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IN THIS ISSUE:

CIVIL SOCIETY

- Bakhodir Ergashev.** CIVIL FORUMS IN CENTRAL ASIA:
GOALS, SPECIFICS, POTENTIAL 7

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

- Kamoliddin Rabbimov.** HIZB UT-TAHRIR—LEADER
OF THE ISLAMIST ANTIDEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN 15
- Odil Ruzaliev.** THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN:
LINES TO COMPLETE THE PORTRAIT 21
- Imam Iaraliev.** RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AS A FORM
OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME
IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS 32
- Daniel Linotte,
Leif Erik Aune.** THE ECONOMICS OF CONFLICTS (CIVIL WAR,
TERRORISM AND SEPARATISM): SELECTED ISSUES,
FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY LESSONS 41

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

- Robert Bruce Ware.** CIVIL WAR IN CHECHNIA: POLITICAL FAILURE AND
STRATEGIC RESPONSE 53

- Mikhail Savva.** ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS:
CONFLICT POTENTIAL 61

ETHNIC RELATIONS AND POPULATION MIGRATION

- Aygul Zabirova.** RURAL-TO-URBAN AND CITY-TO-CITY MIGRATIONS
IN KAZAKHSTAN: MOTIVES AND RESULTS 71
- Ainura Elebaeva.** LABOR MIGRATION IN KYRGYZSTAN 78
- Jamshed Kuddusov.** MIGRATION PROBLEMS IN TAJIKISTAN 86
- Viktor Viktorin.** THE LOWER REACHES OF THE VOLGA AND
THE NORTHERN CASPIAN AT THE CROSSROADS:
TIME AND PEOPLE, PAST AND PRESENT 90
- Sergei Murtuzaliev.** ETHNOPOLITICAL PROCESSES
IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS AND
THEIR ASSESSMENT BY THE POPULATION 98
- Sergei Rumiantsev.** THE INFLUENCE OF URBANIZATION ON FORMING
THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF AZERBAIJAN SOCIETY 105
- Vladimir Volgin.** THE MIGRATION SITUATION AND
MIGRATION POLICY IN KALMYKIA 110
- Anatoli Momrik.** CAUCASIAN DIASPORAS IN UKRAINE 119

RELIGION IN SOCIETY

- Rauf A. Guseyn-zadeh.** RELIGION AND POLITICS: INTERACTION AGAINST
AN AZERBAIJANIAN BACKGROUND 127

REGIONAL POLITICS

- Li Lifan, Ding Shiwu.** GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS OF RUSSIA,
THE U.S. AND CHINA IN CENTRAL ASIA 139
- Farkhod Tolipov.** ON THE ROLE OF
THE CENTRAL ASIAN COOPERATION ORGANIZATION
WITHIN THE SCO 146
- Farkhad Aliev.** RUSSIA-AZERBAIJAN: BACK TO THE BEGINNING? 155

- Nurlan Aliev.** COOPERATION BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS 161
- Muratbek Azymbakiev.** KYRGYZSTAN-EUROPEAN UNION: FACETS OF COOPERATION 167

REGIONAL ECONOMIES

- Murat Kenisarin.** THE ENERGY SECTOR OF UZBEKISTAN: PRESENT STATE AND PROBLEMS 172
- Abu Avtorkhanov.** MECHANISM FOR RESTORING THE AGROINDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IN CHECHNIA AS A FACTOR OF POLITICAL STABILIZATION IN THE REGION 178

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Special Feature section in the next issue will discuss:

Central Asia and the Caucasus

- World and Regional Centers of Power and their Impact on the Regional Situation
- Energy Policy and Energy Projects
- Political Development Trends in the Context of International Antiterrorist Campaign

CIVIL SOCIETY

**CIVIL FORUMS
IN CENTRAL ASIA:
GOALS, SPECIFICS, POTENTIAL**

Bakhodyr ERGASHEV

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In Central Asia, society is divided into three segments: the power vertical, business structures, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which largely interact in keeping with time-tested international practices. What is more, the historical-cultural and national-religious characteristics of the region's countries are modifying the structure

of civil society in ways that are turning the nationwide consolidation processes into something of a mindbender for researchers. This, together with the growing geopolitical role of the Central Asian countries, is giving research of the evolution of democratic institutions in these republics vital scientific significance.

**The Historical and
External Environment**

In the official political vocabulary of the region's countries, the very term "civil society" did not come into active use until the second half of the 1990s. Although, for example, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev states that "our history has essentially had no experience of a civil society,"¹ this in no way means that the leaders of the Central Asian states are not paying attention to this problem. The facts confirm that in the 20th century alone peaks of interest in a civil society occurred in the 1910s, the 1920s-1930s, the 1960s-1970s, and during the second half of the 1980s. Whereby the most productive in terms of constructive results can be considered the pre-revolutionary and perestroika periods.

¹ *Speech by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev at the Civil Forum (Astana, 15 October, 2003)* [www.president.kz].

For example, M. Bekhbudi, a prominent representative of the region's intelligentsia, leader of the Turkestan jadids (the end of the 19th-beginning of the 20th centuries), and "father" of local positivism, openly called for the constructive analysis and dissemination of ideological pluralism. In particular, by criticizing the Marxist theory, he recognized the need for comprehensive development of patronage of the arts, national consolidation, and youth reformation.² The informal movements of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, which arose at the end of the 1980s, also played a certain positive role in the revival of civil self-awareness. (The whimsical symbiosis of the constructive wing of the national communist parties, the patriotic vector of the cooperative movement, and the intellectual stratum of the "people's fronts" that came with "perestroika" is still awaiting its researcher.)

As becomes clear from the multitude of facts, civil self-awareness in post-communist Central Asia was also indirectly stimulated by the political processes not only in the Baltic states alienated from the U.S.S.R., but also in Eastern Europe.³ In the experience of the European countries, particularly regarding organizing "public consent" measures, the local intelligentsia was fascinated by their "velvet" and effective nature. The successful political fate of Czech presidents Vaclav Gavel and Vaclav Klaus, who by means of civil forums managed to unite all the constructive forces, ensure their victory at the parliamentary elections, and carry out socioeconomic reforms, only confirmed the expediency of using European traditions.

Russia, the closest nation to us in past and present mentality, was unable to put a system of civil forums into practice until the 21st century. One of the initiators, Gleb Pavlovskiy, head of the Efficient Policy Foundation, believes that such forums make it possible, first, to carry out an "inventory" of power, second, to involve society in resolving state problems, and third, to adjust the program of the powers that be on the eve of parliamentary elections.⁴ But in Russian society there were also voices that spoke out "against," maintaining that in this way the authorities were trying to "lasso" a civil society. In any case, the fact that Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the opening of the Civil Forum on 21 November, 2001, and that the Russian government adopted the "List of Measures to Implement the Results of the Civil Forum" on 14 February, 2002, had a certain influence on the spread of the forum's ideas in Central Asia as well.

Program Precepts

Civil forums usually carry out four main tasks in transitional societies: they confirm the general adherence to democratic values, draw up principles for strengthening cooperation among the power vertical, business structures, and NGOs, stabilize the sociopolitical situation, and reinforce the human factor. This form of democratic participation is usually effective only if it is ongoing, and if the activity of the executive structures of the civil forum is also continuous.

Transformation of the "third sector" into a factor of maturity of the democratic processes, on the one hand, and a component of the country's international image, on the other, makes it possible to view NGOs not only as a subject, but also as an object of the state's national security. In other words, of all the elements of the triad (power vertical-business structures-NGOs), the "third sector" is considered the most mobile, the most independent, and in so doing, is very authoritative at the international level. In this way, the dialog between the state and NGOs is considered compulsory and necessary.

In Central Asia, local civil forums were held in one way or another as early as the end of the 1990s-beginning of the 2000s. For example, in Uzbekistan, one of them was organized within the framework of

² See: Oina-Samarkand, No. 32, 1914, p. 623b; Khurriat-Samarkand, 3 May, 1917. For more detail, see: *Uzbekistan na puti k grazhdanskomu obshchestvu*, Shark, Tashkent, 2003, p. 91.

³ See, for example: "Rukovodstvuias obshchenatsionalnymi interesami," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 18 January, 2003.

⁴ See: G. Pavlovskiy, *Grazhdanskii forum dolzhen polozhit nachalo formirovaniuu obshchestvennogo shtaba prezident-skoi kampanii* [www.rambler.ru/db/news].

a project by the Izhtimoi fikr Public Opinion Research Center (the republic's largest sociological service) along with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Germany). These first initiatives were distinguished by a certain theme⁵ (including the Uzbekistan forum mentioned) and were aimed, in particular, at raising the legal education of women and activating their participation in the country's economic, political, social, and scientific life.

In Kazakhstan, the idea of a national civil forum was expressed in the president's Message to the people in April 2003. But the head of state qualified such an undertaking as a "republic-wide congress of nongovernmental organizations" and gave instructions for it to be held during the second half of 2004.⁶ If we take into account that there are approximately 4,500 NGOs in this republic, which employ about 35,000 people on a full-time basis, and 50,000 part-time (consultants and experts), with more than 100,000 volunteers, Nursultan Nazarbaev's idea is quite pertinent for Kazakhstan. It seems to us that when organizing "public consent" measures, the authorities of the Central Asian states were motivated by a desire to achieve national consolidation of society on the eve of the elections.

What is more, the so-called Partner Forum held in July 2003 in Kyrgyzstan and attended by the country's president demonstrated two organizational-technical difficulties characteristic of holding such undertakings not only in Central Asia, but also in other post-Soviet countries: defining the members of the working group and the quotas of regional representatives. But as the head of state himself noted, "it is not representation of all the people that is important, but representation of all the ideas."⁷ It is worth noting that this forum, which was the fourth major national meeting of the country's NGOs, was preceded by a discussion in which all of its sociopolitical forces participated. An important role in the forum's success was played by the "Ten Principles of Partnership and Stability" adopted 15 days earlier at a round table in the republic's parliament.

The authorities of Tajikistan, on the other hand, are placing greater significance on nascent businesses in their relations with public institutions. It is worth noting that in his program speech on 4 April, 2003, President Emamoli Rakhmonov called private property "one of the main prerequisites for the existence of a civil society."⁸ Nevertheless, the obvious weakness of the business structures in many of the region's districts does not allow business structures to be an equal component of the above-mentioned triad.

The national NNO forum held in Uzbekistan⁹ in August 2003 confirmed another general trait of the largest Central Asian "consent" undertakings—broad international support both by sponsors, and by the mass media. The recommendations adopted by the members of this forum to international charity foundations and organizations in planning and implementing their own projects can be classified as one of the forum's special features. Open orientation toward active participation of the electorate in the upcoming parliamentary elections was expressed at the Second Forum of Women's NNOs held in December 2003 in Tashkent.

It is possible to single out five general indices of the effectiveness of democratic institutions, in particular of "consent measures:" access of the broad masses of the population to these structures; their maximum financial support from the state and international organizations; linguistic diversity, linguistic parity, and cultural communality; expansion of the sphere of communication among NGOs; sincerity and trust of all three sides (power vertical-business structures-NGOs).

⁵ Held on 29-30 October, 1998, the Forum of Women's Nongovernmental Organizations of Tajikistan was distinguished, for example, by specific proposals to the authorities, international organizations, and NGOs, as well as by the priorities of the gender theme.

⁶ See: N. Nazarbaev, *Main Areas of Domestic and Foreign Policy for 2004. The Message of the President of the Country to the people of Kazakhstan*, Astana, 4 April, 2003 [<http://www.president.kz>].

⁷ A. Akaev, *Speech at the opening of the Partner Forum "Kyrgyz Statehood of the Third Millennium: New Ways and Mechanisms of Partnership of State Power and a Civil Society"* [<http://www.president.kg>].

⁸ E. Rakhmonov, *Otvetstvennost' za budushchee natsii*. Speech by the Tajikistan President to the Majlisi oli [www.tajikistan.ru].

⁹ NNO—In Uzbekistan: nongovernmental noncommercial organization.

National Innovations

The leaders of the Central Asian states understand the building of a civil society in different ways. For example, the seven priorities for strengthening democratization proclaimed in Uzbekistan primarily include ensuring independence, strengthening security and stability, and creating a market infrastructure, thus underlining the fundamental role of the state in this question.¹⁰ The President of Kyrgyzstan singles out “three main tasks in developing democracy:” maintaining an atmosphere of positive striving and social optimism, completing formation of the democratic institutions, and creating a strong vertical of representative democracy.¹¹ It appears that these two approaches nevertheless show the dilemma of choosing between comprehensiveness, on the one hand, and breadth of conceptual approaches, on the other.

National innovations are even more apparent using the example of the transitional organizational structures that exist in all of the Central Asian countries of interaction between the power vertical and civil society. For example, the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights (NIDHR), which exists in Turkmenistan, can be seen as a kind of bridge between the state and the “third sector.”

President Askar Akaev called the Public Council of Democratic Security (PCDS) of Kyrgyzstan an “absolutely unique structure.”¹² The PCDS’s experience in monitoring implementation of the national human rights program and drawing up the Democratic Code project is interesting for other states. And it is worth noting the council’s right to “hear the reports of directors of state structures, local self-government structures, other organizations and institutions on questions regarding the protection of human rights and freedoms.” It is also expedient to qualify this structure’s ability to present corresponding recommendations to the president and republic’s government as a good lesson. But the PCDS is inevitably acquiring political functions, since this organization is a kind of indicator of the state of democracy in the country.

The Tajikistan National Unity and Revival Movement (TNURM) created in July 1997 “unites the efforts of different social strata and forces to establish strong civil peace, mutual trust, and consent.”¹³ This experience of resolving civil problems within the political movement deserves close analysis, even if only because TNURM is headed by the president and this movement has effective channels for strengthening social partnership.

In Kazakhstan (also under the patronage of the head of state) there is a Standing Assembly for Drawing up Proposals on Further Democratization and Development of the Civil Society. Judging from the decisions made (Memorandum on Adherence to Democratization and Development of a Civil Society, several important resolutions on questions of judicial and legal reform, the activity of the mass media, etc.), the Standing Assembly is demonstrating the same efficiency as the civil forum and has successfully involved oppositional political organizations in its activity.

The Institute for Civil Society Research (ICSR), which opened in Uzbekistan in June 2003, could become one of the largest NNOs. For example, as early as the second half of 2003, it held 20 round tables on questions of social partnership and, at the request of the political parties, organized a scientific experts’ examination of their program documents. With the assistance of public and state structures, the institute is creating a national data base of “21st Century Leaders.” The proposals and recommendations of the ICSR, which were formulated taking public opinion into account as much as possible, form the basis of many legislative acts.

All the named structures (the NIDHR, PCDS, TNURM, Standing Assembly, and ICSR) reflect the national models for building a civil society. In so doing, great attention is paid to economic, political,

¹⁰ See: I.A. Karimov, “Osnovnye napravleniya dal’neishego uglubleniya demokraticheskikh preobrazovaniy i formirovaniya osnov grazhdanskogo obshchestva. Doklad na IX sessii Olii Majlisa Respubliki Uzbekistan vtorogo sozyva 29 avgusta 2002 g.,” *Narodnoe slovo*, 30 August, 2002.

¹¹ See: A. Akaev, *Speech at the Opening of the Partner Forum...*

¹² A. Akaev, *Speech at the Opening of the Partner Forum...*

¹³ According to official data, there are currently more than 1,000 NGOs active in the republic, many of them participated actively in implementing the Public Consent Treaty in Tajikistan.

legal and social issues. They include: the extent to which market relations have been established in different countries, as well as the middle class as the foundation and guarantor of a civil society; the rates at which government and society are being democratized; the presence of budget assignments (albeit in the form of social state orders) and foreign sponsor investments in NGOs; the quality of the population's life, citizens' interest in socially beneficial labor and complete information; perfection of the legislative base for developing democratic institutions; attitude toward intellectual labor and the extent of the "brain drain."

It seems to us that there is no need to look for any social threat in nationalizing democratic institutions. As Manuel Castells wrote on a similar issue, "in order to retain a steady course in the midst of a variety of different currents, there must be a reference point, there must be an anchor. This anchor is originality."¹⁴ In addition to this, it can be said that originality only accelerates or slows down the inevitable transition to democracy, but in no way destroys it.

Difficulties and Dangers

Civil forums in the region, no matter what auspices they are held under (the Partner Forum, the NNO Forum, and so on), have the same difficulties in common.

- These are, first, the problems mentioned above (using the example of Kyrgyzstan) in creating working structures and promoting delegates. Russian experience shows that these problems can be resolved by granting basic and additional quotas. The basic quotas are calculated according to the size of the region's population and the additional quotas with the aid of an experts' evaluation of public activity in the region and advantages for cities with a population of more than one million. In our opinion, under Central Asian conditions (with its large territory, rural population, and absence of development indices for civil society institutions), a series of preparatory provincial civil forums is more important than quotas.¹⁵ (Incidentally, in the Russian Federation, they were held in Kaliningrad, Cheliabinsk, Perm, Nizhny Novgorod, Tiumen, Krasnoyarsk, Sakhalin, Buriatia, and so on).
- Second, they are very expensive to hold, which against the background of the difficulties of the transition period, society may sometimes perceive as blasphemy (for example, according to the mass media, the civil forum in Russia cost the treasury 1.5 million dollars). Nevertheless experience shows that this is not a case where the strictest economy is needed (after all the NGOs themselves, thanks to their charitable activity, save the state dozens of times more money!). Under Central Asian conditions, by way of an alternative to such high expenses, it is desirable to attract the funds of international organizations.
- Third, due to the difference in starting conditions and degree of development of market relations, it is quite difficult to involve businessmen and other representatives of the nascent middle class. In particular, it is difficult to convince the relatively young stratum of businessmen that helping NGOs is not a quittance, but a social requirement, even greater than paying taxes. In this sense, Kazakhstan's experience is interesting, where the first open contest to implement socially significant projects was held among NGOs and the 20 best were chosen, which were then financed from the budget. This is a graphic example of how it is possible to "instigate" the interest of commercial structures in the "third sector."

We can single out three dangers among those befalling civil forums in the region, designating them as "buffoonery," "dressing up for show," and "duping." The forum really can be limited to a simple state-

¹⁴ See: M. Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society, Culture*, Vol. 2, Blackwell, Oxford, 1997, p. 2.

¹⁵ As an example of positive initiative, we could present the interregional forums held in Uzbekistan by NNOs of the Karakalpakstan Autonomous Republic and the Khorezm Region.

ment of public opinion, or turn into a garrulous show-piece, thus being socially ineffective. Since the president is guarantor of the constitution, he, as the experience of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan ascertains, should also be the “first fiddle” (but not the “conductor”) of the forum. In the triad mentioned above, “the power vertical” is still the most powerful element in terms of resources, and as such it is the state that should “be lenient” toward society and give it the opportunity to speak up, without forgetting in so doing to activate the economic and financial levers favorable to the “third sector.”

Taking into account the strategic partnership between several of the region’s states and the U.S., there is a great temptation to turn the forum into a show intended exclusively for diplomatic representative structures and foreign journalists. All of the participants in the forums organized in Central Asia should, in our opinion, proceed from two fundamental premises: realizing vitally important national interests and creating a favorable international image for their country. It frequently happens that the representative offices of international organizations are not completely informed about the state of the countries involved and the mentality of the actors in the political processes, which distorts their view of how a civil society is being formed in these states and sometimes causes it not to correlate with the strategic tasks of the countries whose interests they are supposed to be defending.¹⁶ One of the sensitive topics relating to civil forums is participation in them by the opposition.

And finally, it is difficult to agree with the opinion about the need for strict regulation of civil forums. “Gentle” regulation presumes, as already mentioned above, personal presentation of a report by the head of state. Restriction of representatives, regulation of debates, and a lack of real results, on the contrary, only reduce the efficiency of these meetings. In this respect, it is necessary to emphasize the negative impact on civil society of the ideas of “controllable democracy” currently being spread in Central Asia,¹⁷ which are promulgating ultra-patriotism, restricted parliamentarianism and freedom of the regions, a ban on objective political and economic analysis, reduction of the role of the mass media, and introducing censorship.

First Results

Based on the “forum palette” study of the Central Asian states in 1996-2003, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- First, a national mechanism of systematic restoration of the data base on nongovernmental organizations at the central and regional level is being created in each of its republics. For several reasons, particularly taking into account the declared liberalization of public life, the justice structures may not (and should not) coordinate the activity of NGOs. In this respect, as well as due to insufficient information about so-called “initiative groups” (clubs, activity groups, and so on, which are frequently not registered due to the high registration fees and other expenses imposed by the current legal requirements), the secretariat of the Civil Forum could be responsible for this coordination.
- Second, NGOs are being increasingly involved in resolving specific socioeconomic tasks. In this respect, we must agree with Alexander Pochinok, who at one time as head of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of Russia, noted: “Civil forums (in the RF.—*B.E.*) are decreasing the work volume of the social ministries. We need to move away from the model where all social protection is concentrated in the hands of the state. If every NGO took ten people in need of social protection under its wing, there would not really be any need for the ministries.”¹⁸

¹⁶ We would like to limit ourselves here to only two examples illustrating our thesis: discussion at the end of 2003 by the civil society institutions in Kazakhstan of the new law on mass media, as well as the scientific polemics around the *Ethnic Atlas of Uzbekistan* published with help from the Soros Foundation.

¹⁷ In any case, as Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez noted, we need to talk not about controllable democracy, but about democratic controllability.

¹⁸ A. Pochinok, *Printsip finansirovaniia sotsialnoi sfery neobkhodimo meniat* [<http://www.robalt.ru>].

A similar assessment also applies to Central Asia. It is particularly worth underlying the improvement of legislation on the state financing of nongovernmental organization projects.

- Third, the expert consultation potential of NGOs is being increasingly recruited for government purposes. Due to the continuing “brain drain” from the region and the fact that many qualified analysts are moving to work in international organizations, the question of involving (on a volunteer basis) nongovernmental intellectual potential in resolving government tasks is becoming particularly topical. The civil forum is promoting the formation of a broader data base on the personnel fund, which can be used by the state, businesses, and the “third sector” itself.
- Fourth, the ranks of the so-called volunteer movement are expanding and strengthening. The NGOs of Central Asia have acquired valuable experience in using the population’s volunteer resources. Moreover, socioeconomic difficulties (unemployment, migration, etc.), on the one hand, and “transit” phenomena (lack of spirituality, apathy, etc.), on the other, are dramatically increasing the need for volunteers, particularly of those recruited from among young people.
- Fifth, the outlines of state development conceptions for NGOs and their activity programs for the future are forming. (A conception, for example, forms the strategy, while a program forms specific state support measures of the “third sector.”) These documents define the optimal model of interrelations between the state and NGOs. What is more, as experience shows, when drawing up such documents, public opinion must be taken into account as much as possible.

According to our estimates, approximately 2,500 NNOs have been created in Uzbekistan (including territorial divisions and initiative groups). Approximately 17,000 people are employed in these structures full-time, with 26,600 on a part-time basis (consultants and experts), and 53,000 volunteers, that is, approximately 96,600 people are active in the “third sector.” To one degree or another, approximately 2.7 million of the republic’s citizens enjoy the services of NGOs. These organizations have become the only way to attract nongovernmental investments into the humanitarian field.

For example, among the most general indices of the effectiveness of “consent measures” characteristic of all the Central Asian states, we will note the following: the change in dimensions of the “third sector;” its expression of the real needs of democratic development; the number of grant-giving organizations, including state-owned; the level of involvement of NGOs in the social sphere, their resolution of gender problems, environmental issues, and so on; the influence of nongovernmental organizations on the state decision-making process, their participation in law-making; and governmental policy regarding NGOs.

Forecasts and Proposals

Talking about the near future, first, national forums of the “third sector” will soon become organizationally independent of state structures and have stronger financial backing.¹⁹ Second, the stronger interregional NGO forums (for example, in the Ferghana Valley located on the territory of three republics of the region) will promote even greater interaction between the state and civil society.²⁰ Third, it is quite likely that with successful regional integration, further specialization can be expected of both state (media, gender, environmental, and so on) and interstate forums. Fourth, interstate forums in particular will become the main catalyst for regional integration, by eliminating citizens’ psychological and intellectual discomfort. Fifth, interstate forums can be thematic and address a particular topical theme of domestic or

¹⁹ It seems that the time will come in Central Asia when the participation of the power vertical in the triumvirate of civil society becomes proportional to the participation of business and the “third sector.”

²⁰ As predecessors of the efficient interregional forums, we can single out the Central Asian Youth Congress (2-24 October, 2002), the Central Asian Meeting of Leaders of Women’s NGOs (14-16 October, 2003), and several others. We can also refer to the experience of progressive countries, for example, to interregional civil forums of North European countries held within the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

even foreign policy. It seems to us that the main “forum” driving force will be young people, who, in contrast to people of the older generation, will be able to more successfully correlate market and democratic values.

We would single out the following topics that are pertinent for discussion at interstate civil forums of Central Asia: ethnic relations, the development of local self-government, judicial-legal reform, the penitentiary system, banning torture, youth policy, military reform and alternative service, combating terrorism and religious extremism, the problems of the Aral Sea and Sarez Lake, eliminating customs barriers, ensuring access to information, abolishing censorship, improving the normative-legal basis, and so on. Creating an interstate support center, Info-Center NGO, can be recommended as a step toward strengthening interregional integration of the “third sector” based on the Kazakhstan analogy.

* * *

Civil forums in Central Asia, as public institutions gaining in momentum and taking into account the national specifics of their particular country, are becoming an important factor of democratization. On the whole, they are in tune with the centuries-long traditions of the region and are based on human values and models that have time-tested by world practice. It is not just a matter of ensuring that parliamentary and presidential elections are well organized, a national idea as such in any form requires systematic rallying of all constructive forces, and this is something only a civil forum is capable of doing.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

**HIZB UT-TAHRIR—LEADER OF
THE ISLAMIST
ANTIDEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN**

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Samuel Huntington has described the future of the world as a clash of civilizations, especially of the democratic (Western) and Islamic worlds. The relations between their ideologies are moving in this direction: there is general antagonism in this sphere; aware of its material-financial and military-political superiority, the liberal West has become too aggressive. This has increased the radicalism and animosity of the Islamic groups fighting for human minds, particu-

larly in ideological terms. In his article “The Road from Tashkent to the Taliban,” Zeyno Baran, director for international-security and energy programs at the Nixon Center, was quite right when he said: “It is time to name the war correctly: this is a war of ideologies, and terrorist acts are the tip of the iceberg.”¹

¹ Z. Baran, “The Way from Tashkent to Taliban” [www.nationalreview.org], 2 April, 2004.

**Terrorist Acts
in Tashkent and Bukhara**

In late March and early April 2004 Tashkent and Bukhara were shaken by a series of terrorist acts very different from the incursions we witnessed in 1999-2001. The “shakhid belts,” women as suicide terrorists, the demonstrative attacks on the militia, and the powerful blasts that create pyrotechnical effects are novel elements. Tashkent and Bukhara, two cities that suffered from the terrorist attacks, and the rest of Uzbekistan were living in an unannounced state of emergency. The country, hitherto a pillar of

stability in Central Asia, was once more confronted with terror; the state and society were dragged through a grave moral, political, and psychological test.

An extensive discussion of terrorism, as well as of the global nature of this threat and the antiterrorist struggle has been resumed. The antiterrorist units launched a special operation: a term that is becoming a household one among the Uzbeks.

The operational-search and investigative measures that were carried out hot on the heels of those responsible for the night attacks on the militia (and their accomplices) in places where they could have found shelter turned up a huge number of "shakhid belts" and metal bits and pieces they are stuffed with, detonators, descriptions of how to assemble parts into an explosive device, more than ten sacks of ammoniac saltpeter, barrels with powdered aluminum, several thousand cartridges for automatic guns, and all sorts of religious-extremist publications.

It turned out that the terrorists had planned to blast the Bukhara-Palace Hotel, a synagogue, the Dilkusho market building, the mayor's office, and the regional department of internal affairs; in Tashkent their targets were the U.S. embassy, the Intercontinental Hotel, the National Security Service building, and the head of state's out-of-town residence.

The law enforcement bodies are still working on the case; their operational-search and investigative actions have already prevented several large-scale terrorist acts; they detained several suspects for organizing and carrying out terrorist acts, as well as several possible accomplices. There is information that these people had contacts abroad and that these actions were of an international nature. It has been established that many of the criminals were trained in terrorist camps in Pakistan and other countries.

Experts are convinced that the physical evidence gathered and the fact that some of the detained were known to the law enforcement bodies prove beyond a doubt that the terrorists were members of religious-extremist structures (the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, IMU, the World Front of Jihad, and Hizb ut-Tahrir).

At a briefing on the terrorist acts and investigation results, the republic's Public Prosecutor-General said that it had been established that several groups (jamoats) have been acting in Tashkent and the Bukhara and Tashkent regions (vilaiats) since 2000. Their actions can be described as the most dangerous type of religious-extremist terror. The investigating groups have also established that the suicide terrorists of the jamoats were guided by the ideas of Hizb ut-Tahrir, combined with the radical elements of the ideas preached by the Islamic Movement of Turkestan and other extremist Islamic trends. The information already gathered proves beyond a doubt that the jamoats are the grass-root cells of Hizb ut-Tahrir, a sort of factory that turns young Muslims into terrorists with the help of ideology and gradual inculcation of the ideas of radical extremism. According to the statements of the detained, they were subjected to brainwashing, which planted the ideas of "jihad" in their minds.

Ideological pressure makes use of illegal audio, video and printed matter and DVDs calling for overthrowing the constitutional order by force and setting up an Islamic state, which in the future would make up part of a single Caliphate.

A leaflet called *Zhikhodiy amaliyeta kandy kirishlyk* (How to Join in the Practice of Jihad) was found on many terrorists; it contained detailed descriptions of how to gather the strategic and tactical information needed to perform an action of jihad and to ensure safety of the jamoat members in the process. The documents, statements, and eyewitness accounts suggest that there is a strong hierarchically arranged criminal structure headed by one person (the so-called Chief Amir). Operating from abroad he oversees the jamoats, coordinates their activity and contacts with other international extremist structures, and looks after finances and training in specialized camps.

So far no complete analysis of the events in Tashkent and Bukhara is possible: investigation is still going on. It is for the court of justice to pass the final verdict, yet today we have to answer questions about these terrorist acts and the problem of terrorism as a whole. Indeed, why was Uzbekistan selected as a target? What drove the Uzbek women to suicidal attacks? Are these acts part of a wider offensive of international terrorism (Russia, Spain, Iraq, etc.) or are they local efforts? There are no final or reliable answers to these questions, therefore here I shall analyze only one aspect of the problem.

Since the late 1990s Central Asia has been the victim of periodical flare-ups of terrorism. No one doubts that terrorism is rooted in extremist pseudo-religious ideology. It seems that to successfully fight terrorism we should resolutely oppose the spread of this ideology.

Democracy and the Hizb ut-Tahrir Ideology

Islam, a very complicated world religion, offers no unambiguous answer (either positive or negative) about its attitude toward democracy.

The ulema, clerics, and other prominent figures of the Muslim world have worked out a sort of methodology: if someone wants to prove that Islam and democracy do not contradict each other, he starts with their philosophies and points out that both highly value human life and honor. Certain Islamic institutions (such as the shura, or council) are likened to parliaments, political parties, madhabs, etc. Those who want to prove that Islam and democracy are opposing systems point out that in the past Christianity and Islam were enemies; that the social functions of both systems are different, etc.²

Many experts on religion say that an impartial investigation of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam shows that some of their tenets can be interpreted as democratic or authoritarian.³

This vagueness (present in many other specific issues) adds importance to the interpreters of the Koran, Sunnah and Shari'ah as divine instruction and the source of Muslim law and ethics. In other words, the interpreters act as intermediaries between God and the faithful; they are also the guardians of divine order and interpreters of ideals. This makes them privy to serving the Divinity; the nature of their religious knowledge allows its bearers to exercise spiritual and moral guidance of the community of the faithful in the name of religion.⁴ It is for the clerics to decide when any of the original texts should be used and how they should be interpreted. Unable to argue or check the use and interpretation, the faithful have to accept them as God's position on the issue. In certain circumstances the choice of text is all-important. This gives the clerics (the ulema and the clergy), who have good command of Arabic and a good knowledge of the main Islamic texts, the Koran and Sunnah, a monopoly on interpretation, explanation, and use of the holy texts.

To create a better idea of the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology I would like to quote the words of a prominent Muslim figure Seyed Mohammad Khatami: "At all times, passion and hatred, the two gravest ailments, have proved to be the main obstacle to a correct understanding of Western civilization as the greatest event in recent human history. Burdened with passion or hatred, reformers and those who wanted to restore the old traditions suffered from extremism or idleness. They lost their road in the struggle between traditions and innovations."⁵

Charged with anti-Western emotions Hizb ut-Tahrir has aimed the entire range of grudges and ire against the West; it outright rejects everything that is connected with its "godless" way of life, while Western democracy, especially the human rights principle, has been proclaimed the source of all evil. Therefore, according to the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology, recognition of democratic principles and their implementation in Muslim society is a grave sin against the genuinely faithful followers of Islam.⁶

² Discussions of the relations between Islam and democracy are very much in vogue now. The clerics and liberally minded philosophers insist on a very similar or even close nature of both systems, while radical Islamists concentrate on their differences.

³ This is what Azerbaijanian specialist in Islam Hikmet Hajji-zadeh thinks (see: *NG-Religia*, No. 004 (16), 15 April, 1998.)

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the role of the clergy and Muslim clerics see: Z.I. Levin, "K voprosu o sotsial'noy roli musul'manskogo dukhovenstva," *Islam i sotsial'nye struktury stran Blizhnego i Srednego Vostoka*. Collection of articles, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1990, p. 130.

⁵ Seyed Mohammad Khatami, *Traditsia i mysli vo vlasi avtoritarizma*, Moscow State University Press, Moscow, 2001, p. 9.

⁶ It is well known that Hizb ut-Tahrir regularly explains its attitude toward democracy in books and leaflets such as *Hizb ut-Tahrir and Kalifat* (The Caliphate). The party has published several books on the subject: *Demokratia—sistema neveria* (Democracy is a Faithless System) that condemns acceptance of democracy as a blasphemy. All its program works have been translated into the Central Asian languages.

The Hizb ut-Tahrir's Radical Ideology and Its Assessment in the West

Like many other radical organizations, Hizb ut-Tahrir has found favorable conditions in the West. Unlike the Muslim countries, the West is less concerned with radical Islamism for several reasons.

- First, the West does not regard Islamism, as preached by Hizb ut-Tahrir, a threat: the norms, standards, and codes of Western mass consciousness have nothing in common with those to which Hizb ut-Tahrir appeals. In other words, the basic Islamic concepts (*kufir*, or lack of faith, *harom*, prohibited, etc.⁷) produce no impression on public opinion in the West, since it is not easy to transform liberalism or Euro-Christianity into Islamism.
- Second, the West knows quite well that critics of Western values and institutions are not a bad thing to have—they are even useful. The West knows that criticism is important and that it creates an atmosphere of constructive tension and pluralism, thus helping the system to survive by inventing new approaches and methods of crisis settlement.
- Third, certain Western strategists may look at Islamist groups as geopolitical pawns to be used in unexpected (or even deliberately created) circumstances.

Another thing is even more important: the Western legal system has so far failed to formulate its attitude toward what can be conventionally described as “anti-democratism” flourishing in Western societies themselves. (By anti-democratism I mean groups, movements, and parties that reject democracy.) There are two different views on the subject in Western science: supporters of radical liberalism are convinced that freedom should be absolute since any limits destroy democracy. They are convinced that “democracy means admitting those who deny democracy.”⁸ More realistically minded people believe that the freedom to act that political forces enjoy in democratic society should have certain boundaries to restrain those who want to liquidate democracy itself using democratic measures.

When assessing the radically minded Islamic groups, Hizb ut-Tahrir in the first place, the West, however, often tends toward the first of the two viewpoints. Hizb ut-Tahrir says the following about its strategy: “By being here, we shall create our own state in our homeland and then take revenge on you for all insults you hurled at us.” Today, experts agree that the term “Islamism” should be understood as “political Islam.” As a contemporary ideology, “Islamism” took shape against the background of communism, socialism, and capitalism and uses Islam as a theoretical and practical foundation. Radical Islam is one of its branches. It can be described as a belligerent ideology that uses the phraseology of violence to win people over to its cause; it is always prepared to use violence, while its activists are interpreting Islam literally as a religion of intolerance.⁹

The term itself, while fully revealing the essence of this phenomenon, stresses its political, rather than religious, component.

Regional Security in Central Asia and the Hizb ut-Tahrir Threat

Those who know little about the Central Asian realities may think that some of the local countries tend to overestimate the threat presented by Hizb ut-Tahrir. This is true of certain experts, politicians, and

⁷ Islam has created a system of assessments of behavior of its followers from *farz* (obligatory) to *harom* (prohibited). When imposing their political views on others the party's apologists always appeal to these categories in an effort to mobilize the entire Muslim society to fight for their political aims.

⁸ Iu.A. Iudin, *Politicheskie partii i pravo v sovremennom gosudarstve*, Forum-Infra-M publishing group, Moscow, 1998, p. 64.

⁹ For more detail, see: Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003; Is Islamism a Threat. A Debate [<http://www.meforum.org/meq/dec99/debate.shtml>].

human rights activists who apply Western human rights standards to the local developments. They are convinced that the problems created by religious extremist organizations are overstated on purpose. Some of the experts take this as a definite sign of authoritarianism.

When talking about the threat presented by Hizb ut-Tahrir, we should apply a systemic approach which takes into account the set of factors responsible for the threats lingering in these countries.

First, self-identity and the present state of public consciousness are all-important. In Uzbekistan, for example, most of the local people describe themselves as Muslims; traditional Islam is part and parcel of public consciousness and everyday life.

The religious-political teaching of Hizb ut-Tahrir took shape in the Middle Eastern confrontational context and if not re-adjusted may be distorted by the mass consciousness of the Central Asian population. Such fundamental concepts as *kufr*, *haram*, and *halol* can affect the mind and individual behavior. This shows that the degree of response to the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology and its contaminating power is high enough. It is skillfully adapted to Islam and the tactics of “guidance in the Divine name.”

Today, in the independent Central Asian republics the traditional religious schools and institutions are just trying to find firm ground, they have not yet formulated their positions on many contemporary social and political issues in relation to the Islamic specifics and the Muslims’ spiritual requirements. Early in the 20th century Islam had to discontinue its official activities; its ideas ceased to develop, while the positions of traditional schools weakened or were lost altogether. Today, the Islamic clerics of Uzbekistan have to work hard to restore the lost schools, to improve the educational system, and to reform the Islamic ideas. This is very much needed in order to meet the growing spiritual requirements of the faithful and to create intellectual protection against radical Islamism of the Hizb ut-Tahrir type.

Second, democratic values and institutions are just beginning to develop, which means that the social shock absorbers (the free press, elections, parliament, democratic opposition, and meetings) that are part and parcel of liberal civilization able to dampen open or latent discontent of the masses do not work.

Third, many of the region’s socioeconomic and political problems have remained unresolved so far. A large sector of the lower and middle social layers continues looking at the 1980s way of life as an ideal social order—this makes the situation even worse. Taught by the Soviet system to cherish egalitarianism people find it hard to accept the growing diversity of the market economy. As a result popular discontent is rising.

Standardization, one of the ways to fight diversity, directly stems from the Hizb ut-Tahrir program; certain social sections are eager to accept it. Standardization in the name of religion is undoubtedly an obstacle on the road toward social development and one of the conditions that lowers its creative potential, dampens social energy, and undermines society’s ability to meet the challenges of history.

The radical program of Hizb ut-Tahrir is antidemocratic, it preaches integration that smacks of imperialism; it is idealistic and even utopian. This program can be easily passed for an ideology of social justice; these elements have been skillfully arranged and adorned with Islam.

In fact, the faithful are led to believe that they are being offered simple and convincing answers to the most painful questions of the country’s socioeconomic, spiritual, and moral development; they are told who is to blame and what should be done. A God-fearing Muslim has no chance to disagree: everything is presented in the name of religion; disagreement is tantamount to a loss of faith, which must be paid for in hell.

The general lack of profound religious knowledge among the faithful does not allow them to contest these positions; after speaking even once to Hizb ut-Tahrir supporters they fall easy prey to the sect and become its ideological prisoners. At first, they are robbed of an ability to think for themselves—this is banned by the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology—later they develop into ideological fanatics regarding all other people as unfaithful. Inside the organization, criticism is taken as a “durability test of faith.” This is typical of many conservative religions, trends, and sects.

As a radical wing of Islamism Hizb ut-Tahrir has burdened Islam with its ideology of confrontation; it is mercilessly exploiting religious values and criteria to make an even deeper impression on the minds of the faithful.

Any religion, especially Islam, is a vehicle that if skillfully loaded with all sorts of ideas, even contradictory one, will easily carry them for a long time. It seems that the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideologists have realized this.

If legalized in the Central Asian countries, Hizb ut-Tahrir could develop into a great threat. It seems that it will inevitably step up its activities in an organizationally (institutionally) weak and religiously undeveloped region of key geopolitical importance. The situation looks promising for Hizb ut-Tahrir. If it develops along these lines, we can expect the public to turn away from liberalism to Islamism. According to the Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology, liberalism and Islam, or rather Islamism, are two enemies (the degree of their opposition depends on the level of Islamization of society). Liberalism will be confronted with a nearly insurmountable (or insurmountable) ideological barrier. Hizb ut-Tahrir describes the West and its ideology—liberalism—as one of the worst sides of world evil, which deliberately destroys and disorganizes life, and as an enemy of Islam and the Muslims.

