

CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS: POST-CRISIS ANALYSIS OF THE STATE AND SOCIETY

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On the whole, little or no attention is paid to the forecasts of post-crisis development in Central Asia and the Caucasus that are scattered among the publications on the post-crisis world. Indeed, so far these regions essentially remain outside the global industrial market, while the raw-material orientation of their economies allowed practically all eight of them to avoid serious socioeconomic upheavals. It is impossible, however, to supply an exhaustive forecast of the crisis' economic, political, cultural, demographic, and other impacts.

Kazakhstan was the first among the Central Asian (and the post-Soviet countries in general) to face the crisis. This happened in the fall of 2007 when the oil reserve fund was opened and the state tried to stifle the crisis by urgently pumping state money into the republic's economy.

This means that the numerous official statements, expert assessments, and constructive sug-

gestions coming from the Kazakhstan opposition should be regarded as belonging to the so-called inertia model of social and economic development promoted in the republic for many years.

The international conference held in Bishkek in March 2009 and the International Conference on the Social Impact of the Economic Crisis in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Turkey held in December 2009 in Almaty pointed out that the countries for which "Russia remains a main trading partner and a major source of remittances" suffered more than many of the others.¹

¹ For more detail, see: "Gosudarstva Kavkaza i TsA zhdet rezkoe padenie tempov ekonomicheskogo rosta," 6 March, 2009, available at [www.un.org]; "V Almaty otkrylas' Mezhdunarodnaia konferentsia po antikrizisnoy politike v stranakh Vostochnoy Evropy i Tsentral'noy Azii," available at [www.un.org] (see also: D. Jardaneh, "Crisis Brings Reversal of Fortune to Caucasus and Central Asia," 10 March, 2009, International Monetary Fund. Middle East and Central Asia Department, available at [www.imf.org]).

This means that all the academic publications relating to the prospects for state and social development should be associated with the countries that have economies closely tied to Russia.

The post-crisis development of Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, which still rely on the production and transportation of energy resources, while the most important political and economic decisions still hinge on increasingly greater oil and gas export, looks different.

International organizations are actively involved in elaborating long-term strategies for the two countries; their small populations create a relatively smaller number of problems.

The post-crisis strategy of Uzbekistan can be put in a nutshell as “tapping the anticrisis measures to the full for the positive development of the state and society.”

In 2009, the republic launched a state program called The Year of Development and Improvement of the Countryside, which opened a new stage of reforms. The country’s leaders plan to extend the state social programs designed to further promote human rights and freedoms and move closer to a civil society.

The Georgian model of post-crisis development deserves special mention: according to Mikhail Saakashvili, “We said that instead of reg-

ulated economy we would choose the way of liberal economy.” The Georgian president insists that this model rests on the “values and works of Ilia Chavchavadze, ... the first Georgian libertarian with his economic philosophy,”² rather than on the Western theories based on the Anglo-Saxon tradition.

“Despite many social problems, unemployment, poverty, and the political unrest, the society understands that we need to carry out the process by means of dialog.”³ According to the Georgian leaders, their “last hope always was a foreign assistance and international finance organizations.”⁴

I have undertaken a comparison and analysis of the possible post-crisis development of eight countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and of the future of their state institutions and civil societies.

² M. Saakashvili, “The President of Georgia Presented Economic Package to the Parliament of Georgia,” 6 October, 2009, available at [<http://www.president.gov.ge/?l=E&m=0&sm=3&id=3052>].

³ M. Saakashvili, “The President of Georgia Met with the Members of the Anticrisis Council,” 8 November, 2008, available at [<http://www.president.gov.ge/?l=E&m=0&sm=3&st=30&id=2775>].

⁴ M. Saakashvili, “The President of Georgia Presented Economic Package to the Parliament of Georgia.”

The State Initiates, Carries Out, and Guarantees the Post-Crisis Reforms: Necessary Theoretical Digressions

The state should not be carried away by “financial algorithms” of post-crisis development (which might push social interests to the backburner). Complex anticrisis measures should be sought and elaborated. One of today’s politicians has described the measures designed to preserve the state’s regulatory role as an “eternal historic task.”⁵

⁵ F. Fillon, *Un Etat moderne dans une économie de marché responsable*, 16 septembre 2009, available at [www.blog-fillon.com]; *Prime Minister Francois Fillon’s speech at a Conference in Yaroslavl*, available at [www.yaroslavl-2009.ru].

