy towards Central Asia that Japan would seek to cooperate with the international community in the goal of reconstructing a “Corridor for Peace and Stability,” linking Pakistan and Afghanistan with Central Asia, in a “region filled with factors for instability (including extremism and narcotics).” Furthermore, in a policy speech given in November of the same year, Foreign Minister Aso stated the importance of forming a rich and stable region on the basis of universal values such as human rights, democracy, market economy, and rule of law. Japan’s assistance in contributing to political and economic stability in Tajikistan is essential if these goals are to be realized, and can be said to be an embodiment of conflict prevention diplomacy.

(2) Development

i. Status of Development in Tajikistan

At the end of 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and ensuing independence, Tajikistan was obliged to make a transition to a market economy. However, in the long-running civil war that erupted in 1992, much of the country’s social and economic infrastructure was destroyed, and the national economy was dealt a devastating blow.

Following the peace agreement, economic growth gradually appeared against the backdrop of political stability, and in terms of macroeconomic indicators, the GDP growth rate stood at an average of 10% from 2002 to 2004, with the proportion of the population living below the poverty line (living on less than US\$2.15 a day), dropping from 83% in 1999 to 64% in 2003. These were figures that demonstrated a degree of hope in Tajikistan’s economy.

⁵ Diplomacy to the Silk Road Region: In July 1997, then Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced Japan’s foreign policy with regard to the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia. He elucidated three policy directions: ① “political dialogue aiming to enhance trust and mutual understanding,” ② “economic cooperation and cooperation for natural resource development aiming to foster prosperity, and ③ “cooperation to build peace through nuclear non-proliferation, democratization and the fostering of stability.” Since 1997, these policy directions have been the pillars for Japan’s foreign policy towards the region.

⁶ Civil affairs officer, the late Prof. Yutaka Akino of Tsukuba University.

However, subsequently in 2005, the major export products of aluminum and cotton were hit by instability in international prices, and the pace of growth slackened off, with GDP growth falling from 10% to 7.5%. Although it was expected that the private sector would be the engine for economic growth, there are many factors obstructing growth, including undeveloped systems and rampant corruption, and Tajikistan still remains the poorest among the member countries of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In addition, there are many people, including children under 15 who make up 40% of the population, who lack sufficient access to social services such as education and health care, and many who suffer from malnutrition. Moreover, the provinces in particular tend to be worse off than urban areas and poverty reduction is a significant task.

ii. Importance of Tajikistan for Japan from the Perspective of Stability in the Central Eurasian region

Tajikistan possesses a wealth of water resources and the opening of a bridge on the Tajik-Afghan border in August 2007 has meant that a distribution route to the south is also one step closer to realization, which has prompted fresh recognition of the importance of Tajikistan in the Central Asian region as a whole. Expectations are that the completion of such a “southern route” would bring about sustainable economic vitalization for the Central Eurasia region, including Afghanistan. With Tajikistan as a central base, the “formation of an energy-distribution corridor” that would reach southwards through the Eurasian landmass would contribute to political and economic stability for Central Asia as a whole. In addition, as such a corridor would also align with Japan’s prioritized diplomatic goals such as conflict prevention, energy security, and the promotion of trade and investment, it is considered to be rational for Japan to offer assistance to Tajikistan, providing cooperation for the realization of the southern corridor initiative and also assistance to secure stability in Tajikistan itself, which is a prerequisite for the initiative to work.

2. Basic Policy and Direction of Assistance

(1) Following the conclusion of the civil war the most urgent task was to reconstruct and develop the country’s devastated society and economy, and with this in mind in 2002 the Tajikistan government formulated a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)⁷ and requested assistance from the international community. At the Consultative Group Meeting held in 2005, President Emomali Rahmon announced that Tajikistan had completed its period of post-conflict reconstruction and was now in a period of development. Following this, the Tajikistan government incorporated the achievement of the United

⁷ Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP): This is a national strategy formulated by the Tajikistan government in June 2002 that details policies and measures by sector from 2003 to 2006, with the aim of achieving income increase and economic growth among other objectives. Following a review of the entire PRSP, in June 2007 a PRS (the so-called PRS2) was adopted, which sets out measures over a three-year span from 2007 to 2009 that aim to secure stability, achieve economic growth and the appropriate distribution of social services, among other targets.

Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)⁸ into their policy making and had started in the formulation of basic strategy which demonstrates activities towards rational and efficient socioeconomic development under a market economy. In 2007 the government announced the “National Development Strategy (NDS) for the period of 2015” and the “Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2007-2009 (PRS2)” as action plans to implement the NDS. The NDS sets out Tajikistan’s development challenges from the following three aspects: firstly, the improvement of the public administration system to respond to the market economy; secondly, the promotion of private-sector economic activities and investment, particularly in terms of sustainable growth through enhancing infrastructure for energy and transportation, and agricultural production, and support for economic diversification; and thirdly, the improvement of basic social services to the general public and human resource development. In addition, the Tajikistan government has emphasized in the NDS the necessity to create a national development system that is in accordance with the market economy, and in June 2007, on the occasion of the Development Forum (formerly known as Consultative Group Meeting), based on a concept formulated with the cooperation of Japan, the establishment of a National Development Council headed directly by President Rahmon was announced as a forum for discussion and formulation of a national development strategy.

(2) Based on the above, Japan recognizes that an increase in incomes among the poor is essential for the economic development in Tajikistan, which is the poorest among the CIS countries. From this point of view, Japan will extend its assistance to Tajikistan with the aim of helping it to develop into a nation with sustainable economic growth based on the adopted market economy, and to achieve poverty reduction

(3) In order to realize the goal stated above, as based on the content of former Foreign Minister Aso’s speech detailed in “1. Principles and Objectives of Assistance to the Republic of Tajikistan (1) i.” above, Japan has taken into consideration to strengthen regional cooperation in Central Asia and boost widespread regional cooperation with a broad-based perspective including Afghanistan, within the framework of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue.

3. Priority Areas for Assistance

(1) Approaches to Priority Areas

The Tajikistan government has been working hard towards socioeconomic development, with the goal of poverty reduction. On the occasion of the Development Forum for Tajikistan in June 2007, President Rahmon announced that for Tajikistan to develop further, the task of highest priority is to advance the transition to market economy and achieve sustainable economic growth. Donor countries also welcomed the formulation of

⁸ The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals which countries have agreed to try to achieve by 2015. The MDGs were the result of a common framework being created that combined elements of the UN Millennium Declaration adopted at the UN Millennium Summit held in New York in September 2000 with international development goals adopted at major international conferences and summits in the 1990s.

the NDS and PRS2, and in addition to announcing support to those strategies they also emphasized the necessity for administrative reform and development of social services.

Bearing in mind the Tajikistan government's formulation of economic development policies and the trends in assistance to Tajikistan by the international community, and also given expansion in the scale of assistance provided by the United States, Russia, China and Iran, as well as active private-sector investment in Tajikistan's energy sector from Russia, China and other countries, in order to boost Japan's presence in Tajikistan it is important to utilize the limited budget effectively, and concentrate on timely assistance projects in the "selective and intensive" assistance areas.

Japan aims to implement assistance that would enable the "promotion of regional cooperation," by linking "pinpoint" projects (agricultural revitalization projects in multiple administrative districts) with "linear" projects (development of road transportation infrastructure) and thereby promote over the long-term an improvement in distribution systems. This type of cooperation would benefit Central Asia and the surrounding region. In other words, Japan is envisaging an expansion in cooperative efforts in terms of specified "aspects" and will implement development assistance that is interlinked and multifaceted.

In addition, given that national demand for basic social services remains at a high level, it is important to cooperate in implementing measures to tackle poverty and to increase incomes of the poor, as well as in development of the country's infrastructure for the human security such as improvement of health services and sanitation to ensure that the people of Tajikistan will be able to live a healthy life.