In an effort to win the greater part of society over to its cause, Hizb ut-Tahrir is gradually creating a psychologically unhealthy atmosphere in various spheres, including foreign and ethnic policies in the first place, as well as in relations between religion and the state. Any society that accepts this organization as a legitimate force will rapidly deteriorate into a totalitarian state in which social consciousness will become even more radical.

The party itself insists that it rejects violence as a means of reaching its goals,¹⁰ yet radical ideology speeds up destabilization and confrontation for the simple reason that it divides individuals, societies, and states into legitimate and illegitimate, the latter forced to embrace Islam under the threat of liquidation. Any careful reader of the Hizb ut-Tahrir programs can detect the consistent propaganda of “jihad” as a struggle against the infidels and suicide terrorist acts of shakhids as one of its methods. The programs also contain ideological justification for a totalitarian state that terrorizes its own citizens. According to the experts of the R. Nixon Center, while not directly involved in terrorist acts, Hizb ut-Tahrir surely encourages people to commit acts of violence. This is a terrorist-producing factory.¹¹

After studying the social and political involvement of social segments, Arend Lijphart, one of the most prominent Western political scientists, has concluded that democratic societies can be divided into consociational democracies and majoritarian democracies.¹² In a consociational democracy, its main units (ethnic, religious, ideological, and cultural) all work together and none of them find themselves isolated for a long time. In a majoritarian democracy, a certain sociocultural group dominates over the others, thus keeping certain segments away from political life.

An analysis of the situation in Muslim societies (Uzbek society included) suggests that in the nearest future they will have little chance of acquiring conditions conducive to a consociational democracy. They will be dominated by the majoritarian form of democracy for several reasons, one of them being the presence of bearers of Islamic ideas and an antidemocratic program fraught with totalitarianism.

C o n c l u s i o n

Sadly, Islam and democracy are unlikely bedfellows, yet democratization of society does not reject Islam or lower its social status. At the same time, a ban on liberalism in the name of religion will not help to resolve the socioeconomic and political problems—it will drive them even deeper. By contrast, liberalism can change the nature of traditionalism; it gradually enriches it by encouraging an exchange of ideas

¹⁰ The recent terrorist acts of 29-31 March, 2004 in the Bukhara Region and in the city of Tashkent cast doubt on these statements. According to Prosecutor-General of Uzbekistan R. Kadyrov the investigating bodies found indirect evidence of Hizb ut-Tahrir's involvement in these events.

¹¹ See: Z. Baran, *op. cit.*

¹² See: A. Lijphart, *Demokratia v mnogostavnykh obshchestvakh: sravnitel'noe issledovanie* (Democracy in Plural Societies), Aspekt Press, Moscow, 1997, p. 38.

and opinions. When functioning properly the social shock absorbers of liberalism will finally stabilize society and open the road to sustainable and dynamic development for Islam.

Islamism knows no bounds in its criticism of democracy: it seeks complete monopoly over everything and control over all spheres of human life—something that liberalism does not allow it to accomplish. No wonder, Islamism treats liberalism as a contagious and dynamically developing disease.

Hizb ut-Tahrir is out to discredit liberalism and show itself as the true defender of Islam; it has likened our times to the distant past when Islam was first formed as a religion and has proclaimed itself a Messiah of our epoch. This organization has learned well that “rules should be studied in detail so as to discover how to violate them in the best way possible.” By establishing its very restrictive standards of piety, the party has contracted the field of legitimacy; by the same token it has made its ideology highly intolerant and radical and has intensified the Islamic side of individual and collective thinking and conduct by presenting freedom, liberalism, the West, and all those who share these values and support these institutions as enemies.

In this way Hizb ut-Tahrir is compromising Islam and its followers; it is a source of concern and fear; it tries to adjust its ideas to Islam and sow doubt in the hearts and minds of the faithful about the future of Islam’s social and political potential. In other words, by “reviving” Islam Hizb ut-Tahrir has achieved the opposite: it is compromising the key Islamic values. The party’s social ideas are generating many questions: how can totalitarianism, censorship, and systemic control raise the standard of living? How can they help develop intellectual potential, creativity, and production in Muslim societies? Is the party socially naïve or is it plotting against Islam and the Muslims?

Islam in Central Asia is an eternal factor. It has been there and will stay in the region. We can say that it is a cultural matrix of the local nations. Students of religion, analysts, experts, and politicians should carefully study the phenomenon of religious extremism in Central Asia in order to find a way to combine Islam with a secular state, and Islam with democracy.

THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN: LINES TO COMPLETE THE PORTRAIT

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In 2000, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, or the IMU, became the first terrorist group in the post-Soviet space to be included in the U.S. Department of State “List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations.” Despite its name, the IMU is composed of citizens of all the Central Asian states, Chinese Xinjiang province, Chechnia, and some Arab countries. The IMU’s main objective is to

create an Islamic state in the Ferghana Valley and consequently in the whole of Uzbekistan. It is supported by Islamic radicals around the world as well as intelligence services of some countries. The IMU also has links to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qa’eda and fought against the Northern Alliance of Ahmad Shah Masood alongside the forces of the Taliban Movement of Afghanistan. It carried out terrorist

attacks in Uzbekistan and made incursions into neighboring Kyrgyzstan. For years the international community and mainly Western states had been blind to the civil war in Afghanistan, the Taliban's stone-age policy and enormous drug business.

The world regained its sight as a result of the tragedy of 11 September, 2001 in the United States that promptly shifted the attention of the international community to Afghanistan. International terrorism's home, Afghanistan, was bombed. International terrorism's patron, the Taliban movement, was destroyed. Terrorists lost their home and were deprived of security; their base and financial system were damaged. Though not completely rooted out, the threat of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan to Central Asia was greatly diminished. Its military leader is thought to have been killed during the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan and

its political leader is believed to be in hiding. Following the Operation Enduring Freedom in late 2001, the IMU renamed itself the Islamic Movement of Turkestan (IMT), thus openly proclaiming its purposes of controlling the entire Central Asian region, disregarding the five existing nation-states and their boundaries.

This paper is about the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's history, structure, objectives, tactics, leadership, and links to other terrorist and religious extremist groups as well as to al-Qa'eda and bin Laden. I will explain the conditions under which the movement came into existence and flourished in a country that was atheist for decades, and external factors that nourished its existence. In conclusion I will cover the implications the 2001 war in Afghanistan had on the IMU and its future impact on the security of Central Asia.

IMU's Source of Financing

The IMU was established in the summer of 1996 when its leaders Juma Namangani and Tahir Yuldash met in Kabul. The declaration of *jihad* against Karimov's government followed the establishment of the movement. An official communiqué declaring *jihad* and calling for the overthrow of the Uzbek government was issued later on 25 August, 1999.

The organization was from the very beginning multi-ethnic: Central Asians, Chechens, Uighurs, Arabs, and Pakistanis. "Our organization does not follow only Uzbek interests. We are an Islamic group. There are many ethnic groups ... but because we are all from Uzbekistan, we call ourselves the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," declared the IMU's press secretary, Zubair ibn-Abdurahman in a Radio Liberty interview.¹ In order to carry out such ambitious plans as overthrowing a government, the organization needed a lot of money to build its infrastructure, to attract new followers, to travel internationally to meet with followers and supporters, to buy modern communications equipment, arms and other military devices, and to have an active intelligence network.

The IMU received funding not only from many Islamic organizations in the world, but also from the Uzbek Diaspora in Afghanistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.² The Diaspora consists mainly of wealthy people who had fled Central Asia in the 1920s in the early years of the Russian Revolution or during the Sovietization of the region.³ They supported the IMU cause because they viewed the current regime in Uzbekistan as the continuation of the Communist regime since the current leader Islam Karimov has a Communist political background.

Once the IMU established a relationship with the Taliban movement, drugs became a lucrative source of financing. Relations with al-Qa'eda and Osama bin Laden also generated substantial money for their cause. The Pakistani ISI also provided financial support to the IMU and supplied arms and military equipment.⁴

¹ See: B. Pannier, "Central Asia: IMU Leader Says Group's Goals Is 'Return of Islam'," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 6 June, 2001 [http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/06/06062001121150.asp].

² There are about three million ethnic Uzbeks living in the Middle East and South-West Asia. Of them, two million live in Afghanistan and 700 thousand live in Saudi Arabia (see: "Military and Political Conflicts in Central Asia," *Center for Foreign Policy and Analysis*, Kazakhstan, 2000 [http://www.cvi.kz/text/Experts/Kozhikhov_pub/Konflikt_Central_Asia.html]).

³ See: A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Yale University Press, 2002, p. 141.

⁴ See: *Ibid.*, pp. 140 and 154.

The movement's political leader, Tahir Yuldash, was the organization's main fund-raiser. In November of 1995 he visited Peshawar, Pakistan and met with representatives of Islamic organizations from Pakistan, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. Senior ISI officers arranged the meetings, which addressed the allocation of funds for the IMU. Several Turkish organizations and charity foundations in Germany also contributed generously. Some of these organizations were acting under the umbrella of Turkey's Welfare Party led by Necmettin Erbakan.⁵

Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami and Qatar charity society, the Saudi Islamic Salvation Foundation, Ihwan al-Muslimun Egyptian Muslim brotherhood and the Saudi World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) also supported the IMU and its activities. In August of 1999, bin Laden's five personal envoys visited the mountainous village of Hoyt in Tajikistan and handed 130 thousand dollars to Namangani. At this time, IMU fighters were carrying out incursions into Uzbekistan via southern Kyrgyzstan. A few weeks later, a meeting took place in Karachi between the members of Islamic organizations from Pakistan, Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt, the Palestine, Kashmir, Uzbekistan, and Chechnia. They agreed to raise two million dollars to support the Holy Jihad against Karimov's regime. In June of 2000, IMU's press-secretary Zubair ibn-Abdurahman confirmed the receipt of a few thousand dollars from bin Laden intended to stir up "the holy war against Karimov's pro-Zionist government."⁶ According to the Ferghana Province Directorate of National Security, Juma Namangani annually received around three million dollars from Osama bin Laden.

Following the end of the civil war in Tajikistan in 1997, IMU's military leader Juma Namangani who had taken part in the war on the side of the Tajik opposition forces, settled in a Tajik village with his family and some forty Uzbeks. He began a business by buying several trucks and transporting goods to the Tajik capital, Dushanbe. Later Namangani became involved in the trafficking of heroin from Afghanistan to Tajikistan and on to Russia and Europe through his truck company. He also raised funds to sustain the IMU.⁷ It wasn't until the IMU established good relationships with the Taliban, however, that the movement became heavily involved in the trafficking of lucrative opium, stockpiled in Afghanistan. According to the U.N. Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), opium production in Afghanistan doubled between 1998 and 1999, from 2,750 tons to 5,000 tons. By July 2000, when the Taliban banned poppy cultivation, estimated 240 tons of opium were stockpiled in Mazar and Kunduz. Laboratories to refine heroin were set up in Tajikistan. Ralf Mutschke, assistant director of Interpol's Criminal Intelligence Directorate, reported to the U.S. Congress then that 60 percent of Afghan opium exports moved through Central Asia, and that the IMU might be responsible for 70 percent of the heroin and opium transiting the area.⁸

Estimates of IMU Funds Received from Various Sources
(U.S. Million \$)

	Narcotics	Al-Qa'eda	Uzbek Diaspora and others
1999	5	5	10
2000	7	6	7
2001	4	4	7

Source: Estimates made by various Central Asian diplomats.⁹

⁵ Turkish Milliy Gurush (National Outlook) organization based in Cologne, set up by Turkey's former Prime Minister Erbakan, gave away hundreds of thousands of dollars to the IMU, with Erbakan's consent, to buy arms through Milliy Gurush Secretary Muhammad Kuchak on condition that the IMU would become subordinated to Milliy Gurush and only Erbakan can specify a precise time when the jihad against Uzbekistan would begin. Leading Turkish company Ulker, controlled by Milliy Gurush, generates 1.5 bln. U.S. dollars in profits annually (see: B. Tursunov, "Extremism in Uzbekistan," *The Conflict Studies Research Center*, British Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, July 2002 [http://www.csrc.ac.uk/pdfs/K37-hpz.pdf]).

⁶ Interview with an Uzbek intelligence official in 2002.

⁷ See: A. Rashid, op. cit., p. 144.

⁸ See: Ibid., p. 165.

⁹ These may not be authentic but provide an idea of the magnitude of the resources available to the IMU.

Drugs, however, were not only the source of income for the IMU. According to Uzbek military prosecutor Bohodir Dehqonov, drugs also served as inspiration for IMU fighters during incursions into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The prosecutor says that most of the militants were drug addicts, as investigators had found a large number of used syringes in the areas cleared of the infiltrators.¹⁰

One more source of financing for the IMU was hostage-taking. When the IMU carried out several incursions into Uzbekistan via the south of Kyrgyzstan in 1999 and 2000 from their bases in Tajikistan, they were able to take several people hostage. Some of them were U.S., Japanese, and Kyrgyz citizens. In exchange for ransom and a safe passage back to Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz hostages were freed. The hostage crisis involving four Japanese geologists working for a mining company made headlines in Japan. Continuous negotiations, which involved Japanese diplomats and intelligence officials, resulted in the release of the geologists after two months. Although both the Japanese and Kyrgyz leaders said no ransom was paid, some speculated that Japan had secretly paid 2-6 million dollars to the IMU.¹¹

There is also a report that Tahir Yuldash used Kyrgyz Parliament deputy and Ombudsman Tursunbay Bakir Uulu to be a mediator between him and the Kyrgyz intelligence officials during the hostage crisis. The six million dollars were later spent to buy more arms and uniforms for the IMU fighters and some Tajik Opposition forces as well as to finance Tursunbay Bakir Uulu's election campaign in Kyrgyzstan. The report also states that this same Kyrgyz lawmaker later was invited to visit IMU bases in Afghanistan.¹² As for the four American climbers taken hostage, they escaped when their IMU guard fell asleep.

IMU's Military Structure, Tactics, Terrorist and Para-Military Activities

Unlike the Hizb ut-Tahrir organization, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan never believed in coming to power peacefully. The hunt down of IMU's earlier parent organizations ("Adolat Uyushmasi" (The Justice Society), "Islom Lashkarlari" (Warriors of Islam) and "Tawba" (Repentance)) and Uzbek opposition members by Uzbek intelligence and law enforcement forces following the Uzbek presidential elections in 1992 only strengthened this conviction. Namangani, who fought in the Afghan war and later on fought with the Tajik opposition against its secular government, and Yuldash, who had been expelled from school and had little formal education, could hardly be expected to come to power in Uzbekistan through peaceful and democratic means.

A few months after the 1992 elections, the Democratic Party Erk (Freedom) and the People's Movement Birlik (Unity) were banned in Uzbekistan and their newspapers were forbidden for publication. Their leaders were harassed and fled the country gradually. These government actions betrayed the people of Uzbekistan's expectations that Independence from the Soviet Union would engender democracy.

The years of 1992 and 1993 were also economically the most difficult for the country. Uzbekistan had not yet introduced its permanent national currency. Enterprises with economic ties to other parts of the former Soviet Union had not gained sufficient independence and ceased functioning due to the lack of orders and raw materials. The banking structure had not been developed yet and there were no foreign investments. The earliest groups of foreigners to come to Uzbekistan were mainly Pakistanis and Indians who traded leather garments in small quantities.

¹⁰ See: Uzbek newspaper *Halq So'zi*, 17 August, 2000.

¹¹ See: A. Rashid, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹² See: B. Kudratov, "Ordinary Murder in the Name of Jihad," *Uzbek Information and Analytical Website "Stability"* [<http://www.stability.uz/ubiystvo.html>].

The difficulties of this chaotic period, compounded by the profound influence of various Islamic missionaries, produced the first generation of IMU members. These IMU members were taught that in order to revive Islam, an Islamic state must be built in Central Asia. However, to their conviction, Islam could not have been revived in a secular state run by the former Communist leader. The civil war (1992-1997) in Tajikistan served as an example. Namangani and Yuldash realized from the very beginning that they had to use force to achieve their goal. As one of the earlier members of the Adolat group said, "We have no desire to be in parliament. We want an Islamic revolution here and now—we have no time for constitutional games."¹³ The government was also at fault for not paying sufficient attention to the religious issues in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan, which had been part of the atheist regime for years, experienced a religious and spiritual vacuum once the old regime perished. The government offered no solutions. "There were three mosques in Namangan during Communist times, now there are 130 and most of them are controlled by these militants. I don't have the funds to compete with them," said one imam of an official government mosque in Namangan in 1992.¹⁴

Although the IMU carried out its first terrorist attack in 1999, Namangani and Yuldash-led Islamic groups began their criminal activity by murdering militiamen who they thought had been unjust toward fellow Muslims.¹⁵ Despite their desire to build an Islamic state and invest in the revival of Islam, writer Ahmed Rashid says that "they had no respect for official Islam, no patience with tradition, and no fear of the political regime, which they overoptimistically considered to be on the verge of disintegration and collapse."¹⁶

The IMU used the raised funds to buy grenade cup dischargers, heavy machine-guns, mortars, AK-47s, night vision goggles, Russian and Japanese Jeeps, modern communications equipment, sniper rifles and many other things.¹⁷ Relationship with al-Qa'eda training sessions in Chechnia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan, and practical application of this training in conflicts in the former three countries shaped the movement's tactics and structure and transformed it from a group of undereducated mullahs, peasants and criminals into a modern combatant movement.¹⁸ Some of their training manuals, confiscated during the IMU incursions into Uzbekistan in the summer of 2000, testify to their military structure and warfare tactics. They trained themselves in carrying out low-intensity guerilla warfare in mountainous areas. Their combat operations were organized by small mobile groups of 4-6 people that tried to avoid open spaces and direct battle, and act quickly, constantly changing their positions. They have employed intelligence efficiently. The IMU used women for delivering their messages to sleepers inside the country. Others, familiar with the terrain and the area, collected information on the situation inside. Groups usually consist of a commander, a bomber, a signaler, and 3-4 riflemen, including snipers. Snipers usually try to occupy higher positions than the enemy. After an extensive attack, they retreat immediately and change their positions.¹⁹

The guerillas are very well trained, strong, and enduring. They can wander highlands for a long time carrying three-day supplies of full ammunition and provisions. One of the guerillas trained in IMU's Afghan camps described the training exercises. "These exercises were conducted in highlands. When crawling, instructors would shoot to the ground past the trainees' ears—a psychological test." He says a fighter must learn to do without food for three days and eat whatever he lays eyes upon. At the training he also learns to shoot at sound, light and make explosives literally out of soap.²⁰

¹³ A. Rashid, op. cit., p. 139.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ On 10 November, 2001 *Washington Post* reported that in 1997, members of the group had assassinated regional Uzbek officials, leaving the head of one on the gate of the home of the Namangan internal affairs chief (see: D. Struck, "Uzbek Taliban Chief Feared in Homeland," *Washington Post*, 10 November, 2001, p. A17).

¹⁶ See: A. Rashid, op. cit.

¹⁷ See: S. Jahangir, "The Prompt Islamic Construction of a Caliphate on Blood," Russian *Kommersant* newspaper, 18 August, 2000 [<http://www.uzland.uz/2000/special4.htm>].

¹⁸ The IMU also consisted of criminals who were convicted in Uzbekistan for various crimes but escaped justice.

¹⁹ See: "Military and Political Conflicts in Central Asia."

²⁰ See: L. Gibelgaus, "Who Are They: IMU Rebels?" *Deutsche Welle*, Russian-language version, 25 February, 2003 [http://www.dw-world.de/russian/0,3367,2226_A_786870_1_A,00.html].

The IMU also learned evacuation techniques for wounded rebels, and methods of replenishing ammunition, medicines, uniforms, and fuel. They always try to carry the wounded and dead away from the battle-field to convince the enemy that they have suffered few casualties. IMU members never address each other by their real names. Each has a number that replaces their name. Failure to abide by this rule results in punishment, including death. They are also forbidden to make contacts with local populations or members of other groups. The IMU mainly uses Soviet and Russian-made weapons, because they are cheap and easily accessible.²¹

The IMU has two additional assets that contribute to its potential as a serious threat. The first is a safe haven in the Pamir Mountains.²² The importance of a sanctuary or safe haven for an insurgency or protest movement is well understood to be critically important. In this case, it continues to provide opportunities for recruitment and replenishment as well as a safe base from which to move into Uzbekistan when weather conditions permit and other circumstances are favorable. The second asset is the underlying alienation of the population: the IMU benefits considerably because it is the most obviously available funnel for the political, social, and economic dissatisfaction existing in Uzbekistan. In spite of the setbacks suffered by the IMU in late 2001 and early 2002, it could ultimately prove resilient enough to become a formidable adversary for the Karimov regime, particularly if the regime continues to use the IMU's existence to justify even more repression.²³

The IMU's first terrorist attack took place on 16 February, 1999, when five car bombs exploded in various parts of Tashkent within an hour. The first explosion occurred near the Headquarters of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the final explosion detonating outside the Cabinet of Ministers building minutes before President Karimov's arrival at a special government meeting. All top government officials were to attend that meeting. The IMU had initially planned more than five explosions. The post-terrorist attack trial of 22 men involved in planning and execution of the explosions said 25 blasts had been initially planned that were aimed at toppling top government officials and spreading panic among the population, while Tahir Yuldash was to enter Uzbekistan from Afghanistan with the Taliban forces and Juma Namangani's rebels were to enter Uzbekistan from Tajikistan with UTO forces. The whole conflict was planned to be supported by sleepers in the Ferghana Valley and elsewhere in Uzbekistan who were waiting for a signal for the take-over.

Tahir Yuldash was to become a defense minister of a new Uzbek government with Muhammad Salih being its president.²⁴ One of the accused rebels at the trial said that had the first part of the operation been successful (the president's death and more explosions) the forces outside Uzbekistan would have entered.²⁵

It was a brilliantly planned al-Qa'eda/IMU operation. If successful, it would have given al-Qa'eda a greater field in which to maneuver and plan its future operations and it would have given al-Qa'eda-linked terrorists more territories for new bases. If Central Asia's largest country became an Islamic state, the probability that the whole region would soon follow suit was very high. Moreover, the al-Qa'eda/IMU-controlled Central Asia would not pose a threat to the gangs' drugs business. (In late December 1999, Uzbekistan's Interior Ministry said that more than two tons of heroin had been seized by the Uzbek author-

²¹ Interview with an Uzbek intelligence official in 2002.

²² See: A. Rashid, "Pamirs Offer IMU Secure Base," *Eurasia Insight*, 10 April, 2001 [<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav041001.shtml>].

²³ See: G. Gleason, "Counterinsurgency in Central Asia: Civil Society Is the First Casualty," *Eurasia Insight*, 8 January, 2001 [<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010801.shtml>].

²⁴ Muhammad Salih (a.k.a. Salay Madaminov) is a poet and exiled leader of the banned Democratic Party Erk of Uzbekistan, who was President Karimov's only opponent in the 1992 presidential elections. He was tried and convicted in absentia by the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan for taking part in the coup attempt of 1999. The Uzbek intelligence believes he used his high-level contacts in Turkey while being there in exile to help the IMU receive funds from various Turkish religious, political and business circles, including from Erbakan. He allegedly agreed to any form of government in Uzbekistan if he could be a president. The IMU thought that it could receive legitimacy from the West if Salih, whom international human rights organizations considered to be a democratic oppositionist, were to become a president of Uzbekistan.

²⁵ See: O. Juma, "Bandits and Their Human Rights Defenders," *UzLand.Uz*, 22 February, 2003 [<http://www.uzland.uz/2003/february/22/06.htm>].

ities that year compared to 11 kilos (only) in 1994. Uzbekistan has been a major cordon against drug trafficking in the region.²⁶ A larger territory would also allow al-Qa'eda to easily hide weapons of mass destruction if acquired.

The failure of the IMU/al-Qa'eda plan on February 1999 changed the IMU's tactics from terrorist attacks to paramilitary operations. It was logistically difficult for the IMU to plan and carry out terrorist attacks from Afghanistan, Tajikistan or elsewhere. They needed a base inside Uzbekistan to train people and store weapons. The Uzbek base would provide the movement more time to plan and accomplish their attacks, and would reduce the risk of being exposed to Uzbek security forces through cross-border movements and radio communication. So in the summer of 1999, the IMU crossed the Amu-Darya River into Tajikistan and then sent small groups of fighters into southern Kyrgyzstan, eastern Uzbekistan and the Fergana Valley, operating mainly in mountainous areas. The main purpose of the incursions was to ship in supplies and manpower in order to set up bases in Fergana that would facilitate the mobilization of the local population in the winter months.²⁷

The IMU relied heavily on sleepers inside Uzbekistan whose numbers may have grown following the Uzbek government's persecution of Muslims in the country and their torture in prisons.²⁸ These men and women were accused of possessing ties to the February 1999 bombings in Tashkent. Another factor potentially adding to a rise in the IMU's popularity is the deteriorating economic situation in the Uzbekistan caused by the government's numerous economic failures, including the resumption of currency convertibility, which was halted in 1996.²⁹ Rural people, the most religious people in Uzbekistan, were hardest hit by religious repression and deteriorating economic conditions. Writer Ahmed Rashid says that when Namangani was in the Tavildara Valley of Tajikistan controlled by the Tajik Opposition, hundreds of people would come to see him from Uzbekistan in search of help, justice and revenge.³⁰ These were people whose family members were in jail in Uzbekistan. The United States Department of State annual reports on religious freedom in Uzbekistan have indicated that religious figures in Uzbekistan disappear, are kidnapped or put in jail, and frequently tortured. Some of them die in prisons and their dead bodies are brought home in coffins that are forbidden to be opened. The letters of bereaved family and friends to President Karimov have produced no results. Namangani could immediately recruit all these people for the movement, however, he asked them to stay in their homes, go about their daily business, and wait for his call to arms.³¹ Some of them stayed with Namangani, though, and made up the IMU's second generation of members.

Setting up bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan was aimed at training these sleepers and supplying them with arms when needed. I should also mention that people had different motivations to join and support the IMU. Some of them were religious fanatics who hated Karimov and his regime; some were criminals who joined the movement to avoid conviction; some supported the IMU because they suffered from government persecution and injustice; some came to Namangani's camp for financial reasons.³² However, there were also people who had followed Namangani to study real Islam, but realized they had been deceived once they got to the IMU base and learned about the use of arms and explosives more than the Koran. These people had no choice but to stay there, because the area was remote and highly secured. Those who attempted to flee were cruelly killed.³³

²⁶ See: J. Sinai, "Islamist Terrorism and Narcotrafficking in Uzbekistan," *Foreign Affairs*, May 2000, Lexis-Nexis.

²⁷ See: A. Rashid, "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's Incursion Assists the Taliban," *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute*, 13 September, 2000 [http://www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=132].

²⁸ In 2002, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, Theo van Boven, visited Uzbekistan that resulted in a report condemning the systemic use of torture by law enforcement and security officials of the country.

²⁹ The government resumed currency convertibility in November of 2003.

³⁰ See: A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 158.

³¹ See: O. Juma, *op. cit.*

³² The Uzbek government's economic failures produced high unemployment rate. But even the employment wouldn't guarantee better life in the country where the minimum monthly wage is 15-20 U.S. dollars, not enough to maintain a family of 3-4 children. In his book *Jihad* Ahmed Rashid says that Namangani paid his guerillas monthly salaries of between \$100 and \$500—in U.S. dollar bills. This rumor alone was enough to ensure that more recruits would join him (p. 167).

³³ In May of 1999 a group of IMU militants decided to go back to Uzbekistan following a presidential decree granting full amnesty to those who thought they were deceitfully kept in the IMU and would come back to Uzbekistan. Thirty-six IMU

The IMU incursions into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the summer of 1999 were uncovered by Uzbek forces, and both governments sent special troops to the areas to fight the invading forces. Militarily stronger Uzbekistan also used military helicopters and SU jets to bomb highlands and villages where the militants were believed to be hiding. After two months of fighting, the remaining militants retreated to their base in Tajikistan, but could not remain long there because of the mounting pressure from the Uzbek and Kyrgyz governments on the Tajik government's inability to deal with the IMU.³⁴ Namangani's forces, numbering around 600, and their families were flown by Russian army helicopters from Tajikistan to the Afghan border.³⁵

In his book *Jihad*, Ahmed Rashid recounts three instances of the Russian army's assistance in transporting some of the IMU members on helicopters to the Tajik-Afghan border. Russian assistance to Namangani can be explained in light of the corrupt nature of the current Russian political environment and imperial nature of the Russian military establishment.

I will give two explanations for the Russian-IMU cooperation. First, some of the Russian military stood to gain from the transit of drugs from Afghanistan via Tajikistan where in 1996 12,000 troops of the Russian 201st Motorized Rifle Division were based.³⁶ Although there is no direct evidence that Russian troops are involved in drug trafficking, Russian border guards have been accused of taking bribes for turning a blind eye to drug trafficking. My second explanation deals with the Russian military establishment's (mainly Russian "hawks") geopolitical interests and concerns in Central Asia. Uzbekistan's President, Islam Karimov, has criticized the Russian government and media for exaggerating the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and the Taliban movement to regional security in order to be accepted in Central Asia as protectors and to impose their imperial policy. This in part caused Uzbekistan to withdraw from the CIS Collective Security Treaty in 1999.³⁷ Nevertheless the Russians pursued their goal of establishing a military presence in Central Asia and may have used the IMU to apply pressure on the region in order for the Central Asian states to accept a Russian military presence.

In August of 2000, the IMU changed its tactics and began carrying out multi-front surprise attacks on Kyrgyz and Uzbek troops to distract from the smuggling of arms and ammunitions into the Ferghana Valley for the sleepers. The guerillas possessed flak jackets equipped with infrared night scopes, sniper rifles, heavy machine guns, and rocket launchers³⁸—the result of the 1999 funding of the IMU and the relationship with the Taliban and al-Qa'eda. From Tajikistan the IMU also tried to take the Kamchik mountain pass, the only and strategic pass linking the Ferghana Valley to Tashkent. This campaign lasted for three months.

Partly these campaigns, as part of the IMU tactics, were also aimed at testing the capabilities of government armed forces in the region, sowing the seeds of panic in those governments, undermining their legitimacy, keeping the populations under psychological pressure, and preparing the sleepers for a final battle.

The campaigns served as a good lesson for the governments of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan who witnessed the inability of their troops to fight well-prepared irregular units of small sizes in highlands and prompted reforms in their armies. The incursions also increased the regional states' awareness of the threat of international terrorism and prompted them to work together more closely, resulting in arms supplies from China and Russia for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and U.S. government financial and training assistance for these countries. The 2000 designation of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan as a foreign ter-

members decided to take that opportunity and were coming to Uzbekistan from their base in Tajikistan when another group of militants attacked them on Namangani's orders on their way and slaughtered 17 of them taking the rest back (see: B. Kudratov, op. cit.).

³⁴ Uzbekistan threatened Tajikistan to use its bombers against the supposed IMU locations if the Tajiks could not control the situation themselves.

³⁵ See: A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 164.

³⁶ See: "Operational Group of Russian Forces in Tajikistan" [<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/ogrv-tajikistan.htm>].

³⁷ The Collective Security Treaty was signed on 15 May, 1992 in Tashkent by presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Belarus and Uzbekistan.

³⁸ See: A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 167.

rorist organization by the U.S. Department of State also made it possible for U.S. intelligence to share information with their Uzbek counterparts.

The IMU and al-Qa'eda

Throughout the paper I have indicated the cooperation between the IMU and al-Qa'eda and how the former received constant assistance from the latter. I also mentioned how Namangani was promoted to become bin Laden's deputy. I would also like to address what brought these two organizations together.

It is obvious that Namangani and Yuldash needed a strong partner and sponsor for their cause. It was this partnership through al-Qa'eda that the IMU turned from a small criminal group into such a sophisticated, secretive, and well-organized terrorist organization. The connection with bin Laden was the IMU's pass to the World Islamic Terrorist Network's treasury, top leaders, and fame. Had the Northern Alliance kept Afghanistan under control, and had there been no bin Laden and Taliban in Afghanistan, Namangani and his gang would have either sought refuge elsewhere or would have been subject to extradition while in Tajikistan as the pressure was mounting high on its government from neighboring Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Even if the IMU had sufficient funding from various donor countries and international Islamic organizations, it would not have gained the skills that al-Qa'eda could provide its guerillas. Bin Laden's Arab instructors taught the IMU very sophisticated techniques of carrying out military and clandestine operations. In Chechnia, notorious Jordanian terrorist Khattab would host from time to time IMU fighters for training. Uzbek intelligence says that IMU guerillas used three languages for radio communications: Arabic (for al-Qa'eda), Pashtu (for Taliban and Pakistanis) and Russian (for the Central Asian contingent).³⁹ The association with al-Qa'eda also gave the IMU free movement between Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and possibly Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Al-Qa'eda benefited from its partnership with the IMU as well. The IMU served al-Qa'eda's goals to fight the Northern Alliance, to extend jihad to Central Asia, to report about the movements of Western and mainly American diplomats within the region, to control the routes for drug trafficking in Central Asia, and even possibly to help al-Qa'eda obtain elements of weapons of mass destruction.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, a former Soviet biological weapons test site containing tons of anthrax on Vozrojenie Island, located in the Aral Sea Basin, posed a serious threat as neither Uzbekistan nor Kazakhstan (who shared the Island territorially) had enough resources and skills to clean the site until the Pentagon's Threat Reduction Agency became involved in such a program. Although there are no indications that the IMU attempted to obtain any WMD elements, in 2000, however, Uzbek customs officials did detect a commercial truck with an Iranian license plate at the Kazakh border that contained radioactive substances and was heading to Pakistani Quetta. I was unable to trace the recipient of the substances and whether the IMU had any part in it.⁴⁰

I must also say that the relationship with al-Qa'eda proved to be fatal for the IMU. The IMU's bases and men also became a target during the 2001 U.S.-led antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan. Irregardless of how longer the Hizballah or HAMAS was on the U.S. Department of State List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations than the IMU, and irregardless of how much more violent than the IMU these groups

³⁹ Interview with an Uzbek intelligence official in 2002.

⁴⁰ "Trailer with Radioactive Containers Expelled to Kazakhstan," *UzLand.Uz*, 1 April, 2000 [http://www.uzland.uz/2000/04_01.htm#trailer]. In January 2003, BBC reported about the seizure of more radioactive materials at the Uzbek-Turkmen border (see: C. Davis, "'Dirty Bomb Material' Seized in Asia," *BBC*, 5 January, 2003 [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2629343.stm>]).

were, Hizballah and HAMAS were not affected by the war on terror. The IMU was simply at the wrong place at the wrong time and with the wrong partner, which greatly damaged the movement. Through involvement in the al-Qa'eda and Taliban offensive on the Northern Alliance, the IMU was distracted from its main focus—Uzbekistan.

The Impact of Operation Enduring Freedom on the IMU

There is very little reliable information regarding the broader military impact of the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan on IMU military forces as a whole. An IMU contingent was heavily involved in fighting around Mazar-i-Sharif and Konduz in November of 2001, and it appears that substantial numbers of IMU followers were killed during fighting in the latter city. The IMU's political leader, Tohir Yuldash, is likely still alive. Some reports suggest that he fled to Pakistan, while others claim he is still in Afghanistan.⁴¹ In late November 2001 it was widely reported that the group's 32-year-old military leader, Juma Namangani, died from wounds received during U.S. bombing in the Mazar-i-Sharif region of Afghanistan, although accounts varied.⁴² He had been sentenced to death in absentia by the government of Uzbekistan in November of 2000.

Namangani was the only IMU leader who was well known throughout the region, and he cannot be easily replaced. He maintained tight control of his followers through both harsh discipline and personal loyalty, and there is no guarantee that this authority will easily transfer to his lieutenants.

While Tohir Yuldash is also an important figure, he has less charisma and authority than Namangani and has not been proven as a field commander. It is possible that he will encounter considerable difficulty retaining the support of the disparate groups that comprise the IMU, and it will take time for other leaders to emerge. Early 2002 the International Crisis Group reported that a number of splinter groups and factions might develop from the remnants of the IMU. While they would likely employ similar aims and tactics, they would be less of a threat than a more unified IMU operating under a clear leadership that the rank and file considered legitimate.⁴³ However, in contrast, there were reports in the fall of that year on the unification of a number of Islamic groups in the region into an Islamic Movement of Central Asia that included the remnants of the IMU, Islamic extremists of Tajikistan, Chechen guerillas, and Uighur separatists from the Chinese Xinjiang province with a headquarters in Afghanistan's Gorno-Badakhshan mountainous area.⁴⁴ It is interesting however to see how this new group will operate given the complexity of the situation and the active international antiterrorist campaign.

Events in Afghanistan might have severely disrupted the IMU's funding, which is believed to come from the drugs trade in Central Asia and in part from Osama bin Laden's al-Qa'eda.⁴⁵ The IMU no longer

⁴¹ *International Crisis Group*, "The IMU and the Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Implications of the Afghanistan Campaign," 30 January, 2002 [http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/asia/centralasia/reports/A400538_30012002.pdf], p. 2.

⁴² General Tommy Franks, CINC CENTCOM, told journalists in Uzbekistan that Namangani was indeed dead although he did not reveal the source of this information (see: "Uzbekistan Gets U.S. Military Pledge," *The Associated Press*, 24 January, 2002, Lexis-Nexis). There were however other controversial reports from Russian and Kyrgyz intelligence sources that Namangani may still be alive and that he himself spread the rumor of his death intentionally to catch his breath before a new campaign (see: A. McConnell, "Islamic Radicals Regroup in Central Asia," *Eurasia Insight*, 15 May, 2002 [<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051502.shtml>]), although, I think the Russians are interested in such a scenario for the reasons discussed above.

⁴³ ICG, p. 3.

⁴⁴ "Boeviki-islamisty ob'edinilis' v Islamskoe dvizhenie Srednei Azii," *UzStrateg.Info*, the website of the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies of Uzbekistan, 10 September, 2002 [http://www.uzstrateg.info/frontend/index.cfm?target=news&sub=article&news_id=4887].

⁴⁵ See: ICG Asia Report No. 26 *Central Asia: Drugs and Conflict*, 26 November, 2001.

controls the drug routes through Tajikistan nor will it have access to narcotics if production is brought under better control in Afghanistan. Other possible sources of money include backers in the Middle East or local political groups seeking to use the IMU as a means to build their own influence. However, without its refuge in Afghanistan, the IMU is likely to face a serious financial squeeze.

Rohan Gunaratna says that the IMU may be replaced by the Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) organization. Founded in Jordan and Saudi Arabia in 1952, the HT is a non-violent Islamist party organized in the form of clandestine cells; its members are recruited from relatives and friends to restore the Caliphate.⁴⁶

In Uzbekistan the organization clandestinely distributes leaflets exposing the corrupt nature of the leadership and even calls President Karimov "a Jew." Its anti-Semitic character led to its ban in Germany recently.⁴⁷ The Government of Uzbekistan has also requested a number of other countries to do the same. Although the HT rejects the use of violence or force to pursue its objective, the events of the past few years in Uzbekistan, during which a number of HT members were arrested and put in jail (especially following the February 1999 bombings in Tashkent), may have forced it to review its tactics. There have also been cases when the militia, in pursuit of personal enrichment, revenge, or perhaps because of an unofficial government policy, would plant leaflets or drugs in people's pockets in order to arrest them by accusing them of being HT members.

The International Crisis Group says that some HT members are already calling on the organization to be more decisive and take concrete actions. The ICG also says that "since many former IMU fighters may now be looking for a new affiliation and leadership, the Hizb ut-Tahrir could offer an attractive new home, increasing the potential for the Hizb ut-Tahrir to become more radical."⁴⁸

HT, however, faces a number of obstacles in realizing such a prominent position in Uzbekistan. According to the International Crisis Group, there seems to have been disagreement already within the leadership of the Hizb ut-Tahrir on organizational tactics. Hizb ut-Tahrir has also been subject to factionalism, with at least two cases of fairly significant groups establishing separate political movements independent of HT leadership. Further splits are possible, both for personal reasons,⁴⁹ and over political tactics.⁵⁰ Also, the HT, like the IMU, lacks a social, economic, or political plan for governing the Caliphate they want to restore. Their ideologies are based not on the indigenous Islam of Central Asia, the birthplace of Sufism and nineteenth-century Jadidism, but on imported ideologies.⁵¹

Another factor that might obstruct HT goals of establishing an Islamic regime in the region is the dubious role of Islam in Central Asia as a consolidating factor at ethnic and national levels. Regional, clan, ethnic, and tribal interests nowadays have precedence over adherence to a common religion. For example, the civil war in Tajikistan took place between Muslims from various regions and clans. In Kazakhstan, to be a member of the *Juz* (clan) is in practical life incomparably more important than professing Islam. Finally, in the ethnic conflicts in Central Asia (in Ferghana in 1989; in Osh in 1990) those involved were Muslims. The population itself is not ready for an Islamic state and does not see Islam as a factor of unity and political stabilization. Most people confine Islam's role to the religious and cultural sphere and regard Islam as a regulator of relations between people in everyday life.

⁴⁶ See: R. Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qa'eda: Global Network of Terror*, Columbia University Press, 2002, p. 171.

⁴⁷ "Germany Bans Accused Islamic Organization," *The Associated Press*, 15 January 15, 2003, Lexis-Nexis.

⁴⁸ ICG, p. 13.

⁴⁹ In early 1997 a group in the Ferghana Region of Uzbekistan led by Iu. Akramov left the main body after disputes with the local leadership; a further split in 1999 reportedly took place in the Tashkent branch when a fairly significant group set up its own party, called Hizb an-Nusra (Party of Victory) (see: *Ibid*, p. 9).

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ See: A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 9.

RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AS A FORM OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS

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During the last decade the law enforcement bodies of the Northern Caucasus have been confronted with a new problem: religious extremism as part of international terrorism.

A careful analysis of its causes shows that in the Soviet past, when the state borders remained under strict control and were virtually closed to all types of criminals from other countries, no criminal elements could penetrate the autonomous North Caucasian republics. After the Soviet Union fell apart into new independent states, after economic and social-political reforms were launched in the 1990s, and after Russia began to lose its foothold in the Northern Caucasus, the local republics were caught in the midst of all kinds of interregional and international criminal organizations, including terrorist groups.

Daghestan was their most attractive target, probably because of its geopolitical situation (Russia's southern border and unstable neighbors—Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the Chechen Republic, its long Caspian coastline, rich natural resources ranging from oil and gas to uranium ores and a very specific infrastructure), and the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transportation routes.

Today, the republic's operational structures have registered over 150 organized criminal groups, 20 of them connected with similar groups abroad, while 6 or 8 of them are purely terrorist organizations. The latter are engaged in all types of terror: social-political (assassination of prominent public and political figures—they have already murdered the minister of finance, the head of the ministry of national relations, and several deputies of different levels), nationalist (confrontations between ethnic groups accompanied by fel-

onies), religious (clashes between the Wahhabis and common Muslims, assassination of a mufti), and criminal (contracted murders, criminal wars, abductions, etc.). The republican law enforcement bodies intercepted several coups and attempts to seize the building housing the State Council and the republic's government.

Under Soviet power, terrorism was described as a product of Western ideology; the nation was told that the FBI and CIA were engaged in training international terrorists; one Soviet author went as far as including the U.S. police academies on this list. This suited the ruling party. Today, we are well aware of the real situation and know what produces terrorism, who supplies it with ideological pillars, and who pays for it. We also know where terrorists are trained.

In Russia, so-called religious extremism is the most dangerous manifestation of international terrorism; it unites criminals and other law offenders under the slogan of establishing an Islamic republic in Daghestan. In fact, to achieve their own political and mercenary aims, they are trying to impose the alien ideology of Wahhabism and the idea of struggle for so-called pure Islam on the North Caucasian peoples. It should be said that neither religious extremism, nor Islamic terrorism, nor Wahhabism have anything in common with true Islam: this world religion rejects violence and the use of force. These terms are applied to crimes committed under the banner of religion.

According to the Russian special services, Wahhabism came to the Northern Caucasus in the early 1990s when active and open propaganda of this religious trend was launched in some of the regions. The Wahhabis opened their mosques, pub-

lished and distributed their reactionary writings free of charge, and set up illegal armed detachments allegedly to defend Islamic values. According to the Committee for Religious Affairs in the government of Daghestan, in 1992-1996 foreign sponsors (international Islamic organizations) spent about \$1m to build about 40 and renovate 16 mosques and 5 madrasahs in the republic.

We are not worried about Islamic propaganda in our regions: in Daghestan and the Northern Caucasus as a whole, religion is regarded as part of everyday life of any democratic society. We are worried about the fact that the transnational nature of Islam, the wide-scale anti-Russian activities of the residents coming from traditional Muslim countries, their provision with money and arms, as well as the republic's porous borders have allowed these people to join forces with the Chechen fighters and the emissaries in Chechnia to set up certain strong points in Daghestan.

Islamic extremism justifies terrorism as an instrument for achieving the main aim: an Islamic theocratic state, introducing the Shari'a by force, and creating a united Muslim community. Terrorists used religion to attract law offenders, wanted criminals, and religious fanatics; they supplanted the legal authorities in the so-called Kadar zone of Daghestan with the Shari'a, and cooperated with other criminal groups engaged in abductions, extortions and murders. The Public Prosecutor's Office of Daghestan has uncontestable proof that the majority of the abducted people were kept in the Kadar zone before they were moved to Chechnia.

The reactionary (extremist) Islamic organizations used terror to achieve their own aim. Terrorist acts are expected to rivet public attention, no matter how shocked, to the organizations responsible for them. The criminals do not exclude the possibility that this will attract more discontented people to their ranks.

The "Islamic Call"

Over time the number of foreign mercenaries in the North Caucasian terrorist organizations have increased; according to the special services, there were about 3,000 foreign mercenaries from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan, the Saudi Arabia and other countries fighting in Chechnia. Until his death, Habib Ali Mohammad Fathi, known as Paki, a U.S. citizen, was their ideological and military leader; he was trained in Israel and fought in Afghanistan.

In recent years his place was taken by the so-called "one-star" general of the armed forces of Chechnia, Emir ibn Khattab (also known as One-Armed Ahmed and Black Arab); he was born in Jordan and carried a Saudi Arabian passport. Foreign money paid for a wide network of terrorist bases and camps in Chechnia where foreign mercenaries trained fighters. It was through these foreigners that arms, uniforms, and money reached the illegal armed units.

Well-trained and well-armed extremists, who fought in Afghanistan, found themselves unemployed when the Soviet Union withdrew its forces from this country. They went back home being convinced of their invincibility. There is information that there were mujahedin among those who invaded Daghestan in August 1999, who fought in Afghanistan. Islamic fighters served one of the pillars of terrorism in the Northern Caucasus, and Chechnia as its part, in Tajikistan, Northern Africa, the Middle East, and the United States.

To achieve their aims terrorists planned and carried out a wide-scale project they themselves described as the "Islamic call." They wanted to emulate the Taliban by setting up paramilitary units in the Northern Caucasus. Speaking in front of graduates from training camps he himself had helped to set up, Khattab put this aim in a nutshell: "It is your task to sow deadly fear among those who betrayed Allah, they should be aware of the cold hand of death every waking hour... Those who want to rally around the holy banner of the Prophet should be tied to it by blood."

His camps developed into training centers for international terrorists: they have already trained over 10,000 people from the Northern Caucasus and from mainly unstable countries of other regions. Attempts on the lives of the presidents of Georgia and Uzbekistan were carried out by graduates from these camps—the best illustration of international terrorist activities of Khattab's fighters.

In Daghestan, within a very short period, fighters attacked the military of the motor rifle brigade deployed in the city of Buynaksk and militia stations in the same city; they invaded the Tsumada, Botlikh, and Novolakskoe districts, blasted an apartment block in Buynaksk killing 64; took part in capturing hospitals and murdering civilians in Budennovsk, abducted and killed militiamen in Kizliar, and were present during an armed clash in the village of Pervomaiskoe.

Khattab went as far as recommending that “Chechen methods” be used in Daghestan—the Kadar zone was set up to serve this criminal aim. Young Daghestani men were trained in the well-equipped camps set up in this zone.

At the same time, charities, Islamic centers and cultural and educational organizations in Daghestan were used for reconnaissance, subversion, propaganda, and financial support of Wahhabism. In 1998 alone Saudi Arabia and the UAE allocated tens of millions of U.S. dollars to pay for the training of fighters and their armed actions. Wahhabism in the Northern Caucasus was financed through the religious charity “The Living Heritage of Islam” stationed in Kuwait; two other charities based in Saudi Arabia—the Saar Foundation and Salvation (Al-Igasa); the office of an international charity Benevolence, two more charities—Al-Hayria based in Sudan and Qatar from the state of Qatar, and Tablig, an international Islamic organization based in Pakistan. The Public Prosecutor’s Office of Daghestan took all the necessary measures to liquidate their offices in Russia as organizations violating Russian laws. Some of them had offices in the United States, which means that we should cooperate with it in checking to see whether they were acting within the law (especially in the financial sphere). In 1995-2000 the Federal Security Service for Daghestan alone instituted criminal proceedings against 57 foreign citizens detained for illegal crossing of Russia’s state border.

Possible growth in extremist activities is especially dangerous in view of the plans nurtured by the Islamic movement of Taliban, among other structures, to step up drug trafficking. There is intelligence that late in the 20th century there were over 30 mini drug processing plants operating close to the Russian borders. The agreement between the Taliban leaders and the Chechen fighters on their share in the profits from sending Asian heroin to Russia and further on to Europe will create new markets, on the one hand, and “quick money” to finance further military actions, on the other.

In August 1999 the religious extremists who invaded Daghestan tried to capture the areas bordering on Chechnia, impose the Shari‘a by force on those who lived there and create springboards for moving further. They hoped to rely on their supporters and find likeminded people among the local population, yet the absolute majority of Daghestanis rejected the alien ideology of Wahhabism. While readying for intervention and during their attack the terrorists widely promoted the idea of an Islamic rule established by force in the Northern Caucasus. One of their religious leaders even published in Daghestan a so-called “aid to the program of a world-wide Muslim uprising.”

The savage attack on Daghestan carried out from Chechen territory forced the Russian Federation to restore order and carry out an antiterrorist operation in Chechnia. This attack proved to be a painful experience for Daghestanis because they had categorically condemned the war of 1994-1996 in Chechnia, banned transit of Russia’s troops across their territory, and housed over 200 thousand refugees. They were “thanked” with abductions, subversions and, in the end, real aggression.

Information Confrontation

While the federal Center was waging an antiterrorist operation in the Northern Caucasus, the terrorists launched information warfare against Russia to rally international and domestic support for their criminal actions. Their leaders hoped, and are still hoping, that international extremist organizations and the leading Western powers will come to their aid.

This warfare was entrusted to a special unit set up by Movladi Udugov, the Chechen ideologist. The so-called Information Agency Kavkaz-Tsentr opened a site of the same name on the Internet to disseminate false information about the victories scored by the Chechen fighters and huge losses of the federal

forces so as to plant a negative attitude toward Russia in the minds of the common people and political leaders. There are about 100 pro-Chechen sites in Russian, English, Arabic, French, and other languages opened by the Chechen diasporas in America, Britain, Finland, Lithuania, and Estonia. The Chechen separatists have organized their information centers in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Finland, Turkey, and Poland, spreading false information about “the atrocities of Russian soldiers toward civilians” and “a humanitarian catastrophe in the Northern Caucasus.” Many of the foreign media, being convinced that “vicious lies have responsive audiences,” used the information supplied by these centers without discrimination.

The provocative statement by Movladi Udugov that the Daghestani citizens who died in the *Kursk* disaster were responsible for the explosion aboard the nuclear-powered submarine served the same aim. Similar provocations were undertaken earlier, at the start of President Putin’s first election campaign. One of the German TV companies timed its broadcasts of videos about tortures of Chechen fighters and their burials by Russian soldiers to coincide with the visit by U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights to Russia. In fact, the video was made up of several unconnected subjects filmed in different seasons; none of the episodes showing bodies of Chechen fighters suggested that the Chechens had been tortured or executed.

In 1991-1994 Chechen terrorists were merely criminals: they abducted people, attacked coaches and hijacked planes, yet not once did they formulate any political demands. In 1994-1996, while criminal activities continued, new phenomena appeared: people were abducted in great numbers in neighboring territories; terror acquired dimensions of large-scale military operations (Budennovsk, Kizliar, Pervomaiskoe); journalists and missionaries became victims of abductors. Hostages were taken in other regions to be exchanged for captured fighters. Chechen terrorism was acquiring political hues; the leaders of the Chechen Republic were watching passively or even encouraged criminals. A carefully planned armed attack at Daghestan in August 1999 was the peak of these criminal terrorist activities. The Russian special services captured certain documents that irrefutably proved that the plans nurtured by the terrorists were far from purely criminal. I have already written that they were mainly of a political nature, which means that the terrorists wanted to violate the Russian Federation’s territorial integrity and establish a different form of power in the Northern Caucasus by force.

The Use of Force

The complaints by certain European political leaders about violations of human rights and freedoms in Chechnia are absolutely unfounded: the latter were destroyed there in the 1990s when Shari‘a courts functioned in the republic for three years, when executions were public, and when people were abducted from the streets. It was in “independent Chechnia” that the British and New Zealand engineers were first taken hostage with the hope of collecting a ransom and then beheaded. In Daghestan alone 590 people were abducted and taken to Chechnia (there were 157 women and 22 children among them). According to the RF Ministry of the Interior, fighters are still keeping about 800 people of various nationalities as guarantees of their safety.

Obviously, it is the task of the law enforcement bodies to complete the antiterrorist operation, therefore they should be keeping a keen watch over all the extremist organizations inside and outside the country. The specially organized investigation groups did a lot to identify terrorists and call them to account. In the course of investigation of these cases, however, when instituting international retrieval of terrorists, the investigative structures of the RF and the Republic of Daghestan discovered that it was hard to establish the terrorists’ true names; there was no information about their previous criminal activities, and nothing was known about them in their home countries or in the places from where they arrived.

Earlier, the Public Prosecutor’s Office of Daghestan sanctioned arrests and instituted international retrieval of the main terrorists (Khattab, Shamil and Shirvani Basaev, Movladi Udugov, and others) who prepared attacks on towns and villages of Daghestan and personally carried them out.

Until 2000, the tax police instituted 35 criminal cases against the structures that financed Chechen bandits, and brought more than 20 people to trial. In the last three years 34 crimes in the financial sphere were committed in Daghestan, 24 of them were solved. Today, 27 terrorist acts have been exposed; 46 criminals were condemned (seven of whom were sentenced to life imprisonment). The following figures provide food for thought: in 2002 there were 294 acts of terrorism in the Southern Federal Okrug (Art 205 of the RF Criminal Code), 272 of which took place in Chechnia; 7 in Daghestan, and 5 in Karachaevo-Cherkessia, North Ossetia, and the Stavropol Territory each. In Daghestan 89.9 percent of the crimes were exposed; the figure for the Russian Federation is 23.4 percent.

Resolution No. 1040 of Russian government of 15 September, 1999 On Measures to Prevent Terrorism suggested that the local self-administration structures should tighten security measures in housing estates, places of public gatherings, life-support facilities, etc. Later, public prosecutor's offices discovered that in some places local self-administration structures neglected real measures and limited themselves to drawing up plans and approving decisions. For example, on 14 September, 2001, the administration head of the Buynaksk District issued a decision On Urgent Preventive Measures to Avert Terrorist Acts in the District followed on 29 December by another decision On Measures Designed to Prevent Biological and Chemical Terrorism in the District. Until recently, however, nothing was done to even identify which facilities fell into the category of "vitally important" and "life-support." It was also discovered that in the region many of the religious organizations repeatedly violated the federal Law on the Freedom of Conscience, Religion and Religious Organizations. In particular, some of the educational establishments (the institutes named after Iusuf Hajji, Saidmuhammad-Hajji Abubakarov, and Hazan Hilmi in Khasaviurt among them) did not have state registration and licenses, or secular disciplines in their curricula; among the pupils were children under 15 with no secular secondary education, which creates fertile soil for extremist ideas. The local self-administration bodies that are expected to control religious education do nothing.

In the city of Derbent the public prosecutor established that there were 6 unregistered religious Islamic organizations in the city and 4 religious educational establishments, 2 of them unregistered. In the Derbent District there are 31 Muslim religious organizations, 21 of which have no registration; there are 2 madrasahs teaching minors who do not attend secular schools.

The administration heads of the cities Kiziliurt and Khasaviurt and the heads of three districts (Kazbek, Gergebil, Shamil) and the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Daghestan received documents dated 10 November, 2002 that demanded they remedy the violations discovered during inspections of educational religious organizations with respect to their stated aims and tasks. So far, none of the administrations, nor the Spiritual Administration, has reported back about any measures taken.

The recent monitoring of how the laws on opposing extremist activities were being implemented revealed that the violations have not been completely removed. In addition, in some of the religious educational establishments, the teachers themselves are uneducated: this applies to four out of six educational establishments in the Karabudakhkent District, where the directors have no special education; the same applies to the Burgimakhinskiy branch (the Akusha District) of the Imam Shafia Islamic University in Makhachkala, and others.

Religious zeal among the local people cannot go unnoticed—sometimes people become religious fanatics; in some cases the clergy tries to act, instead of the legal authorities, imposing their conditions on them, etc. This happened, for example, in the Karabudakhkent District. Early in 2002 the clergy from the village of Dorgeli tried to remove the head of administration and chairman of the Korkmasov collective farm. They demanded that a general meeting be convened to discuss his report about the farm's production activities and listen to reports by the chairman and head of the village administration. The Federal Law on Opposing Extremist Activities describes such actions as extremist.

According to information received by the Public Prosecutor's Office of Daghestan, there are currently over 400 Daghestanis studying abroad, mainly in the Middle East. It should be added that, according to information obtained from different sources, and from local public prosecutor's offices in particu-

lar, those who return after studying abroad do not betray extremist intentions. Still, law enforcement bodies and local self-administrations should monitor the problem.

The special services of Russia and Daghestan played an important role in the antiterrorist campaign: they are responsible for efficiently monitoring investigations and intercepting the illegal actions of bandits. The State Duma amnesty does not apply to the heads of bandit groups and those involved in the terrorist acts in Moscow, Volgograd, and Buynaksk. Obviously, the frequency of clashes between fighters and federal troops will diminish if the most active separatists are neutralized. The problem is how to do this and how to accomplish the task soon. The special services of Russia have hinted that the heads of bandit units will not escape them even if they manage to leave the Russian Federation. The heads of the special services of Russia count on the cooperation and understanding of their foreign colleagues.

Special services of various countries may exchange the so-called “non-typical experience” of neutralizing or, to put it plainly, liquidating terrorists. We all know, for example, that Israel never wavers when it comes to punishing terrorists: their crimes have no limitation period.

International Cooperation

Today, cooperation among law enforcement bodies and special services of various countries does not meet the requirements, despite the mounting threat of worldwide terror. Religious extremists receive financial and every other type of support in the host country and from other states. They have the latest weapons, materiel, and enough money. For example, the search of a private house in Daghestan, the owner of which was suspected of contacts with Chechen fighters, revealed over 300,000 high-quality counterfeit U.S. dollars, foreign printing equipment, clichés, printer’s ink and paper.

Terrorist No. 1 Osama bin Laden, head of al-Qa’eda has a special role to play in everything the international terrorist organizations, including those acting under religious slogans, are doing. He looks at the United States and Israel as Islam’s main enemies. In one of his messages he said: “In the name of Allah, we call on each faithful Muslim wishing to receive Divine Blessing to heed His call and kill Americans and take their money everywhere and every time this can be done.” Bin Laden is responsible for the explosions at the American embassies in the capitals of Tanzania and Kenya that killed about 500; it was his money that paid for what Khattab (now dead), Abdulla Malik, Muhammed Sharif, Saleh ed-Din and other international terrorists were doing in Chechnia and Daghestan. Regional groups of the Muslim Brothers, Hezbollah, and Hamas are operating in Europe and America. Other terrorist organizations (Jamaat ul-Fukra, the Ramzi Iusef Group that blasted the Twin Towers) are also working in the United States.

The Islamist fighters are religious fanatics; they are highly disciplined and handle the latest weapons, transportation and communication means with professional skill—therefore they are threatening many lives. It should be stressed once again that states should pool their efforts in fighting international terrorist organizations. The dynamics and structure of crimes differ from country to country—so similar trends are hard to identify, yet there are several common features: terrorism, banditry, contracted murders, illegal trafficking of arms, drugs, money, and raw materials. They are an equal threat to America and Russia. While the United States has already accumulated a vast amount of experience with fighting these crimes, the Russian law enforcement bodies encountered them for the first time about ten years ago. They should learn from their American colleagues. The different legal systems and different socioeconomic and political situations in the two countries should not overshadow what is most important—our common problems and shared responsibilities in fighting crime and its most dangerous form: organized transnational crime.

In the post-Soviet period organized crime in Russia has not only established contacts with similar structures in other countries, criminals from Russia have managed to gain a firm foothold on the international arena and, in certain countries, acquired political and economic influence. According to World Bank

experts, up to 50 percent of hard currency is still annually smuggled out of Russia, while the country does not have a clear dividing line between the legal and shadow economy.

The RF National Security Conception of 1997 responded to the fact that transnational crime came to the post-Soviet expanse by making “closer international cooperation in antiterrorist struggle and the struggle against transnational crime” one of the key elements of Russia’s foreign policy.

In the last twenty years Islamic extremism, in the form of terrorism, has made itself known across a vast expanse—from Indonesia and the Caucasus to the United States—in different forms (armed conflicts, demonstrative acts of terror, Islamic revolutions in Iran and Sudan, etc.). There are numerous examples of terrorist activities of quasi-religious organizations spreading outside the limits of one country to destabilize the situation in others. The Taliban officially declared a holy war against Russia to force it to stop the antiterrorist operation in Chechnia; on 16 January, 2000 the Taliban recognized “Independent Ichkeria” and opened its representative office in Kabul. Back in 1998 Vice-President of Chechnia Arsanov promised to execute all the leaders of the Russian Federation; he personally declared war on the United States (after missile strikes at the terrorist bases in Sudan and Afghanistan). Maskhadov, Udugov, and Basaev invested about \$12 million in commercial structures and real estate in Pakistan.

Some 100 Chechen, Arab and Pakistani fighters trained in Afghanistan (at the town of Host) were ready to cross state borders to Chechnia: this is normally done under the guise of religious tourism via Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan on bin Laden’s money when fighters pass for teachers or clerics. In January 2000 bin Laden personally met Chechen emissaries in Kandahar to discuss the wider scope of this aid, a larger number of mercenaries was dispatched to the Caucasus, as well as a greater supply of weapons, ammunition, and medication.

In fact, this was an “International” of terrorists and extremists of sorts, which can destroy stability in the world in the very near future. Being aware of this threat, Russia counts on mutual understanding with its foreign partners in order to prevent these developments; it repeatedly calls for closer cooperation in the antiterrorist struggle so as to stem the proliferation of terrorism. The threat, so far underestimated by political leaders, is growing together with its destructive potential. Regrettably, democratic countries often limit themselves to idle talk: one of Russia’s top leaders, for example, recently described the armed Wahhabis in Daghestan as the “peaceful believers.” While we are trying to agree on terms, terrorists are freely moving around the world, and organizing terrorist acts using money that regimes hostile to particular states are prepared to pay.

Only a wide antiterrorist front can change the situation: all democratic countries should agree on a common strategy in crises and follow it no matter what; special services and law enforcement bodies of all countries should pool their efforts; the terrorists should be deprived of money and of the possibility to set up their bases. The media should be banned from lauding terrorists no matter what the reason. Terrorists should be outlawed across the world; they should be tracked down and exterminated like mad dogs. This requires concerted efforts to prevent any criminal from hiding anywhere: no country can cope with the task single-handedly.

This cooperation should not be limited to an antiterrorist struggle alone—there are other forms of international crime to be dealt with. I mean drugs, money laundering, crime detection, counterfeit money, car theft, etc. These crimes earn money that pays for acts of terror. I am convinced that Russian experts, including experts from Daghestan, should carefully study American experience and receive information and technical support from their American colleagues. For our part, we are also prepared to exchange information and experience with our colleagues abroad. Cooperation is especially advisable in the following spheres: undercover agents; controlled supplies; operational experiments; setting up decoy enterprises. Secret agents are very useful. Whereas instructions issued by the U.S. General Attorney on undercover operations fail to mention the possibility of “urging to commit offences and creating conditions conducive to such offences,” these measures are banned by the RF Law on Operational Search Actions.

The law enforcement bodies of Russia, and the Northern Caucasus as its part, can and want to cooperate with the FBI and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and

Firearms, the Citizenship and Immigration Services, corresponding structures of the Ministry of Finance, etc. We would also like to learn more about the Witness Security Program. In some cases the law enforcement bodies of Daghestan fail to provide enough evidence to support criminal cases against terrorists in court. As a result of the events in the Kadar zone mentioned above, the Public Prosecutor's Office of Daghestan collected enough eyewitness accounts and information from the victims during the investigation, as well as other factual material, to institute criminal cases against over 130 Wahhabi fighters. In court, however, nearly all the eyewitnesses and victims refused to confirm their earlier testimonies. There is every reason to believe that they were either intimidated or bribed by the arrested fighters' relatives.

The law enforcement bodies of Russia and the United States could cooperate to carry out investigatory and operational search measures related to specific criminal cases. I mean that the two states could set up joint operational groups to stay hot on the heels of criminals, and create and use a joint data bank about organized and professional criminal structures, their leaders, international contacts, etc. In the field of investigation, the time has come to set up a mechanism for carrying out urgent international investigation orders. I do not know much about the American procedure—in Russia such orders are controlled by the General Prosecutor's Office, which treats them as an absolute priority. In February 2003 we sent such an order to the American law enforcement bodies with a request to find out who had received about \$2m transferred to the U.S. by the Elmier Plant in Daghestan and received no reply.

All states, Russia and America among them, suffer from money being smuggled out of the country with the help of false customs documents; bank credits received under false contracts that find their way to foreign banks, and tax evasion. Taking advantage of the absence of working contacts and cooperation among the law enforcement bodies, private and legal persons who try to conceal their revenues enter into collusion with the citizens of other states and use the requisites of non-existing firms. The data on concealing money in the U.S., France and other countries can be found in the investigative documents of Daghestan's law enforcement bodies.

The world market is feeling the impact of criminal foreign economic activities. As soon as smuggling certain commodities out of Russia via the Baltic states was stopped, the price of gasoline went up, together with metal prices at the London Metal Exchange. This confirms that the law enforcement bodies of all countries should work together.

C o n c l u s i o n s

Cooperation among the leading states in the antiterrorist struggle should be developed in the following fields:

- real implementation of all agreements reached at the G8 summits in fighting transnational crime;
- exchanging operational-search, crime-related, etc. information of mutual interest;
- carrying out operational-search measures and individual pleadings on international orders;
- exchanging experience at meetings, conferences and seminars;
- planning coordinated measures, including carrying out "controlled deliveries" of firearms, drugs, etc. when necessary;
- publishing a joint bulletin on current problems of antiterrorist struggle, positive experience in intercepting and investigating terrorist activities;
- exchanging legal acts, methodological publications, textbooks and research publications on relevant issues;
- helping to train and upgrade the skills of everyone involved in antiterrorist operations, including on-the-job-training in specialized antiterrorist units;

- carrying out joint research of mutual interest;
- rendering legal aid through official involvement of the sides concerned in investigating specific cases;
- assisting in tracking money and properties of criminal origin abroad.

Today, our cooperation with the United States and other countries in the areas listed above is obviously inadequate. We must work even harder to achieve real cooperation, otherwise Russia will not be able to demand the extradition of members of organized criminal and terrorist groups in order to institute criminal proceedings against them, while the countries to which these people escape will have a lot of trouble with them.

We all know that the crime level in the United States has been on the constant decline since 1991; this is especially true of felonies, the number of which is diminishing faster than stealing of property. There are other positive trends created by consistent efforts and the implementation of corresponding national and regional programs. We should study this experience and think about applying it in Russia and in Daghestan.

Today, those who are fighting international crime mostly respond to the already committed offence—little is being done to prevent offences, to disrupt the international ties of criminal communities, and to liquidate them altogether.

What can the law enforcement bodies of Daghestan offer their American colleagues? First, we have information about crimes committed by terrorist groups and about their members. Second, we have information about the possible international activities of local criminal groups and individuals. Third, we have information about the planned purchase of equipment, goods, etc. outside Russia, in the United States in particular, for huge sums of money, the movement of which should be traced further. Fourth, we can offer detailed information about the 1999 events and the role international terrorists played in them. Fifth, we can offer maximum protection to American citizens arriving in Daghestan. Finally, we can protect valuable cargoes arriving from the United States.

The law enforcement bodies of the Russian Federation can offer more than that: setting up a data base on all aspects of organized crime; exchanging experience in training special units; carrying out anti-terrorist operations; rendering legal aid in organizing direct contacts; establishing cooperation on the basis of the Interpol Central Bureau in Russia, etc.

It should be said that our republic does not need political patronage—it is part of the Russian Federation, its constituency, and the Daghestanis proved this when defending the republic's borders. What we need is equal and mutually advantageous cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, and other spheres.

Finally, we should not expect any major decisions to ensue from the recent meeting of heads of the law enforcement bodies of Russia and America. We can build up our cooperation in accordance with the "most favored nation" principle—what we need is goodwill and the desire to help our colleagues.

Why did extremism spread in the Northern Caucasus and Daghestan as its part? The following factors played a key role: the drop in the population's standard of living in recent years, and the widening gap between the very rich and the very poor. The ruined economy and reduction in the number of jobs left many people without employment. This is especially true of the youth, which turns to crime in search of a means of subsistence. Religious extremist ideologists exploited this situation: they dispensed lavish promises and petty handouts. Dissatisfied with their social status and hoping for a better future in a new Islamic state, young men commit crimes against the state and society: some of them do this for wrong ideological reasons, others, for money.

THE ECONOMICS OF CONFLICTS (CIVIL WAR, TERRORISM AND SEPARATISM): SELECTED ISSUES, FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY LESSONS

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

There were 225 armed conflicts from 1946 to 2001, 34 of which were active in 2001. This indicates that the termination of the so-called Cold War did not end fighting and the slaughtering of people. More than 90 percent of conflicts take place within countries; they are civil wars.¹

The causes of armed conflicts have been studied by academia and international organizations. The factors explaining conflicts are manifold. They include political ambitions and frustrations, domestic and foreign economic interests, institutional and social conditions, geopolitical factors and ideology.

Analytical and empirical work on the economic roots of conflicts is growing. For instance, the World Bank research program, "The Economics of Civil War, Crime and Violence" is far from being purely academic, and indicates "implications for policy." Some studies concentrate on the conditions for ending conflict, the consolidation of

post-conflict peace and prevention. Sets of early warning indicators are proposed. Terrorism is also perceived as a conflict, with the "privatization of war," and the economics of separatism becoming research topics.

Armed conflicts require weapons. Their avoidance necessitates disarming and fighting the trafficking of weapons, which has economic dimensions with the imposition of strict controls on exports and imports, the conversion of defense-related industries, the reduction in size of armed forces and the re-insertion in civil life of former combatants.

Despite the accumulation of important analytical works, empirical evidence and recommendations for action, it seems that the academic and research community has little impact on rulers, politicians and decision-makers.² We hope that this article may contribute to the bridging of analysis, policies and international cooperation.

¹ See: N.P. Gleditsch *et al.*, "Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Data Set," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, Issue 05, 1 September, 2002.

² See: A. Mack, "Civil War: Academic Research and the Policy Community," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, Issue 05, 1 September 2002.

1. The Economic Analysis of Conflicts

1.1. Methodological Remarks

Defining conflict. According to Steven L. McShane, a conflict is "a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party."³ Another perspec-

This paper does not reflect any official OSCE position.

³ Web-document (1/10/01).

tive sees conflict in the broad spectrum between peace and war; it ranges between random or planned, from unexpressed hostility to physical violence, with identified enemies or not, and different level of stress for the population.⁴ Such definitions may help for pre-selecting events. Tensions between groups or states, civil wars, terrorism and separatism can be seen as conflicts. For empirical research, these definitions have to be complemented by precise criteria that allow for measurement.

Proposed criteria and measures. An armed conflict requires the use of armed forces between (at least) two parties resulting in the death of people. The Correlates of War (COW) data set on civil wars, developed by the University of Michigan, is based on four criteria: (1) the involvement of military action, (2) the number of deaths during the conflict (the threshold is 1,000 deaths from hostilities), (3) the active involvement of the government, (4) the effective resistance of both sides. Experts from Uppsala University propose an alternative to COW data. They draw a line between “minor conflicts” with 25 to 1,000 battle-related deaths and (true) wars with a minimum of 1,000 death *per annum*, etc.⁵

Evaluating data. According to Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, definitions are essential, especially for measuring the duration of conflicts. Defining human costs can be difficult because violent and lasting conflicts interrupt the functioning of institutions, resulting in the destruction of basic infrastructures and the disruption of basic and regular economic activities, causing hunger, facilitating the spread of diseases and, in some instances, raising the death toll to phenomenal levels. Thus, a distinction should be made between direct and indirect deaths. There is also a lack of reliable data on military expenditures.⁶

1.2. Basic Figures and Tendencies

The Uppsala University data contains a total of 204 armed conflicts over the years 1946-1999: 145 are intra-state conflicts (they can be called civil wars), 18 had external involvement of foreign states. 104 conflicts could be seen as wars. 87 conflicts were minor conflicts. The evidence (see Fig. 1) shows that the termination of the Cold War had some immediate impact on the number of conflicts. In 1999, the situation was comparable to what was observed at the end of the 1970s.

1.3. The Analysis of Civil Wars

Causes of civil wars. Most often, it is believed that rebellion is a protest because of grievance. Such views partly reflect the discourse produced by rebels and the media. The evidence indicates that “greed” is often mixed with “grievance.” Rebel leaders may compromise when being offered a “share of the pie,” most often receipts from the extraction and exports of raw material and minerals. Thus, countries that have a high share of GDP and exports coming from primary commodities are more conflict-prone than others, which have a diversified economic base. Other important factors are low average incomes, slow growth, and large diasporas (in rich countries). The success or failure of insurgent forces depends on their capacity to raise funds, which is often linked to illicit activities such as the trafficking of drugs and, subsequently, money laundering, which underlines the importance of financial factors. Pure grievance in-

⁴ See: S.R. Marsh, “Mediation Services”. Website.

⁵ For a critical overview, see: P. Collier, A. Hoeffler, *Data Issues in the Study of Conflict*. Paper prepared for the Conference on “Data Collection on Armed Conflict,” supported by the European Commission, Uppsala 8-9 June, 2001.

⁶ Ibidem.

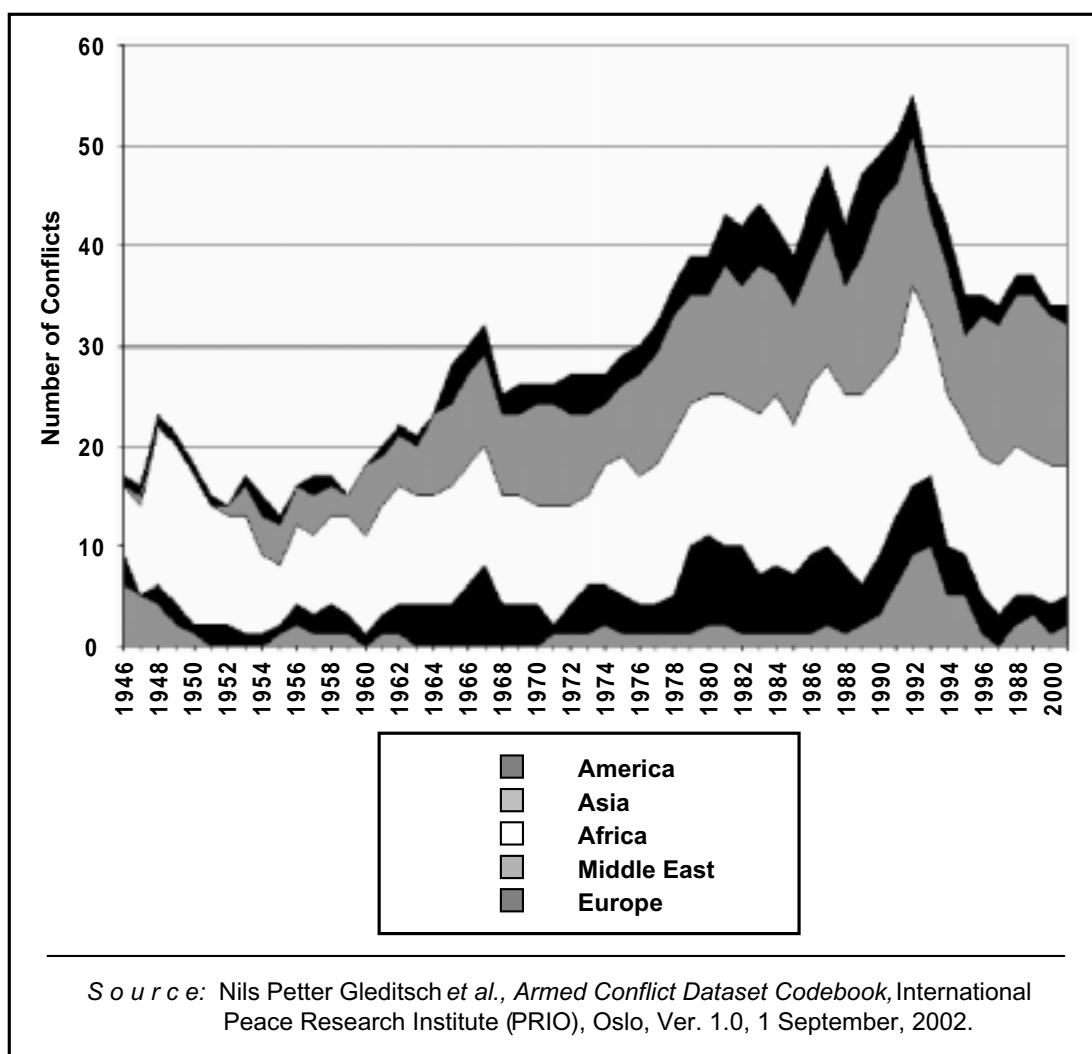


Fig. 1.
Number of Armed Conflicts by Region, 1946-2000

dicators, i.e. inequality, political repression and the lack of democracy, and ethnic and religious divisions, do not matter much for explaining civil wars.⁷

The scale of civil wars. The scale of a conflict has various dimensions; one is its duration. Other dimensions are geographical coverage, the number of deaths and refugees, and so-called “internally displaced persons.” Duration is essential because, from a policy perspective, what matters is how to (contain and) end a conflict. Traditional models assume that the benefits of a civil war accrue only upon victory. In fact, the conflict itself can be a source of benefits. The evidence indicates that the duration of a conflict partly depends on the relative importance of ethnic groups (that can have access to specific sources of incomes during the conflict) and has little to do with the causes of the conflict *per se*. In other words, the conflict has its own inner logic that has to be understood and addressed for terminating it.⁸

⁷ See: P. Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implication for Policy,” *World Bank*, 15 June, 2000.

⁸ See: P. Collier, A. Hoeffler, M. Soderbom, “On the Duration of Civil War,” *World Bank*, May 2001.

1.4. Funding and Cost Aspects of Civil Wars

A first source of funding insurgency is obtained from the control of primary resources and trafficking. "A second potential source of rebel finance is from diasporas living in developed countries... There are several reasons to expect that diasporas would increase the provision of finance for rebellion, [including the fact that they] are usually much richer than the population in their country of origin... A third potential source of rebel finance is from hostile governments... A further potential influence on rebel costs is the presence of accumulated physical, human and organizational capital. If a country has previously had a rebellion [e.g. against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan] there will be a stock of guns, former rebels who know how to use them and probably a persistent, if quiescent, rebel organization."⁹

2. The Analysis of Terrorism

2.1. Terrorism as Conflict

Already in the 1970s, experts predicted that "the dispute about a detailed, comprehensive definition of terrorism will continue for a long time, (it) will not result in the consensus and (it) will make no notable contribution toward the understanding of terrorism."¹⁰ More recently, an official report on world terrorism underlined that "no one definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance."¹¹ Nevertheless, considering the definitions of conflict provided in Section 1, we can assume that terrorism is a conflict. Moreover, the absence of a common definition of terrorism did not prevent organizations and researchers from collecting data and information about the phenomenon. Given its magnitude and historical significance, we shall refer to "September 11" (or "9/11").

2.2. The Analysis of Terrorism

The changing nature of terror. From the 1960s until the late 1980s the main motives for terrorism were nationalism, separatism, Marxism, etc. The 1990s saw the emergence of religious factors. When counting terrorist groups, the proportion of religious groups is increasing overtime. This change corresponds to new behaviors and outcomes.¹²

Enders-Sandler's analysis of terrorism. "A terrorist group must first decide its allocation of resources between terrorist and non-terrorist activities. Next the group must allocate its terrorism-designed resources among various modes of attack. ... A risk-loving group will attempt more risky operations, whose expected payoffs in terms of their impact on the targeted audience are greater and whose prices are also higher to the perpetrators than those executed by a risk-averse group. ... The increased proportion of fundamentalist religious groups and fanatical groups that are not averse to risks among the active terrorist groups in the post-Cold War period is expected to increase the proportion of risky and logistically complex incidents undertaken... [The statistical analysis of time series indicates that] although the number of incidents has dropped dramatically during the post-Cold War period, transnational terrorism still presents

⁹ P. Collier, A. Hoeffler, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, 4 January, 2001.

¹⁰ O. Malik, *Enough of the Definition of Terrorism*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 2001.

¹¹ abc News.Com, 11 Oct., 2001.

¹² See: W. Enders, T. Sandler, "Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 44, No. 3, June 2000.

a significant threat... In recent years, [incidents are] more likely to result in death or injuries.”¹³ “9/11” does support that perspective. Incidents also tend to display cyclical patterns. Basically, when considering the number of deaths, there are two very long cycles: a primary cycle of 58.18 quarters (or about 15 years) and a secondary cycle of 23.98 quarters (6 years) (see Fig. 2).

Specificity of suicide-terrorism. Confined until recently to a few countries, suicide-terrorism may represent a specific category that requires more analysis and research for understanding and elaborating preventive and reactive counter-measures.¹⁴

Root causes of terrorism. Poverty in the Third World and U.S. foreign policy were mentioned as explanations for “9/11.” Considering the evidence, the 19 suicidal terrorists and Bin Laden himself were not poor and uneducated. In their cases at least, fanaticism and hate were major motives.¹⁵ Nevertheless, in some regions of world poor economic conditions and social despair may lead to extreme behaviors.

2.3. The Financing of Terrorism

The Importance of Fund Raising. As indicated by World Bank studies, the capacity to raise funds is essential for supporting organized violence. Considering “9/11,” formal and informal banking were used to channel illicit funds.