Some experts insist that the world crisis has “restored” the state; others are convinced that the crisis was triggered not by an imagined “absence of state regulation” but by the state’s active interference in the economic sphere, excessive patronage of other spheres of life, and the cult of power.⁶

It should be said that quality is more important than quantity. When talking about the “size of the state” economists refer not to its territory and population strength but to the share of financial resources in its GDP redistributed through the national budget (the so-called extended government budget) and the scale of the state’s direct interference in the economy through all sorts of bylaws, which make possible “state regulation,” and through the interference of executive structures in the form of “economic management by hand.” Mikhail Saakashvili has pointed out in a similar context: “Freedom [is] expressed in minimal number of the government body, low taxes, in the minimal involvement of the state and in the maximal freedom of an entrepreneur and citizen from bureaucratic ties.” The Georgian leader believes that during the world crisis the public became extremely disoriented by socialist and populist slogans about the greater role of the state. This pattern should be destroyed.⁷

Let us take a closer look at the role of the state in post-crisis society.

President of Kyrgyzstan Bakiev is convinced that “the entire society should pool its efforts” to fight the crisis. This calls “for a new ideology and new organizational forms” because “there are prerequisites of real changes.” This means that “a reasonable balance between novelties and traditions should be maintained to make it possible to capitalize on our heritage, actual experience, and technological achievements.”⁸

President of Armenia Sargsian deemed it necessary to describe the changing role of the state as follows: “There is a misunderstanding which I want to discuss now. Some think that the crisis is limited to the financial and economic spheres, its social dimension being the result of the former. The global crisis is a great challenge to the political sphere, the system of values, and morality.”⁹

The Armenian leaders believe that the post-crisis strategy should have a political aspect as well.

The above suggests that the ruling elites of Central Asia and the Caucasus are convinced that the traditional ways of social progress should acquire a new theoretical interpretation.

After the Crisis: State-Society Relations

The leaders of the Central Asian and Caucasian countries are equally concerned about post-crisis development. Witness the following:

President Karimov: “We should think about post-crisis development.”¹⁰

President Nazarbaev: “Crises come and go yet the general vector of our movement toward a successful and prosperous society remains the same.”¹¹

⁶ See, for example, works by Deepak Lal, a prominent economist and professor at the University of California in Los Angeles.

⁷ M. Saakashvili, “The President of Georgia Presented Economic Package to the Parliament of Georgia.”

⁸ K. Bakiev, “Vystuplenie na zasedanii Zhogorku Kenesha KR,” 1 September, 2009, available at [www.president.kg].

⁹ S. Sargsian, “Vstupitel’noe slovo na tematicheskoy soveshchani s predsedateliami politicheskikh partiy “Vsemirny finansovo-ekonomicheskoy krizis i Armenia,” 20 March, 2009, available at [www.president.am].

¹⁰ I.A. Karimov, *Mirovoy finansovo-ekonomicheskoy krizis, puti i mery po ego preodoleniiu v usloviyakh Uzbekistana*, Uzbekiston, Tashkent, 2009.

¹¹ N.A. Nazarbaev, “Obrashchenie po sluchaiu Natsional’noy perepisi naselenia,” 24 February, 2009, available at [www.akorda.kz].

President Sargsian: "Economic and other crises are temporary phenomena."¹²

President Bakiev spoke about the "mechanism of long-term changes as the president's course in the conditions of the problems created and exacerbated by the world financial crisis"¹³ and called on the nation "to be prepared for further development," to carry out "resetting," and to "renovate the approaches and formats of interactions inside the administrative system and with other social groups."¹⁴

President Saakashvili: "In a word: Reform. Reform. Reform. This is the only path to transforming Georgia into a trustworthy partner for our allies."¹⁵

As early as in February 2009, President Nazarbaev formulated the task of the ruling Nur Otan Party, the government, the presidential administration, and the parliament as drafting a Plan of Kazakhstan's Renovation in the Post-Crisis Period.¹⁶