As stated in 2. above, in order to achieve the long-term development, it is essential for the Tajikistan government to construct an appropriate mechanism so that it can formulate development plans while holding ownership. From this viewpoint, in Japan's cooperation to the priority areas detailed below, it is imperative that a cycle be put into operation that works effectively and efficiently to (i) improve systems, (ii) plan and implement development policies, and (iii) engage in evaluation and monitoring.

Moreover, it is essential that human resource development activities be put into action concurrently in order to promote the move to a market economy in Tajikistan, and the results of such human resource development would also contribute to the effective implementation of Japan's assistance.

(2) Specific Assistance Areas

i. Rural Development and Industry Promotion

Agriculture in Tajikistan accounts for 21% of nominal GDP (2004 figures) and employs 67% of the workforce (2003 figures). However, due to a lack of employment opportunities in agricultural regions and the low wage levels associated with agriculture, there is a continuing outflow of agricultural laborers from Tajikistan. It is therefore a task of the highest priority to ensure that measures to deal with poverty through agriculture are

directly linked to the vitalization of agricultural regions.

The advancement of privatization in the agriculture industry has resulted in the emergence of small and medium scale farmers. However, for the farmers who used to work in socialist-style large agricultural collectives, the process of raising income levels in accordance with market economy principles is no easy task. Given this fact, Japan considers that it can make a contribution to raising income levels in the rural area of Tajikistan and tackling poverty reduction, by implementing technical cooperation in a format utilizable not only in agricultural management for vast agricultural areas and using large-scale farming equipment inherited from the nationalized collectives of the Soviet era, but also for small and medium-scale farmers, providing assistance to cultivate high value-added agricultural products that capitalize on the unique climatic conditions of Tajikistan and also for processing industries.

At the same time, the PRS2 also recognizes the necessity for a highly profitable agricultural sector at the national level, making reference to efforts towards the export of fruit, vegetables and honey.

Since 1993 Japan has implemented assistance for human resource development in the agricultural sector and in other sectors in Tajikistan. So, it is important to utilize these human resources skills in providing assistance, while making efforts to promote projects coordinated with technical cooperation and other schemes that directly contribute to poverty reduction in the agricultural sector.

Moving forward, in order to implement effective and efficient assistance to the agricultural sector, Japan will select areas as targets for prioritized assistance, including mountainous regions where economic development is lagging, and lowland areas that possess high potential for agricultural development.

(a) Assistance to Improve the Quality of Agricultural Products

Assistance will be provided to improve the quality of agricultural products, through dissemination of technologies to farmers for cultivation, storage and processing of products.

(b) Assistance to Farmers through Development of Farming Guidance Structure

Assistance will be provided for the training of farmers so that they can engage in farm management and make rational management decisions under a market economy. This assistance will be provided through model projects that will lead to the development of a system to raise awareness of and further disseminate information on markets, legislation and technologies, etc.

(c) Assistance for Distribution and Agricultural Industries

Assistance will be provided to vitalize the economy in rural areas and increase the incomes of poverty-stricken farmers, through improvements to market access and fosterage of industries in farming villages.

iii. Transportation (road development, maintenance and management)

Given Tajikistan's position as a central point between Central and South Asia, it is

important to develop southern transportation routes for the land-locked countries of Central Asia including Tajikistan because it would enable ease of access to the Indian Ocean and help develop the economy of the region as a whole. In addition, three roads of the Asian Highway network, which links Asia with Europe, pass through Tajikistan, and in August 2007 a new bridge was completed with US aid across the border with Afghanistan along one of these roads. Also, within the framework of CAREC the 6th Ministerial Meeting adopted the “Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy (TTFS)”⁹ in June 2007, which includes approximately US\$18 billion project for the improvement of the regional transportation infrastructure network, and in this way efforts have been initiated to develop an international distribution corridor linking Central Asia with South Asia.

The Tajikistan government has also formulated a “long-term transport development plan” and is advancing development of the main road network on a priority basis. In addition, the government’s “national investment and technology program” notes that “in order to promote economic growth, it is imperative to develop the road network, increase efficiency in the freight shipment and passenger transport, and reduce the time of transportation.” The government thus demonstrates its stance to tackle this issue as one of the most prioritized ones, emphasizing the necessity and urgency of the road network development.