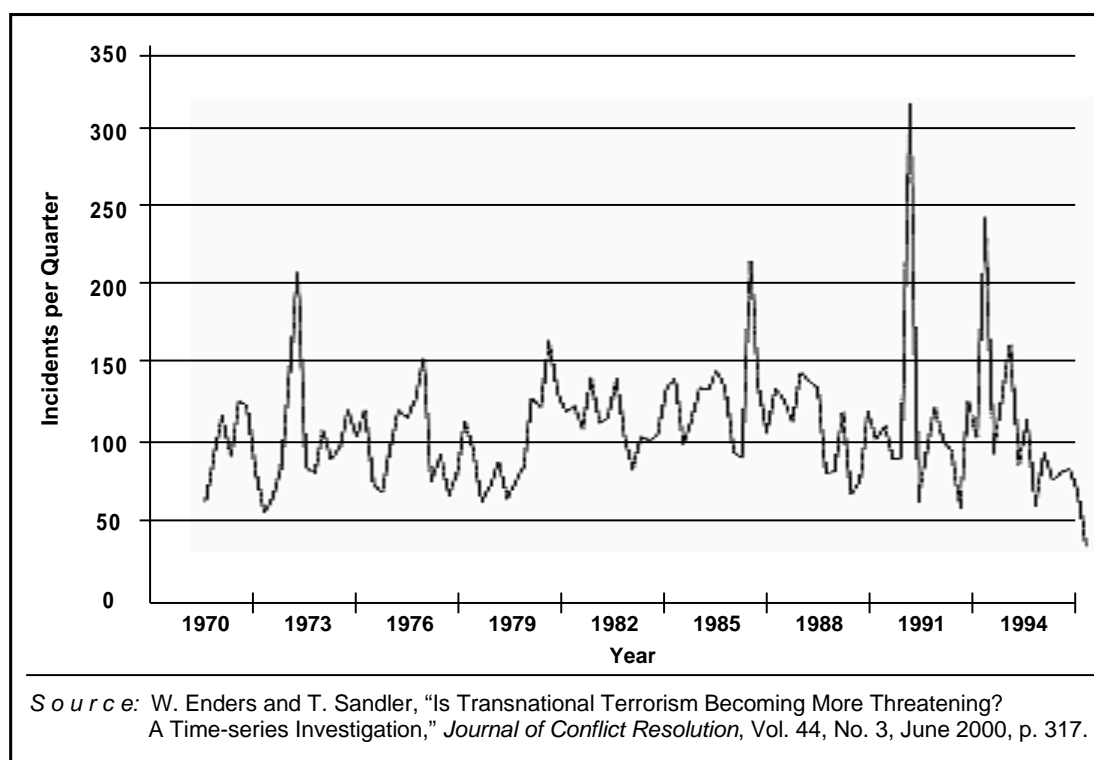


Fig. 2.
Total Number of Terrorist Incidents per Quarter, 1970-1994

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ See: R. Gunaratna, “The Employment of Suicide in Terrorism and Guerrilla Warfare,” in: “*Vers une privatisation des conflits?*” Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Recherches & Documents, No. 22, Avril 2001.

¹⁵ See: H. Dalle, “Poverty and Terrorism,” *The Washington Times*, 20 February, 2002.

Informal Finance. According to *Washington Post* journalists, we should not expect too much from investigations and the control of formal financial flows and banking operations.¹⁶ In the “9/11” case, what the Bin Laden’s group did most often was providing seed money to terrorist cells and asking them to rely progressively on their own resources. Raising money was done through petty crime acts such as theft and credit card fraud. Such crimes do not normally attract much attention. Besides activities aiming at self-reliance, crime-related money transfers do not often use formal transaction channels, informal banking could even be the rule.¹⁷

Formal Finance. Despite some pessimism, within a few months after “9/11,” more than \$100 million had been seized in terrorist-related assets and bank accounts. The FBI reviewed at least 200,000 documents and 10,000 accounts. Most countries of the world supported U.S. investigations and actions. Some financial operations and bank accounts can be associated with money laundering.

2.4. The Economic Costs of Terrorism

Terrorism causes death and devastation. As illustrated by “9/11,” a line can be drawn between micro and macro-costs. Global and long-term costs should also be taken into consideration.

Micro-costs. According to the Swiss Reinsurance Company, “9/11” costs an estimated \$90 billion, of which \$19 billion was insured.¹⁸

Macro-costs. IMF experts also estimated the economic cost of “9/11.” The conditions of the world economy by mid-2001 were taken into account and a multiplicity of channels through which the attacks should affect the world economy was considered. The direct costs for the U.S. are estimated at about \$21.4 billion. As many of the policies were insured abroad, there should be a net inflow to the U.S. of \$11 billion. Nevertheless, “It is impossible at this stage to provide firm evidence on all of the channels by which the September 11 could affect long term potential.” Only rough estimates can be provided. “The loss of output from all sources could be as much as 3/4 percent of GDP.”¹⁹

Global costs. The costs of “9/11” are certainly not limited to the U.S. Millions of people around the world may also endure its consequences on trade and growth.

Long-term costs. Following “9/11,” border controls have to be strengthened and streamlined. That implies investing in equipment and personnel, and also delaying the crossing of borders for goods and people, which may impede global trade and create additional costs for public bodies and business.

3. The Case of Separatism

Civil wars generally aim at toppling down ruling authorities and replacing them by new ones, with no change of international borders. They may also correspond to separatism and lead to independence for territories that can secede. Both the separation process and, when separatism is “successful,” separated regions and supportive interest groups have economic dimensions that are worth analyzing for peace and security reasons, during and even after open conflicts.

¹⁶ See: R. O’Harrow, Jr., D. Hilzenrath, K. De Young, “Bin Laden’s Money Takes Hidden Paths to Agents of Terror,” *The Washington Post*, Friday, 21 September, 2001, p. A13.

¹⁷ The Arabic word *Hawala* “refers to money transfers, regardless of how it is made,” it is based on mutual trust and personal relationship, and might even be faster, cheaper and more reliable than formal banking.

¹⁸ See: National Center for Policy Analysis, “Global Disaster Losses Reach \$115 Billion in 2001,” *Daily Policy Digest*, Friday, 21 December, 2001.

¹⁹ IMF, *World Economic Outlook – The Global Economy After September 11*, December 2001.

3.1. The Quest for Separation

The causes of separatism are manifold. They can be ethnic, cultural, ideological and political. There are also socioeconomic factors. Social inequities, including horizontal economic inequalities among ethnic and national groups within a country, are often mentioned as a factor that feed separatism.²⁰ Moreover, when a region disposes of large mineral, oil or gas deposits, one may assume that there is a strong material incentive for separatism, particularly among the elite. External private or public interests may exacerbate tensions by supporting separatist movements and weaken the central authorities. Separatists may resort to criminal activities such as the trafficking of drugs, weapons and people for funding their political and armed actions. Diaspora workers might also be subjected to pressures to surrender part of their incomes to separatist organizations. Some diaspora entrepreneurs are also willing to support separatism or are sometime the victims of racketing. More research is needed to strengthen conclusions concerning the mechanisms and the institutional framework of separatism. Nevertheless, there is plenty of factual evidence showing that the recourse to criminal activities does not easily end, even if separatism is successful. That implies that some structures will take time to disappear—there is a conversion challenge!

3.2. The Economy of Separatist Regions

When separatism is successful, separatist regions may be fully recognized by the international community and particularly by former rulers. In that case, one may assume that there will be a progressive normalization of economic activities. However, very often, separated regions do not gain international recognition and economic and social conditions remain harsh, which stimulates illicit activities that may eventually become serious threats for the international community.

Blockade. The experience of Abkhazia shows that when separated regions are confronted with an official blockade imposed by the legally recognized political center and the international community, it may worsen economic conditions and strengthen authoritarian tendencies. Living standards can fall to very low levels, far below what it could be without separatism. Most of the local and regional meager budget is used for military purpose.²¹ Despite official blockade, one may assume there is smuggling and trafficking taking place between the separatist region and the rest of the world. Moreover, the separatist region may become a permanent or provisory heaven for criminals and eventually terrorists.

Partial isolation. Contrary to Abkhazia, Nagorny Karabakh has been capable to maintain linkages with foreign countries, including Armenia. That region also benefited from U.S. aid for a short period of time at least; U.S. support went principally into the social sphere. NGOs were also involved. The authoritarian regime fell in 1999, and despite the state of emergency, priority is now given to the development of civil society, democratization and liberalization.²²

No single model. The two examples of separatism indicate that there is no single model of the economy in separated regions. However, isolation does not necessarily help reducing tensions and resolving political problems. On the contrary, a blockade seems to impede the development of civil society and democracy, and allow for military-type regimes that do not favor constructive dialog between belligerents. Maintaining links with the outside world may possibly create opportunities for democratization and represent a positive base for future negotiations aiming at reconciliation and durable peace.

²⁰ For more detail, see: Dean E. McHenry, Jr., *Accounting for the Absence of General Explanation of Separatist Movements in Federal System: An Argument based on Four Indian New State Movements*. Paper prepared for the 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, 2-5 September.

²¹ See: R. Gotsiridze, "The Economic Situation in Blockaded Abkhazia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (18), 2002.

²² See: N. Airumian, "Postwar Economy of Nagorny Karabakh," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (18), 2002.

4. Conflict Prevention and Resolution

4.1. Early Warning Indicators

Conflict prevention requires the monitoring of critical regions and countries. For that purpose, sets of indicators have already been proposed. For instance, the European Commission has elaborated an extensive “Check-list for Root Causes of Conflict” that includes: legitimacy of the State, rule of law, respect for fundamental rights, civil society and media, relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms, the geopolitical situation and socioeconomic indicators. The latter comprise an evaluation of the robustness of the economy, macroeconomic stability, sustainability of the environmental policy, social and welfare policy, regional policy within a country, etc.²³

4.2. Political Dimensions

Addressing the economic root-causes of conflict cannot only rely on pure economic measures. The successful implementation of sound economic policies needs political support for being legitimated and, as a result, help make the overall environment more stable and predictable for both citizens and the business community.

Sharing of power. As already mentioned, ending conflict often requires new power structures and allows for the participation of all stakeholders in the ruling of a country. Political and administrative reforms could be envisaged to institutionalize the changes and fully integrate major actors into power structures. In this context, democracy is essential.

Democratization. Many conflicts take place in countries characterized by a lack of democracy and extremely poor records in terms of observing and respecting human rights. The adoption of democratic rules that allow for a full representation of the people should contribute to stability. There would be what is called “democratic peace.” It is worth observing that when being confronted with hostile environments and armed conflicts, democracies appear as extremely resilient, which is not the case of autocratic regimes, fundamentally unstable.²⁴

Federalism. There might also be a need for new political and institutional schemes allowing for a redistribution of political power within conflicting countries—that relates to de-concentration, decentralization and devolution. In some cases, replacing centralized States by federations or confederations may represent reasonable options for ending conflicts and appeasing tensions. Such political arrangements must be accompanied by adequate budgetary and fiscal structures that allow for income redistribution, from the richest to the poorest regions. That expresses solidarity and builds up confidence among people.

4.3. Long-term Sustainable Growth

Alleviating poverty, increasing incomes and reducing inequalities require economic growth. For that reason, growth-conducive strategies must be adopted and corresponding measures and policies should be implemented. Above all, the quality of public and private governance must be enhanced.

The meaning of good governance. Good governance corresponds to mechanisms, processes and institutions through which civil society, citizens and the business community can articulate their views and needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and duties.

²³ See: European Commission, External Relations website.

²⁴ See: M. Mousseau, Y. Shi, “A Test for Reverse Causality in the Democratic Peace Relationship,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 36, No. 6, 1999.

The importance of good governance. Widespread corruption in the political spheres and in the administration may trigger tensions and even armed opposition and, therefore, should be addressed accordingly.²⁵ Good governance necessitates improving the management of public resources, rationalizing the budgetary process and adopting new administration techniques in governmental bodies.

Macro-economic stability. Economic stability is a precondition for stimulating investment, economic growth, employment creation, higher incomes and better living conditions for all. Successful macro-economic policies require the adoption of modern national accounting methodology, the disposition of adequate statistical databases and indicators, and the implementation of sound budgetary and fiscal policies. Overall, macro-economic stability corresponds to limited budget deficits and sustainable levels of public and private (internal and external) debts, low inflation rates, balanced external accounts and stable exchange rates, while guaranteeing the convertibility of the domestic currency, for current account transactions at least.²⁶

Private sector development. The creation of small and medium enterprises should be seen as a priority. SMEs are often the main source of job creation, employment and earning for most of the working population. In many countries, the number of legal documents, licenses and authorizations, required for starting new businesses, should be limited and corresponding procedures should be simplified. Efficient banking and financial markets are needed to mobilize domestic savings and allocate them.

Sustainable development. Long-term growth and development requires the adoption of measures and policies that favor social justice and takes into consideration environmental and natural resources constraints. The wellbeing of future generations should be taken into account.

Private governance. The business sector must be associated to stabilization and long-term development efforts. The fight against corruption must reflect the wish and the cooperation of business people, in countries that have been wrecked by war and elsewhere. The involvement of private business in conflicts should be severely reprimanded in all countries. Multinationals could eventually be associated to the prevention of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.²⁷

4.4. The Foreign Trade Issue

As indicated by World Bank studies, countries that have a high concentration of economic activities and exports on a few primary products are more conflict-prone than other countries that have more diversified export structures. The logical implication should be advocating and fostering development strategies and policies that may broaden the range of economic activities and exports. Many developing and conflict-prone countries are members of the World Trade Organization. For those countries, economic diversification policies, relying on direct and indirect subsidies, might conflict with WTO rules. Moreover, from an historical perspective, when developing countries promoted import-substitution strategies, it often led to external imbalances and sometimes unbearable external indebtedness, namely so-called "debt trap" situations where new borrowings are needed to repay old ones. Export promotion policies might look more appealing. But, in that case also, one should ensure that it does not lead to countering measures (with the use of safeguard, anti-dumping or countervailing instruments) and negative actions within the WTO framework. In other words, the room for maneuver is limited and should rely on market forces and transparency. For that reason, as already mentioned, priority must be given to enhancing the business and investment climate by imposing the rule of law and enhancing the quality of governance, possibly with foreign technical assistance.

²⁵ "Political corruption" is relatively hard to reduce because, in some cases, the heads of state directly benefit from it.

²⁶ Which is in line with the obligations of Article VIII of the IMF Articles of Agreement.

²⁷ There are initiatives for involving large companies in conflict prevention activities.

4.5. Combating Terrorism

The dilemma of policy response. “The rise of religious terrorism in which massive civilian casualties are the goal poses a potential dilemma ... for policy. If a government responds by tightening security at official sites ... its civilian targets will become *relatively* less secure. Destroying even a large portion of a group may not ameliorate the dangers for long, because the remaining fanatical members may attack with even greater resolve and vengeance.”²⁸ In the U.S. case at least, taking into account the termination of the Cold War and given the size of the defense budget (above USD 400 billion in 2003), one may wonder if such a dilemma does exist. In less affluent countries, the dilemma might be real.

Comprehensive Perspective. The fight against terrorism must be global, directly or indirectly, and comprehensively involving all countries. That means using several instruments, including diplomacy, the legal and criminal system, freezing and seizing financial assets, countering money laundering, police and military force, and intelligence. Social and economic roots should also be addressed with adequate instruments and policies.

Short-term versus Long-run. Following a terror act, the immediate priority is reaction to arrest and neutralize those who share responsibility. The epidemic nature of criminal behaviors must also be recognized and addressed accordingly. In the long run, prevention becomes essential. Terrorism can be a managed problem, under control and containment.

Addressing suicide terrorism. Suicide terrorism requires specific policy responses, with a focus on economic and social roots, but also to identify those who recruit, indoctrinate, and provide material and financial support. In that respect, the economics of crime based on the seminal article of Nobel Prize Winner G. Becker, which assumes that individuals are rational and before starting criminal activities they calculate, might help.²⁹ Considering suicide-terrorism, a few variables are certainly important for sponsors, namely: the size of the reward (in the case of terrorism, the satisfaction provided by the killing of people and the destruction of assets), the probability of being killed, or caught and convicted, the severity of punishment, and the wellbeing provided by competing legal activities.

Money Laundering. Terrorist organizations rely on money laundering. Money laundering can be facilitated by many factors, including inappropriate banking and financial legislation, the globalization of financial markets and the special status of some territories. Subsequently, much effort is needed to improve and tighten controls on financial systems. The complex task of controlling illicit funds is already supported by the private sector itself with the introduction of specific computer programs to detect suspicious operations and the use of “black lists” on “risky clients.” The recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on money laundering and the financing of terrorism are generally recognized as appropriate standards. In that respect, the IMF is already taking measures for integrating FATF recommendations into its current work.

4.6. Coping with Separatism

The role of diasporas. Very often, diasporas harbor myths and romantic emotions about their regions of origin. When they become richer, they can finance armed groups and support open conflicts. “Above all, they do not have to suffer any of the awful consequences of renewed conflict.”³⁰ For that reason, it is essential to work actively with diasporas for stopping conflicts and building peace agreements.

“Softening blockade?” Considering the two examples of separatism provided in this text, the impression is that an improvement of economic conditions in a separatist region should have a positive impact

²⁸ W. Enders, T. Sandler, op. cit.

²⁹ See: G. Becker, “Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach,” *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 76, No. 2, March-April 1968.

³⁰ P. Collier, op. cit., p. 14.

on social conditions, which could eventually soften the attitude of the people regarding a peace process. In other words, blockades should be selective and not comprehensive.

Cutting supply lines. The funding of separatism has to be addressed, particularly for extremist groups that categorically refuse any dialog and political processes. The active role of foreign supporters and suppliers cannot be ignored too.

4.7. Disarming

There cannot be armed conflicts without weapons. There are significant positive relations between arms sales and trafficking, and conflicts. According to the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), "more than 500 million small arms and light weapons are in circulation around the world and are considered the weapons of choice in 90% of conflicts."³¹ Disarmament and decommissioning are complex and difficult tasks that can also be very costly.³¹ International cooperation is therefore needed. Moreover, the trafficking of arms must be combated firmly by the international community. The legal commerce of arms should also be a focus of action. Unfortunately, there are formidable vested interests in both the production and exports of all sorts of weapons and munitions. In post-conflict zones, it is essential to reintegrate fighters into a normal civil life. That may require well-targeted training and education programs. Mercenaries should also be discouraged to offer their services to private armies and eventually be punished for doing so.

4.8. Foreign Intervention

The use of force by the international community is a radical option for ending a civil war. Nevertheless, diplomacy should first prevail. The overall human and economic costs of a military action should be put in perspective, in comparison with possible peaceful solutions that may allow for true reconciliation.

4.9. International Cooperation and Foreign Aid

Promoting contacts and dialogs. "On the international level, there must be concerted efforts to expand favorable contacts between people from different groups and nations."³² Dialogs are pre-conditions to understand and respect others, and build bridges between nations, cultures and civilizations.

Education. "In the twenty-first century it will be necessary in child raising to put deliberate, explicit emphasis on developing pro-social orientations and a sense of worth based not on depreciation of others but on the constructive attributes of oneself and others."³³

Economic and technical assistance. There is evidence that there is a positive link between foreign aid and post-conflict peace.³⁴ Massive aid will help populations to secure minimum standards of living and restore key-infrastructures. Technical assistance is needed for institutional development, adopt new legislation, enhance the quality of governance, and support civil society and democracy. Private sector promotion should be a priority, especially small and medium businesses, i.e. the backbone of a genuine middle-class.

³¹ See the website of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for relevant information about weapons, their trafficking and disarmament.

³² D.A. Hamburg, *Preventing Contemporary Inter-group Violence*. Paper presented at the USAID January 2001 Conference on "The Role of Foreign Assistance in Conflict Prevention."

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ See, for instance: World Bank publications.

Final Remarks

The analysis of conflicts has already produced a remarkable number of documents. Civil wars are the focus of research in several international organizations, particularly the World Bank and the U.N. These studies show that economic factors may trigger armed conflicts. "Greed" is as important as "grievance." Trade concentration on a few primary commodities is also a risk factor, which should be reduced by improving the business climate and attracting foreign investors.

Considering terrorism, analytical studies already underlined growing threats for which there must be adequate responses to address root-causes. In the short and medium term, affluent societies will have to continue to fight against fanatic ideologists, facilitators and sponsors. Much importance must also be given to the financial aspects of terrorism.

Separatism is one of the most controversial and sensitive issues in the international political and diplomatic arena. Nevertheless, the social, economic and political costs of separatism can be tremendous and should be documented and weighted against the potential benefits of reconciliation and stable peace. The research agenda on conflicts should include new items such as the analysis of the full economic and social costs of separatism and the best conditions for terminating related conflicts and bringing together parties.³⁵

Conflict prevention is as important as post-war peace. Conditions for both must be strengthened. Beyond economic issues, educating young generations is certainly a key-factor contributing to peace and should include elements of shared values such as democracy and human rights. Self-respect must be associated with an understanding and appreciation of others' culture, including religion and language.

In conclusion, naïve optimism should be avoided and pragmatism should prevail. The political, social and economic root-causes of conflicts can be very resilient and determination, time and resources are needed to eradicate them—assuming it can be done! Priority must be given to financial aid and technical assistance to conflict-prone regions, with a focus on minorities, vulnerable groups such as the unemployed youth and stateless nations.

³⁵ See: D. Fischer, J. Brauer, *Twenty Questions for Peace Economics: A Research Agenda*. Paper prepared for a special issue of *Defense and Peace Economics*, April 2002.

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

CIVIL WAR IN CHECHNIA: POLITICAL FAILURE AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE¹

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Over the last 15 years, Chechnia's history has been a series of political failures. The last two of these failures, which occurred in 2003, have ushered in a civil war and are currently reflected in the shifting tactics of the conflict. For years to come, they will be played out in terms of personal suffering, regional instability, and geostrategic response.

The recent political failure in Chechnia began with the structure of the government that was ratified in the constitutional referendum held in March 2003. The resulting presidential system is incompatible with the chronic fragmentation of Chechen society, particularly along the traditional lines of Chechnia's 160-some *teips*, or clans. An individual executive inevitably will benefit some groups over others. In a political society as deeply and elaborately divided as that of Chechnia this can only exacerbate cleavages and increase political alienation.

Instead of a presidential system, Chechnia needed some variety of consociational institutions, such as

those that helped to stabilize the neighboring Republic of Daghestan from 26 July, 1994 until a presidential system was imposed there on 26 July, 2003.²

² Daghestan adopted constitutional alterations instituting a presidential system of government on 26 July, 2003. The republic is required to elect a president by 2006. It is expected that current State Council representatives will serve out their terms, which are set to expire in that year. It is probable that the current Chairman of the State Council, Magomedali Magomedov, will be elected to the presidency in 2006. For a discussion of consociational democracy in Daghestan, see: R. Ware, E. Kisriev, "Ethnic Parity and Political Stability in Daghestan: A Consociational Approach," *Europe and Asia Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1, January 2001. For discussions of the recentralization process that has undermined Daghestan's consociational institutions and imposed a presidential system see: R. Ware, E. Kisriev, "Russian Recentralization Arrives in the Republic of Daghestan: Implications for Institutional Integrity and Political Stability", *Eastern European Constitutional Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter, 2001; R. Ware, E. Kisriev, W. Patzelt, U. Roericht, "Russia and Chechnia from a Daghestani Perspective," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 4, December 2002; R. Ware, E. Kisriev, "Bending Not Breaking: Daghestan's Presidential Expedient," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), 2003.

¹ The article was completed on 15 March, i.e. before the death of president of Chechnia Akhmad Kadyrov.

In some states, consociational systems have assisted societies that are divided along ethnic or religious lines in making their transition to democratic institutions. While consociational systems have varied widely, they have shared some common features. Within a consociational system, political elites from each of the social segments cooperate in what political scientist, Arend Lijphart, describes as a "grand coalition."³ Political bodies guarantee proportional representation to all social segments, and veto powers permit a single representative from any group to sideline policies or legislation that are viewed as harmful to his group. Finally, consociational systems permit spheres of autonomy to all social segments.

Consociational systems tend to have problems of their own. The brittleness of some has led to their disintegration. They have been most successful in societies undergoing sustained economic development (such as Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland). In other countries (such as Lebanon and Nigeria) they have collapsed with catastrophic results. Nevertheless, Daghestan's consociational system had demonstrated remarkable resilience, and would probably have provided a better model for the Chechen constitution than the federal institutions, upon which the new Chechen government is based.

Chechnia's traditional social structure suggested numerous possibilities for consociational innovation. For example, Chechnia might have been better served by a bicameral legislature with a lower house representing small single mandate districts determined strictly in terms of equal increments of the total population, along with an upper house that might have been constituted by one member of each *teip* regardless of the group's size.⁴ An executive might have been chosen by a plurality of the upper house for a two-year term, with the provision that members of no single *teip* could hold the executive office twice within a period of five years.

Such a system might have been built upon Chechnia's traditional social structures with a view toward transcending the cleavages among them, and

³ See: A. Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1977.

⁴ In practice this would have opened the door to controversy since divisions among *teips* are not always unequivocal and some sub-groups have claims to membership in more than one *teip*.

binding them within a cohesive political framework. Were such a government successful in providing a stable political foundation for Chechen society, then subsequent economic development might have rendered traditional social cleavages (especially kinship structures) less salient over time, so that a presidential system might have become more appropriate in twenty or thirty years. In the best scenario, consociational institutions might have helped Chechnia to make a transition toward a political system in greater conformity with the Russian federal constitution.

In short, Moscow might have done better: a) to extend both Daghestan and Chechnia ample doses of political autonomy within a federal framework, at least on an interim basis for one or more decades; b) to tolerate Daghestan's consociational institutions for at least another decade; and c) to use Daghestan consociational system as a model for the establishment of similarly consociational institutions in Chechnia. However, this political strategy was precluded by the Putin administration's focus upon an enforced uniformity of regional governments within a centralized federal structure. Consequently, 2003 became the year that the Kremlin imposed presidential systems on both of these North Caucasian republics.

Of course a consociational system would also have had disadvantages. First, it might have produced a weak government when Chechnia's desperate social circumstances called for a strong government. Secondly, it might have tended to institutionalize rather than eliminate Chechnia's chronic political fragmentation. Moreover, since April 2000 Moscow has raised legitimate concerns about regional constitutions that fail to conform with their federal counterpart.

Nevertheless, Chechnia's constitutional referendum also provided grounds for hope. Though electoral irregularities were evident, the results of the referendum appeared to reflect a broad consensus among the Chechen population that the time had come to move forward within the federal framework. In so far as this consensus ever existed it marked an important milestone, raising hopes that there might be sufficient political will to make the presidential system work.

These were the hopes that were betrayed in September 2003, when the presidential election was blatantly manipulated in order to extend new authority to Akhmad Kadyrov. Kadyrov is a former

Mufti of Chechnia, who had fought against Russian forces in the first Chechen war. However, he grew concerned about the rise of Wahhabism and criminality that took place in Chechnia during its years of *de facto* independence from 1996 to 1999. When the second war began, Kadyrov opposed the militant forces led by Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov. Appointed by Moscow in June 2000 to head the administration of Chechnia, he soon produced a plan for social "stabilization" that was largely realized in last year's referendum and presidential election.

Unfortunately, electoral machinations on behalf of Kadyrov deprived Chechen voters of a legitimate political process through which they might have influenced the terms of their political union. Instead the administration that emerged from this process has dictated those terms in a sometimes brutal and arbitrary manner. What might have been the commencement of a process of political reintegration, was revealed to be a cynical consecration of political repression.

The months since the October presidential election in Chechnia have begun to reveal the consequences of the Kremlin's failure to counterbalance the power of Akhmad Kadyrov. Moscow can still dangle budgetary carrots and brandish military sticks before the Chechen President. Yet because Moscow has failed to cultivate a counterbalance, or even a capable understudy, to Kadyrov, and because the latter has steadily strengthened his own political and paramilitary muscles, Moscow is now nearly as dependent upon Kadyrov as Kadyrov is dependent upon Moscow. The irony in events of recent months is that Moscow weakened its own hand in Chechnia when it countenanced the manipulation of the Chechen presidential election.

In fairness, it is unlikely that any election result would have removed Kadyrov entirely from the administration of Chechnia. With at least three thousand armed men under Kadyrov's command by August 2003, any electoral victor would have had to make a deal with him. At one point, during the summer it appeared that Moscow was interested in opening a door to such a deal when Kremlin officials made a series of ambivalent remarks about Kadyrov, and then listed him among Moscow's United Nations delegation.

Whatever reservations the Kremlin may have had about Kadyrov in July they seem to have been resolved by 3 September, 2003, when a meeting

between Khusein Dzhabrailov and Alexander Voloshin was followed by the withdrawal of the former from the Chechen presidential race. The Kremlin enticed Aslambek Aslakhonov from the race with the offer of an executive position, and then stood by as Malik Saidullayev was disqualified on a technicality. Saidullayev was Kadyrov's last, and perhaps most, serious electoral challenger; it is possible that he would have won a fair election.

Implications of Chechnia's current situation may be elucidated by consideration of the consequences that might have followed from Saidullayev's victory. Suppose, for a moment, that the presidential election had been fair, and that Saidullayev had won. Even with an electoral mandate of sixty or seventy percent, Saidullayev would have lacked the strength to rule, in no small part because he lacks paramilitary muscle. Even with popular support he therefore would have lacked leverage with Chechnia's numerous armed groups.

Hence, such a president-elect would have had little alternative but to yield to the necessity of a power sharing arrangement with Kadyrov. Kadyrov might have served, for example, as a prime minister or a minister of the interior. Yet regardless of his title, Kadyrov would have retained more raw power than the new president would have been likely to acquire during his first years in office. In such a situation, Kadyrov might have remained effectively head of the government, though perhaps on a nominally "transitional" or "emergency" basis. Hence, a hypothetical electoral victor, such as Saidullayev, might have amounted to little more than a minister of finance, or a ceremonial head of state, at least during the first years of his administration.

Yet any such arrangement would have been preferable to a brutal monopoly of power, and would have been preferable not only from the standpoint of many Chechens, but also, ironically, from Moscow's perspective. Chechnia needs someone with the entrepreneurial instincts of a Saidullayev to focus on economic and civic development. Yet Saidullayev, or anyone like him, would have needed someone not so dissimilar from Kadyrov to handle security. Nevertheless, a second locus of Chechen administrative power, however much weaker than Kadyrov's, would have served to limit Kadyrov's scope. Two leaders with differing claims to power might have checked one another's excesses.

Evidently, the Kremlin has shelved Aslakhhanov in a nominal executive position against such contingencies. Yet if Kadyrov were replaced by Aslakhhanov, the latter would have little more power than federal forces could deliver to him, and therefore little capacity to govern. Moreover, the elimination of Kadyrov would mean that Moscow would likely face Kadyrov's armed supporters, now more than 4,000 strong, as a source of potentially greater hostilities than those which are currently being mounted by militant commanders. For these reasons, Moscow cannot readily do without Kadyrov, and each month has seen an increase in Kadyrov's powers. Kadyrov is likely to perceive himself as less than entirely dependent upon Moscow, and as bearing some influence with regard to the latter.

What are Kremlin officials going to do when Kadyrov realizes that Moscow needs Kadyrov at least as much as Kadyrov needs Moscow?

There are currently tensions between Moscow and the Kadyrov administration, and these are likely to increase. As the militants grow weaker, their resistance will provide less of a unifying force for the administrations in Moscow and Grozny, which are therefore likely to view each other in terms that are increasingly ambivalent and even adversarial. Coordination between federal forces and the forces of Kadyrov is currently ineffective, and is prone to further deterioration. It is likely that an atmosphere of disappointment, frustration, mistrust, and muffled hostility will develop between these groups.

Shifting Tactics

Within Chechnia, Kadyrov's power is limited only by chaotic socioeconomic conditions, and by the militants. Because they lack popular support, and because they increasingly lack funding, the militants have no hope of victory. The desperate and disorganized gambit on the part of some of Ruslan Gelayev's men to move from Chechnia to Georgia by way of Dagestan in December 2003, the isolated ignobility of Gelayev's death just six weeks later, and the growing reliance upon female suicide bombers, are all emblematic of the militants' operational weakness. The same period saw the capture of Magomed Khambiev, the former Chechen defense minister, and the death of other Chechen field commanders, such as Akhmed Basnukayev. The modest success of Kadyrov's mission to Saudi Arabia and the assassination of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the former Chechen president turned Persian Gulf fund-raiser, are indicative of the militants' decreasing financial capacity. The only goal that they are now capable of achieving is the stubborn perpetuation of conflict and instability. Hence, they will strive to perpetuate social disarray with the aim of thereby restricting Kadyrov's power.

Moscow, Grozny, and multiple militant factions are now competing to support their respective claims of political legitimacy under circumstances in which each lacks popular support. The result has been a shift away from large-scale mobilization toward tactics that allow for operations that are more effectively targeted and punctuated.

Targeted abductions and murders are now a tactical preference of all sides, including federal forces, Kadyrov's forces, militants, criminals, and anyone with a serious grudge. By most accounts, federal forces are gradually doing less of this, while Kadyrov's forces are doing more. These methods may be somehow darkly preferable to the cleansing operations that stained federal tactics for three preceding years, but only because they substitute retail for wholesale brutality. Moreover, these methods are inevitably imperfect in their targeting, and are inevitably exploited for personal objectives. Apart from personal injustice, such errors are also politically corrosive and conducive to the inspiration of further militancy.

At the same time that federal forces have shifted tactics, so have Islamist leaders, such as Shamil Basayev, Dokku Umarov, Abdul-Malik Mezhidov, and Abu Walid. As they increasingly are finding themselves without the local and international support required to sustain guerrilla warfare, they are also reverting to more highly targeted techniques, involving abductions, and suicide bombers. The profiles of these martyrs seem to run a gamut from those of committed, and perhaps embittered, combatants⁵ to women

⁵ Such as the woman who essentially fought her way into the doorway of a military bus near Mozdok on 5 June, 2003.

who are victims of manipulation.⁶ Such attacks are emblematic of deep despair on the part of the Chechen population.

It appears that both tactical and strategic objectives are behind the shift to suicide attacks. First, it is a tactic accessible to weakened militant forces, and is therefore likely to remain a feature of their struggle for some time to come. Second, as explicated separately by Shamil Basayev and Abu Walid, it is a tactic that enables the militants to exact retribution against the Russian population in their home territory for their tacit support of the current Chechen war.

However, this tactic amounts to a tacit acceptance of defeat on the part of the militants. Militant leaders have openly embraced terrorism despite its propensity to consolidate popular support for the Putin administration and diminish international support for their cause.⁷

Yet suicide tactics also have a strategic objective. The militants hope that terror will sway Russian public opinion against the war and force a negotiated settlement. Here ends and means are patently inconsistent since, in the past, terrorist attacks have hardened public opinion against Chechen militants, and since Russian officials have steadfastly refused to negotiate with terrorists at all times since September 1999.⁸ This inconsistency can be explained only in terms of the growing desperation of the militants, their desire for retribution, and their zealotry, which has previously presented itself in the acts of self-destructive irrationality. Yet even if the Kremlin wished to end the conflict it is unlikely that it could force the Kadyrov administration to do so.

Civil War in Chechnia

Chechnia is now engulfed in a civil war, in which federal forces are fighting against one side. It is a civil war that has been brewing since the collapse of the Soviet Union, an internecine conflict that had already broken out prior to the first Russian invasion in 1994. In 1999, the invasion of Daghestan was, at least in part, an expression of the rivalry and competition among Chechen groups, whereby Islamists and other radical elements sought to seize the initiative from secularist and moderate elements in order to attract followers and international funding to their cause. Indeed, both of the Russo-Chechen wars that have occurred in the past decade have served to evade, and to postpone, civil war within Chechnia by uniting antagonistic Chechen forces against a common enemy.

Now that Chechnia is engulfed in a civil war, it is, much as it always would have been, a multifaceted conflict. All sides in the conflict are amalgamations of sometimes-contentious sub-groups. There are rivalries, competitions, and fluctuating antagonisms among groups constituting the federal forces. For their part, the militants have always fielded a highly fragmented force, which has augmented their resilience during periods of pressure by federal forces without greatly undermining their offensive capacity. Militant forces are arrayed along a motivational continuum with implacable ideologues such as Shamil Basayev and Abu Walid at one end, and, at the other end people who are fighting on a mercenary basis or because fighting enhances opportunities for criminal enterprise. In between are fighters whose motives are essentially nationalist, and those whose military interests are primarily personal or retributive. This militant motivational continuum is highly fluid, with most fighters experiencing interests that overlap and fluctuate over time, and which lead some fighters into, and back out of, militant circles. This motivational fluidity may also apply to some prominent militant leaders, such as Aslan Maskhadov and Ruslan Gelayev who appear to have fought for reasons that are more or less Islamist and more or less nationalist at

⁶ Such as Zarema Muzhakhoeva who deliberately sabotaged her own mission to blow up a Tverskaya café on 9 July, 2003.

⁷ Ironically, critics have argued that Russian security services had a motive to commit terrorist acts against the Russian population in September of 1999 in order to generate popular support for the current conflict. On the other hand, I have argued that the apartment block blasts of September 1999 may have been retribution for federal attacks upon the Wahhabi enclave in the Daghestani villages of Karamakhi, Chabanmakhi, and Kadar that were taking place concurrently. The present Islamist tactic of terrorist retribution against a civilian population appears to be consistent with that argument.

⁸ Federal forces evidently learned this lesson after disastrous negotiations during the hostage incidents at Budennovsk in June 1995 and Kizliar in January 1996.

different stages in the conflict. On the whole, however, it appears that militant motives are moving toward the extremes of this continuum, with greater proportions of militants who are fighting for radical Islamist objectives, on the one hand, and for personal or pecuniary objectives, on the other.

Chechens opposed to the militants are being recruited and organized by Kadyrov loyalists, who are able to offer social, political, economic, and security incentives in exchange for their support. As these groups continue to expand they will become increasingly prone to internal fragmentation, rivalry, and antagonism. Those groups nominally within Kadyrov's organization are collaborating, competing and sometimes conflicting with other groups that are regularly aligned with neither Kadyrov nor the militants, and which are sometimes opposed to both. These groups include structures organized around either kinship or criminal interests, or both. Some individuals have affiliations with multiple groups.

Relations among all of these groups are chronically fluid, and are subject to shifting opportunities for conflict and collaboration. At the field level, there are opportunities for collaborations of an informal economic nature among even those groups that seem most implacably opposed, such as federal forces and militants.

The civil war in Chechnia is a maelstrom of all of these shifting interests and forces, in which no side is more than an aggregation of factions that sometimes work at cross-purposes to each other. Caught in the storm are many people who are, to varying degrees, alienated from, and exhausted with, all of these groups, and who are primarily interested in efforts to stabilize their private lives.

This mix provides no immediate opportunities for a negotiated end to the conflict. Because the conflict is multifaceted, and because many of those facets are fluid and shifting, there is no one who controls forces sufficient to guarantee its resolution on any terms. Neither the administration in Moscow, nor that in Grozny, nor any militant leader is currently in a position to end the conflict regardless of concessions that might emerge from the other sides.

Ironically, one of the weaknesses that the current militant strategy of terrorism shares with pressures being applied upon the Putin administration by international groups is that the Kremlin is no longer in a position to end the conflict even if it wished to do so. The perpetuation of the conflict is not in President Putin's political interest. He is no longer popular because of the war in Chechnia, but rather in spite of it. The war is a substantial drain on the limited resources of his government, and the unpredictability of terrorist attacks is a political liability. President Putin cannot afford capitulation, but he appears to be deriving little benefit from the conflict, and there are periodic indications that it provides him with considerable frustration.

It appears that the second Putin administration will attempt gradually to distance itself from the conflict by portraying Chechnia as Kadyrov's problem and Kadyrov as Chechnia's problem. If this is the Kremlin's ambition, then Kadyrov would have appeared by far the most attractive candidate in last year's presidential election in that he was the only one who clearly could have borne the load. An electoral victory of Saidullayev and Aslakhonov would have somewhat undermined Kadyrov's capacity to bear it without offering a suitable alternative for shifting the burden.

Strategies for Improvement

Given the Kremlin's evident indifference toward the active improvement of conditions in Chechnia, what can be done? There is little point in calling for a negotiated settlement of the conflict, since no one is in a position either to seriously negotiate or to guarantee such a settlement.

Recent calls by Ilyas Akhmadov, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Ruslan Khasbulatov, and others for an international peacekeeping force are also non-starters. The situation in Chechnia is so dangerous, deceptive, and difficult that no international peacekeeping force, regardless of its composition, could possibly prove effective. Moreover, international forces would quickly become targets for hostage taking. The introduction of an international force would be as likely to increase, as to decrease, conflict and suffering.

There is more merit in recognizing the political failures of 2003, and in using the growing clarity of those errors as a basis for advocating a legitimate and positive political process for the reintegration of the

Chechen population into the Russian Federation. Yet while this is the only real solution to the problems of Chechnia, it does not appear likely to occur in the next few years, and perhaps not for many years to come. Are there any strategies by which conditions in Chechnia might be improved?

Multiple Local Negotiators

It is not currently possible to negotiate an end to the conflict in Chechnia, but it might be possible to negotiate terms by which some of the parties to the conflict are able to disengage. Some militant leaders might be increasingly open to this approach in coming months as their prospects grow increasingly desperate. The isolated and pointless nature of Ruslan Gelayev's death may provide some incentive in this regard.

Without *formal* Kremlin approval, is it possible that intermediaries might make contact with selected militant leaders in Chechnia to discuss terms of disengagement? Clearly, this approach would not be feasible in the case of militants who have been implicated in terrorist acts. Yet other leaders, whose roles have been more consistent with principles of moderation and traditions of military leadership, might be quietly approached. Potential intermediaries might be identified among the leaders of the North Caucasian republics.