The republic has already identified seven trends of its industrial and technological development: modernization of the agrarian sector; development of the construction industry, oil refining, and infrastructure of the oil and gas sector, metallurgy and production of finished metal products, as well as accelerated development of the chemical, pharmaceutical, and defense industries, electric power production; and the transport and telecommunication infrastructures.¹⁷

President Bakiev identified four key trends of his country's mid-term development: movement toward a real multiparty system and adequate conditions for constructive opposition activities; a dialog and cooperation with the institutions of a civil society; reform of the state administration system to involve broad social groups into decision-making; and correct and well-considered cultural policies.¹⁸ It should be said that the leaders of Kyrgyzstan are relatively more concerned about meeting the daily needs of the public.

Armenia is no less concerned about post-crisis developments. President Sargsian: "Topic No. 1 of all our discussions is unquestionably new trends in our progress... To overcome the crisis imposed on us we should intensify the reforms to the maximum rather than postpone them."¹⁹

This means that a wider range of social and economic reforms and their acceleration look like the intention of all.

In the summer of 2009, Ashgabad hosted an international symposium called Shaping the Post-Crisis World: Regional Implications and Coordinated Responses by Member Countries (of the Islamic Development Bank—IDB) which discussed "how to mitigate the impact of the global financial crisis on their economies."²⁰

It was at the same time that the leaders of Turkmenistan identified their main strategy as trade in energy resources.

¹² S. Sargsian, "Pozdravitel'noe slovo po sluchaiu 18-oy godovshchiny nezavisimosti," 21 September, 2009, available at [www.president.am].

¹³ K. Bakiev, "Kurs na obnovlenie strany," 24 March, 2009, available at [www.kyrgyzembassy.ru].

¹⁴ K. Bakiev, "Vystuplenie na vstreche s molodymi gossluzhashchimi i biznesmenami," 12 March, 2009, available at [www.president.kg].

¹⁵ M. Saakashvili, "Address to the Parliament of Georgia," 20 July 2009, available at [http://www.president.gov.ge/?l=E&m=0&sm=3&id=2988].

¹⁶ See: N.A. Nazarbaev, "Zakliuchitel'noe vystuplenie na rasshirennom zasedanii Biuro Politsoвета partii," 12 February, 2009," available at [www.akorda.kz].

¹⁷ See: N.A. Nazarbaev, "Interview korrespondentam agentstva 'Khabar' and TRK 'Kazakhstan,'" 20 May, 2009, available at [www.akorda.kz].

¹⁸ See: K. Bakiev, "Obrashchenie 'Kurs na obnovlenie strany,'" 24 March, 2009, available at [www.kyrgyzembassy.ru].

¹⁹ S. Sargsian, "Privetstvennaia rech k uchastnikam s'ezda Soyuza promyshlennikov i predprinimateley," 13 May, 2009, available at [www.president.am].

²⁰ "Ashkhabadskiy summit IBR: novaia strategiya sotrudnichestva," 2 June, 2009, Electronic newspaper *Turkmenistan: The Golden Age*, available at [www.turkmenistan.gov.tm].

Protection of Human Rights: Prosperity or Law?

In the final analysis, the impact of the crisis will depend on the degree to which the state has developed a civil society and its institutions. So, the world crisis will hardly reduce to naught everything that has been done to protect human rights and ensure the rule of law and is unlikely to interfere with the reforms in the judicial sphere.

Experts from the leading international organizations are convinced that “additional measures should be taken to protect the rights of vulnerable groups and individuals, especially women, children, migrants, refugees, autochthonous peoples, the disabled, and senior citizens.” “Xenophobia in relation to migrant workers might increase.”²¹

Members of international organizations who visited Uzbekistan approved of what had been done to improve the conditions in prisons and extend the Program of the Red Crescent International Committee; they also added: “We urge Uzbekistan to continue looking to ODIHR for guidance in areas such as enhancing legislation on human rights, fighting trafficking in persons, and raising public awareness of human rights.”²²

The president of Georgia, likewise, confirmed in front of the parliament: “I repeat today my personal commitment to introducing popular jury trials in our judiciary system.”²³

The international community has described Kyrgyzstan’s priorities as “ensuring a role for civil society oversight of police activity, protection of human rights in detention centers, and a strong and independent judiciary.”²⁴

In 2007, Tajikistan adopted a Program of Judicial Reform to strengthen and improve the judicial power; the country’s leaders insist that the reform is being implemented step by step.