However, many of the major roads that were built in the Soviet era are not only too old, but also were further destroyed in the post-independence civil war. What is more, due to economic stagnation the Tajikistan government has been suffering from a chronic budgetary deficit and lack of technology, and cannot secure materials, equipment, human resources and technology required to develop roads, which is the major reason why so many roads remain undeveloped. Furthermore, more than 90% of the land in Tajikistan is mountainous, and there are many roads that are impassable due to natural disasters such as avalanches, landslides or fallen rocks, which is further exacerbating the delays in developing the road networks.

Such blockages in the transportation network and lack of development caused prolonged time of transportation, presenting a significant barrier to economic development. It is for this reason that the appropriate development of the road network and its maintenance and management are necessary. The Action Plan of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue includes assistance for development of the north-south transportation routes and Japan will, while aiming to cooperate effectively with other frameworks such as CAREC, implement financial and technical cooperation. For example, one aim is to enable the transportation in a short time-span of the rich agricultural produce of Tajikistan, thereby ensuring its freshness in response to domestic and neighboring country demand, and another aim is to achieve gains for economic development not only in Tajikistan but also in neighboring countries, through vitalization of domestic and regional distribution channels.

⁹ At the 6th CAREC Ministerial Meeting held in Tajikistan on November 3, 2007, the TTFS was adopted, which requires investment of US\$18 billion over a ten-year period. The TTFS was formulated to facilitate development of the six corridors that pass East-West, North-South through Central Asia and to expedite and simplify trade procedures, etc.

iii. Border Control

In October 2004 Tajikistan adopted a concept for national security by presidential decree. The basis for this concept is a non-compromise policy in the fight against narcotics and terrorism. In addition, this concept aims to realize two national plans, the first being the fight against smuggling of narcotics and psychotropic substances and the second being the strengthening of legitimate trade. In this regard, in April 2006, President Rahmon signed a government decree for the expansion of budgetary provisions to strengthen border controls and for the provision of food supplies from regional organizations to border security forces.

With regard to the refining and smuggling of narcotics, 70 to 75% of the narcotics circulating in the global market are produced in Afghanistan. In particular, it is said that narcotics destined for Europe and the Far East are smuggled through Central Asian countries, and one major route is through Tajikistan. While there is no question as to the necessity of eradicating narcotic production in Afghanistan, at the same time, enhanced border surveillance at the Tajik-Afghan border is also of the utmost importance from the perspective of interdiction of narcotics smuggling and counter-terrorism, and is essential if the smuggling of narcotics to Europe and the Far East is to be halted.

Border control functions in Tajikistan were performed for more than 15 years by Russian border security forces following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In October 2004 an agreement on border control was concluded between Russia and Tajikistan, and in August 2005 transfer of all border control functions to Tajikistan authorities was completed. However, it is difficult to say that the structure of the Tajikistan border control authorities is sufficient, either in terms of personnel numbers or from a qualitative viewpoint.

In addition, state budgetary support to the National Security Committee is extremely small, with the budget for protection of national borders standing at no more than 1.15% of the total budget. As a result, despite the importance of the duties of the National Security Committee, the equipment of and support system for security guards engaged in border surveillance are extremely meager. Currently, Tajikistan is cooperating with international organizations and donor countries to improve border control structures, but further international assistance will be required to boost capacity towards the implementation of more effective border control.

In order to foster closer relations with Central Asia through the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, Japan is making efforts to promote regional cooperation. The Action Plan of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue that was signed in June 2006 raises the issue of measures against terrorism and narcotics as one area for cooperation that would contribute to the promotion of intra-regional cooperation, and also notes the importance of assistance for enhancing border-control capacities in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Assistance for surveillance on the Tajik-Afghan border is an essential policy in order to prevent the spread of narcotics smuggling and terrorism. Such assistance would contribute

to the stability of the Central Asian region, and it would also help to promote intra-regional cooperation. At the same time, it should also be borne in mind that the enhancement of border-control capacity should be combined with trade-promoting measures including simplified tariff and custom procedures, in order not to obstruct trade.