Russian Islamic Leaders

Akhmad Kadyrov has depended upon Russia's traditionalist Islamic leaders, including those from neighboring North Caucasian republics, for two purposes. First, their recognition has provided his only real source of legitimation. Second, some have helped him explain why the Muslim world should stop funding Islamist militants who are fighting against his administration in Chechnia.⁹ Given Kadyrov's past dependence upon these leaders, is it possible that some of them might influence him toward the improvement of the human rights record of his administration?

Foreign Islamic Leaders

Akhmad Kadyrov has sought support from Islamic leaders in Egypt and the Persian Gulf to recognize his administration, to cut funding for Chechen militants, and to subsidize the reconstruction of Chechnia. These leaders should ensure that Kadyrov earns their endorsement. If Kadyrov wishes to be recognized as Chechnia's legitimate leader, and as the appropriate channel for financial assistance for the Chechen people, then he should demonstrate his ability to aid the people of Chechnia by tangibly improving the human rights record of his administration. Influential Western governments might encourage leaders in Egypt, the Persian Gulf, and elsewhere in other Islamic regions, to recognize their responsibilities in this regard.

Russian Leaders

In principle, Russian leaders are in the best position to diminish human rights abuses by federal forces in Chechnia, and to influence the Kadyrov administration toward similar goals. In practice, Russian lead-

⁹ In both cases, their actions may have less to do with their regard for Kadyrov and more to do with their common Islamist enemies. Yet some of Russia's moderate Islamic leaders admire Kadyrov for his political ascendance, and aspire toward similar recognition.

ers have shown little sustained interest in improving Chechnia's human rights situation. Russian indifference has not been diminished by Western criticism, which sometimes has been insufficiently balanced and informed, and which therefore has been easily dismissed. Yet in recent years, American recognition that international Islamist elements have penetrated Chechnia has confirmed Russian claims that the conflict in Chechnia should be regarded as part of the global war against Islamist extremism and terrorism. Perhaps Russian leaders could be shaken from their indifference about human rights violations in Chechnia if this claim were taken seriously.

All of the governments that have played a role in the prosecution of this global struggle have faced some of the same complexities and ambiguities. Whether in Afghanistan, Algeria, Chechnia, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, the Philippines, or Uzbekistan Islamist and nationalist militants have tended to constitute irregular fighting forces that seek to conceal themselves among civilian populations. Regular military forces are then placed in the difficult position of sifting militants from civilians without violating the rights of the latter, or, as often happens, with chronic violation of their rights. Indeed violations have occurred to varying degrees during the conflicts in each of these countries. In all cases, more human rights violations are likely to occur, in part because of the genuine ambiguities and complexities that are inseparable from this sort of asymmetric warfare.

The United States and its closest allies are making efforts to sort their way through these complexities in order to establish defensible procedures and rules of engagement. In the course of these efforts controversy and criticism are not only inevitable, but can be genuinely useful. Other allies—such as Russia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Indonesia—have been less attuned to the subtleties of human rights, in part because of the geographical proximity of their homelands to these conflicts, and in part because of their relative conditions of military weakness.

However, the United States might contribute to a reduction of human rights violations in places like Chechnia if it were to insist that all of its allies should uphold the same procedures and rules of engagement for sifting militants from civilians in such conflicts.

In short, the United States should take Russia seriously in its long-standing claim that its forces in Chechnia are fighting alongside the United States in its war against global terrorist forces, and then insist that Russia conform to established international standards of conduct. The United States has a clear interest in seeing that such standards are upheld since human rights violations by regular military forces clearly help to breed new recruits for their irregular adversaries. Thus if Russia wishes to portray itself as participating with the United States in an international struggle then there is a clear American interest in guaranteeing that Russia upholds the same international standards to which the United States endeavors to conform. This would put useful pressure on Russian officials who might have to choose between a similar program of human rights improvements, or a tacit admission of their relative backwardness and deficiency.

A further difficulty is that international standards and rules of engagement for asymmetric warfare of this type have not been clearly defined. Perhaps Western governments might take the initiative by calling upon international bodies to establish clear and realistic standards. Alternatively, the United States might convene an international conference to discuss difficulties in the clarification and implementation of such standards. The United States might thereby achieve greater leverage for influencing the human rights situation in Chechnia, as well as in other parts of the world.

During the past year, American officials have resumed lengthier statements that focus upon problems in Chechnia. Generally, these have been helpfully balanced in that they have begun with a recognition of genuine difficulties that Moscow faces regarding international Islamism and terrorism in the region, and have then moved to a review of human rights violations in Chechnia. Most recently, these statements have been especially helpful in that they have called for a political process defined not so much in terms of negotiations as in terms of legitimate, democratic decision-making on the part of the Chechen people.

However, there is more that these statements might do, particularly with regard to Chechen IDPs. With remarkably unfortunate timing, Russian officials closed Chechen IDP camps in Ingushetia in the early days of December 2002 and again at the same time of year in 2003. In both cases, people were stranded

without heating, and in some cases, without shelter. Russian officials have outlined a program of further camp closures beginning in March, and appear to be placing pressure on residents with artificial shortages of water, gas, and other necessities.

Even under the best of circumstances, Ingushetia's IDP camps are not comfortable places. If people wish to remain in them, then it is generally because they have no better place to go. They have no place better to go because Chechnia is now engulfed in a vicious civil war that is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The conflict has featured brutal tactics of terrorism and abduction that have resulted in the arbitrary victimization of the Chechen population, and that are also likely to continue. It is understandable that people would wish to seek refuge from these conditions. And if the Russian Federation wishes to claim these people as its citizens then it has an obligation to offer them appropriate care at a safe distance from the conflict in Chechnia. Western governments should continue to hold the Russian Federation accountable for its satisfaction of that obligation.

Russian officials have a further obligation to defer eviction of Chechen IDPs until they are able to guarantee receipt of compensation that would allow IDPs at least a minimal opportunity to reestablish themselves in Chechnia. Promised compensations are not received by many returning Chechens. In some cases, compensations have been received only after payment of bribes up to 50 percent of the compensatory payment. In some cases, Chechens receiving compensatory payments have become targets for assault, murder, and theft. Most of the leaks in this compensatory pipeline are at the Chechen end, but Kadyrov is unlikely to take the lead in their elimination. Therefore it is important that Moscow provide stronger oversight.

Just a few kilometers across the border, in Western Daghestan, there is a useful model for a relatively successful distribution of funds for housing compensation. Federal funds underwrote the reconstruction of Daghestani villages that were destroyed during the incursions of August and September 1999. Some of the reconstruction was completed within a period of one year, and nearly all of it was completed within three years. Many of the misappropriations that occurred at the local level were addressed through judicial processes.

Peace and stability will evade the Northern Caucasus until Chechnia has an authoritative political structure capable of providing viable solutions to the problems of its people.

ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS: CONFLICT POTENTIAL

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Even though ethnic conflicts in Russia are localized while their nature is growing more specific they still remain one of the priorities and one of the typical features of Russian society today. At the same time, they are the least studied subject with no developed research methodology of its own. There is no agreement on the key concepts: an ethnic conflict and its derivatives (conflict potential and ethnic tension). This is not a purely academic problem: practical measures, behavior of the law enforcement bodies

and the media depend on how we interpret an ethnic conflict. This is why I deem it necessary to offer my interpretation of the key and related terms.

An ethnic conflict is one of the types of social confrontation in which at least one of the sides describes itself as an ethnic community. It was V. Tishkov who first offered this interpretation in Russian academic studies: "By ethnic conflict we mean organized political actions, public movements, mass unrest, separatist actions and even civil wars in which ethnic communities are involved."¹ This approach differs greatly from how the law enforcement structures in the Northern Caucasus (and, probably, across the country) identify ethnic conflicts: for them an ethnic conflict is a situation in which hostile actions were planned as ethnically oriented from the very beginning (that is, the object of hostile actions was selected because of its ethnic affiliation). In Britain and America such crimes are called "hate crimes." This approach cannot explain the mechanism of such conflicts: a fight at a local discotheque may develop into wide-scale ethnic pogroms. This approach has narrow forecasting potential and cannot reveal the conflicting level of ethnic relations (to say nothing of distorted crime-related statistics as a whole). I am convinced that to describe any clash as an ethnic conflict it should inflict measurable damage on the sides. In the absence of such damage one can only speak about various levels of ethnic tension.

By conflict potential I mean the possibility of an ethnic confrontation and its development in an area at any given period of time. This potential includes a fairly complex system of elements in which public consciousness phenomena rather than objective conditions (the economic development level, for example) play the key role. Conflict potential shows how fast ethnic tension is growing and how easily it can transform into hostilities. In fact, similar events produce different results on territories with different conflict potentials. An ability to assess this potential is the key to correct forecasting of possible conflicts.

Let us look at the Northern Caucasus as a territory that includes several republics within the Russian Federation: Adigey, Daghestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, North Ossetia-Alania, Chechnia, as well as the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories and the Rostov Region. The boundaries of the Northern Caucasus are determined not so much by close economic contacts within it as by its common past and the close social and cultural features of its peoples. I should say that the Rostov Region is the least North Caucasian among the other constituencies, as far as its social and cultural features are concerned, yet its capital, Rostov-on-Don, is the administrative center of the Southern Federal Okrug. This, and the Soviet tradition, makes the region part of the Northern Caucasus.

The Northern Caucasus figures daily in news reports—this confirms that the conflict situation there remains tense. The largest number of ethnic conflicts happens in the Northern Caucasus; their intensity and quantity in this area have made the region a pattern to be used when studying ethnic conflicts.

Common people know that the region's conflict potential is large, yet this opinion is not enough to analyze the situation, forecast future developments, and plan efficient remedies. Let us try to answer three main questions: How was this potential assessed? What are the main results of this assessment? How did they affect social practice, including that of the state authorities?

According E. Stepanov, a very respected researcher, "the methods for studying tensions and conflicts should be used to register conflict-prone manifestations at the conscious level and to identify the parameters of involvement in tense, or conflict, interactions. This presupposes: collection and analysis of conflict statistics; content analysis of media information; monitoring the conflicting sides' behavior; clarification of expert assessments of conflicts with the help of the focus-group method; conflictological processing of sociological information; secondary analysis of empirical information, and mapping conflicts."²

More often than not, to assess the region's conflict potential researchers turn to the time-tested method of mass sociological polling in the form of questionnaires or interviews; the greater part of such polls was limited to one federation constituency alone (one republic, territory or region). One of the exceptions was a wide-scale poll of 4,500 respondents conducted in 1995 by E. Kritskiy and his team (of which the

¹ V.A. Tishkov, "Etnicheskiy konflikt v kontekste obshchestvovedcheskikh teoriy," in: *Sotsial'nye konflikty: ekspertiza, prognozirovaniye, tekhnologii razresheniya*, Issue 2, Part 1, Moscow, 1992, pp. 30-31.

² E.I. Stepanov, "Upravlencheskie aspekty regional'noy konfliktologii v Rossii," *Konflikty na Severnom Kavkaze i puti ikh razresheniya*, Rostov-on-Don, 2003, p. 27.

present author was a member) in ten constituencies of the Russian Federation. It was organized with the help of the RF Ministry for Ethnic Affairs and Federation within the largest project called "The Chechen Crisis as Perceived by the North Caucasian Population." Conducted in the Chechen Republic and Ingushetia while hostilities were still raging in Chechnia, it became one of the best examples of "frontline sociology." Later studies use its methodology: because of this we can rationally assess social dynamics since 1995.

Mass polls produce vast bodies of empirical material that unfortunately lacks the depth needed for further study of the key trends. Some of the aspects of tension can hardly be translated into figures (for example, everything connected with motivation). This explains why in 2001 the Southern Regional Resource Center (SRRC) polled 1,000 respondents in four federation constituencies within the project "The South of Russia—a Region of Ethnic Harmony and Peace", the poll being complemented with a series of eight focus groups (in-depth collective interviews) in two cities. In Krasnodar the focus groups included leaders of ethnic public member-organizations of the National Cultures Center of Kuban; Slavic youth between 18 and 25; and Slavs and Armenians between 30 and 55. In Maikop the focus groups included Slavic women between the ages of 30 and 55, Slavic men and Adighe women of the same age, and a mixed group of Russian and Adighe youths. Combining the mass poll and the focus groups made it possible to study the conflict potential of a vast territory and obtain a better understanding of such important aspects of the conflict potential as the causes of concern and motivations of members of various ethnic and social communities.

Text analysis is another important method of conflict potential studies; the texts produced by the authorities and the media are the best source of such analysis. In 2002, the author of this article studied over 300 newspaper publications in the Krasnodar Territory on the ethnic relations and migration patterns that appeared between 1989 and 2002. My main conclusion is that the common approach of the local press increases negative stereotypes related to ethnic "aliens." In fact, lack of tolerance is a habit caused by many years of one-sided influence of the authorities rather than the journalists' personal views.³

Some of the researchers (I. Batykov and M. Savva among them) described human behavior in conflict situations using eyewitness accounts of the pogroms in the Severskaia District (Krasnodar Territory) in December 2002.⁴

The information on the relations between old-timers and ethnic minorities relatively recently driven to the region by the ethnic conflicts that flared up in the Soviet Union during the last years of its existence are especially important. The "new diasporas" and the radically minded locals demonstrate the highest conflict level; in the Northern Caucasus such "new diasporas" primarily include the Meskhetian Turks and the Kurds. In 2003, sociologists of the department of sociology at Kuban State University conducted a poll among the local Meskhetian Turks at the request of the Krasnodar Territory Administration. They polled the heads of 1,688 families (with 8,524 members) using specific polling methods.⁵

The size of the Armenian diaspora and its considerable influence on the social and economic situation in the region requires sporadic studies of various aspects of life of the North Caucasian Armenians.⁶

There were attempts at mapping ethnic conflicts. The *Liudi goda* (People of the Year) journal published in the Krasnodar Territory carried the first map of ethnic conflicts in 1989-2002 in issue No. 6 (11) for 2003.⁷ Ethnic mapping is going on in the Stavropol Territory, which is also developing a monitoring instrument of ethno-demographic and migration processes based on GIS (geographic information system) technologies.⁸

³ See: M.V. Savva, E.V. Savva, *Pressa, vlast i etniceskiy konflikt (vzaimosviaz na primere Krasnodarskogo kraia)*, Krasnodar, 2002, p. 77.

⁴ See: M. Savva, I. Batykov, "Proiavleniia ekstremizma," *Set etnologicheskogo monitoringa i rannego preduprezhdeniia konfliktov. Bulletin*, No. 3, November-December 2003, p. 42.

⁵ See: V.N. Petrov, V.I. Okhrimenko, *Obshchina turok-meskhetintsev v Krasnodarskom krae: cherty sotsial'nogo portreta*, Krasnodar, 2003.

⁶ See: G.S. Denisova, "Armiaskaia migratsiia na Iuge Rossii v zerkale obshchestvennogo mneniia," in: *Problemy migratsii na Iuge Rossii: opyt sotsiologicheskogo analiza*, Rostov-on-Don, 2003, pp. 35-49.

⁷ See: M. Savva, N. Blinova, "Zatiazhnaia bolezn kubanskikh konfliktov," *Liudi goda*, No. 6, 2003, pp. 52-54.

⁸ See: A.N. Panin, "GIS-monitoring etnodemograficheskikh i migratsionnykh protsessov (na primere Stavropol'skogo kraia)," in: *Problemy migratsii i opyt ee regulirovaniia v polietniceskom Kavkazskom regione*, Moscow, Stavropol, 2003, pp. 194-196.

Such work will be better done if we apply several methods within the same project; regrettably, I do not know of any research programs carried out in the region that employed more than two or three methods of conflict potential analysis. In recent years there have been no studies on a regional scale that provide information for carrying out a comparative analysis of several North Caucasian constituencies of the RF. The reliability of mass sociological polls (especially in the areas with a high level of armed violence, such as Chechnia, Ingushetia and Dagestan) leaves much to be desired. We can say in general that the studies conducted in the region have not created a trustworthy basis for forecasting ethnic conflicts even in the short-term perspective. In my opinion, judging from ethnic-and-conflict mapping of the Krasnodar Territory, ethnic conflicts have recently been losing their scope: they involve fewer people and cover smaller territories. They remain fairly frequent and grow more unique where their causes and manifestations are concerned. This makes forecasting even harder and raises the question of applicability of the currently used methods. In other words, our instruments no longer suit the situation.

At the same time, the results of several years of studies suggest several conclusions concerning the factors behind the ethnic conflicts in the region.

A high level of ethnic diversity of the local population. It is hundreds of times higher than in Central Russia: the local index of ethnic diversity is no less than 0.3, compared with 0.003 in the central federation constituencies. This index shows how often members of different ethnic groups communicate. In the Northern Caucasus they live side by side, come into contact, and have to compete for jobs and resources. The high level of ethnic diversity does not mean that conflicts are inevitable, yet it creates objective prerequisites: indeed, there are no ethnic conflicts in monoethnic environments. Regrettably, the results of the latest population census have not yet been processed, therefore researchers cannot use the data defining the North Caucasian ethnic composition. As soon as they become available we shall be able to trace the dynamics of ethnic diversity for 1989-2002.

External migration to the South of Russia. A considerable part of those who migrated to Russia (both forced and economic migrants) selected the Stavropol and Krasnodar territories and the Rostov Region as places of settlement. We should say that the ethnic structure of the migration flow more or less corresponds to the local people's ethnic composition. According to information supplied by the Krasnodar Territorial Bureau of State Statistics, Russians account for 80.7 percent of those who settled in the territory in 2002; Armenians, 5.9 percent; Ukrainians, 5.8 percent; Tartars and Belorussians, 0.8 percent of each group.⁹ By 1 January, 2002, Russians accounted for 85 percent of the local population, and Armenians for 4.9 percent.¹⁰ If we take 1989 as the departure point we shall discover that it was migration that swelled the ranks of the previously small diasporas (which consisted of tens or, at least, hundreds of people). I have in mind the Meskhetian Turks and the Kurds. In the absence of a deliberate integration policy, considerable cultural and axiological distinctions and different accumulation and consumption patterns of the old-timers and newcomers cause tension. In some cases migrant diasporas become self-contained; they reject contacts outside their members and look at the old-timers as enemies. Normal interaction between the migrants and the local people becomes impossible; sudden (at first glance) violence becomes highly possible, thus lowering the sides' security level. Today, science has coined and is actively using a new term "migrantphobia."¹¹ In the last ten years the number of newcomers has dropped considerably: while in 1992 over 90,000 came to the territory, the figure for 2003 was about 12,000.¹² However, not only are common people highly susceptible to the media's influence, but the authorities and self-administration structures also regard external migration as the main factor behind the ethnic conflicts.

There are several generally accepted myths about migration in the Northern Caucasus. The first of them created by the structures of state power of the local federation constituencies says that migration

⁹ See: "Statisticheskie kharakteristiki migratsionnoy situatsii v Krasnodarskom krae," in: *Pravovye aspekty migratsii. Metodicheskoe posobie*, KKO Obshchee delo, Krasnodar, 2003, p. 58.

¹⁰ See: "Natsional'nyi sostav zhiteley Krasnodarskogo kraia," in: *SMI i mezhetnicheskie otmoshenia v Krasnodarskom krae*, Gil'dia zhurnalistov i spetsialistov PR, Krasnodar, 2003, p. 42.

¹¹ G.S. Vitkovskaia, "Vynuzhdenaia migratsia i migrantofobia v Rossii," in: *Neterpimost v Rossii. Starye i novye fobii*, Moscow, 1999, pp. 151-191.

¹² Information supplied by the Administration for Migration, Main Department of the Interior, Krasnodar Territory.

developed into one of the most acute problems (this was especially true of the Krasnodar Territory in 1996-2000, during Nikolai Kondratenko's governorship). The public was taught to look at migrants as a very numerous, homogenous and aggressive group responsible for the drop in standard of living among the local people. This myth proved to be tenacious even though the situation has changed. The simplest analysis of the local statistics shows that we have left the peak of migration behind. At the same time, the natural decrease in population in the Krasnodar Territory is high (as elsewhere in Russia). The same trends can be observed in other regions formerly attractive for migrants. Local public opinion refuses to take this into account. An analysis of publications in the media and statements issued by the local administrators shows that the political elite has not readjusted the ideas about migration it acquired some 8 to 10 years ago at the peak of migration caused by the Soviet Union's disintegration and social discord in Russia. The idea of migration as a negative phenomenon formulated during those trying years has become another myth. It is a stable, abstract, and emotional phenomenon far removed from reality.

It should be said that the larger part of those who recently came to the Northern Caucasus consider it their home. No efforts to control migration can be applied to them. Such measures were taken at the territorial level in the early 1990s when migration was a great problem. For example, a positive role was played by the legal restrictions in the sphere of migration formulated by the leaders of the Krasnodar Territory at a time when federal laws proved inadequate, the country was falling apart, and the central power was weak. The territory did not become a scene of violent conflicts—meanwhile in the early 1990s this was possible. Today, the situation is different: to decrease the risk of conflicts it would have been wise to help the migrants integrate. In fact, both sides need security. The local press virtually ignores the subject of adaptation and integration. A report about a meeting convened in Krasnodar by the main federal inspector of the office of the presidential representative in the Southern Federal Okrug was the only publication on the subject.¹³

The second myth is that migrants tip the region's ethnic balance. A mass sociological poll conducted in Adigey, the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, and the Rostov Region by the SRRC within the already mentioned "The South of Russia—a Region of National Harmony and Peace" project revealed that the public closely associated the migrant and ethnic issues. When answering the question about the possible settlement of ethnic problems, 15.2 percent of respondents pointed to limiting migration (which was the fourth most frequent answer). The share in the Krasnodar Territory was even larger (20.6 percent). This means that on the whole people are convinced that the ethnic composition of their regions is changing considerably because of migration. An appeal by the Council of Deputies of Anapa (a Black Sea resort) to the President of the Russian Federation and the Federal Assembly is one of the clearest illustrations. It said: "The migration situation taking shape in the Krasnodar Territory is causing concern because it brings in people of different ethnic affiliations and swells the ranks of the ethnic diasporas. This is further complicating the already difficult ethnic situation and tipping the historically created balance in the size of the ethnic groups. Ethnic relations are breeding conflicts; it has become much harder to find work, to provide school education, to pay pensions, child and other allowances: the budgets of all levels have no money for the migrants."¹⁴

The third myth is that migrants constitute a homogenous group united by common interests, problems, and attitudes. Detailed studies revealed the opposite.¹⁵ In actual fact those who come to the region in search of a new homeland are very different people: some blend easily into the environment, while others find it hard (for individual reasons) to adjust. But they all have to deal with problems of getting settled and with the aggressive myths about migration. These myths are very tenacious and largely affect how the authorities cope with the migration processes. In fact, people should be informed about the real situation in this sphere to help them gradually readjust their ideas about the newcomers. It should be said that migrants of ethnic origins different from the local people settling in conservative-minded

¹³ See: "Migratsia: adaptatsia i ekonomicheskaia vygoda," *Kuban segodnia*, 20 February, 2002.

¹⁴ "Migratsionnye protsessy neobkhodimo regulirovat," *Kubanskije novosti*, 31 August, 2000.

¹⁵ See: O.A. Oberemko, M.M. Kirichenko, *Vynuzhdennye pereselentsy na Kubani: institutsional'naia perspektiva upravlenia*, Krasnodar, 2001.

social milieu create the danger of conflicts: the old-timers, mainly Slavs, regard the newcomers as aliens for two reasons: they belong to “other nationalities” and “they are not ours.” In fact, more often than not such migrants demonstrate no desire to integrate, thus raising the local people’s suspicion and even enmity.

Migration inside the region. It is fairly intensive: Russians are leaving the North Caucasian republics, while those who have chosen to stay behind are living under great pressure from objective circumstances (loss of work because of ruined industrial infrastructure) and from local national radicals. In recent months the Krasnodar Territory has received an ever-growing numbers of migrants from the manpower-surplus mountainous areas of the Central Caucasus and Daghestan. The attitude toward migrants of other nationalities is guarded; the level of distrust is rising along with the numbers of such migrants. Today, relevant studies have established that 10 percent of migrants in any settlement (be it a village, a small town, or a city) is the absolute limit beyond which the local people become hostile to them. There is a pattern: “The experience of other countries has shown that as soon as the share of migrants of alien ethnic groups reaches 10 percent phobias automatically flare up. For example, by the mid-1990s the share of immigrants in France reached 10 percent—at the presidential elections Jean-Marie Le Pen, who described people of alien ethnic origins as a ‘threat to France’s continued existence’ and who suggested that the country ‘should be cleansed of migrants,’ received 15 percent of the votes. A similar situation can be observed in many countries which, starting in the 1960s, have been attracting great numbers of guest workers and migrants.”¹⁶ The traditional bans on migration applied in the “Russian constituencies” of the Northern Caucasus do not apply to migrants from the manpower-surplus areas of the Caucasian mountains, because they are citizens of Russia. Obviously, a new strategy of migration control in the region is needed.

The outflow of Russian-speakers from the North Caucasian republics breeds anti-Caucasian sentiments in the “Russian” federation constituencies where these migrants settle.

Specific modernization processes. Today, sociologists agree that xenophobia increases in periods of social modernization. The Northern Caucasus exhibits several specifics: socioeconomic development and the assimilation of new technologies are proceeding unevenly among different peoples, therefore, behavior and morals are also changing to different degrees in different places. The youth is already taking on “Western” behavioral patterns while the traditionally strong influence of the older people has weakened considerably. We can say that the traditional mechanisms of social control in the tradition-oriented Caucasian societies are falling apart; the process is spurred on by war situations in which a considerable part of population refuses to obey anything but force. At the same time, the traditional idea that “aliens” are enemies and as such can be treated amorally is very much alive. This has already created a greater possibility of conflicts among the young people of the North Caucasian mountain peoples. Today, a large number of local people still bound by the past have become hostage to the problems of the contemporary world. Social modernization among the nations that created what is known as Western civilization took a long time to reach fruition and was fairly balanced: new elements appeared while the old elements died away. In addition, the North Caucasian peoples had the technological achievements of modern society handed to them on a silver platter: this made their transfer too fast and did not give them time to get rid of the archaic behavioral norms and traditions.

Influence of the traditional institutions. Councils of clans (teips, tukhums, etc.), elders, and religious brotherhoods (tarekats) have been functioning on the basis of the norms of the “military democracy” epoch for over 1,000 years. The system of solidarity among relatives stems from the principle of unconditional support for “one’s own people” (irrespective of what they have done), and this increases the possibility of conflicts among the carriers of traditional sociocultural norms.

We can say that the scope of human rights violations committed by the traditional social institutions in the region is comparable to violations committed by the state. This legal system proceeds from the conviction that “aliens” (members of other confessions and ethnic communities) have no rights. It was a common thing for a Shari’a court in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria during the period of independence

¹⁶ *Migratsia i bezopasnost v Rossii*, Moscow Carnegie Center, Moscow, 2000, p. 161.

to sentence a victim of rape (a Russian woman) to forty strokes of the cane for “violating the morals rule,” while the rapist had to pay a 1,000-ruble fine. Conflicts are provoked by the lack of rights of those who live among the autochthonous people and do not belong to them.

The absence of a developed civil society and traditions of partner relations between power and public organizations. Devotion to traditions does not allow a civil society to fully develop. Conservative-minded people elect conservative-minded deputies and are ruled by conservative-minded bureaucrats. The “third sector,” which can potentially play an important role especially at the stages of conflict prevention and conflict settlement, is inadequately involved in the peacekeeping activities pursued by the authorities. Consultative structures that include heads of national-cultural associations under the local authorities should be more active in all the federation constituencies. Today, they are either idle, like the Ethnic Council at the Governor of the Stavropol Territory, or non-existent. At the same time, the number of radical ethnic public organizations in the region is large: all of them are prepared to take part in ethnic conflicts (the level of their readiness is higher than the Russian average).

Negative historical memory. Stories about the Caucasian war of 1818-1864 and the relatively recent memory of the 1943-1944 deportations serve the local peoples as psychological justification for war. The recent quasi-scientific speculations and fiction revive the millennium-old negative ideas about ethnic neighbors. An Ingush, one of the characters in *Our Game*, a spy thriller by John Le Carré, says that the Ossets are not local people, they are aliens, namely Persians turned Christians.¹⁷ In his novel *Iz t'my vekov* (Days Bygone), contemporary Adighe writer I. Mashbash described a combat between Mstislav, Prince of T'mutarakan, and Adighe Prince Reded, an event well known from Russian chronicles that took place around 1023. The writer, making no reference to historical sources, wrote that the Russian prince won because he violated the rules, thus making the distant past a weapon of ethnic-political struggle in our day and age.

Historian A. Kudriavtsev has the following to say about the Northern Caucasus: “This is a region in which history, for objective (as a sum total of cause and result) and also for subjective (because of strongly developed historical memory among the North Caucasian peoples) reasons, exerts a considerable lagging influence on contemporary developments.”¹⁸

Stirring up of religious fundamentalism. The main centers of political Islam (Salafism, or Wahhabism) are found in the South of Russia; the leaders of national radicals are using it to their own ends. In this case, religious and national ideas are fulfilling different functions: the national idea brings all supporters closer in the interests of the national elite seeking more influence and wider potential, while Islamic fundamentalism ensures support of other national groups in Russia and abroad.

Impact of certain neighboring states. Such impact can be intentional and purposeful: some of our neighbors do not want stability in the Caucasus. There are either oil-related interests behind this (attempts to thwart the plans to lay pipelines for Caspian oil across the territory of Russia) or the desire to control “the zone of vital interests.” The easiest way to upset stability in the region is to support the radical ethnic and separatist movements. There are other ways: for example, ethnic and political instability in the Crimea negatively affects ethnic relations in the Krasnodar Territory (through the media that connect the situation in the Crimea with what is going on in the Kuban area). For example, on 13 March, 2004, the *Novorossiiskiy rabochiy* newspaper wrote: “Some of the Meskhetian Turks who have flooded our area plan to move across the ocean at the invitation of the American side... In Novorossiisk there are fewer Meskhetian Turks than in the neighboring districts. At the same time, our people still have not forgotten the arrival of the Crimean Tartars, another people with a sad past, which was no laughing matter. They came here from Central Asia and then moved to the Crimea, another rather crowded place. Those who lived in the Crimea had to move aside to make room for the Crimean Tartars.”¹⁹

How high is the conflict potential of ethnic relationships in the Northern Caucasus? First, we have to agree on methodology: what should be measured to ultimately identify conflict potential, which is a

¹⁷ See: J. Le Carré, *Nasha igra*, Moscow, 1997, p. 274.

¹⁸ A. Kudriavtsev, “Chechentsy v vosstaniakh i voynakh XVIII-XIX vekov,” *Vestnik Evrazii*, No. 1 (2), 1996, p. 95.

¹⁹ “Vot-vot rvanet... V Krymu ochen skoro mozhet sluchit'sia vtoroe Kosovo,” *Novorossiiskiy rabochiy*, 13 March, 2004.

very complicated system? In the event of mass polls, an adequate result can be produced by the percentage of different answers to the following question: What is the state of ethnic relations in a certain territory? Normally the responses are distributed according to a point system. In 1995, 54 percent of those polled in the Krasnodar Territory within the project “The Chechen Crisis in the Mass Consciousness in the Northern Caucasus” described the state of ethnic relations as negative. In 2001, 64 percent of the polled in the same area within the “South of Russia—a Region of National Harmony and Peace” project gave the same answer. This shows that over six years the number of those who negatively assessed the state of ethnic relations in the Krasnodar Territory grew considerably. What happened? In fact, little changed: the war in Chechnia was still going on, while in the Krasnodar Territory conflicts between the local Slav population and non-Slav migrants still flared up from time to time. In 1995 there was probably still hope that these conflicts would be settled in one way or another. The hopes have diminished since that time, while anxiety increased. In some way, this is a result of sharp and, sometimes, irresponsible statements by certain officials of the then territorial administration and Governor Nikolai Kondratenko personally, as well as inappropriate publications on ethnic issues in the territorial and district press.

The structure of the region’s conflict potential can be specified with the help of other questions asked in mass polls, such as the methods to be used to prevent ethnic conflicts. In the 2001 study organized by the SRRC in the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, Adigey, and the Rostov Region, the answers to the question about the methods for dealing with ethnic problems were the following: “Consistently fight criminal ethnic groups” (23.9 percent); “Create equal living conditions for the members of all ethnic groups” (21.8 percent); “Prevent economic domination of some peoples over others” (16.0 percent); “Limit migration (limit entrance to the region for permanent residence)” (15.2 percent).²⁰

Organized radical groups seeking conflicts are another important factor of the local conflict potential. The radical ethnic groups in the region became better organized. Here is what a student of the Department of Sociology at Kuban State University, who witnessed an ethnic pogrom in the Krasnodar Territory, had to say to M. Savva and I. Batykov. “This happened in mid-December 2002 in the settlement of Afipskiy (Severskaia District, Krasnodar Territory). There are a shop and billiard room behind the railway frequented by local Armenians and Greeks. At about 6 p.m. a PAZ bus with toned-glass windows drew up nearby. The windscreen was clear and it could be seen that the bus was packed with passengers—all the seats were taken. They all looked alike: closely cropped hair, black coats with orange sleeveless jackets (like those used by road builders) over them, and they wore red armbands. All wore black jeans and army boots. For some time they remained seated, then one of them rose from his place and started saying something waving his arms energetically. This all went on for five minutes, not more. Then he distributed bundles wrapped in newspapers. A minute later they were out and lined up behind the shop’s façade. The leader (the man who had distributed bundles) said something. The group folded back their armbands revealing black swastikas against a white background (earlier they had been folded, so invisible). It was a fascist swastika without any additional elements. They discarded the newspapers, in which iron rods were wrapped, and started smashing the parked cars and people standing at the billiard room, shouting ‘Beat the blacks!’ The people (they were Armenians, Greeks and Russians) tried to run away; some of them managed to get into their cars and drove away, two received severe wounds and remained lying on the ground (later they were taken to a hospital). About 15 minutes later some of those who had escaped in cars returned with “reinforcements” from among the locals, but the attackers had disappeared.

“Two days later, inscriptions appeared: ‘Russia is for Russians!’ ‘Blacks Should Go to Mars,’ etc. as well as leaflets of similar content.”

On the same day several hours later, about 8 p.m., a similar attack was made in the district center (the settlement of Severskaia). This happened in the local park, at the Molodezhnoe café on its territory and at the Berezka café nearby. Two days later nationalist slogans appeared in the settlement, too. Here is what an eyewitness had to say:

²⁰ On the results of sociological polls about the state of ethnic relations in the region see: *Mezhnatsional’nye otnoshenia i stanovlenie grazhdanskogo obshchestva na luge Rossii*, KROO “Iuzhny regional’ny resursny tsentr,” Krasnodar, 2002, p. 23.

“Normally, at this time of the day the park is full of slightly tipsy young people flocking from all sorts of cafés, bars, and discos. A large group of Armenians left the Berezka café (here and elsewhere the witness called all non-Slavs Armenians) and moved toward the park. They were followed by a PAZ bus, from which young men with closely cropped hair, orange jackets and red armbands emerged. After lingering for several minutes by the bus, they rushed to the park in close formation. Soon we heard shouts and the noise of fighting. An Armenian with a blood-stained face ran past me into the Molodezhnoe café and shouted something in his tongue; about 10 people ran out of the café and moved toward the dark park. A crowd was moving toward the park from the Berezka café. In the park the group in orange jackets was wielding iron rods. They were beating the Armenians who put up stiff resistance using broken garden benches, trees and fence rods as weapons. I noticed that there was a man standing behind the orange-clad fighters. He did nothing, just looked around as if trying to spot something or somebody. I turned and saw another crowd moving toward the place of the fight. Just then, the man behind the ‘orange jackets’ whistled; his crowd retreated to the bus in good order, climbed aboard, and drove away at high speed toward the highway. The ethnic minorities managed to resist because they learned a lesson from the Afipskiy event. The Armenians started moving around in large numbers with knuckle-dusters. They obviously knew how many attackers they could expect and how strong they might be, therefore they were well-organized and fought with caution.”

These accounts appeared in neither the district nor the territorial press; the press of the local ethnic organizations supplied no information either. What is more, no criminal cases were commenced because there were no complaints. This raises a question about the number of officially registered hate crimes in the region and their real number. If no complaints reach the militia in cases like those described above, the militia’s statistics can hardly be trusted for assessing the conflict level.

The fights in Afipskiy and Severskaia have demonstrated that the thugs are much better organized than before: they wear uniforms (orange jackets) to recognize each other in a scuffle; they have acquired buses to move around; they have learned to conceal their iron rods in newspapers and fold their armbands under to hide the swastika; the leader instructs them before the fight; they act in close formation; they are obviously very fit; they obey a special signal to end the fight, and they retreat in good order.

We cannot ignore the fact that the symbol on their armbands is a copy of the fascist symbol, which leads us to presume that either a new radical organization has appeared in the Krasnodar Territory or an already functioning structure has acquired a special unit with special symbols.

The public is aware of the main ethnic problems; the state of ethnic relations has become something of a myth. The number of negative assessments on three levels (local, territorial, and nationwide) testifies to this: the results of our polls have demonstrated that those living in the Kuban area believe that the situation throughout Russia as a whole is the most alarming (86.1 percent), whereas it is considered much more tolerable in the Krasnodar Territory (63.5 percent), and is much better in the particular settlement where the respondent lives (48.4 percent). In the Krasnodar Territory migration as a phenomenon has also developed into a myth of sorts.

There is the opinion that the level of the conflict potential in the region is diminishing: “an unbiased analysis of trends related to the ethnic relations in the South of Russia suggests that their conflict potential has decreased considerably. Today, they are no open ethnic conflicts similar to those that shook the Northern Caucasus in the early 1990s. This positive development was promoted, in part, by the improved socioeconomic situation and the stronger state.”²¹ In fact, the contracted scope of conflicts in itself does not indicate that the conflict potential has diminished, especially in light of the increase in the state’s repressive possibilities. I have written above that conflicts assume different forms.

My studies of this problem in the Northern Caucasus have led me to draw several conclusions.

The high level of potential ethnic conflicts says that we should work hard to teach our society to be more tolerant. The entire population is our target group, yet we should also concentrate on the following groups: the leaders of ethnic and migrant organizations and journalists. Our public is convinced that the

²¹ N.S. Slepsov, V.V. Gatashov, “Etnokonfliktogenny potentsial Iuga Rossii: tendentsii evoliutsii i mery po snizheniu urovnia etnopoliticheskoy napriazhennosti,” *Konflikty na Severnom Kavkaze i puti ikh razreshenia*, p. 3.

high level of ethnic tension is a product of the low living standards and that the problem will go away as soon as economic stability and acceptable living standards are achieved. The experience of other countries, however, shows that this is a delusion: violent ethnic conflicts and ethnic separatism happen in the most developed countries. At the same time, numerous public structures engaged in social projects designed to alter the sentiments of the specific target groups have discovered that this method works. These are the SRRC-supported projects designed to improve mutual understanding between the old-timers and the Meskhetian Turks of the Krymsk District (Krasnodar Territory).²² The method of integration and social peacekeeping projects tested by public organizations can be applied by the state and local authorities in the places where tension among ethnic communities or between old-timers and migrants is high. I proceed from the assumption that the authorities need social and political stability in the conflict-prone territories just as much as the local population.

Today, the region's conflict potential is differentiating; the causes and forms of tension and opposition are limited to certain localities and differ from one place to another. This makes it harder to forecast conflicts and poses the question of new study methods. What we urgently need today is mass regional sociological studies of ethnic tension, which should use several methods adequate to the purpose.

As demonstrated above the radical ethnic structures are becoming more organized and better equipped.

So far, the region lacks a system for state monitoring the ethnic conflict potential; the EAWARN representatives are contributing to conflict prevention in the Northern Caucasus, yet their network is not dense enough to ensure adequate monitoring. The present practice of state administration fails to take into account the dynamics of conflict potential and its changing structure, while the current trends toward differentiation of this potential obviously call for tighter control.

²² See: M.V. Savva, "Vynuzhdennye pereselentsy na Iuge Rossii: itogi proekta IuRRTs," *Novaia real'nost*, No. 1, 2002.

**ETHNIC RELATIONS AND
POPULATION MIGRATION****RURAL-TO-URBAN AND
CITY-TO-CITY MIGRATIONS
IN KAZAKHSTAN:
MOTIVES AND RESULTS****Aygul ZABIROVA**

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

The problem of migration is one of those that make it possible to better understand the trends and repercussions of what has been going on in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. The following aspects of migration are most important: emigration of the Russian speakers; repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs, and movement of rural Kazakh population to cities.

So far, academic writings have failed to provide an adequate interpretation of the theoretical side of the migration problem. At the empirical level, however, several research projects have been realized or are being carried out. As a rule, all of them analyze outside migrations caused by the Soviet Union's disintegration. Working in our republic our own and foreign academics concentrated on the outflow of Russian speakers, while com-

pletely neglecting the movement of the Kazakh population inside their republic. Meanwhile, internal migration (its scope, directions, economic and sociopolitical prerequisites and results) is as important as ever and has even acquired new significance because new causes of migration appeared side by side with the traditional ones. Economic reforms (including the transfer to market economy, private property and entrepreneurship) as well as a wider range of human rights served as an important impetus of rural-to-urban migration and provided legal support for the freedom of movement. Rural-to-urban migration is going along with accelerating city-to-city migration, mainly from the regional centers to the new and old capitals of Kazakhstan (Astana and Almaty).