The leaders of Kazakhstan call on structures “to increase the faith of the people in the judicial system in particular through its transparency and efficiency as well as through the courts’ strict abidance to the laws.”²⁵

In Central Asia and the Caucasus everything said about human rights hinges on the “rule of law.” What does the term mean? Without going into detail and in the context of the already proclaimed priority of the economy over politics, this means, primarily, that the state power structures should not discriminate among those involved in economic activities.

Job Security: Uses and Dangers of Unemployment

Opinions about employment differ from one Central Asian and Caucasian country to another.

Tajikistan, for example, where the employment problem is probably the most acute, is carrying out a wide range of anticrisis measures designed to achieve macroeconomic sustainability and stabili-

²¹ Human Rights Council Tenth Special Session: “The Impact of the Global Economic and Financial Crises on the Universal Realization and Effective Enjoyment of Human Rights”, Statement of Ms. Navanethem Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, available at [<http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/A7A2CA2316182115C12575630035ED9F?opendocument>].

²² U.S. Mission to OSCE on Human Rights in Uzbekistan, 17 September, 2009, available at [<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/September/20090917165922eaifas0.8082653.html&distid=ucs>].

²³ M. Saakashvili, “Address to the Parliament of Georgia,” 20 July, 2009.

²⁴ “Response to Kyrgyzstan Minister on Advancing Democracy. U.S. Welcomes Kyrgyzstan’s Actions to Reform Law Enforcement, Judiciary,” 1 October, 2009, available at [www.america.gov].

²⁵ N.A. Nazarbaev, “Vystuplenie na otkrytii III sessii Parlamenta RK chetvertogo sozyva,” available at [www.akorda.kz].

ty of the real economic sector and to encourage the private sector. Labor migrants are actively involved in the labor market, and social support of the population is realized.²⁶ It seems that the problem of new jobs in the republic will remain topical.

In Uzbekistan, a job-creation program is being implemented together with encouraging outworking based on cooperation with industrial enterprises. In 2008, the outworkers produced \$25 million-worth of products and services.²⁷

The state encouraged cattle breeding in private and dehkan households to increase employment, particularly in the countryside.

Some think that after the crisis a certain level of unemployment should be preserved so as “to rescue the normal world with an innovation economy based on a high level of human capital and training.”²⁸

The above cannot be accepted as true in the Central Asian and Caucasian countries because of their demographic status, the level of social protection of the unemployed, the local mentality, the “register of material costs,” and potential new jobs.

The president of Armenia has offered the following: “The process should look like a two-way street: the crisis should not be used to justify the distortions in the reform process accompanied by statements that this has improved the business climate.”²⁹ Potential economic advance should be followed by stabilized work hours, restored paid administrative leave, and liquidation of the wage arrears. The Armenian president also spoke about social responsibility of the businessmen, even though some of the economists reject this opinion: they describe this as a charity that “shifts the burden to the shareholders.”

Reducing Poverty: Where is the Boundary between Moderation and a Threat?

The world crisis cut down financial receipts (the states are receiving fewer taxes, money transfers, and loans); according to the World Bank, it has reduced to naught everything that was accomplished in the last 10 years to reduce poverty³⁰ (in Azerbaijan the poverty level dropped from 49 to 16 percent in 2004-2008).³¹

These negative trends might trigger social tension, lead to extremism, and bring the reforms to a standstill.

To avoid this and withdraw from the hazardous zone, the state should provide greater state incomes for spending in the social sphere (higher pensions, allowances, and social aid).

In other words, stronger social policies are very much needed; they should develop the market economy and create a stronger state. This is possible only in a state where power is consolidated,

²⁶ See: “Tadzhikistan priznatelen OON za podderzhku v preodolenii global’nykh krizisov,” 29 June, 2009, available at [www.un.org]; “Vystuplenie Sirodzhidina Aslova, Postoiannogo predstavitelia Respubliki Tajikistan pri OON,” New York, 29 June, 2009, in: *U.N. Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development*, available at [http://www.un.org/ru/ga/econcrisissummit].