iv. Development of Basic Social Services

Although Tajikistan has long since moved from the reconstruction phase to a development phase, there remains a high degree of necessity to develop basic social services as one means of supporting anti-poverty measures and to raise incomes. In terms of human security also, it is vital that cooperation be provided to the efforts of the Tajikistan government to ensure that basic social services are developed and provided to the populace in a sustainable manner, in particular in areas such as health and medical care, the provision of safe drinking water, and measures to mitigate natural disasters. Such basic social services serve to protect the lives and livelihoods of the people, and are a basis for stable economic growth. However, all of such services fell into crisis in the midst of the post-independence civil war and economic slump, and even today the country faces financial difficulties, technology deficiencies and a lack of human resources. While advancing cooperation in the priority assistance areas of rural development and industry promotion, transportation, and border control, it is essential that Japan also push forward with cooperation in the area of basic social services, on which all other sectors rely.

In addition, Tajikistan, with a landmass consisting of more than 90% mountain regions, is highly prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes, avalanches, landslides and flooding. These disasters frequently have a widespread impact on agriculture, transport and health, and impose serious damage on the development of the economy and society. Given this reality, in Tajikistan to date, measures to deal with natural disasters have focused on rescue activities, and prevention measures and development of natural disaster response structures remain in their infancy. Currently the Tajikistan government is dealing with the issue of disaster prevention by gathering experts from various related organizations for the forum of the Emergency Situations Committee among others. In response to a request from the Tajikistan government the Japanese government resolved to provide cooperation in disaster prevention projects, and the “Study on Natural Disaster Prevention in Pyanj River” is among the projects to have been adopted. For the government of Japan, which is also a country highly prone to natural disasters, it is important to provide assistance to improve technological capacity in disaster prevention and to cooperate in the creation of specific disaster prevention plans. The “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue Action Plan also identifies disaster prevention and reduction as one task for intra-regional cooperation, and has announced that it will advance intra-regional cooperation, including mutual support systems in case of emergency, in order to formulate effective disaster prevention measures for the countries in the region.

4. Points to Be Considered

(1) Coordination with Donor Countries, International Organizations and NGOs

The implementation of development assistance to Tajikistan requires that limited domestic and international resources be utilized to their maximum effect. Given this fact, based on the Paris Declaration of March 2005 and with the World Bank at its center, movements are gaining momentum to coordinate aid implementation in priority areas. In the Development Forum of June 2007 too, donor representatives announced that they were preparing to implement assistance through a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)¹⁰, including in the health and education sectors. In addition, actors such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Commission (EC), the UK Department for International Development (DfID), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) have announced the formulation of a Joint Country Support Strategy (JCSS) that will provide a mid-term plan for cooperation between the Tajikistan government and donors. Discussion on the JCSS is currently ongoing, with the aim of completing it by the end of 2008. Japan will continue to monitor future developments.

(2) Consideration of Gender Equality

The maternal and infant mortality rate is high in Tajikistan and it is necessary to consider maternal and child health when implementing Official Development Assistance (ODA) and to provide assistance to the social sector. In particular, in section “3. Priority Areas for Assistance, (2) i. Rural Development and Industry Promotion” above, the role of women in daily activities is significant, and consideration of gender issues is a factor affecting development outcomes.

(3) Other Matters

In 2. (1) above, it is noted that Tajikistan has made a shift from a reconstruction phase to a development phase. However, in terms of the reconstruction and restoration of economic and social foundations, it is not necessarily the case that graduated improvement has been witnessed when compared with the reconstruction phase, and the development of basic infrastructure such as water supply and sewerage and power grid networks that directly affect the lives of the people remains as urgent a task as before for the Tajikistan government.

For such assistance Japan will consider the use of yen loans in the medium to long terms, but in such an event the lending status of other donors and the debt capacity of Tajikistan would be duly borne in mind, among other considerations.

¹⁰ An approach through which representatives from recipient and donor countries engage in mutually consistent activities in the education and health care sectors, among others, based on uniform sector-wide development policies.

Conceptual Diagram for the Republic of Tajikistan