Societal changes transformed many of the social institutions and the republic's social structure. The social structural changes, in turn, have influenced to a great extent (and are influencing) human behavior, people's lives and resources. A new national identity, for example, has opened new possibilities for the Kazakhs' ethnocultural and ethno-social makeup and social statuses. It means that rural-to-urban migration of Kazakhs strictly limited in Soviet times is being replaced by the ever-increasing rural-to-urban and city-to-city migrations. These processes differ greatly from what was going on under Soviet power. In the Soviet Union migration was state-controlled by the means of the passport and registration system. The unfolding migration of Kazakhs inside their own country, the figures of which are registered by state statistics, conform to the economic law that says that population mobility increases together with the development of market economy.

Migration to cities has become especially important: it is transforming the sociocultural and ethnocultural makeup of the country's largest cities. So far, the rural-to-urban and city-to-city migrations have not yet been studied in depth; we know next to nothing about the motives behind such movements and the role of its traditional and recent (cultural-psychological and political) causes.

In the theoretical-methodological sense this work uses the paradigmatic approach that makes an in-depth and adequate analysis of the migration processes possible. I rely on the activity paradigm (A. Giddens, A. Touraine, P. Stompka, V. Iadov, T. Zaslavskaja) and take into account the thesis formulated by Anthony Giddens about the influence exerted by socioeconomic and political transition

on the migration processes¹ as well as Rogers Brubaker's conclusion concerning the influence of ethno-political transformations on the migration processes in post-Soviet Eurasia.²

Here are several key propositions: proceeding from the definitions of migration offered by contemporary science I suggest that we should look at rural-to-urban migration as a relatively permanent process of movement of an individual or groups of people from one geographic locality to another based on their decision to move. I identify this migration type with the term "movement," since it imposes on man new forms of behavior and the need to adapt to new relationships and a new lifestyle. I mean that a rural dweller has to adapt itself to the lifestyle of an urban community—to do so he has to abandon the axiological-normative system of his old place of residence and to accept different social regulators (applied in the place of his new residence) and to adjust to them.

Here I offer the following definition of the "migrant" concept based on my analysis of academic writings: a migrant is a person who exchanges his habitual physical, social, economic, political and cultural environment for a different one, who crosses borders (even if within one state) moving from one regional subculture and from certain regional specifics to others. A migrant is a person who leaves behind the supporting system and tries to acquire social and psychological assistance in a new place. He is not afraid of ailments and is prepared to starve; at the same time, he is free from certain obligations imposed on him by his immediate social environment: the family, clan or work collective.

¹ See: A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984.

² See: R. Brubaker, "Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An Institutional Account," *Theory and Society*, No. 23, 1994, pp. 47-78.

Motives and Social Resources of Internal Migrants

The article is based on the results of a sociological poll of Kazakh migrants who moved from rural areas to cities or from other cities to Astana and Almaty. Empirical information was collected in February-May 2002; the standardized interviews in both cities involved 589 people.

The data obtained in the territories of arrival (I have in mind representation in the samples of dwellers of specific regions and cities) correspond to the migration statistics for both capitals. For example, the group of rural and urban migrants to Astana is dominated by those who arrived from

the neighboring regions and towns, while a group of migrants from the south is also numerous. The composition of Almaty population has changed considerably in the last 10 years: in the early 1990s its population size had dropped, starting with 1997 it resumed its growth mainly at the expense of inter-regional migration.

As distinct from Astana, Almaty attracts people from neighboring districts, cities and regions. The share of city-to-city migrants was the largest among our respondents: there were 33.3 percent of the former dwellers of Taldy-Kurgan; 24.7 percent of people from Taraz and Shymkent each; 17.3 percent from Kzyl-Orda. It turned out that people from other cities were not covered by our sample. The same poll discovered that the largest share of rural dwellers came to Almaty from the Almaty Region (51.7 percent); 19.0 percent arrived from the South Kazakhstan Region; 16.1 percent from the Kzyl-Orda Region; 12.1 percent from the Zhambyl Region. People from other regions were not represented in our sample. Our results correspond to statistical data.

The contemporary migration theory has established that socioeconomic situation affects the nature of movements—either permanent or temporal. At the initial stage we had expected that city-to-city migration would turn out to be permanent which was later confirmed. The poll demonstrated that the city-to-city migrants (as compared to rural-to-urban migrants) normally move for permanent residence. The share of respondents who described themselves as temporal urban dwellers is much higher among those who came from the countryside (about 25 percent in Astana). Few of the city-to-city migrants turned out to be seasonal workers. While the 2001 polls had revealed a large group of those who planned to stay in Astana from 1 to 3 months, the 2002 and 2003 polls demonstrated that the number of those who planned to stay for 6 months was fairly large. Temporal migrants from the republic's southern areas do not go home frequently, except those who work in shifts and travel home every two to four weeks. They work as builders, chefs at Uighur, Korean and Chinese takeaways and restaurants or managers of specialized shops owned by Almaty people.

There are certain distinctions between the rural migrations to Astana and Almaty: while seasonal workers come to the former for a period of one to six months, in the latter they remain for a year (this has been demonstrated by our in-depths interviews). They come to Astana to stay for one or two seasons (spring and summer or fall and winter); in Almaty they stay for the four seasons. This is mainly explained by the local climates: in the southern capital people can live in summer houses or in dwellings unsuitable for habitation; the distance between their permanent and temporal homes is normally short. Our interviews showed that seasonal workers in Almaty travel back to their villages about once a month to bring their families money, foodstuffs, and clothes. As distinct from rural migrants in Astana, those who come to Almaty from the countryside tend to look at their new place of residence as a permanent one: this was confirmed by 84.5 percent of village migrants and 96.0 percent of migrants from other cities.

From the point of view of their resource (property, education and skills) status the migrants arriving in the new capital can be divided into four groups. The first consists of people arriving from Almaty and regional centers: a share of well-off, educated and skilled people among them is high. We have found out that they came to the capital because they looked at it as a political, economic and financial center. In other words, they came to Astana not so much because they had found no place for themselves at home but because the capital offered numerous career and professional possibilities for them and their children. We have observed that city-to-city migrants are mostly well-educated and well-off people, therefore they find it easy to adapt (socio-economically and socio-culturally) to the new city.

On the labor market they prefer (and have good chances to be employed at) civil service; they become doctors in new clinics, hospitals and other medical establishments; lecturers with numerous educational institutions, and journalists with the republican media. There is another difference: those coming from Almaty (as distinct, for example, from people from Karaganda or Arkalyk) want (and can) find employment with the most prestigious organizations. The majority of the qualified staff of the Republican Clinic in Astana came from Almaty. Many of the professors employed by the Eurasian National University were also invited from Almaty. A certain part of the city-to-city migrants (those who have private capitals) became part of the Astana business community, the so-called "sector of firms."

We have discovered that in this sector, too, there is stratification according to the place of origin: people from Almaty become owners of the most prestigious and expensive restaurants and cafés, fewer own shops.

The same group has successfully resolved the problem of dwelling: a sociological poll testified that part of the city-to-city migrants can either buy flats or rent them in the best parts of the city. The majority of civil servants, especially those invited from Almaty, were given flats that they could privatize later. A special group consists of employees of large companies (oil-and-gas firms, in the first place). They have good chances to get flats (that according to CIS standards, can be described as elite) either free or at much lower prices. Only a small part of the city-to-city migrants to Astana (as distinct from migrants in Almaty) buy or build highly comfortable homes or even cottages. On the whole, members of the first group can buy newly built housing in Astana (mainly of higher quality).

The second group consists of people with lower social-economic status; they have no considerable economic or financial capital, yet they have professional skills, higher or secondary education and corresponding qualification. This allows them to adjust to new life even if less successfully than the first group. The second group is made up of former dwellers of average and smaller towns and, partly, of regional centers; well-off villagers also belong to the same group. Having moved, this group is obviously confronted with social and economic difficulties but, on the whole, they can adjust themselves to the new lifestyle.

Our empirical studies have shown that members of this group have a chance to join the ranks of civil servants even if at lower levels (referents, rank-and-file bureaucrats, etc.). This affects their possibility to buy dwellings, the income level and, on the whole, migration results. Some of the members of the same group find their way to large organizations and departments, yet their posts are not important ones, therefore they have no chance of getting housing either free or at lower prices. Some of them work in hospitals as nurses, rather than doctors, and at schools: there is a growing shortage of such specialists in Astana. According to field studies, up to a third of this group finds employment in the tertiary sector of the city's economy. Having analyzed the "trading sphere" of tertiary economy, we identified several groups: owners of small shops and kiosks and people who rent cargo containers. Some of them work in the services: they drive private taxis, renovate flats and offices, work as hair stylists, etc.

This group mainly buys old dwellings with all modern conveniences—their housing is much less comfortable and cannot be described as elite; they live mainly in small flats found in houses built during Soviet times when the virgin lands were developed. Some members of this group, especially those who come from small towns, build their houses themselves—obviously, they are not comfortable at all.

The third group consists mainly of people coming from the countryside: it is far from homogeneous in the sociopolitical aspect. The social-economic status of its members is low: they had to leave homes not because they were attracted by the capital but because they could not support themselves in the native villages. Its members have nowhere to live; they mainly rent housing, which is often not comfortable or even ramshackle. Some of them live in the capital's fringes in the houses they built themselves. Employment and stable incomes are another important description of any group. Our field studies have shown that the majority of the third group is self-employed—they trade in the market. A small part works in the budget sphere and other organizations filling the lowest posts of charwomen, hospital attendants, doormen, etc. In other words, in the process of adaptation members of this group have been confronted with (and still have to overcome) great difficulties. They feel that the city has rejected them: they have neither decent housing nor decent jobs. They are aware, however, of their socioeconomic and sociocultural failings (no education and no special skills). In search of employment they start selling things at markets (though incomes and productivity are low) in the hope of building up better future for their children.

The fourth group consists of people with no housing rented for one family (they obviously cannot afford housing of their own). Likewise, they have no permanent employment and a stable source of income. These people mainly come from the countryside (villages and district centers) either with families or alone (seasonal workers). They have neither solid capitals nor even savings; they cannot find good jobs

because they have no education, skills, connections or means to buy, rent or build housing. In other words, members of this group have no means to adapt to the urban conditions. They can be described as socially excluded. Even outside observers can see that this group is the worst adjusted one both socially and economically among all other migrant groups in Astana; these people see no future either for themselves or their children. An analysis of works related to rural-to-urban migration in the Muslim East has revealed that it is children of these migrants, rather than they themselves, who start unrests and urban troubles. Professor Farhad Kazemi of Columbia University has formulated a theory of exaggerated and unrealized expectations of the second generation of rural-to-urban migrants according to which the second generation became the main force of the urban revolution in Iran.³

Let us turn to the internal migrants in Almaty among which we discovered two groups: rural-to-urban and city-to-city migrants. According to our observations, as distinct from Astana, the city-to-city migrants in Almaty form a more or less homogeneous sociocultural and socioeconomic group. They all came from the cities of Shymkent, Zhambyl, Kzyl-Orda and Taraz; nearly all of them were attracted by the prospects offered by a big city. Our field studies have demonstrated that they were more prosperous socially and economically than their former neighbors and that they moved in the hope of further improving their social and economic positions.

The increased scope of city-to-city migration to Almaty from neighboring towns was, to a great extent, caused by the fact that many of the former Almaty dwellers had moved to Astana. This created vacancies and a wider housing market in the old capital. This group finds it easy to adjust: their financial and material resources allow them to buy housing.

According to our polls, as distinct from a similar group in Astana, a considerable part of this group prefers to build or buy houses of the highest quality (cottages); other members of the same group buy elite housing in apartment blocks; still others (a half of the total number of members) buy flats in old houses. We have discovered that, as distinct from the situation in Astana, practically none of them "put off till later" buying or building housing.

The rural-to-urban migrants make up the second group heterogeneous in its social-economic makeup. At the same time, our findings allow us to presuppose that more of its members are financially and materially well off as compared to a similar group in Astana. (This is graphically shown by the housing conditions.) At the same time, the number of seasonal workers in Almaty is greater, which means that socially crippled groups (with no skills or education) are often on the move: migration involves not only people who have certain means to fit into new environment but also those with no future at home (in the countryside) and, very likely, no future in any other place.

From this it follows that the newcomers were driven to both cities by social-economic considerations, therefore both rural-to-urban and city-to-city migration was caused by social-economic reasons. This is typical of many developing countries (especially in the East). We have in mind the vector of modernization of the developing countries that creates enclaves and concentrates all types of resources (human and financial, in the first place) in one or two large cities. Russia, Turkey, Brazil and Mexico can serve as examples.

Comparative Analysis of the Migrants' Adaptation Strategies

I have undertaken to analyze the answers to several questions: Which are the variants of job-hunting among the rural and urban migrants? How is the workforce distributed? Does the process involve state employment structures, private agencies or personal contacts? How do the informal employment chan-

³ See: F. Kazemi, *Poverty and Revolution in Iran: The Migrant Poor, Urban Marginality, and Politics*, New York University Press, 1980.

nels affect the process? Is it possible to find work independently? It was very important to find out who or what supported (and continues to support) people at their new jobs; which behavior strategies they selected; which of them proved successful and which had to be discarded.

It should be said that the majority found life in new places hard; the strategies of job-hunting were highly varied. Our first question was "Do you work?" A positive answer invited another question: "How did you find this job?" A negative answer to the first question was followed by another one: "How are you looking for work?" We analyzed the answers to obtain an idea about the methods of job-hunting and their efficiency. For example, only 0.8 percent of the urban and 0.6 percent of the rural migrants in Astana applied to job centers.

The theories of rural-to-urban migration in the East have discovered a phenomenon of the "well-trodden path," which means, first, that man moved to a city where his relatives or neighbors had been living for some time; second, that he relied on their help while looking for work and place to live in. The results of our field studies have shown that the phenomenon exists also among the rural migrants in Almaty. Indeed, rural migrants (29.9 percent) turned for help to their relatives and former neighbors more often than urban migrants (24.7 percent). This explains why the number of those who found work through the relatives is the largest: the share of urban migrants in Almaty who used this method is 22 percent; the share of rural migrants, 19 percent.

When interpreting the empirical data we never forget that mobility and behavior on the labor market are very complicated social processes in which the informal element has acquired a much greater role thanks to capitalization of economy. Those looking for work need information; it can be obtained through purposeful efforts (for instance, a trip to the place of potential residence) or can be learned by chance. In this situation assistance of friends and relatives is very important (initially something or somebody should supply relevant information). Our interviews and sociological studies testify that personal contacts are the most efficient mechanism.

There is information that individual efforts in the form of direct contacts with potential employers are also very important. A person can create a job for himself—this is one of the possible variants. The largest share of rural migrants who found work independently lives in Astana (38.4 percent); this method works among the urban migrants in Astana as well (26.0 percent). In the new capital 16.0 percent of the urban migrants found work through adverts of organizations and departments.

The first conclusion follows from the above: informal contacts (independent successful job-hunting and personal contacts) predominate. More active network relationships in this sphere are a sort of a response to the highly contracted labor market. Personal contacts are important not only when looking for jobs in the new (private) sector that has become much more important in the last few years but even when looking for vacancies in budget organizations and civil service.

With the aim of studying the informal employment channels and checking the hypothesis about ethnic solidarity as an adaptation resource we asked: What is important when looking for a prestigious work in Kazakhstan? The respondents were offered the following variants: higher education; diligence; ethnic affiliation with the Kazakhs; ethnic affiliation with the Russians; active involvement in political activities; active involvement in market economy; good command of the Kazakh language; good command of the Russian language; contacts with the right people; relatives; natural talents.

The results showed that in Astana the migrants pointed to higher education as the most important element followed by contacts with the right people. From this it follows that on the whole people think high of informal contacts in the process of job-hunting. In Almaty the migrants pointed to contacts with the right people as the most important instruments (67.3 percent among the urban migrants and 62.1 percent among the rural migrants). They all agreed that contacts among relatives were very important, which means that they value highly not only ethnic affiliation but also sub-ethnic solidarity and belonging to smaller groups of friends, acquaintances, and former colleagues. When looking for jobs, 56.4 percent of the rural and 53.4 percent of the urban migrants used personal contacts.

If we lump together the channels of (1) relatives, (2) friends and acquaintances and (3) former colleagues, we shall be able to identify regional differences: the share of migrants in Almaty (56.4 percent of rural and 53.4 percent of urban) who used personal contacts is higher than in Astana (45.5 and

45.9 percent, respectively). The following variants ranked lowest among the answers: active involvement in political activities; good command of the Russian language, and at the same time, ethnic affiliation with the Kazakhs.

When analyzing the results of rural-to-urban and city-to-city migrants one should find out what changed (and continues changing) in the life of each person and his family as a result of his movement to the capital. Employment was the most frequent result of migration. Our studies have testified that the majority of urban migrants found work in Astana. There is the opinion (46.6 percent) that Astana promises more than Almaty where careers and personal development are concerned. Migration also allowed many people to earn money to support their families and to help relatives who stayed back at home. In Almaty 56.0 percent of urban migrants found employment; 38.7 percent of the same group believes that promotion at work is the most important result of migration; for 31.3 percent their ability to support their families is most important achievement. Another important achievement is an ability to help relatives who stayed back in the villages. The rural migrants in both cities agree that the main factor is employment that gives money to support the family; the second important factor is an ability to help relatives who remained in the countryside.

Transfers are another important question to be clarified when analyzing rural-to-urban migrations. They are important to those who get them; they are especially important to the poorest families who stay behind. Our analysis has testified, however, that the fact of transfer and its amount do not depend on the sender's income. We have to study the scope and role of transfers in greater detail, yet we have already established that rural migrants, that is, those with lower incomes and no dwellings of their own, help their relatives more often than others. Among the polled migrants it was the groups with the lowest incomes (1,000-3,000 and 3,000-5,000 tenge) who sent money more often than the groups with much higher incomes (15,000-25,000 and over 25,000 tenge). This completely supported our hypothesis that, as distinct from urban migrants, the rural migrants badly hit by social-economic difficulties would help their relatives much more often. The share of such people among the rural migrants in Astana was 60.7 percent. During our in-depth interviews we wanted to know what form this help took. As a rule, it was money, foodstuffs and clothes, all intended for the closest relatives.

Among the polled rural migrants in Astana with an income of 1,000-3,000 tenge two-thirds regularly send money, foodstuffs or clothing; over 50 percent of those earning between 3,000-5,000 tenge and many of those with incomes from 5,000 to 10,000 tenge help their relatives regularly. In other words, the lower the income level the more eager is the rural migrant to transfer money.

As we expected, urban migrants have fewer relatives in villages than rural migrants, which explains why the former less often send money to the countryside. This has also been confirmed by the following: over half of urban migrants in both capitals send no money to the countryside while 33 percent of them do help their village relatives.

C o n c l u s i o n

Thus, the migration profile is determined, to a great extent, by the resource status of migrants in Almaty and Astana: education, qualifications, good command of the Kazakh and Russian tongues, and material and symbolic capital (by the latter we mean contacts with the right people). Field research has revealed that city-to-city migrants were attracted by the big cities; they wanted to (and could) improve their status and achieve higher social position for themselves and their children and to earn more. Because of their advantages the urban migrants want (and can) find employment in the budget sphere and civil service; part of the group goes into business. They want better housing than rural migrants and can obtain it.

The rural-to-urban migration is caused by the fact that many of such migrants can find no employment at home. Our field studies showed that, having moved to a city, they improve, to an extent, their social and economic situation and that of the families they left behind at home. In a social-economic as-

pect (their resource status) the rural migrants are a heterogeneous group, but their achievements are very different ranging from good jobs and housing of their own to lack of housing and unemployment. On the whole the rural migrants are quite content to build their own houses themselves or buy flats in old apartment blocks. The city authorities should pay special attention to the members of this group, in particular, by building affordable dwellings and supporting those who went into small business.

LABOR MIGRATION IN KYRGYZSTAN

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General Description

Due to various social-economic factors typical of the transition period that followed the Soviet Union's disintegration legal and illegal labor migration is one of the main methods of job-hunting in the republic.

The demographic situation is another factor especially obvious in the south—the most populated and demographically overburdened area in the post-Soviet expanse. In this area, children and teenagers under 16 account for about 40 percent of population; young people between 16 and 29 constitute 50 percent of the workforce; and people over 60 make up 7-8 percent of the total population. Every year large numbers of young people flock to the labor market in search of a job, thus adding to its already considerable demographic pressure.

Obviously, employment problems are hard to resolve, especially at the transition stage when economic development slows down. In the 1990s industrial production in the republic dropped by nearly half. According to the First National Population Census of 1999 in 10 years the employment level in cities fell from 66.5 to 42.2 percent; the figures for the country being 67.3 and 64 percent; and the share of dependents increased from 12 to 24.8 percent.¹

Unemployment forces people to leave their country in search of work; in transitional economies migration somewhat alleviates the pressure on the labor market and inflation and compensates for the lowered incomes; it makes it possible to avoid a dramatic drop in the living standards of a large number of people.

Like many of its CIS neighbors, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (RK) is a host country to the migrant workers and is itself a source of labor migrants. It exports more workers than it imports. The titular population predominates in the workforce outflow, especially to CIS countries. On the whole, labor outflow from our country is large-scale and mainly haphazard. Its main flows are temporary—migrants prefer to

¹ See: *Osnovnye itogi Pervoy natsional'noy perepisi naselenia Kyrgyzskoy Respubliki 1999 g.*, Bishkek, 2000, pp. 48-49.

come back. There are no reliable statistics of the process in the republic—official figures have little in common with reality.

Art 16 of the RK Constitution envisages the right to labor; this right is specified in the Labor Code, which enumerates the rules and conditions of labor and the guarantees of labor-related rights. The Law on Licensing Certain Types of Activity and governmental decisions in this field regulate the labor market together with the Code and the main legal acts related to foreign labor migration. The rights of our citizens working abroad are protected by the recently signed intergovernmental documents. There are regional agreements among the Central Asian countries and agreements with other CIS states.

The largest number of such documents was signed with Russia; they are On Protecting the Rights of Working Migrants, On Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and Academic Degrees, etc. Similar documents were signed with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan. There are cooperation programs with the WTO and the International Migration Organization.

Foreign Labor Migration

At the institutional level the Migration Department of the Foreign Ministry and the Employment Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection are concerned with labor migration in the republic.

To obtain permits valid for up to twelve months, an employer should present a packet of documents to the Migration Department; such permits may be extended on a yearly basis for no more than five years if necessary (with justification of this request from the employer). There are quotas for foreign citizens and stateless persons on the whole, as well as by profession. One enterprise may not employ more than five persons under the quota established by the government and endorsed by the Legislative Assembly of the RK Zhogorku Kenesh (parliament). The Migration Department of the Foreign Ministry may increase or reduce the quota according to the situation on the domestic labor market and depending on the sphere in which the potential employer is operating. If the rules are violated or totally ignored the Department may suspend its permits (until the violations are remedied) or withdraw them altogether.

Foreign citizens and stateless persons employed according to the rules are supplied with documents that confirm their right to work in Kyrgyzstan; this document is invalid in the absence of a permit to employ foreign workers. The packet of documents presented to the Foreign Ministry should contain a copy of the labor contract with each of the potential workers, an international medical certificate of AIDS tests, etc. Foreign workers are entitled to the labor conditions, payments and labor safety regulations, social security and insurance (including medical insurance) envisaged by the legal norms of our republic and the international agreements signed by Kyrgyzstan.

The Department keeps a register of all labor contracts with foreign workers; it sends relevant information to the Consulate Service of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior. The consulates of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan abroad rely on this information when issuing visas and granting labor permits; in special cases envisaged by the republic's international agreements this information serves as the basis for visa-free entry into the republic's territory if no other procedure is envisaged.

The Employment Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection is entrusted with the task of drawing up annual agreements with the regional administrations and the mayor's office of Bishkek with the aim of keeping the regional labor markets under control and optimizing domestic migration.

Art 28 of the Law on External Migration and cabinet decision No. 566 of 17 September, 2002 established a quota on the foreign workforce (4,425 people in all economic branches and regions in 2003) distributed according to the number of employers at joint ventures.

Pursuant to this document, in November 2001, the Employment Department began issuing relevant documents to foreign companies and enterprises. During the first quarter of 2003, 226 foreign specialists

were invited under 77 such documents. Foreign companies employ 1,923 Kyrgyz citizens.² Along with representatives of the Foreign Ministry Migration Department specialists from this department are members of a commission of experts engaged in controlling enterprises that employ foreign specialists and regulating employment of citizens of the Kyrgyz republic at joint ventures.

To somehow improve the situation on the domestic labor market a system of licenses for organizations engaged in employing foreigners was introduced. Citizens of Kyrgyzstan should be employed on a priority basis, while the inflow of unskilled workforce into the republic should be stemmed. However, foreign companies tend to ignore the laws, disregard the social benefits existing in the republic, and pay different wages to foreign and local workers with identical educational and professional levels. In so doing, they violate the international legal acts relating to payment of labor and are, in fact, guilty of discrimination. However, if we take into account that, according to official sources, the share of foreign workforce in the total number of the employed is 0.1 percent, these violations can hardly be described as destabilizing.

In 2002, foreign labor migration sector of the Migration Department issued 319 permits (one of them being a duplicate) and 297 confirmations of labor permits. The percentages of those who applied for such documents (by country of origin) are the following: Turkey, 32 percent; China, 14 percent; local (Kyrgyz) structures, 20 percent; the percentages of other countries are negligible. The percentages of branches of the economy are as follows: trade and public catering, 46 percent; industry, construction and transport, 29 percent; public health, education, science, 17 percent; agriculture and forestry, 7 percent; crediting, insurance, etc., 2 percent.³

It is commercial and purchasing firms that employ foreign workers; they do nothing to promote production, and export hard currency from the country. The share of European and American companies (mainly mining firms) is less than 15 percent.

It should be said that the republic's mass media report more and more frequently that in the southern border areas the number of illegal immigrants is increasing. There is the opinion in the expert community and among bureaucrats that these people are having a negative effect on the social-economic situation and are responsible, in a way, for the reduced wages. This may destabilize the situation in these areas. There are over 10 illegal labor markets along the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border trading in cheap Uzbek workforce; at the sight of officials the markets promptly dissolve.

According to the local Kyrgyz authorities, between four and five thousand Uzbek citizens work on the Kyrgyz side of the border, their daily wages being less than \$1 (25 to 30 soms). There are about two thousand seasonal workers; some of them are cotton gatherers in the Dzhahalal-Abad Region. The majority work illegally and have no labor contracts; they are not covered by social and other benefits and are mortally afraid of the police and racketeers. In many cases they are not paid at all and are treated abominably. Experts believe that Kyrgyz farmers profit from the low wages they pay to illegal Uzbek immigrants. The state gets nothing because of tax evasion.

In an interview the head of the foreign migration sector, the Migration Department of the RK Foreign Ministry, said: "We would like to settle the problem of transborder workforce migration with Uzbekistan, but for reasons beyond our control we cannot do this." For its part, Tashkent is trying to settle the problem by tightening border control, which does not help.

According to the same department, by 14 April, 2003 only ten companies were licensed as employment agencies providing employment abroad. They mostly offer jobs in the "far abroad."

According to a sociological poll-interview,⁴ they carefully explain to their clients their rights and contract provisions with respect to living and working conditions. Those who employ these people refund the Kyrgyz agencies.

All the agencies agreed that South Korea has the best control system over labor migrants: all of them have to carry identity cards valid for the term of their contract. In conflict situations caused by violation

² Materials of the Employment Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

³ Materials of the Migration Department of the KR Foreign Ministry.

⁴ The present author conducted this sociological poll in February-March 2003.

of the migrant's rights, he or she can contact the local office; the conflict is then settled by a representative of the corresponding Kyrgyz firm. These firms, however, do not guarantee complete protection of the rights of their former clients: they draw up contracts and provide tickets. The newly employed worker has to sort out his own problems upon arrival. The heads of these agencies agreed that so far there have been no serious conflicts; the police deal with personal quarrels and everyday squabbles. All labor migrants can count on medical assistance in case of need.

Though this group highly assessed what they were doing, we failed to find out how the rights of Kyrgyz migrants were protected: none of the agencies could procure either an original or a copy of a labor contract. At the same time, all the polled labor migrants complained of the lack of necessary information and of free ongoing consultations either in Kyrgyzstan or in the places of their employment. Meanwhile, the Migration Department has created a packet of information documents including instructions for those who leave for the Russian Federation, questionnaires for seasonal workers who travel regularly to Kazakhstan, a sample of a migration card to be handed in upon arrival in Russia, etc.

Nobody doubts that our compatriots are willing to work abroad because the wages there are good by Kyrgyz standards. According to the Employment Department, a "shuttle" trader selling Chinese goods in Russian flea markets can earn on average about \$700-1,000 a month (with initial capital of no less than \$2,500-3,000). Hired sellers earn about \$200-250, of which \$80-100 are spent on food and lodgings. Construction jobs fetch the following wages: unskilled workers, \$180-200 a month; skilled workers (electricians, painters, etc.), \$300-400 with 12-hour long working day and two days-off a month. Compare these figures with average wages in the construction sector paid to legally employed workers: unskilled workers, no less than \$350-500, skilled workers, from \$700 up with an 8-hour day, one or two days-off a week and paid annual holidays. In Almaty "shuttle" traders can earn from \$100 to \$300 a month; seasonal workers at tobacco plantations earn from \$200 to \$500 per family; girls employed in show business in Korea earn \$350-400 a month. All migrants have to accept appalling living conditions.

Labor migration is gradually extending its borders. People from Kyrgyzstan have already reached the labor markets of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Korea, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait (there are official contracts with some of these states), as well as West, East and Central European countries. Kyrgyz work in such far-away states as America, Canada, and Australia. Great Britain is their favorite; according to expert assessments, there are 5,000 to 8,000 young people from Kyrgyzstan working in the British capital.

The spheres of employment in the "far abroad" are varied: people from Kyrgyzstan work in show business (dancers); services (waiters, au pair, domestic help and gardeners); agriculture and construction (unskilled and skilled workers).

Even though labor migrants travel far and wide, people mainly head for Russia and Kazakhstan in search of employment. According to the Kyrgyz embassies in these countries over 300,000 of our compatriots are working in Russia and about 50,000-100,000 in Kazakhstan.

Russia attracts workforce by its capacious labor market and the worsening demographic situation; its political situation is fairly stable and economic growth is sustainable, which makes the Russian ruble stronger than the Kyrgyz currency.

According to the Passport and Visa Department at the RF Ministry of the Interior, by early 2002 there were over 25,000 Kyrgyz citizens permanently living in the Russian Federation; over 41,000 had temporary registration.⁵ Our compatriots are mostly attracted to the Urals and Siberian federal okrugs (the Krasnoyarsk Territory, Sverdlovsk and Kemerovo regions, republic of Sakha-Iakutia, etc.), the Central Federal Okrug (Moscow and the Moscow Region, Orel Region, etc.), as well as St. Petersburg.

Official figures have little to do with reality: after arriving in Russia a large part of Kyrgyz citizens obtain short-term or fake registrations; many do not bother about registration at all. For example, 3,313 Kyrgyz citizens are temporarily registered in Moscow and the Moscow Region, while in reality

⁵ Materials supplied by the Embassy of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian Federation.

there are at least 10,000; in the summer their ranks swell to 15,000. Those who have no registration live and work illegally.

The contracts in the sphere of labor migration between the Russian Federation and Kyrgyzstan and between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are based on the intergovernmental agreements on cooperation and mutual assistance signed within the CIS in 1992-1994. There is an agreement On Labor Activity and Social Protection of Labor Migrants between the RF and RK; on 22 September, 2003, the sides signed a protocol On Amendments and Changes in the 1996 Bilateral Agreement on Labor Migration that envisaged certain privileges for Kyrgyz citizens temporarily working in Russia. There are special agreements with the Urals and the Siberian federal okrugs and a Memorandum on Cooperation between the government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the government of Moscow and the Russian Federation in the field of mutual employment of the citizens of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan in Moscow and citizens of the Russian Federation from Moscow in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

Labor migration to Russia goes through three main channels: special state structures; employment agencies that offer contracts; and individual efforts (preferred by the majority). All those who come to Russia fall into three main categories: private entrepreneurs ("shuttle" traders); hired sellers at flea markets, and construction workers. They stay in Russia for different periods ranging from several weeks to twelve months.

I should say that our country has accumulated considerable experience in organized temporary employment of its citizens in Russia (about 200 people a year). These people are usually employed in the Sverdlovsk and Novosibirsk regions, and in Orenburg and Tynda. Since 2000, the Urals Machine-Building Plant in Ekaterinburg has been engaged in organized employment of skilled workers in the "near abroad." In 2000-2002, 161 people went there from Kyrgyzstan. The directions of unorganized flows depend on the transportation network, wholesale prices, customs fees, etc.

The agreement On Labor Activity and Social Protection of Migrants Employed in Agriculture in the Border Areas signed by the governments of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan came into force on 9 July, 2002, under which Kazakhstan's quota amounted to 7,500 people. Four private employment agencies appeared as soon as the document had been signed. Three of them are operating in the south (Osh, Dzhalsal-Abad, Batken), from which people mainly migrate to Kazakhstan; one is found in Bishkek. In an interview, its head told me that his firm mainly hired Kyrgyz tobacco-growers for work in the Almaty Region. On the whole, he approved of the agreement initiated by the Kyrgyz side; he was quite satisfied with the registration rules, the contract system with a Kazakh private employment agency, and the contract conditions. He had no objections to specific legal points, yet he disagreed with the Kyrgyz term of labor permit issued annually for one specific activity type. He pointed out that in Kazakhstan labor permits were issued for indefinite terms and could be discontinued if violated. He is convinced that a system of labor permits valid for two years and covering all sorts of activities would have been more reasonable.

So far, officially registered employment agencies have been unable to use the quota of 7,500 in full: in 2003 people preferred to migrate illegally; the firms stopped thinking about their clients as soon as they crossed the border; the registered firms have not yet created a well-oiled system of moving people to the place of their employment and back: not all employed reach their destination in Kazakhstan, some of them prefer to go where they used to work in the past. The Kyrgyz firms are losing money paid for travel documents and food, while the Kazakh side is expected to cover these expenses upon the newly hired workers' arrival. So far, there is no clear-cut system of payment for the services of the Kyrgyz employment agencies.

Today, although intergovernmental agreements are in place, there is still no mechanism for putting them into practice, carrying out state marketing, information provision, and consultations. The firms that have already acquired licenses have to advertise in the media themselves; they distribute leaflets to convince people to switch to legal employment, familiarize them with official documents, etc. They do all this themselves even though the Information and Consultative Center at the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection has a data base about vacancies and training courses in the republic; it runs an Internet site about vacancies in the "near and far abroad" and a data bank containing text methodologies and their

computer versions. There are plans to open a sector for gathering and processing information about vacancies abroad and possible candidates from Kyrgyzstan.

The employment agencies say that the Migration Department of the Foreign Ministry has limited itself to issuing labor permits, supplying firms with relevant legal information, and receiving lists from them of those who found employment abroad. In March 2003, it organized a meeting with the legal entities engaged in finding employment for the republic's citizens abroad to hear their reports.

It should be said that the country's leaders are doing their best to control labor migration to the "near abroad." In 2002, the government set up workgroups composed of specialists from the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Labor. They visited the Urals and the Volga federal okrugs in December 2002 and the Siberian Federal Okrug in February 2003 to meet the local leaders, officials of the RF Ministry of Labor and Social Security, and employers and discuss labor conditions, social security, and the safety of Kyrgyz migrants with them. For the same purpose deputies of the Zhogorku kenesh visited the Sverdlovsk and Novosibirsk regions. These delegations tried to prevent possible deportations of Kyrgyz migrants under the newly adopted Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the RF. It was suggested that RK consulates be opened in Samara and Novosibirsk to protect the rights of Kyrgyz migrants. (According to the Embassy of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian Federation, as of 1 January, 2003, there were 100,000 Kyrgyz migrants in these two cities.) Today, our republic only has a consulate in Ekaterinburg.

Security Problems

Essentially no movement from one state to another can be considered absolutely safe. And although the risks involved in this movement are not the same as threats to personal security, a migrant nevertheless weakens, and sometimes entirely breaks, his social ties when he leaves home, only to meet unexpected and not always legal pressure on these ties in his new place of residence.

The local people are loath to welcome newcomers because of the pressure they put on the local employment and housing markets, the possible conflicts caused by ethnic and sub-ethnic behavior stereotypes, the social and cultural exclusion of some of the migrants, etc. In other words, compact groups of migrants cause great social tension among the local people.

Russia is suffering from the negative consequences of the large number of labor migrants: wages are reduced, something which Russians are not pleased with, and there is the threat of epidemics, a higher crime rate, and unemployment. The regions do not have enough housing to accommodate migrants.⁶ This explains why the obviously economically advantageous phenomenon of labor migration to Russia is negatively perceived at the administrative level; there are cases of bureaucratic abuses in relation to migrants.

Researchers have already pointed out that the labor markets in certain Russian regions are being deformed due to pressure from migrants.⁷ On top of this, migrants are not looking for any work: they need employment not controlled by the state in order to evade taxes. Employers profit from this by hiring migrants under oral agreements and paying them much lower wages than Russians.

The migrants not only need protection—they themselves are a source of economic and criminal threat. This happens if the local population is not adequately protected in the social and legal spheres.

The security aspects can be analyzed on the basis of a sociological poll the author of this article conducted in Ekaterinburg and Novosibirsk in 2002. Only 10 percent of the polled gave positive answers to the question: "Do you regret that you chose to work abroad?" Nearly 20 percent failed to give a clear answer to this and another question: "To what extent are you satisfied with your life as a migrant?" They were obviously aware that they earned more than they could have done at home and had reconciled them-

⁶ See: *Migratsia v Rossii: problemy pravovogo obespechenia*, ed. by M.V. Nemytina, Saratov, 2001, p. 107.

⁷ See: *Migratsia i bezopasnost v Rossii*, Moscow, 2000, pp. 104-105.

selves to the fact that psychological discomfort is the price they have had to pay for a "good life." This is especially true of those who work in trade: stress is an inevitable companion of any "shuttle" trader while he travels to Russia with his cargo, at the market where he is open to pressure from the stall owners, and in the streets where his documents are frequently checked. He also comes in contact with the militia and the Federal Security Service throughout the day.

The sociological poll in Ekaterinburg included a poll of experts who officially had to deal with labor migrants from Kyrgyzstan. The majority pointed out that the migrants find it culturally and psychologically hard to adjust, which makes it hard to achieve normal relations with the local people. A large number of the polled experts pointed out that migrants create many new problems: they are prone to excessive drinking and fighting; they commit offences and worsen the crime situation. At the same time, some the respondents said that not infrequently the law enforcement and other official structures infringe on the migrants' rights and freedoms, which provokes the newcomers to engage in asocial conduct and causes tension in the places of their temporary residence.

According to the polls, many of the migrants have to bribe the militiamen who check their registration documents. One of our respondents, head of the Migration Department of the State Administration of the Interior of the Sverdlovsk Region, said that temporary registration of labor migrants from Kyrgyzstan was the worst problem. The local law enforcement bodies raise all sort of bureaucratic barriers: the cost of registration is low, yet the process is torturous. People prefer to pay rather than waste time standing in line in all kinds of offices. The majority of the migrants pay intermediaries. This explains why a considerable number of the newcomers do not have registration. One of the sides profits from document checking; the other is living in fear, humiliation, and the need to stay away from the authorities, so as not to be caught without documents. When answering the question "To what extent are you satisfied with being a migrant?" only 4.4 percent said that they were absolutely comfortable. This small percentage seems to be completely justified.

The respondents agreed that racket in Russia was a common phenomenon, as well as monthly payments to local criminal structures; that hatred of Islam is rising, and that part of Russian society is intolerant toward Muslims. The majority of the migrants knows next to nothing about the local Kyrgyz consulates and does not respect them. They look at the Uzbeks who, they argue, "are absolutely safe—no Kazakhs bothering them. Everything is well organized—there are structures that stand up for them." The polled were convinced that much depended "on the strength of the state as a whole and of the president" and that "our government is powerless and cannot defend its citizens."

My poll conducted in 2002 in Kazakhstan revealed that Kyrgyz tobacco growers were living and working in appalling conditions; they normally worked from dawn to dusk; they had no elementary conveniences; as illegal migrants they had no protection from the tyranny of those who buy cheap workforce; people were forced to work despite health problems; there were cases of people trying to escape, being caught and beaten, etc.

Our sociological poll revealed that those who work at the Almaty markets also had problems with getting temporary residence and work permits. Both are expensive: registration is given for twelve months, so those who come to stay for a couple of months have to apply to agents. Most of them have none of the required documents at all. There are plans to introduce a pension tax to be paid by everyone, even non-citizens of other states.

Migrants are ignorant about their rights and obligations; there were several cases in Almaty when children were separated from their Kyrgyz families and put into orphanages under the pretext that child labor was banned in Kazakhstan, or that these children lacked the necessary documents. In actual fact, these children were helping their parents. This is another method of extortion: the children were not returned until the militiamen were paid a ransom.

The railways connecting Kyrgyzstan with Kazakhstan and Russia are the scene of cruelty and terror. Even the names of certain railway stations cause panic among migrants: customs officials, border guards, and the militia all demand their share of payment. They take away passports for real or faked reasons, throw away luggage, insult people and beat them up.

These factors have already affected the intentions of labor migrants: 7.4 percent of the respondents in Ekaterinburg have decided to stop their “shuttle” trading; 11.8 percent are inclined to do this; 35.3 percent will stay in the business, while 41.2 percent are undecided. The respondents complained that they are not employed in their field of specialization, and that they have to do hard unskilled work which none of the Russians want. There is another negative factor: half of the polled live in Russia without families because they cannot enroll their children in schools or kindergartens; as a result, family relations suffer. Forty percent of the respondents said that the family climate had worsened, while mutual understanding between spouses and with their children was lost.