²⁷ See: “Uluchshenie polozhenia zhenshchin—prioritet gosudarstvennoy politiki Uzbekistana,” 19 March, 2009 [www.un.org].

²⁸ “Bezrobotitsa—odna iz samykh tiazhelykh sostavliaiushchikh ekonomicheskogo krizisa,” available at [www.svobodanews.ru].

²⁹ S. Sargsian, “Privetstvennaia rech k uchastnikam s’ezda Soyuza promyshlennikov i predprinimateley.”

³⁰ See: *Europe & Central Asia Poverty Team Newsletter*, Issue 27, April 2009, available at [www.worldbank.org].

³¹ See: I. Aliev, “Interview agentstvu ‘Interfaks-Azerbaijan,’” 20 March, 2008, available at [www.interfax.az].

the social institutions demonstrate efficiency, while society observes the norms of morality and the laws.

In a poor country, democracy is poorly developed, which means that the aid should be fairly distributed, something which applies in particular to Tajikistan. The World Bank believes that state finances should acquire a special system of administration which would distribute the available means in the most effective way and ensure their rational and transparent use to reduce poverty and achieve macroeconomic sustainability.³²

The West believes that its aid (designed to promote economic growth and fight poverty) should be limited to the countries which pursue the “right” policies to develop and consolidate the civil society institutions. There is also a different opinion among economists: aid should be extended to all states irrespective of their policies; it should stimulate economic growth and should not punish people for the errors and blunders of the ruling elite.

In fact, in the absence of control over international organizations and objective assessments of their activities, everything done to extend financial aid to countries proved ineffective. Instead of giving the citizens of Third World countries maximum freedom and assistance to move them closer, to a certain degree, to well-being in the market economy, they are invited to get out of the poverty trap according to a unified plan concocted by international experts.³³

Fighting Corruption: “Much Depends on Our ‘No’”

The U.N. term “post-crisis setting” is used to envisage a wide range of measures designed to ensure observance of ethical norms and the anticorruption struggle in the public and private sectors. The banking secrecy principle should no longer interfere with the efforts to recover stolen assets.

Within the much-publicized Stolen Assets Recovery Initiative, the states should be actively assisted in their efforts in this direction. The U.N. Secretary-General has pointed out that corruption “weakens democratic institutions, undermines the rule of law and enables terrorists to finance their nefarious work.”³⁴

President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbaev deemed it necessary to stress that “fighting corruption is not a short-term campaign—it is one of the country’s important priorities. We should, at the same time, prevent account squaring under the guise of the anticorruption struggle.”³⁵ He believes it necessary to “submit to the Parliament, on a priority basis, drafts on scientific tests of all laws and by-laws, which should include their potential corruptibility.”³⁶

It should be said that these and other statements by the leaders of Soviet successor-states followed numerous similar statements made by President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev.

³² See: “Vsemirny bank vydellil Tajikistanu \$5 mln. na uluchshenie sistemy upravleniya gosudarstvennymi resursami,” 15 May, 2009, available at [www.un.org]; M. Brownbridge, S. Canagarajah, “How Should Fiscal Policy Respond to the Economic Crisis in the Low Income Commonwealth of Independent States? Some Pointers from Tajikistan,” June 2009, available at [www.worldbank.org].

³³ [http://www.inliberty.ru/library/study/352; http://www.inliberty.ru/library/authors/William_Easterly].

³⁴ Ban Ki-moon, *Secretary-General’s Message on International Anti-Corruption Day*, New York, 9 December, 2008, available at [www.un.org].

³⁵ N. Nazarbaev, “Vystuplenie na otkrytii III sessii Parlamenta RK chetvertogo sozyva.”

³⁶ N. Nazarbaev, “Zakliuchitel’noe vystuplenie na rasshirennom zasedanii Biuro Politsoveya partii,” 12 February, 2009.