Russian researchers have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that labor migrants are robbed of their rights in Russia: their status has not been identified (even though they are described as labor migrants), the law enforcement bodies regard them as illegal migrants; they humiliate them and extort money from them. Russia treats honest people who come to earn money as drug dealers or bootleggers. This must change before the situation cripples Russia’s economic interests. The country needs acts to legalize labor migration and the status of those who come to work for the benefit of Moscow or Samara.⁸

Employers fix wages they are prepared to pay to illegal migrants. Our studies have shown that people become illegal migrants under the pressure of local circumstances, in particular, because the employer wants to avoid paying taxes and social assignments for them. Most of these people live in atrocious conditions, share one room with several people or rent a bed; they are not covered by medical insurance.

It is up to the state to resolve these problems by regulating the migration processes both at their source and destination.

Illegal labor migration is fraught with social tension both at its places of origin and places of destination. In the latter case, it may distort the labor market, worsen the crime situation, and cause problems in inter-state relations. In the places of origin labor migration weakens the professional-and-skill potential. There are well-educated and skilled people among labor migrants prepared to undertake any job, the least prestigious and the hardest, which have nothing to do with their qualifications.

Kyrgyzstan, in turn, attracts illegal labor migrants from Afghanistan, China, Turkey, and CIS countries: it is a link with the southeast of Asia. Recently small groups of petty traders from CIS countries and China have appeared, which is explained by the presence of fairly large Kyrgyz diasporas there. Transit migrants can also be counted as illegal migrants—they use our republic as one of the stages on their journey to the West. Some of them, however, remain. Experts believe that the flow of illegal migrants (mainly from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and China) will increase because of the continued military-political and socioeconomic instability there.

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The official figures and sociological data quoted above testify that the socioeconomic repercussions of labor migration from Kyrgyzstan are far from clear cut. Labor migration is a positive phenomenon because it helps avoid the socioeconomic instability of the transition period. Economists have calculated that the export of workforce is five times more effective than the export of finished goods. In some of the Arab countries, 20 to 30 percent of hard currency income is produced in this sphere. Migrants send money directly to their families; they bring back hard currency, securities, and consumer goods. Return migration cuts down expenses on training and retraining and upgrading skills.

There are negative aspects, too: it is mainly mobile, enterprising, and skilled urban residents who go abroad, thus the quality of the domestic workforce is reduced, and specialists become rare, which is extremely detrimental to industrial enterprises, organizations, and services. This may slow down economic development and cause a serious shortage of skilled workers. We are also witnessing large-scale

⁸ See: *Migratsia i informatsia*, ed. by Zh.A. Zayonchkovskaia, Center for the Studies of Forced Migration in the CIS. Independent Research Council for Migration in the CIS and Baltic Countries, Moscow, 2000, pp. 50-51.

shifts in the size and structure of the able-bodied population, which prefers to work abroad where labor migrants have to take the least desirable and the lowest-paid jobs and put up with inadequate social protection.

Mass labor migration in Central Asia is changing the family and gender-and-age structure of the local population; recently a lower birth rate has been observed. The local communities are already encountering the deformation of their demographic, territorial, and social-professional structure due to the outflow of young and relatively young groups of the population. This is leading to a certain breakdown in social ties, an increase in alienation and emigration sentiments in society, and a reduction in patriotism.

MIGRATION PROBLEMS IN TAJIKISTAN

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Over the last 14 years, the ethnic picture of Tajikistan has changed a lot mainly under the pressure of the transition period. According to the 1989 population census, Tajiks (the title nation) comprised 62.3 percent of the total population; Uzbeks, 23.5 percent; Russians, 7.6 percent; Tartars, 1.4 percent; the Kyrgyz, 1.3 percent; Ukrainians, 0.8 percent; Germans, 0.7 percent. All other ethnic groups, over 20 of them, accounted for less than 0.5 percent. According to the 2000 census, the share of Tajiks increased to 80 percent; the share of Uzbeks went down to 15.3 percent; Russians comprised 1.1 percent; Tartars, 0.3 percent; the Kyrgyz, 1.1 percent; Ukrainians, 0.1 percent; Germans, less than 0.1 percent. We should take into account that the country's demographic potential is high: between the two censuses its population increased by 20.3 percent to reach 6,127,500. In these years the number of Afghans increased from 2.1 thous to 4.7 thous; Arabs, from 0.3 to 14.5 thous; Gypsies, from 1.8 to 4.2 thous. At the same time, new nationalities and ethnic groups appeared in statistical reports: Lakais, Kongrats, Mings, Dourmens, Katagans, Barloses and others, with the total population of about 80,000.

After 1991, when the republic became independent, it lived through one of the hardest periods in the history of the Tajiks: the transfer to market economy affected all spheres of life. The country was shaken by external catastrophes (disintegration of the Soviet Union and ruptured economic ties) accompanied by internal processes, especially the civil war that drove away many people between 1992 and 1997. Later, they all came back; the combination of all these processes spurred on migration.

At present, the social-economic picture is not complete without external labor migration; it is the most important social phenomenon of the turn of the 21st century. Today, external labor migration is exerting decisive influence on the life-supporting system of nearly all Tajik families. There are obvious positive and negative effects; there are also other sides: rural-to-urban migration, migration between the regions, voluntary resettlement from the mountainous densely populated areas to the valleys and planned resettlement from exogenously dangerous to safer places. The scope of these changes cannot be compared, though, with that of external labor migration.

Tajikistan has become a country that receives refugees. They come mainly from Afghanistan; according to the latest registration carried out by the State Migration Service with cooperation of the UNHCR office, there are about 2.6 thous of them. Some of these people either never had official status or lost it.

Labor migration became a large-scale social phenomenon in 1994. So far there is no mechanism of its registration, yet repeated studies of the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance established that between 2001 and 2003, 200-250 thousand, or over 7 percent of the republic's able-bodied population, sought employment abroad. Over 90 percent of them went to the Russian Federation: this is confirmed by the 2000 population census and annual information about tickets sold and passenger traffic supplied by the Ministry of Transport of Tajikistan.

According to a large-scale study of households, as of 1 August, 2003, 347,000 citizens of the republic were labor migrants working abroad, over half of them being young people between 15 and 29; 12 to 16 percent were women. With the statistical error of 15-20 percent of the total number of labor migrants one can safely say that there are 400-420 thousand labor migrants in Tajikistan. I should add that this number includes only those who while working abroad remained citizens of Tajikistan and maintained regular contacts with their families at home.

Their lot is not an easy one: they undertake any work so as to avoid deportation. About 10 to 15 percent of them, having fulfilled all the necessary procedures, work legally; the majority of them are engaged in state structures, large enterprises and the private sector. The majority of migrants, however, works illegally either at private enterprises or as domestic help. Their employers prefer to avoid official registration, which leaves the migrants outside social insurance and medical services, their wages being impossibly low. More and more often employers refuse to pay illegal migrants who fall easy prey to all sorts of structures, including criminal groups set up by their compatriots.

Annual investigations revealed several trends: the number of young men with no skills and qualifications that the labor market needs is rising. Even if such people have adequate practical experience, they lack documents to confirm their skills. The number of women among labor migrants is gradually climbing up. On the whole, migration is seasonal: in spring and summer migrants leave the republic to come back in fall and winter. Recently, the share of those who stay for 12 months or more has been growing.

There was the opinion in Soviet times that among all nations of the U.S.S.R. Tajiks were the least mobile one. According to studies conducted in the 1970s, territorial mobility among the autochthonous rural population of Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasus was about four times lower than in similar areas of Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic republics. According to the 1970 population census, the share of those who changed place of habitation during the previous two years was 5-6.7 percent among Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians; 2.5 percent among Kirghizes, and 2.2 percent among Tajiks. At the same time, agrarian overpopulation was typical of Tajikistan in the 1960s through 1980s. Now manpower surplus in Tajikistan is as high as before. In 2002 the natural population growth coefficient was 22.5; in the past over 85 percent of natural growth of the rural population remained in the countryside. Towns and cities with limited social capacities could not integrate large masses of people who found no employment in agriculture. In the past the scope of labor migration was much lower than in the last decade when large masses of people rushed to other former Soviet republics in search of employment.

In the Soviet Union two factors kept migration in check: the low professional level of the local ethnic groups and planned distribution of workforce. There is any number of opinions about the causes of higher territorial mobility of people in the manpower-surplus areas. We should say, however, that the low territorial mobility in Tajikistan was due to Soviet social policies that guaranteed physical survival. At the same time, despite agrarian overpopulation and manpower surplus, people could earn enough within the limits of Tajikistan itself to live at the subsistence level. There were no reasons to look for a job in other countries.

Today, different factors are responsible for territorial mobility. While in 1991 the level of employment among the able-bodied population in the formal economic sector of the republic was 78 percent, in

2002, it dropped to 53.4 percent. Incomes went down: according to a 1999 poll, about 83 percent of the local people was counted as poor. Informal employment is developing.

The employment dynamics of the 1990s was mainly determined by the change in the physical GDP volume, though over the last ten years this correspondence was not always even. Until 1996 the GDP volume had been declining much faster than the employment level; starting with 1997, when the volume of industrial production went up, the paces nearly coincided. The so-called labor accumulation coefficient, or the labor resources indicator, calculated as the difference between the level of contraction of GDP and the employment level, was 45.8 percent, the figure that demonstrates the speed with which the labor market responded to production decline and, by the same token, the way macroeconomic reforms affected manpower demand. According to the preliminary results of the 2003 poll, the standard of living has somewhat improved, though the present rates of economic growth cannot affect external labor migration yet.

This is a complicated process that should be carefully studied and regulated along with other economic, social and political factors. The state should exert an active influence on external labor migration, elaborate and implement a scientifically substantiated policy in this sphere. To be able to accomplish this the state should clearly formulate its goals and current and future tasks with due account of the traditions, customs, national and historical specifics of our population.

With this aim in view the government has already charted important measures designed to create a normative-legal basis applied to migration in general and labor migration in particular. In 1998 the country acquired a Conception of State Migration Policy that formulated the following urgent aims and tasks:

- An adherence to international treaties in the sphere of migration and compliance with corresponding international obligations;
- Protection of the migrants' rights and interests in accordance with the international legal norms, the republic's Constitution and legislation;
- Development of legislative base regulating processes of migration;
- Improvement of the system of state administration of migration and providing training for its personnel;
- Forecast of these processes, elaboration and realization of all necessary state and other programs in the sphere;
- Prevention of illegal migration;
- Signing of bilateral and multilateral agreements on migration;
- Setting up a system of control, creation of a unified database, etc. that meet all international requirements.

Since 1999 the Law on Migration has been operating in Tajikistan; in 2002 it received a number of special articles related to external labor migration. In 2001 the president signed a decree On Stepping Up the Struggle Against Illegal Migration in the Republic of Tajikistan. There is another decree that describes the order of issuing permits (licenses) to employment agencies engaged in finding employment for Tajik citizens abroad and inviting foreign workers to Tajikistan; the government endorsed the External Labor Migration Conception. It formulated the main goal of the state migration policy as social and legal support of the Tajik citizens temporarily working abroad, regulation of migration flows, prevention of illegal labor migration and making migration a legal process. To reach these goals within the present economic context and in view of the emerging labor market the state decided that regulation of internal and external labor migration was the most effective instrument. The priority was given to a system expected to help labor migrants by creating favorable conditions for the development of a net of private employment firms.

In November 2001 the Tajik parliament ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the republic also signed the 1951 Conven-

tion Relating to the Status of Refugees. Within the CIS Tajikistan is party to the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labor Migration and Social Protection of Migrant Workers (15 April, 1994) and the Agreement on Cooperation of the CIS Member States in Fighting Illegal Migration (6 March, 1998). In this way, the laws of Tajikistan cover practically all its international obligations; though these fairly liberal laws are not free of shortcomings. One of the greatest achievements in this sphere was a system of transfer of the money earned by migrants to their homeland. In 2001 they transferred \$300,000, in 2003 they sent back home \$256 million (over 20 percent of the GDP). The state has to devise methods designed to stimulate investment activity of labor migrants by raising interest rate on their hard currency deposits in the republic's banks and lowering the bank service payment below the world's level.

External labor migration helped develop the market of construction, transport, and banking services; it improved the culture of labor and raised the professional levels of those who worked in other countries.

Regulation has its positive sides as well as many negative effects evident in the economic and social spheres. First, labor migrants are mostly young people (between 20 and 45) with the highest labor productivity; so far their absence is not acutely felt because there are no jobs for them. At the same time, the small but evident economic growth and several large construction projects require skilled workers. Second, the majority of the migrant workers are men; they either have families or are single. Our studies revealed that about 30 percent of single men start families abroad; as a result there is a surplus of unmarried women in the republic. Today, an average age of marriage among women is 30, which creates a new problem in Tajikistan. In addition, left without breadwinners, the families of labor migrants become social outcasts. Third, labor migration causes huge losses in human capital expressed in professional degradation. While abroad, most of migrants work in different professions as compared with those they were trained for. Tajik academics have calculated that in the last 10 years at least \$15 billion were lost in the form of human capital, which is a non-renewable resource. Fourth, the social and economic aspects of external labor migration are extremely unfavorable. Hundreds of thousands of our citizens are exploited abroad; they fall victims to political speculations, they are accused of drug trafficking and drug pushing. Fifth, Tajikistan is absolutely unprotected against infections; the venereal diseases and AIDS present the greatest danger.

Regulation of labor migration is not free from faults either: the infrastructure of services is undeveloped, this can be said, in particular, about information and legal support; there is no training or professional education system; a system of coordination of all relevant structures' activity, including civil society, is absent as well; migrant workers mainly go to Russia. Our legal system lacks laws envisaging responsibilities for organizing illegal labor migration abroad and for bringing foreign migrant workers in Tajikistan; the climate is not conducive to economic activities of intermediaries; there is no investment program that could attract savings of labor migrants, etc.

The state should work toward diminishing the negative sides of labor migration and developing its positive aspects. There are positive shifts in the process. Today, we have a program of external labor migration for 2003-2005 and a special system that will help translate the program into reality (on 1 January, 2004 migrant registration cards were introduced). It was clearly stated that they would be used for statistical purposes only, to gather information about the gender-and-age structure of migration flows and places of their origin, the migrants' qualifications, the reasons for migration and the duration of absence, as well as the country they headed for. No extra people were stationed at checkpoints, while the process of filling in the cards is straightforward and does not take much time. In March 2004 the government passed a decision on considerable extension and strengthening of the representative office of the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance of the Tajik Republic in the Russian Federation. Its functions and tasks were revised and new priorities identified: it has to concentrate on receiving Tajik citizens and helping them in everything related to all aspects of labor migration as well as providing expert opinions about the contracts signed by employment agencies in Tajikistan with employers in Russia. The same decision suggested that obligatory medical insurance should be introduced for all citizens traveling abroad. This has been introduced in the Russian Federation for migrant workers entering the country.

On the whole, these measures can be successfully carried out only if the state creates a clear and balanced system of state regulation. It can be actively supported by state and private structures, the public, political parties and NGOs. Success is impossible without a genuinely national policy. This will transform external labor migration into an efficient instrument of raising the standard of living in the country and successfully addressing investment and other long-term problems.

THE LOWER REACHES OF THE VOLGA AND THE NORTHERN CASPIAN AT THE CROSSROADS: TIME AND PEOPLE, PAST AND PRESENT

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From time immemorial migrations, ethnic migrations included (that were sometimes artificially encouraged or just as artificially restrained) have created and continue to create problems for old-timers and newcomers alike; by the same token the academic community was forced to conceptualize this rather complicated phenomenon. At the same time, "the great migrations of people" have left their indelible traces in world history. They are a vehicle of cultural exchange, a powerful stimulus of ethnogenesis and ethnic contacts that shaped and changed ethnic make-ups of limited and vast territories.

Sociologists have already pointed out that the turn of the 21st century is marked by landslide migrations all over the world. People move for natural reasons or are forced or provoked to migrate. Forced migrations were caused by the tragic end of the Soviet Union and the crisis of the Russian Federation's administrative structure. They reached their peak in the 1990s when huge masses of people moved to new places or returned to old homes long abandoned by their ancestors. (Exodus is probably an apt term to be used in this context.)

Sometimes natural and forced migrations coincide in time and place; in such cases their ethnic descriptions may become even more obvious or may complement the main features of such movements. There are points of attraction and points of transit migrations normally found along borders of neighboring states or along administrative borders inside a country.

The present situation is of critical importance for Russia; when dealing with the most urgent issues we should demonstrate well-balanced, bold and novel approaches.¹ The way these issues are treated in the Astrakhan Region has already attracted academic attention and invited several opinions about the processes and possible approaches.²

¹ See, for example: "Migratsionnye protsessy: regulirovanie i upravlenie (razdel 3)," in: A.A. Sharavin, S.M. Markedonov, *et al.*, *Tezisy po rossiiskoy natsional'noy politike*, Institute of Political and Military Analysis, Moscow, 2004, pp. 19-23.

² See: L.S. Ruban, "Razvitie konfliktnoy situatsii v Astrakhanskoy oblasti," *Issledovaniya po prikladnoy i neotlozhnoy etnologii* (Moscow), No. 86, 1995; V.M. Viktorin, *Mezhetnicheskaia situatsia v Astrakhanskoy oblasti: kul'turnye*,

The region found in the lower reaches of the Volga River has been part of the Southern Federal Okrug since 2000. It is neither large nor densely populated (population size is slightly over 1 million); its territory covers 44.1 thousand sq km, not more than 30,000 sq km of them are suitable for human settlement and economic activities. In the last 15 years the region recovered its former awareness of being "Russia's southern outpost on the Caspian shores." It is developing dynamically.

The local students of local lore, sociologists and political scientists of different schools have agreed to distinguish between the Astrakhan Region within its present limits and the Astrakhan Territory of the past that from time immemorial (at least as part of the Russian State) has been looking at Astrakhan as its cultural and administrative center.

sotsial'nye, politicheskie problemy, Astrakhan, 1998; S.E. Bezrzhnoy, I.P. Dobaev, P.V. Krayniuchenko, "Islam i islamizm na Iuge Rossii," in: *Iuzhnoross. obozrenie TsSRIIP IPPK pri RGU*, Issue 17, Rostov-on-Don, 2001, pp. 216-225; *Bezhtensy i vyzhdennye pereselentsy: etnicheskie streotipy (v sub'ektakh IuFO)*. *Opyt sotsiologicheskogo analiza*, Vladikavkaz, 2002, pp. 53-77; *Natsional'nye men'shinstva v kontekste politiki v regionakh Iuga Rossii. Pravovye osnovy i praktika obespechenia*, Moscow, 2003, pp. 82-127; A.V. Dmitriev, P.L. Karabushchenko, R.Kh. Usmanov, "Geopolitika Kaspiiskogo regiona (Vzgliad iz Rossii. Fragmenty), Part I," *Astropolis—Astrakhanskije politicheskie issledovania. Nauchno-praktich. zhurnal* (Astrakhan), No. 2 (5), 2003, pp. 96-138 ff.

This area has preserved and is developing the feeling of togetherness, economic ties, kindred and friendly relations. The "common fate" is invariably emphasized at the top official level during multilateral meetings, exchange of delegations and regular (since 1997) celebrations of the date the Astrakhan Gubernia was founded by Peter the Great.

Peaceful and generally calm situation in the multi-ethnic region is well known. Some people come here to study, to work and to develop its oil and gas fields; others seek refuge from sharp conflicts in Russia and the CIS. The market relations did not disrupt the old trade contacts with other regions: they merely changed and received a fresh development impetus.

The region is a transit territory that attracts massive migrations flooding the South of Russia. Itself part of the South of Russia it receives new settlers, many of them arriving from other constituencies of the same federal okrug.

In the past, the lower Volga was a center of several mighty powers of a mixed (nomadic and settled) type. They left no trace except for archaeological finds and folklore. Still, this territory can be described as "the Caspian fringe" (the term borrowed from Lev Gumilev) or as the Black Sea-Caspian "inter-maritime" and as an active periphery of Russia and the world in the process of development.

"Quasi-Autochthones" and "Migrants"

I have repeatedly stated in my publications and public speeches that "the absence of an obviously autochthonous population" in the Astrakhan area is one of the factors of peace and stability there, which means that no group can claim this fabulously picturesque territory as its own. From time to time, this statement invited indignation and rejection,³ while the mounting wave of migration to the region stimulated distinction between the "locals" and the "aliens." The press and even the academic circles become involved.

Ethnic histories of practically all peoples, as well as histories of practically all territories know of "locals" and "migrants." The concept of the "adjusting substratum" obvious in the mountainous areas is less obvious in the forest and forest-steppe zones and practically undetectable in (or widely spread across vast expanses of) the steppes, semi-deserts, flood-plains and the delta.

It was Tamerlane's marches of the late 14th century that deprived the lower reaches of the Volga of its settled population; in the mid-16th century the nomads, the remnants of the "Tartars of the khanate," moved to Azov under pressure of Russian troops. So far no traces of these ethnic groups (direct ances-

³ For more detail, see: V.M. Viktorin, "Tak kto zhe u nas glavny? Etnoistoria i 'korenializm' (Ob izdaniy 'Astrakhanskije kazakhi' v 2000 g. v otklikakh v obshechey i tatarskoy presse)," *Astrakhanskije izvestia*, No. 46 (617), 14-20 November, 2002, p. 4.

tors of Hazaria, the Golden Horde and Hajji-Tarkhan) have been detected. In the same way, no traces of an "aboriginal layer" (later absolutely stable and recognizable) that came back to these parts have been found.

As part of Russia the Astrakhan territory was build up by successive migration waves. The lower Volga polyethnic community was swelling with Russian servicemen (who came in the mid-16th century); Nogai-iurtovtsy (who moved here from the Ural-Djaek River in the mid-16th century) followed in the early 17th century by kindred groups of Djetisan-Nogais. A nomadic horde of Torgout Kalmyks arrived closer to the mid-17th century; they were followed by several Turkmenian waves between the 17th and 18th centuries; Tartars arrived from the middle reaches of the Volga in the 18th century; in the mid-18th century Karagashi Nogais migrated from Piatigorsk; late in the 18th century here appeared Armenians fleeing from Persian shahs; Don and Black Sea Cossacks came together with Kalmyks who adopted Christianity to join Russian troops in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Late in the 18th and 19th centuries Ukrainians who brought salt gradually settled in the lower reaches of the Volga; in 1801 there came numerous Kazakhs who belonged to the horde of Sultan Bukey; Ashkenazi Jews came in the 19th century; the so-called "Saxonian" Gypsies appeared after the war; the Volga Germans settled in Kharabali village in the mid-1950s; then came Russians from Turkey and Rumania, "Nekrasovtsy" and "Lipovane" (members of Russian Orthodox sects) followed later (in the 1960s); members of North Caucasian ethnic groups started coming in 1960s and 1970s, etc. Back in the 17th and early 18th centuries numerous Akkinty Chechens were already serving under Astrakhan military leaders. Their number in the Astrakhan Region increased rapidly when they were allowed to return from exile. While in 1959 there were 59 Chechens living in the region in 1989 there were over 8,000 of them; today, according to preliminary estimates, there are nearly 16,000. The destructive earthquake that took place in June 1970 in Daghestan forced many people, mainly Darghins and Avars, to move to Astrakhan.

This shows that the experience of migrations and settlement of new groups of people has been accumulating for many centuries. New realities started taking shape in the 1980s-1990s.

General Ethnic Statistics

Late in the 1980s the Astrakhan Region, like many other Russian regions, welcomed victims of the Karabakh conflict (Armenians, Azeris, and mixed families). Later 1,500 Meskhetian Turks arrived and fit well into the village of Pady in the region's north, the village of Raznochinovka (near the city of Narimanov, not far from Astrakhan) and the Bol'shie Isady District of Astrakhan.

According to the figures of the migration control structures, not less than 1 to 1.5 million migrants (more than the region's permanent population) crossed the region in the 1990s. About 25,000 of them were registered as permanent dwellers; experts are convinced, however, that the real number was at least 3 to 4 times greater; about 14,500 were registered as forced migrants. They all came mainly from Chechnia (Russians, Germans and Jews, on the one hand, and a more or less equal number of Chechens, on the other). In 2002-2003, the sources of migration changed because the situation in Chechnia had normalized and because practically all Russian-speakers wishing to migrate from the republic and the neighboring regions had done so. In addition, tension had increased along the border with Afghanistan. By that time railway communication between Moscow and Dushanbe had been replaced with the Dushanbe-Astrakhan line. Because of this and certain other reasons, this line brought from Central Asia to Astrakhan transit migrants and those who wanted to stay in the region (Tajiks and Pamiris, Uzbeks, Muslim Gypsies, the so-called Liulù from the city of Termez).

There are also seasonal migrations from Central Asia to the Astrakhan Region and up north to Russia as well as migrations of those wishing to settle (from the Southern and Northern Caucasus). The former become permanent and stable, something that earlier was more typical of the latter. There is also "edu-

cational" migration: it is for a long time that neighboring and even more distant regions regarded education in Astrakhan as highly prestigious.

Migration from the Far Abroad has just started—in some cases it is re-emigration of Germans and Jews who had been lured by "ethnic" political calls and the hope of acquiring security, stability and future (if not for themselves then for their children and grandchildren) in the community they were prepared to accept as kindred.

The Astrakhan Kalmyks (the Steppe and Fishing groups of Torgouts) nearly stopped moving to the neighboring Kalmyk Republic, the number of those who do move away is much lower than that registered by the 1959-1970 population censuses. This says a lot about the currently favorable ethnic climate in the region. The ethnic composition of migrations to our region is different from other regions: we have practically no Kurds and no Yezidi who settled in large communities in the Volgograd and Saratov regions (in the latter there are practically no Iranian-speaking Talyshes from Southern Azerbaijan). Their business contacts along the Kazakhstan border brought them in large groups to Novokuznetsk and Astrakhan.

The recently introduced migration cards for the foreigners arriving in Russia made it possible to establish that 96 percent of foreigners who come to Russia as seasonal migrants or intend to settle arrive in Astrakhan and the region. They are mainly people from the former Soviet Central Asian republics. It is much harder to trace migration flows inside the country, yet general numerical assessments of them are possible.

The composition of newcomers who settled in the Astrakhan Region is the following: migrants from Chechnia, about 30 percent; from Kazakhstan, 20 to 25 percent; Tajikistan, not less than 10 percent; from Daghestan, about 8 percent; from Uzbekistan, 6 to 7 percent; from Azerbaijan, up to 7 percent; from Armenia, 5 to 6 percent; from Georgia, 3 to 4 percent; from other places, up to 2 percent. Their ethnic composition is the following: Russians, 75-76 percent; Tartars, 6-6.5 percent; Chechens, about 5 percent; Azeri and Talyshes, not less than 4.5 percent; Armenians, up to 3 percent; Ukrainians, 2 percent; others (Avars, Darghins, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Georgians, Germans, Jews and Tats) up to 4 percent. A number of children of mixed marriages among the newcomers is large: this group suffers more than others in ethnic conflicts.

There are still no official results of the 2002 population census yet one can say that the migration flow has not irrevocably changed (contrary to what many prefer thinking) the region's ethnic composition, yet it has left its imprint on it. I have in mind the larger number of the slightly dominating Russian population that keeps its share more or less at the same level: between 1970 and 1989 its share dropped from 77 to 72 percent; the expected result for 2002, 70-71 percent. The share of the second largest ethnic group, Kazakhs (the so-called Bukeevskie Irredentists) and the number of people with higher education among them increased from 13.5 to 15 percent. The share of the Tartars that somewhat dropped when the Nogais had identified themselves as such (earlier, officially they were all registered as Tartars) is currently stabilizing. The expected dynamics for the Tartars is from 7.2 to 7.0-7.1 percent. The mountain peoples of the Northern Caucasus will become the fourth largest ethnic group (up to 3 percent) to be followed by Ukrainians (2 percent) and Kalmyks (0.8 percent). Over 1,000 Uzbeks and Tajiks will overcome the reference index of 0.1 percent. Negligible by itself migration of 200 Nogais from the valleys of Chechnia and Daghestan will strengthen the already existing Nogai ethnic group in the Astrakhan Region.

The share of Muslims of various trends has increased from 22-23 to over 25 percent. Today, Sunni-Shi'a Islam that came from Daghestan and Chechnia (and its Murid, tariqat, branch) functions together with the local Turkic Sunni-Hanafi School (in 1989-1990 mosque No. 3 on the city marketplace was transferred to the local Shi'ites). Confessional differences lead to stiff competition among trading groups of recent Avar migrants. Some of the migrants who came from Daghestan (the older generation of the Omarov family arrived in early 1970) left the tariqat branch to set up a community of "pure Islam" (jama'at of mukhmins) numbering 60. They were misnamed Wahhabis or "peaceful Wahhabis" because of their adherence to strict discipline and old Islamic code of behavior and clothing.

There are small groups of radical renovation (jihadists) that preach the use of force; they, normally, do not last long.⁴

The local Shi'a community was restored when Azeris and Talyshes resettled in Astrakhan and when the region restored its old (pre-Soviet) contacts with northern Iran. Today they are cooperating in the sphere of education and commerce through the newly opened Iranian consulate in Astrakhan. The Shi'ites peacefully blended into the Astrakhan muftiat. In the mid-1990s a group of about 100 Judaic Tats (so-called mountain Jews) came to Astrakhan from Chechnia and Daghestan. At first, they had found it hard to cooperate with the local synagogue and the Judaic community. Later, the differences were completely settled. In 2001 a small Armenian Gregorian church was restored in the old part of the city close to the national-cultural Arev society.

The "index of migration" of our region is 1 : 12, which is very much below those of the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, yet it is noticeable in the local conditions, therefore the region can be described as a "problem" one but not "conflict-prone."

Ethnosociology of Migrations

L.S. Ruban, a sociologist from Moscow, born and educated in Astrakhan, has dated the "ethnic conflict in Astrakhan" to the late 1980s and predicted its rapid escalation (very much in line with other conflicts in the former Soviet Union). She believed that migration from the Caucasus would accelerate the conflict together with the internal instability typical of the period of transition.⁵

I have been always convinced (and stated my conviction in the 1990s) that the author failed to distinguish between the "everyday," "commercial" and "regional" conflicts. The latter never happened; according to the recent ethnosocial studies, there is no direct threat of it.

After several flair-ups of 1992-1993 (that could be observed elsewhere in Russia) the situation in the ethnosocial sphere stabilized that led L. Ruban to believe that "the unresolved conflict became a latent one."⁶ She guided herself by the vague answers supplied by 600 respondents. I have to say that "latent conflicts" can be detected in any polyethnic territory.

The project Position of Ethnic Minorities in the Border Regions realized in 2002 in some of the Volga and Urals regions by the Center for Ethnopolitical and Regional Studies, RAS (Moscow) together with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation produced interesting even if debatable results. It aroused active discussions on all key issues. Astrakhan academics and especially those practically dealing with the ethnic problems object to introducing "foreign, or Western" terminology as applied to Russian problems. The term "ethnic minority" ("old" and "new") has no local correspondences; it excludes Russians, who while being in the majority in the region as a whole are in the minority in a couple of districts.⁷ One can hardly accept the term "discrimination against the migrant ethnic minorities" as applied to the Astrakhan realities and, consequently, the attempts at "experimenting" with it.⁸

There are doubts whether the 1994 and 2002 samplings were representative enough and whether experiments in ethnic sociology can be accepted as ethical: in 2002 the "provocation method" was used (false attempts at finding employment or renting a flat); in 1994 the question "Are there ethnic groups that you dislike?" suggested an answer—something that should not be done.

⁴ For more detail, see: V.M. Viktorin, "K probleme povolzhsko-prikavkazskogo 'obnovlenchestva' v mirnoy i radikal'noy formakh (na materialakh obshchiny v g. Astrakhani v 1990-2000-kh gg.)," *Evrasiiskoe prostranstvo v postsovetskiy period: etnokol'turnaia spetsifika sotsial'nykh i politicheskikh protsessov. Ezhegodnik TsRTI VGU*, Issue 1, Volgograd, 2001, pp. 46-59.

⁵ See: L.S. Ruban, *Razvitie konfliktnoy situatsii v Astrakhanskoy oblasti*, pp. 4-5, 11 and the diagram.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁷ The present author repeatedly expressed these doubts at the summarizing conference of the project Ethnic Minorities in the Russian Federation (TsEPRI and the J.D. and C.T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rudomino All-Russia State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow, 2-3 June, 2003).

⁸ Described in the collection: *Natsional'nye men'shinstva (v kontekste politiki v regionakh Iuga Rossii). Pravovye osnovy i praktika obespechenia (Astrakhanskaia, Volgogradskaia, Saratovskaia, Samarskaia i Orenburgskaia oblasti)*, Moscow, 2003, pp. 119, 121-125 (and diagram on p. 123).

It seems that L. Ruban and E. Pain were too much enthusiastic of the “positive discrimination” term coined in the English-language sociological writings published in the Netherlands. L. Ruban suggested that “positive discrimination” should have been introduced against the main, in her opinion, population group by creating official privileges and preferences for the “minorities” (at whose expense, I wonder?). The 2002 team referred to the case when a Russian had been denied employment for sake of a Tajik as a case of “positive” (read: “useful, or commendable”) discrimination (!).⁹

Significantly, this project failed to identify serious threats in the region and worsened problems; this was confirmed by recent works *Monitoring obshchestvennogo mnenia po mezhetnicheskim otnosheniam* (Monitoring of Public Opinion on Ethnic Issues) (by the Committee of Soldiers’ Mothers and human rights activists of the Astrakhan Region together with the Republican Party of Russia and the Soros Foundation); *Negativnye etnostereotipy v otnoshenii vyzhdennykh pereselentsev* (Negative Ethnic Stereotypes in Relation to Forced Migrants) (by a group of experts from various departments of regional administration and the Vainakh Society together with the Caucasian and Danish Refugee Councils).¹⁰ They have identified certain potential problems that can also be regarded as favorable and hopeful. Students from various higher educational establishments were also involved, thus learning how to study this very topical problem.

The gathered materials show that the situation in the region is far from simple yet stable—it is not easy, though possible, to unbalance it. Continued stability depends on how well the administrative team and the polyethnic community will work and cooperate.

Eighty percent of the respondents pointed out that they had never encountered ethnic intolerance; 10 percent had had this experience (6 percent of them had been encountered with ethnic intolerance quite often—normally at markets and in other everyday situations) and 10 percent were undecided.

Over 70 percent of the polled were quite positive about “ethnic cooperation” (the best models being: “friends and neighbors,” “colleagues” and “relatives”). Over 25 percent preferred to deal with “their own people”; up to 50 percent of permanent settlers inclined to trust “their own environment” more (among the recent arrivals the share of them was from 60 to 70 percent).

Over 60 percent of respondents believed that the “Astrakhan experience” could be used in other regions (nearly all of them were prepared to act as mediators).

Only 27 to 32 percent of the respondents are critical of the structures of power acting in the ethnic sphere, which means administrative efforts are quite effective; over 50 percent would like to know more about these efforts.

The respondents believe that the Russian and local media are doing a lot to resolve (or fan) ethnic problems; 60 percent is critical of their inability to discuss the issue (that only superficial observers regard as simple) and of their efforts to camouflage their inability with “bombastic” headlines and insulting comments.

Much attention was paid to the migration issue; the respondents in the categories “already dwelling in the region” and “recent arrivals” gave similar yet not identical answers; 80 percent sympathizes with the refugees and migrants (something that gives hope); over 20 percent regards the fact of mass migration as a positive one; 8-15 percent thinks of it as negative, while others do not think of it at all.

Some of the polled spoke about the need to introduce migrant quotas; about responsibility of the newcomers and about deporting those who failed to comply with the local “behavior code.” Over 60 percent approves of the law enforcement structures’ efforts to control the newcomers (10 percent among them are newcomers); not less than 20 percent condemns such measures.

Not all of the newcomers adapted themselves to the Astrakhan environments and wanted to stay. Many of them are loyal supporters of ethnic traditions and naturally want to return to native parts. The newcomers from the Northern Caucasus and the Meskhetian Turks would like to permanently settle in

⁹ For the facts and figures, see: L.S. Ruban, *Razvitie konfliktnoy situatsii v Astrakhanskoj oblasti*, pp. 14-15; *Natsional’nye men’shinstva...*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁰ About them, see: *Nauchnyy vypusk Astrakhanskogo filiala Volgogradskoy akademii gosudarstvennoy sluzhby*. Collection of works by lecturers. Issue I, Volgograd, 2003, pp. 42-56 (studies by post-graduate student E.Sh. Idrisov and others.)

their new homeland; over 80 percent of the Chechen men would like to go back home to Chechnia; surprisingly, Chechen women would like to remain in Astrakhan.

People from Central Asia are less willing to remain: their bad command of Russian is one of the problems that they share with those who came from the Southern Caucasus; both groups want to earn as much as they can and go home.

Such polls are not regular yet their results are highly illustrative. We may conclude that the process of fitting in the new social environment (the process the ancestors of the present population experienced in the past) has involved those who resettled between the mid-20th and early 21st centuries. The families who arrived in the 1950s-1960s and are now raising the second or third generations of "new inhabitants of Astrakhan" serve as the best example.

Conflicts between the old-timers and newcomers are inevitable: their mentalities differ; they are oriented toward different sets of values ("Oriental" among the newcomers and "semi-Oriental" among the local people).

The first migration wave (that arrived when the Astrakhan Territory was first included in the Russian state) consisted of freedom-loving people; not infrequently, young people once outside their own area tend to forget moral norms and rules of conduct.

The local people are highly displeased with wild competition in the commercial sphere where the newcomers protected by their closely-knit clans fight fiercely for their niches. Somewhere else an explosion would have been inevitable: it is impossible in a region with no "title" nation; it is improbable in the Astrakhan Region that has accumulated positive experience and traditions.

The elders and veterans of the recently settled groups play an important role and exert positive influence on the younger generations; the same can be said about the active members of the national-cultural movements (Daghestan and Vainakh societies, the Uzbek and Tajik public organizations, and Payvand, an association of Iranian peoples).

It seems that the press and the law enforcement bodies are gradually abandoning the absolutely unacceptable term "person of Caucasian nationality." There is much less talk about "ethnically tinged crime." Indeed, criminal groups are normally polyethnic and should be described as "regional." According to experts, the criminal community as a whole tends to "natural cooperation," the "division of labor" and "turnover of commodities": the local people prefer traffic of illegal weapons, while transit traders are engaged in drug trafficking. In this sphere ethnic and confessional affiliations are unimportant.

The Astrakhan World and Its Future

In 1997, at the suggestion of a group of local lore students the region celebrated, for the first time, the date of the foundation of the Astrakhan Gubernia (in 1717) by Peter the Great. This has become a tradition that the local people actively support. It promotes the region's contacts with its neighbors deeply rooted in the past. In May-June 2000 it was made part of the Southern Federal Okrug of the RF, together with the Volgograd Region and the Republic of Kalmykia. In Astrakhan this is regarded as a continuation of the old administrative traditions and an embodiment of new realities and new contacts of the border regions.

The regional idea rooted in the past and looking into the future is taking shape; social and ethnic stability, an ability to reach agreements and to keep one's word have become the fact and an ideological aspect that organizes and regulates everyday life.

People are proud of their region; they are aware of its riches and its special role in the Caspian and in the border areas that help it to develop and move away from the commonly accepted image as a source of the best water-melons, tomatoes and expensive fish and caviar and to acquire a new image of a modern dynamically developing region. We have to protect our landscapes and the unique natural reserve, histo-

ry, archaeology and architecture together with the old and newly formed traditions. At the same time, we should maintain industrial growth; use our natural riches so as to raise the living standards and make the region even more attractive and more stable. This is where the local codes of behavior and moral rules should be applied.

The region, which is home to many diasporas and an irredenta for many ethnoses should use its traditions to improve its image, develop external contacts. This is what the local administration is doing; much is done to preserve and study local tongues and cultures so as to offer better future for well-educated young people raised according to the old traditions and taught to love its homeland.

Not infrequently, local people stem possible ethnic squabbles with a stern admonition: "We are in Astrakhan here; stop brandishing your nationality."

The region received a huge migration wave—time has come to assess the results. One thing is clear, though: the region has acquired new colors, new ethnic and cultural traditions and people skilled in many fields (managers, engineers, medics, academics, teachers, and creative workers). The Uzbeks who came to the region late in the 1990s are involved in experimenting with growing cotton, while the Meskhetian Turks in the village of Raznochinovka having built a mosque funded a project of a Christian Orthodox church.

Migrations are hard to correct, yet it should be forecasted and channeled in the best possible directions (since the region's employment capacities are limited). Experts believe the migration potential across the CIS and from the Far Abroad to the South of Russia and across it has not yet been exhausted. In certain political contexts Russian speakers now living in the former Soviet republics may start moving away. We should be prepared to this possibility as well as to other unexpected changes in ethnic and migration fates of countries and nations. For example, developed ferry communication across the Caspian will certainly bring more Russian-speaking migrants from Turkmenistan (so far, there were few of them) to our region and further on to Russia.

In one of his speeches A. Guzhvin, Governor of the Astrakhan Region, called the region the "Caspian crossroads"—the image that speaks volumes of ethnic migration, ties it to the past, explains the present and outlines our common future.

Prospects and Suggestions

For the sake of Russia's future development and stability of its regions the so-far uncontrolled migration flows should be forecasted and regulated to the maximally possible extent. We need state programs coordinated with the regional programs; we should rely on the experience of ethnic mapping of the Volga Federal Okrug so as to map real and potential migration flows.

We should pay more attention to the factors causing migration (living standards, commercial contacts and money flows), we should monitor the opinions and sentiments of those who are either prepared to migrate or have already arrived at the new place of residence.