It is commonly believed that in countries with a low level of economic freedom, corruption interferes with economic growth: wider corruption means limited competitiveness, which causes production decline.

From this it follows that wider economic freedom is the best and shortest road to bridling corruption. According to Ella Paneyakh, sociologist, Director of the Institute of the Rule of Law, European University at St. Petersburg, public organizations claiming to be civil society institutions “develop into phantoms designed to pump out money from foreign donors rather than from the budget.”³⁷

Introducing Innovations: “New Inventions Will Pull the World Out of the Crisis”

To close the gap that separates Central Asia and the Caucasus from Western Europe, America and Southeast Asia, the Central Asian and Caucasian countries should actively promote knowledge and novel approaches to R&D in the high-tech sphere.

Nobel laureate and futurist Alvin Toffler has the following to say about the future: because of the unlimited nature of knowledge, the state in a postindustrial society is merely unable to cover all spheres. The human brain and new inventions, rather than the economy, will pull the world out of the crisis.³⁸

President Nazarbaev has pointed out that to be efficient industrial policies “should rest on innovations and the latest knowledge and technologies. This means that we need a new Law on Science to formulate the principles according to which science will develop in Kazakhstan.”³⁹

He has specified that “technology can no longer assure the prosperity of any country or of the world as a whole—the countries with highly developed technologies have become the main source and the key cause of the global crisis.”⁴⁰

Some people in Uzbekistan are convinced that the country should “introduce the latest innovation technologies”⁴¹ based on the already elaborated strategic program for 2009-2014. The projects comprise about 450 investment documents related to the fuel and energy sphere, chemical, metallurgical, light and textile industries, and other economic branches totaling over \$24.0 billion; about \$18.5 billion of the total will be spent on new facilities, while about \$6.0 billion will cover the cost of modernization, reconstruction, and technical and technological retooling.

President of Kyrgyzstan Bakiev has pointed out: “Those who manage to master the innovation model of post-crisis development better and faster than the rest will win.”⁴²

President of Tajikistan Rakhmon believes that “the time has come to change the education system.” He suggested that “starting in September 2014, all secondary schools should be transferred to a new general education system in order to join the global general education sphere.”⁴³ The Tajik pres-

³⁷ E. Paneyakh, “Resursnoe gosudarstvo” Simona Kordonskogo: zametki na poliakh,” 5 March, 2009, available at [<http://www.liberal.ru/articles/cat/4212>].

³⁸ See: “Novosti konferentsii,” 17 September, 2009, available at [www.yaroslavl-2009.ru].

³⁹ N. Nazarbaev, “Vystuplenie na otkrytii III sessii Parlamenta RK chetvertogo sozyva.”

⁴⁰ N. Nazarbaev, “Piaty put,” *Izvestia*, 22 September, 2009.

⁴¹ I.A. Karimov, op. cit.

⁴² K. Bakiev, “Reforma obrazovania natselena na ukreplenie nezavisimosti i budushchee strany,” 10 June, 2009, available at [www.president.kg].

⁴³ E. Rakhmon, “Poslanie Majlisi Oli,” 15 April, 2009, available at [www.president.tj].

ident is convinced that exact sciences, thinking in technical terms, high technology, and an informational world outlook have become the factors that move the economy and shape the future.⁴⁴

Investments should obviously be channeled into the cities that have specific technical and technological potential.

In Kazakhstan, for example, Almaty is the most promising city, though in the future Kostanay, Pavlodar, and Karaganda may also become fairly attractive. There are plans to set up technopolises, free scientific zones, bio-agro ecopolises, etc.

Farmers: A Halleluiah rather than an Epitaph to the Middle Class

In the future, Uzbekistan is resolved to realize a “wide range of long-term and closely related measures designed to radically improve the standard of living and image of the countryside; to develop the social and production infrastructure on a priority basis; to revise in the most radical way the status, role, and importance of property owners, entrepreneurship and small businesses; and to extend all types of support to farmers.” The republic is busy “upgrading the sustainability and, most important, efficiency of farmsteads,” since “weak farmsteads are unable to acquire the necessary machinery or be sufficiently liquid; they cannot be described as solvent and, most important, they are unable to cover their expenses and create profits to become a reliable source of growing profits.”⁴⁵

According to the president of Tajikistan, the country should “master the latest achievements of science and technology on a great scale and in all fields; start using arable land as rationally and efficiently as possible, and take all possible measures to grow and store high-grade seeds of high-yielding plants, wheat in particular.”⁴⁶

In the other Central Asian and Caucasian countries, agricultural reforms are coordinated with their industrial development.

The middle class has grown poorer—this is described as one of the negative impacts of the global financial and economic crisis. One of the documents of the International Red Crescent says: “[A] sizable number of people in the middle class within the European Union and Central Asia are struggling to meet life’s basic needs.”⁴⁷

This means that after the crisis the middle class—entrepreneurs and farmers—should become the main target of socio-economic reforms.

General Strategy for the Post-Crisis World: “Harmony is the Key to Prosperity”

According to the U.N., there are several major elements in the common strategy to overcome the crisis and shape the post-crisis world. They are:

⁴⁴ See: E. Rakhmon, “Televizionnoe obrashchenie ko dnu gosudarstvennoy nezavisimosti,” available at [www.president.tj].

⁴⁵ I.A.Karimov, op. cit.

⁴⁶ E. Rakhmon, “Obrashchenie k zemledeltсам I narodu strany,” 27 July, 2009, available at [www.president.tj].

⁴⁷ *The Economic Crisis and Its Humanitarian Impact on Europe*, Testimonies from the Red Cross Red Crescent, October 2009, available at [www.redcross-eu.net].

- making responsible and sustainable use of limited natural resources;
- putting the economy back in its proper place in society;
- spreading democracy to all social relations and institutions;
- building a minimum ethos on the basis on multicultural exchange and the philosophical and religious traditions of peoples; strengthening a spiritual vision of the world.⁴⁸

In one of his speeches President Rakhmon rightly pointed out that “a new fair arrangement of the contemporary world can be achieved not on the balance of power but on the balance of interests; not by seeking profits at the expense of others but seeking balance and consensus; not through unilateral claims and arbitrary rule but through mutual respect. These are the principles easily grasped by all reasonable people on the strength of experience accumulated throughout centuries.”⁴⁹

President of Turkmenistan Berdymukhammedov believes that “there are no and should be no barriers where factors of good-neighborliness, territorial proximity, and spiritual affinity are complemented with honesty, straightforwardness, common sense, and transparent intentions, in short everything that has become especially precious during the world crisis and joint efforts to find a way out.”⁵⁰

Some people in Central Asia believe that cooperation with and aid to the developing countries, “especially to the land-locked countries, should not add to their debt burden but, on the contrary, help them achieve sustainable development and strengthen their national potential to stand opposed to this and similar crises.”⁵¹

The fact that the Central Asian and Caucasian leaders involve experts in the public discussions can be described as highly positive. On the one hand, this invites the creative forces of civil society to provide an adequate response and thus be involved in a dialog; on the other, this is a channel through which political leaders can communicate with the nation in an emotional way.

The leaders of the Central Asian and Caucasian countries agree that in the new, post-crisis world, egoism and greed should be replaced with solidarity; the leaders of many other smaller countries, especially in Eurasia, agree with this.

To achieve a qualitatively new stage, that of “ethics of common good” based on respect for each and every individual, responsibility, and cooperation, the global economy should be enriched with universal ethical norms.

⁴⁸ See: *United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, New York, 24-26 June, 2009. Opening Session Address of H.E. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, President of the United Nations General Assembly*, available at [www.un.org/ga/econcrisissummit].

⁴⁹ E. Rakhmon, “Vystuplenie na 15-m zasedanii glav gosudarstv i pravitelstv stran Dvizhenia neprisoedinenia,” 16 July, 2009, available at [www.president.tj].

⁵⁰ “K itogam visita Prezidenta Turkmenistana v Iran,” 7 February, 2009, Electronic newspaper *Turkmenistan: The Golden Age*” available at [www.turkmenistan.gov.tm].

⁵¹ “Kazakhstan prizval likvidirovat’ bariery na puti tovarov gosudarstv, otrezannykh ot moria,” 20 October, 2009, available at [www.un.org].