The experience of stormy migrations of the 1990s dearly bought with the "trail-and-error" method when the regions were left to cope with the problem single-handedly should be taken into account. Regions should exchange their experience, help each other and warn against destructive phenomena and problems.

The Astrakhan Region is a particular yet typical example of ethnic migrations. It was migrants who build up this area; it is migrants who are an important factor today. Its potentials should be translated into reality by concerted efforts of all Russian citizens of the south of the country, all neighboring regions and all those who wish to join us to work together for our common future.

ETHNOPOLITICAL PROCESSES IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS AND THEIR ASSESSMENT BY THE POPULATION

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The events of recent years in the Northern Caucasus have captured the attention not only of Russians, but also of many foreign politicians, which shows the extreme importance of the processes going on here. Today, "Russian statehood, new Russian federalism, is undergoing a test of strength" in the Northern Caucasus.¹ It is always difficult to find a peaceful way in an urgent ethnic, socioeconomic and political crisis.

At the end of the 20th century, Russian society became the "boxing ring" for two opposing trends: national-religious delimitation (even opposition), on the one hand, and national rapprochement and unification, on the other. The national movements which started their activity in several regions and under the present conditions acquired ambiguous ethnopolitical and ethnocultural hues are, in one case, the expression of awakened national self-awareness, and, in the other, a catalyst of national discontent.

The tempestuous growth in political activity, on which the national factor is based, prompted many researchers to begin talking about an "ethnic explosion." But this particular "ethnic phenomenon" is not peculiar to the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries. "Ethnic activity throughout the history of mankind was one of the main driving forces behind the historical process. It was thanks to the activity of particular ethnic groups that the political map of the world was redrawn, and vast empires were created and destroyed." We should only welcome the fact that the scientific community has at last begun studying ethnopolitical processes as a vital factor of political life.²

Public opinion polls in the multiethnic regions of the Russian Federation show that ethnic tension on the whole is caused by the following reasons: the deterioration in the country's economic situation (60-65%), shortcomings in national policy (40-45%), and the unstable situation in society (40%). In so doing, the respondents named purely ethnic differences as the least pertinent cause of tension.³

This is no coincidence, since purely ethnic conflicts do not occur in real life. Ethnic self-identification and solidarity are only a way of protecting our goals, interests, values, and so on. The specific traits of axiological ethnic conflicts are manifested in contradictions related to differences in language, culture, religion, and to other sociocultural characteristics of ethnic groups.

The Northern Caucasus is a unique cultural mosaic of different races (according to some researchers, a unique kind of "Caucasian civilization"), regarding which the Russian government does not have an adequate (scientific, well-thought-out, and so on) policy. By the same token, the importance of the

¹ V. Pechenev, "Severokavkazskie zhernova. Rossiia smozhet uderzhat v svoei orbite etot region, tolko esli proiavit voliu," in: *Sovremennye etnopoliticheskie protsessy na Severnom Kavkaze*, Makhachkala, 1999, p. 97.

² V.Iu. Butuzov, "Vliianie etnicheskogo faktora na rossiiskoe obshchestvo i politicheskoe povedenie studenchestva," in: *Problema 2000: psikhologo-politicheskaja kultura sankt-peterburgskoi molodezhi*, Collection of Scientific Works by Young Scientists of the St. Petersburg State University Political Psychology Department, St. Petersburg, 2000, pp. 32-33.

³ See: G.I. Kozlyrev, *Vvedenie v konfliktologiiu*, Moscow, 2000.

ethnocultural factor has been extremely exaggerated, making it essentially the main reason for the local problems and conflicts.

An analysis of the crisis situation in the region shows that it began as early as the Soviet era and is a result of projects aimed at defining territorial-administrative borders, anti-Russian manifestos and declarations, and actions aimed at forming a "Caucasian confederation." In some territories, the local power structures initiated radical ethnic nationalism and drew citizens out of the legal codes of conduct, going as far as arming them illegally. In particular, they organized an armed coup in Grozny and declared a move toward independence. In this way, both the central administration, and the regional politicians, social activists, and intelligentsia are responsible for the current situation, since it was they who formulated the ideas, programs, and slogans that mobilized the political forces.

One of the defining factors of the current ethnopolitical situation in the region is the integration and disintegration processes. It is expedient to study them in two main areas of ethnic interaction. The first vector is ethnic contacts between the so-called "titular peoples of the Caucasus" and the Russian-speaking population of the republics, and the second is the specific characteristics of ethnic relations among the Caucasian peoples themselves. The situation in this area is developing along with processes that are common for all the North Caucasian ethnic groups. This applies in particular to striving for sovereignty and political self-organization, during which the ethnic component of social identification is becoming increasingly apparent.

What is more, in our opinion, the system of federative formations that has developed in the form of ethnoterritorial autonomies (republics) should not be changed, apart from probably defining a new status for the Chechen Republic.

The existence of both state and traditional legal systems (the latter as supplementary) is possible in the Northern Caucasus. Legal pluralism, which is developing in many countries, may be more efficient in our region than a "single legal space." The main thing in this process is not administrative border redivision, but improving governance. In some republics, positive political innovations are already appearing in the sphere of collective governance and community representation, although the principle of ethnic parties, *tukhums* or *teips* has serious limitations, since it has a conflict-prone potential. In terms of socio-political structuring, it would be more expedient in our opinion not to aim for ethnic corporation, but to build an administration on the basis of mixed ethnic political coalitions (which actually already exist and function), general democratic election norms and regular changes in power, and training a new generation of managerial and legal staff.

The pronounced "national-territorial" complex, which is characteristic of the region, shows that the national-state status of territories is acquiring increasing importance at the level of ethnic self-awareness and so may become one of the main reference points in the choice of ethnic interaction strategy. The sociopolitical reality of today poses a dilemma for the North Caucasian peoples: either self-organization and sovereignty, which will lead to self-isolation of each ethnic group, or ethnic cooperation based on a broadly understood ethnic identity.

The situation within and around the region is rapidly changing. The long rivalry among the political groups, which formed mainly on the basis of ethnic-confessional characteristics, very frequently changes the character and also the orientation of its slogans and actions. The diaspora type of seasonal (labor) migration is also promoting this activity, "when a migrant can rely on the existing structures of employment within an ethnic community."⁴

Demographic changes are also very conducive to destabilization of the situation, but here we will focus on the main aspect—population migration. In terms of character, V.S. Belogurov singles out two zones. The first is primarily territories with a Russian population: the Stavropol and Krasnodar territories, and the Rostov Region. The second is the North Caucasian republics, from which Russians are primarily leaving. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Chechen Republic became a "cone of migration depression" within this zone.⁵

⁴ D. Nikitin, A. Khalmukhamedov, "Migration as a Destabilization Factor in the Northern Caucasus," *Central Asian and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, p. 165.

⁵ See: V.S. Belogurov, *Etnodemograficheskie protsessy na Severnom Kavkaze*, Stavropol, 2000, pp. 11-12, 85.

These processes complicated the ethnopolitical and socioeconomic situation, stimulated the crime rate, and significantly raised the load on the labor market in the areas where migrants settled—the Northern Caucasus accounted for approximately 20% of Russia's migration growth. But it should be noted that from the “purely” demographic viewpoint migration is a blessing for the region, since it curbed the decline in the natural increment of the population.⁶

Forced migrants have predominated in the migration flows of recent years. According to the relative indices, North Ossetia, the Stavropol Territory, and Ingushetia are experiencing the greatest load in this area, which in no way reduces the tension in other parts of the region. For example, the attacks by armed gangs on the border regions of Dagestan in 1999 left about 17,000 people homeless, and many of them became forced migrants.⁷ The problems of forced migrants from the Ossetian-Ingushetian conflict zone have still not been resolved. Whereas the problem of returning forced migrants (approximately 60,000 of them) to the Prigorodny District and Vladikavkaz is still one of the most urgent problems for the Ingushetian government, the authorities of North Ossetia think that repatriation is progressing quite satisfactorily. “But while there is even one person who is unable to return home, this situation can be considered problematic.”⁸ The problems of forced migrants from Chechnia to Ingushetia have not been resolved, or of migrants in the Stavropol Territory, where their number, according to different estimates, amounts to between 200,000 and 500,000 people.⁹

Migration flows are changing the ethnic composition of residents, aggravating ethnic relations, and forming negative stereotypes about the newcomers, which often leads to open clashes and even to violence. One of the most conflictive groups in the indigenous population is the Cossacks. The significant influx of representatives of certain nationalities, the ousting of Russians from the republics of the former U.S.S.R. and Chechnia, the numerous kidnappings, the terrorist acts in Budennovsk, Kizliar, Pervomaiskoe, Makhachkala, Kaspiisk, Piatigorsk, Mozdok, and so on, and the increase in crime rate at the beginning of the 1990s initiated several major campaigns by the Stavropol Cossacks. In so doing, the victims were usually migrants from different ethnic groups.¹⁰ In the Krasnodar Territory, Cossacks quite actively come out against Armenians, Meskhetian Turks, Kurds, and “people of Caucasian nationality” in general. The contradictions and conflicts with migrants of non-Slavic nationalities (according to unofficial data, the total number of those who arrived in the territory in the 1990s exceeded one million) and the followers of other national and ethnoeconomic cultures led in 2001 to ethnic conflicts in the Dinskaia, Krymsk, Abinsk, and Kanevskaia regions, as well as in the city of Slaviansk-na-Kubani. In the Rostov Region, conflicts between non-Slavic migrants and local residents often occur at the everyday level, particularly among young people.¹¹

An important factor of instability is ethnic tension and ethnic conflicts, particularly their political component. In the 1990s, power-hungry Islamic extremist groups increased their attempts to manipulate ethnic consciousness in the region, slogans on political and sociocultural domination of the titular nations were stirred up, separatist sentiments and claims to special territorial rights fomented, and instances of discrimination for national and confessional reasons became more frequent. “The constant increase in the number of these occurrences and the level of their tension threatens to paralyze social life not only in the Northern Caucasus, but also far beyond it.”¹²

The existing ethnic borders, which are regulated on the one hand by geopolitical factors (a single administrative-political space, proximity of territorial borders, economic ties, and so on), and by factors of culturological property on the other (historical past, confessional orientation, sociocultural manifesta-

⁶ See: S.V. Riazantsev, “Demograficheskaia situatsiia na Severnom Kavkaze,” *Sotsis*, No. 1, 2002, p. 80.

⁷ See: *Ibid.*, p. 81; G. Kovalskaia, “Rukotvornaia katastrofa,” *Itogi*, 26 October, 1999, p. 12.

⁸ I. Maksakov, “Posledstvia osetino-ingushskogo konflikta ne preodoleny,” *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, No. 207, 1 November, 2000, p. 2; see also: A. Mal'sagov, “Respublika Ingushetiia razvivaetsia dinamichno,” *Severniy Kavkaz*, No. 38, October 2000, p. 13.

⁹ See: S.V. Riazantsev, *Migratsionnaia situatsiia v Stavropolskom krae v novykh geopoliticheskikh usloviakh*, Stavropol, 1999.

¹⁰ See: S.V. Riazantsev, *Demograficheskaia situatsiia na Severnom Kavkaze*, pp. 83-84.

¹¹ See: D. Nikitin, A. Khalmukhamedov, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹² V.I. Chuprov, Iu.A. Zubok, K. Williams, *Molodezh v obshchestve riska*, Moscow, 2001, p. 61.

tions of the vital activity of ethnic groups: traditions, customs, and so on) play a structure-forming role in ethnic communication.

Today, the need for moving toward new social relations based on principles of tolerance, a peace-keeping policy, dialog, and compromise is obvious, without which it is impossible to reach a certain level of tolerance and acknowledge the rights of others to their own opinion, to a different culture, and to different moral values.

The mentioned factors and their components are much more pernicious than they may seem at first glance. Social psychologists are well aware that "when there is a sudden change in social ideals and morals, certain social groups stop feeling they belong to that society and become alienated, while rejecting the new social norms and values, including the socially declared models of behavior, and instead of trying to achieve individual or collective goals by conventional means, they promote their own methods, which are frequently against the law."¹³

The Northern Caucasus differs from several other Russian constituencies in that the centuries-old traditions of *masliat* (Arabian for consent), which regulate relations between peoples in our multicultural region, still have a positive influence on keeping the peace. But social psychologists wonder how long these traditions can serve as a foundation for stabilizing the situation and to what extent society itself is willing to retain and develop the traditions of folk diplomacy.

Sociological surveys must be conducted in order to clarify these questions and develop an efficient peacekeeping policy. The results of polls conducted in 1990, 1997, and 1999 among the Russian youth convince us of this, which led corresponding specialists to the following conclusion: "Spiritual reproduction today reflects the coexistence of two processes—the succession of traditional values reflected by the historical consciousness of young people and the establishment of new liberal identities characteristic of contemporary society."¹⁴ This trend is not only inherent of young people in the Northern Caucasus, but of the whole world. When analyzing the real state of tolerance among the population, its various communities and groups, at least two important questions arise. First, can the level of tolerance required for the functioning of democracy be at least sort of established between the "elite" and "electorate"? According to some researchers, there is essentially no answer to this based on empirical facts. Further, according to a conceptual analysis by V.P. Makarenko, the prospects for democracy in the Caucasus are determined by the influence of its imperial neighbors, Turkey and Russia, where "money is made with the help of power; in Europe, power is bought with the help of money. The long influence of these models on political life in the Caucasus has turned the countries of the region into a technological and political dumpsite." In this respect, the author asks (the second question in our context): "Will these countries be able to change the situation, or will they passively play the role, in an 'arc of instability,' they have been prescribed by the directors of geopolitics? Neither the near and distant neighbors, nor the governments of the Caucasian countries have programs for counteracting the processes and phenomena described. This makes their theoretical systemization and study even more important."¹⁵

The urgency of this last question emphasizes again the pertinence of studying the ethnopolitical and confessional situation in the Northern Caucasus in order to identify its influence on the peacekeeping activity in the region, as well as the prospects for putting the principles of tolerance into practice.

A study of the dynamics of the changes in social structure of the axiological orientations in the Russian Federation has shown that education level is one of the most valuable factors influencing Russians' tolerant acceptance and attitude toward other people's views, values, cultures, and so on. The country's educated citizen is a more reliable positive force in further democratization of society (but, we will note that the importance of education level should not be exaggerated). It is capable (under certain conditions) of resolving many social and ethnopolitical contradictions and helping to establish and develop a law-based state.

¹³ A. Yuriev, *Mentalitet—osnova sostoiianiia gosudarstva v Rossii*, Speech topic at a round table called "Russia's Human Resources and Globalization," St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 6.

¹⁴ V.I. Chuprov, Yu.A. Zubok, K. Williams, op. cit., p. 97.

¹⁵ V.P. Makarenko, "Kavkaz: kontseptologicheskii analiz," *Sotsis*, No. 1, 2001, p. 40.

The Northern Caucasus is the most developed Russian region in the cultural sense and is characterized by a high concentration of professional cultural, higher education, and scientific institutions. Among the representatives of non-Russian people, the percentage of the population with a higher education and university students is higher than throughout the country as a whole (only the Chechens and some of the Daghestani ethnic groups represent a lower than average percentage), and a system of multicultural education has essentially formed with a dominating role played by Russian-language study. But during recent years due to economic difficulties, conflicts, and xenophobia in the leading universities of the country, including in Rostov, Stavropol, and Krasnodar, the number of students from among non-Russian North Caucasians is declining. Some of these young people prefer to receive a religious education at relevant universities in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. Some of those who return home after study abroad become the bearers and spreaders of ideas of the most radical trend of Islam—Wahhabism, while others cannot get jobs.

In order to identify the ability of our young people to objectively evaluate the situation in the republic and in the region, in February 2002, the students of two Daghestani state universities were polled: Daghestan State University and Daghestan State Pedagogical University, and their branches. Five hundred and sixteen first- through sixth-year students participated in the poll, 48.7% of whom were males and 51.3% females (age of the respondents ranged from 17 to 26).

To the question of how efficiently the state structures are conducting peacekeeping activity and their role in stabilizing the sociopolitical situation in the Northern Caucasus and Daghestan, 63.2% of the respondents (questionnaire No. 1) replied that this activity is not very efficient, or even inefficient, only 16.8% considered it efficient or quite efficient, and 20% did not know.

The role of public organizations in stabilizing the sociopolitical situation in the region and resolving ethnic conflicts was assessed as not very high by 54.9% of the respondents, as irrelevant by 26.3%, and as high by only 10.2%, while 8.6% did not know.

The role of the national movements in the peacekeeping activity was characterized as positive by 25.9%, as negative by 24.5%, as irrelevant by 32.8%, and 16.8% did not know.

But 43.8% considered peacekeeping activity in resolving military conflicts positive (this is largely explained by the attacks of armed gangs from Chechnia in 1999), although 34.7% of the respondents believe that it is irrelevant, 7.9% think it plays a negative role, and 13.6% do not know.

In the opinion of 39.8% of the respondents, ethnic relations in the republic are not stable enough and tense, 28.7% believe conflicts are possible, 25.6% think ethnic relations are stable, and 5.9% do not know.

Twenty-four point four percent of the respondents think that tension in ethnic relations is caused by a socioeconomic crisis. Among its other reasons, 23.3% of the respondents named various manifestations of nationalism, 16.3% political opposition among parties, national movements, and groups, 14.2% mistakes in the state's national policy, 7.7% the publications in certain mass media and some television programs that provoke national intolerance, 7.5% the increase in unemployment, and 6.7% national prejudice of the mass consciousness.

The students assessed the role of religious organizations in regulating ethnic conflicts and in peacekeeping activity (questionnaire No. 2) as follows: not high—42.5%, active—20.9%, not high enough—16.8%, irrelevant—15.6%, and 4.2% did not know.

Forty-nine point three percent of the respondents were against religious organizations participating in the republic's political life, 38.4% were in favor, and 12.3% could not decide or did not know.

To the question: "Is an increase in religiosity among the population helping to harmonize ethnic relations in the republic?" the responses were broken down as follows: 54.6% of the respondents believe it is not, 40.3% think it is, and 5.1% do not know. This shows that despite the increase in the influence of the clergy on young people, confessional organizations have still not justified the hopes placed on religion regarding its ability to promote rapid and effective regulation of the situation in Daghestan and in the region.

In our opinion, the situation will not radically change any time soon, which means we should look for other levers (mechanisms) capable of establishing tolerant relations among the representatives of dif-

ferent confessions. The need for a comprehensive and universal approach to resolving this question is dictated by the fact that two religions are traditionally the most popular in the region: Islam and Christianity. There has always been a discourse between them, but no matter how hostile the precepts of one toward the other, they have always communicated and latently exchanged values. One religious culture borrowed from the other primarily what was lacking in its own potential. Today's reality says that the situation has changed in the 21st century, and as A. Zhuravskiy noted: "...by religious dialog, we are coming to increasingly understand not the spontaneous and latent process of exchanging cultural information, but a creative orientation toward mutual understanding."¹⁶

Students evaluated the ethnocultural situation in the republic in the fall of 2001 (questionnaire No. 3) as follows: 50.2% said it had calmed down, 22% believed it was more tense, 18.6% thought it tended toward aggravation, and 9.2% said it had not changed.

To the question: "Between which confessions are contradictions seen?" the following responses were given: 73.3% said between the representatives of traditional Islam, Tariqat followers, and Wahhabis, 20% between Muslims and Protestant communities (Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, and so on), and 6.7% between Russian Orthodox and Protestant communities (Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, and so on).

The greatest intolerance toward people of a different faith, according to the respondents, is shown by the representatives of the following confessions and movements: Wahhabis—63.3%, traditional Muslims—25.9%, Russian Orthodox—10.8%, Tariqat followers (murids)—0%, and Protestants—0%.

An explanation should be given with respect to Protestants. A preliminary review of a poll just recently started by the author of this article on Protestantism and its trends in Daghestan showed that most students, particularly first and second years, have at best a very superfluous idea of the problem. So the "percentages" obtained in no way reflect the actual situation with Protestantism in the republic and its relations with other confessions. Incidentally, the results of our other polls¹⁷ also show that students know very little about Christianity in general, i.e. Orthodoxy and Catholicism. This is largely explained by the fact that most of the young people we polled identify themselves as follows: "we are Muslims!" Nevertheless, all the respondents believe that no one should force their religion on someone else.

The results of our studies show that ethnic opposition in terms of identification in Daghestan, as throughout the entire Northern Caucasus, is developing among young people "not in terms of Orthodoxy—Islam, Slavs—non-Slavs, as might be expected. It is developing on different grounds, primarily along the lines of the Caucasus—other ethnic groups."¹⁸ This is manifested for example in the incorrect and humiliating cliché of "people of Caucasian nationality."

Sixty point four percent of the respondents believe that religion is having a positive effect on the state of ethnic relations in Daghestan, while 27.6% believe that it is negative, and 12% do not know.

The opinion that the role of peacekeeping organizations in Daghestan has increased (questionnaire No. 1) was divided into three almost equal parts: 34.9% of the respondents said "yes," 33.5% said "no," and 31.6% did not know. This may reflect the state of uncertainty that reigns among the Daghestani youth (the three thirds rule). But it could also be the result of insufficient knowledge about the activity of the peacekeeping organizations. (It could also be a mixture of the two.)

According to 35.6% of the students, the authority of elders and influential people plays an important role in resolving conflict situations, and the traditions of folk diplomacy are widely used: masliat—29.8%, Islam—26.3%, other religions—1.6%, don't know—6.7%. Some respondents wrote: "the traditions of internationalism," and "solidarity of the Daghestani people, which was vividly manifested in 1999 during the attacks by Chechen gangs."

The contribution of the mass media in harmonizing ethnic relations and forming ethnic and confessional tolerance was assessed by 62.6% of the respondents as insignificant, by 20% as significant, and

¹⁶ A. Zhuravskiy, "Khristiane i musul'mane: ot konfrontatsii k dialogu," in: *Khristiane i musul'mane: problemy dialoga*, Moscow, 2000.

¹⁷ See: S.I. Murtuzaliev, "Khristianstvo i molodezh Dagestana," in: *Problemy polikul'turnogo obrazovaniia*, International Collection of Scientific Articles, Makhachkala, 2001, pp. 97-108.

¹⁸ V.I. Chuprov, Iu.A. Zubok, K. Williams, op. cit., p. 211.

17.4% did not know. We think one of the reasons for this is that the peacekeeping policy conducted in the republic and in the region is not given sufficiently qualified coverage, so students do not have a clear picture of the problem as a whole. Another reason in our view is that most of the republic's population does not know exactly what is meant by tolerance and by peacekeeping.

In our opinion, the mass media should publish the main provisions of the Declaration of the Principles on Tolerance (Arts 1-6) approved by the General Conference of UNESCO as early as 16 November, 1995. In the Russian translation of this document, the term "tolerance" was replaced with "acceptance." During personal conversations the author of this article had with residents of the republic it was revealed that most people understand the word "acceptance," as it is used in everyday speech, as the "ability to accept, to resign oneself to other's peoples opinions, to make allowances for the actions of other people," it is frequently associated with a passive attitude to the world around, non-resistance to evil, and the ability "to turn the other cheek." So specific efforts should be made through the mass media to explain that tolerant precepts are on the contrary an active vital stance aimed at protecting the rights of every person and intercepting any manifestations of intolerance.¹⁹

So we can conclude that while the republic's population does not consider the peacekeeping role to be the main contribution to stabilizing the ethnopolitical and socioeconomic situation in the Northern Caucasus, it is nonetheless a significant one. However, the people also think that peacekeeping activity is not very effective in preventing military conflicts (clashes) and resolving ethnic confrontations, while the older generation, mainly men over 50, believe the traditions of folk diplomacy are more effective for regulating the situation in this sphere.

Underassessment of the destabilizing factors characteristic of recent decades has led to the power structures and Russian public thought being unprepared to provide answers to the problems of ethnopolitical and ethnic relations that have "suddenly" appeared, and their inability to foresee potential religious collisions and adjust state national policy in keeping with the demands of the times.

At the turn of the century, the intricate intertwining of different political, ethnic, territorial, economic, confessional and other conflicts has become an everyday reality in the Northern Caucasus. In so doing, it is usually not the entire ethnic group, but only a small part of it, that expresses ethnopolitical and other interests—those elite members who are usually trying to achieve their own personal goals.

The contents of any national policy is not only and not so much the "removal" of contradictions and negative phenomena that already exist, as the ability to forecast them and create mechanisms that defuse ethnic and ethnoconfessional tension and national intolerance. This requires an objective and unprejudiced analysis of the processes of ethnopolitical, socioeconomic and spiritual life, looking for the best ways for political, social and ethnic structures to cooperate, forming ties within and between ethnic groups, and striving for national and confessional harmony.

This analysis should focus greater attention on studying the migration flows. "Today, in the Russian regions of the Northern Caucasus we are witnessing the beginning of a trend that might develop either into a positive factor of integration of the migrants (through national-cultural autonomy, for example) or into a destructive factor (which is more probable). Being a smaller part of the region's population as a whole, an ethnic minority may dominate in certain areas (district, village) and affect the ethnic and political situation there."²⁰ The activists of different national movements used and could still use this situation to their ideological advantage.

For example, forced migration of the Russian-speaking population from the region is fraught not only with difficult economic and social consequences for the country, but also with likely ethnic and national-territorial alienation of the North Caucasian constituencies of the Russian Federation, which could lead to Russia losing its territorial integrity.

In order to make radical changes in the situation, emergency measures much be taken at both the federal and regional level aimed at ensuring law and order, promoting socioeconomic revival of the de-

¹⁹ See: A.G. Asmolov, G.U. Soldatova, L.A. Shaigerova, "O smysлах poniatia 'tolerantnost,'" in: *Vek tolerantnosti: Nauchno-publitsisticheskiy vestnik.*, Moscow, 2001.

²⁰ See: D. Nikitin, A. Khalmukhamedov, op. cit., p. 165.

pressed North Caucasian constituencies, regulating the migration flows, and finding a comprehensive solution to the problems of forced migrants.

The Caucasian noosphere, or great Caucasian tradition, and the phenomenon of “Caucasian-ness” itself correlate primarily with the ideal of the “enlightened Caucasian,” that is with an ideal which is currently doomed to oblivion by the state mass media and which they are pushing to the periphery. Whenever yet another restoration of border status, an inter-civilizational border, an Islam-Christian boundary is imposed on the region, primarily Daghestan, the problem of marginalization is aggravated. If we recognize this danger, we must exert maximum effort to combat any increase in the spirit (trend) of intolerance and violence, which poses a threat to all the peoples of the Northern Caucasus.

The Caucasus has always been famous for its experience in peacekeeping and achieving peace between conflicting sides. As early as the 19th century, S. Bronevskiy noted that if the Caucasus had not recognized “friendship and hospitality” as the foundation of relations “between different tribes, there would have been no other relations apart from military.”²¹ In the Caucasus, not only the “jigit” (a Caucasian horseman) cult, but also the cult of peacekeeper, is promulgated—after all, a mountain saying goes: “War does not give birth to sons.”

Mixed marriages are an important consolidating factor and effective way to inculcate world culture. These families are natural ways to spread bilingualism, a cultural dialog, and the ideals of tolerance (*sabur*), which is one of the moral imperatives of the traditional mountain ethics.²²

Harmonization of ethnic relations should be a special area of state policy on raising the next generation, aimed at forming a tolerant consciousness in civil society by means of the comprehensive and targeted use of the mass media among others.

²¹ S. Bronevskiy, *Istoricheskie izvestiia o Kavkaze*, Moscow, 1825, pp. 127-128.

²² See: Kh. Khasbulatov, “Tolerantnost i noisk sovremennogo dialoga,” *Dagestanskaia pravda*, 1 July, 1999.

THE INFLUENCE OF URBANIZATION ON FORMING THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF AZERBAIJAN SOCIETY

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The past two hundred years in Azerbaijan’s history has been a time of rapid, qualitative, and often dramatic change. It seemed a contemporary, dynamically developing society with a clearly marked social structure was about to appear, with a strong and large middle class at its center. But the first years of the 21st century, which was emotionally perceived as a kind of special watershed, have passed and talk about the need to create a developed civil society and reinforce the middle class are continuing without bringing about any perceptible changes. But it should be noted that if some researchers evaluate the events of the past years as positive and believe a middle class, which is so important and necessary to us, has just about been formed, others severely criticize the reforms of the 1990s, often calling them not

only a waste of time, but also an obstacle hindering the country's development. We would like to offer our own analysis of the situation in the republic, while in no way claiming the absolute truth of our conclusions. We begin our analysis with urbanization, a process that is playing a vital role in differentiating the social structure of both the residents in a particular country, and the planet's population as a whole. In so doing, we will note straight away that this process should be viewed in terms of globalization of the economy, which became possible by creating up-to-date communication technology and an integrated financial space. The urbanization process is the result of globalization, on the one hand, and its most important "agent" on the other, without the mass dimensions of which it would be impossible to talk about building a post-industrial society.

But no matter what serves as the foundation of this process, we are primarily interested in a more prosaic question: how urbanization has affected an increase in the urban population in particular. Its influence is not only blatantly clear in the rapid rise in this parameter, but also in the increase in the number of cities. "Beginning in the 1960s, the U.S.S.R. underwent accelerated urbanization. In 1950, 71 million people lived in Soviet cities (39% of the population), whereas by the 1990s, this number had jumped to 190 million (66% of the population). In so doing, in contrast to the West, a result of accelerated modernization ... was the appearance of a very large number of new cities."¹ But although this phenomenon also affected Azerbaijan, it was more concerned by the increase in population in its largest cities, particularly Baku.

The compilers of the Azerbaijan Human Development Report 1996 state that "the rapid growth of the oil industry in the second half of the 19th century and the subsequent rise in the urban population, particularly in Baku, transformed Azerbaijan into the most urbanized region of the Russian Empire."² In the 20th century, the picture took shape as follows: in 1913, urban residents constituted approximately 24% of Azerbaijan's entire population, whereas this figure was 18% for the rest of the empire. After the revolution, in the 1920s-1930s, the urbanization process speeded up. The size of the urban population rose 1.78-fold—from 649,500 to 1,156,800 (from 28.1% to 36.1%). And this process did not slow down throughout the entire 20th century. "Rapid urbanization was a feature of economic development of the period 1897-1995. The largest investments were made in the areas of greatest importance to the U.S.S.R., i.e. the industry of Russia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan."³ As for the most important reasons for urban growth, they include migration to the cities by the rural population, the natural growth in the urban population, and the transformation of large villages into towns.

Here we should note the influence of the city on the demographic indices. This was shown by the fact that "all demographic processes are manifested in greater relief in large cities and, as experience shows, are pioneering in nature, only later becoming universal, of which both positive and negative phenomena are inherent (for example, the drop in fertility rate and natural population growth, the trend toward fewer children in families, and so on)."⁴ Particularly important is the interdependence between the size of the city and its fertility rate, believes V.I. Kozlov, also because large cities set the standard of behavior and lifestyle for most of the country's population, and correspondingly, the development model, including demographic. In so doing, the correlation between the fertility rate and the size of the city can be very clearly traced. Studies also show that the difference in fertility rate among rural and urban residents is very significant. But for Azerbaijan it was not so noticeable. Whereas in all the largest cities of Russia and Ukraine, the fertility rate was lower than for the entire urban population of the Soviet Union, in our country, the difference was not as obvious. All the same, in spite of this, the fertility rate for the republic as a whole was much higher than in the capital.

It can be seen that the Baku urban fertility rate gradually dropped. But the difference between the indices for the capital and Azerbaijan as a whole is quite impressive. For example, in 1965, the fertility rate for the republic amounted to 36.6 per 1,000 people, in 1975 it was 25.1, and in Baku it was 21.6 and

¹ S.G. Kara-Murza, *Sovetskaia tsivilizatsiia*, Book 2, *Ot Velikoi Pobedy do nashikh dnei*, Vol. 2, EKSMO-Press, Moscow, 2002, p. 96.

² *Azerbaijan Human Development Report*, Baku, 1996, p. 33.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ I.I. Sigov, *Urbanizatsiia i razvitie gorodov v SSSR*, Nauka Publishers, Leningrad, 1985, p. 191.

Table

Fertility Rate in Baku
(number of births per 1,000 people)⁵

City	Size of population as of 1 January, 1980	1965	1970	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Baku	1,030	21.6	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.1	18.2	17.6

19, respectively.⁶ It should also be noted that the gap gradually closed between these indices (as they dropped). What is more, in the cities, particularly in Baku, the fertility rate was also lower due to the large number of foreigners among the population, primarily Russians, among whom this index was lower than among the Azeris. Whereas in 1970, the latter amounted to 73.8% of the republic's entire population, among city dwellers it was 60.8%. What is more, in the same year, the percentage of the urban population among the Azeris themselves amounted to only 41.3%, whereas by 1979, this percentage had increased to 44.5%. At the same time, Russians, who comprised one of the republic's largest ethnic minorities, mainly lived in the cities, primarily in Baku (up to 75% of all the Russians in Azerbaijan). Taking into account the relatively low, compared with the Azeris, fertility rate among Russians, this fact had a great impact on the fertility rate in the cities, particularly in Baku.

Although by the beginning of the 20th century, Azerbaijan was the most urbanized part of the Russian empire, only 24% of the population lived in its cities. By way of comparison, by 1920 urban residents in England amounted to 64%, in Germany to 40%, in France to 37%, in Belgium to 49%, and in Holland to 45% of the total population.⁷ But during the Soviet period, the size of the urban population in the republic rose at a rapid rate. In the 1930s, it was already 36.1%, and between 1959 and 1995, the number of city dwellers rose 2.24-fold, although in percentages the increase was not as significant, from 47.8 to 53%. By 2000, according to the official statistics, the percentage of city dwellers even dropped—to 51%.⁸ Admittedly, a certain discrepancy is noted in evaluating the size of the urban population. Several independent sources agree that this index is actually higher than presented in the official documents. The compilers of the *Universal Geography* website estimate (in June 2001) the size of the urban population at 56%.⁹ According to the statistical reference *Countries of the World*, it is even slightly higher at 57%.¹⁰ But all the sources agree that the size of the urban population is higher than the rural.

A comparative analysis of the population of Baku helps us to come to terms with this question to some extent. For example, as of 1 January, 1990, the yearbook of the *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopedia* (Great Soviet Encyclopedia) (1990), estimates the number of residents in Baku at 1,779,500 people.¹¹ By the end of the century, according to official data, it had increased by only 17,200 people (as of 1 January, 1999, it was 1,796,300 people).¹² And according to the data of BSE, in the 1990s, 7,131,300 people lived in the republic,¹³ and by 1999, according to official data, this number had risen to 8,016,200 people.¹⁴ But the

⁵ See: *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶ See: B.S. Khorev, G.P. Kiseleva, *Urbanizatsiia i demograficheskie protsessy*, Finansy i statistika Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 53.

⁷ See: A.G. Vishnevskiy, *Serp i rubl. Konservativnaia modernizatsiia v SSSR*, O.G.I, Moscow, 1999, p. 80.

⁸ See: *Azerbaijan Human Development Report*, p. 33.

⁹ See: *Universal Geography. Azerbaijan* [<http://wgeo.ru/asia/aze.shtml>].

¹⁰ See: *Statistical Reference. Countries of the World. Azerbaijan* [http://allworld.wallst.ru/page.php?nfile=Azerbaijan_pop&ctr=3].

¹¹ See: *Ezhegodnik BSE, Sovetskaia entsiklopediia Publishers*, Moscow, 1990, p. 99.

¹² See: *Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan*, Baku, 2000, p. 54.

¹³ See: *Ezhegodnik BSE*, p. 99.

¹⁴ See: *Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan*, p. 54.

size of the population in Ganja has essentially not increased since 1991, when it amounted to 300,000 people¹⁵; by 1999, it was 300,500. A similar situation also developed in other cities, for example in Sumgait. However, according to the same official sources, the natural population increment in Baku and Ganja was quite high, 6.1 and 4.5 per 1,000 people, respectively.¹⁶ Of course, during these years many representatives of the national minorities, Russians and Armenians, left the republic, who mainly lived in the cities. Nevertheless, a large number of refugees and forced migrants settled in the cities, primarily in Baku and Sumgait, thus replacing those who had left.

The situation that developed can be characterized as follows: first, the size of the population of Apsheron, particularly Baku, has noticeably grown in recent years; second, this happened despite the large outflow of city dwellers; third, the number of residents in other cities, particularly Ganja, decreased, which is related both to internal migration (moving to Baku) and to emigration. In order to explain what this led to, we need to turn to ethnic demography. Today, all the sources show a very perceptible increase in the ethnic composition of the republic's population in the percentage of Azeris themselves. For which there were both objective reasons (the increased fertility rate), and the events of the end of 1980-beginning of the 1990s. During the whole of the second half of the 20th century, their percentage in the republic increased at a rapid rate. But this did not promote an increase in their numbers in the cities. In 1959, 36.4% of the total number of Azeris lived in the cities, and they constituted 51.3% of city dwellers,¹⁷ that is, almost half of the urban population was made up of non-Azeris, primarily Russians, 24.8%, and Armenians, 15.2%, although with respect to the entire population, their percentage was perceptibly lower, 13.6% and 12%, respectively.¹⁸ By 1970, the number of city-dwelling Azeris, in terms of their total number in Azerbaijan, amounted to 39.7%, that is, it increased somewhat compared with 1959. Unfortunately, there are no data for 1971-1989, but it is unlikely they would have changed the picture as a whole.

Now we can draw our conclusions. Despite the fact that by the beginning of the 20th century, Azerbaijan was the most urbanized region of the empire, its level of urbanization was clearly insufficient, and what is more, very unevenly distributed throughout the republic, since at that time this process mainly affected Apsheron. The republic underwent the accelerated urbanization of the Soviet period in the same way, its cities had quite a number of rural features, and a full-fledged middle class could not form in them. Not one feature of the "rural" urbanization that swept the nation during Soviet times, which A.G. Vishnevskiy gave such an exhaustive description of, passed us by. What concerns us now is how this process has been developing since the Soviet Union disintegrated, and was there an attempt to change the situation that developed?

The data presented above shows that the representatives of national minorities who left the republic were mainly city dwellers. Today, approximately 90% of our country's population are Azeris, whereas the percentage of them among the urban population in Soviet times amounted to no more than 50%. This draws us to conclude that even although the number of city dwellers did not change in the 1990s, it directly indicates an enormous inflow of rural residents into the cities. What is more, it should be emphasized in particular that with the exception of a few cities (Baku, Ganja, Sumgait), all the others are much more rural than urban in their lifestyle. Therefore, the population of many provincial cities did not become true city dwellers, instead they have essentially remained rural residents. The large inflow of villagers into the cities is also confirmed by the data on refugees. For example, as of 1 July, 1995, according to the official documents, there were more than 285,000 refugees and forced migrants in Baku, and more than 71,000 in Sumgait (38.5% of their total number). We intentionally did not look at the problem of Azeris themselves leaving the republic, although in our opinion it is a central one. It is enough to mention that no less than 2 million of them have left the country in search of work, an enormous number of which are city dwellers, primarily members of the intelligentsia. If we also take into account that the percentage of city-dwelling

¹⁵ See: A.A. Gasanova, *Ganja segodnia*, Elm Publishers, Baku, 1991, p. 14.

¹⁶ See: *Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan*, p. 54.

¹⁷ See: V.I. Kozlov, *Natsionalnosti SSSR. Etnodemograficheski obzor*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1989, pp. 89, 93.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

Azeris is clearly low, we can draw the conclusion that the rural element currently predominates in the cities, particularly in Baku and Sumgait. It is much more difficult to change in an environment which largely reproduces the one a person is already accustomed to. Only one conclusion can be drawn: if it was very difficult to form an urban stratum in the population, as a special one with certain qualities unique only to it, in Soviet times, it is even more difficult now.

There are several other reasons for this, primarily the collapse in the economy, which has brought with it disintegration and essential destruction of the working class. What is more, the new system of statehood is largely based on the over-inflated ranks of civil servants. The republic currently has too many policemen, customs employees, utility workers, municipal housing department employees, and so on. But teachers and doctors are also largely classified as civil servants. The development of market relations has essentially stopped, and due to the over-inflated bureaucratic apparatus and corruption, a viable class of free businessmen has been unable to develop. Business is largely carried out by those same civil servants, only they can afford this in an atmosphere of incessant extortions. This leads to an absence of real competition, which means there is no real market economy. Not only has a middle class failed to form, but the foundation created during Soviet times, on which it was to be built, has essentially been destroyed. The transfer of the rural thinking and traditions to city life has created fertile ground for the development of favoritism and clannishness, which are flourishing in the country and, in turn, promoting an increase in corruption and bureaucratization.

All of this has undoubtedly led to archaism of urban society, which has assumed many features of medieval times. Nothing has been done to overcome the negative aspects of urbanization which we brought with us from the Soviet Union. Nothing has been done to form a viable middle class, which is the foundation of a contemporary democratic society. Admittedly, something has nevertheless been achieved, cows and sheep are no longer grazing in the center of the city. But on the whole, the republic today faces even greater problems than those it encountered back in Soviet times. "Completion of the urban revolution, which presupposes dying out of the "village settlement" and the formation of full-fledged middle-class urban strata, is an absolute requirement of the times. We cannot manage without these strata, without the "third" estate, we cannot extricate ourselves from the impasse, or breathe new life into the concrete and metal bulk of the cities and factories, which the generations of peasants caught unawares by the revolution sacrificed their lives to create."¹⁹

So we can say that the country has not undergone sufficient urbanization, and the peasant class is still the largest. As for the rapidly growing population of Apsheron (and particularly of Baku), it has been provided with jobs by means of the catastrophically bloated administrative-bureaucratic apparatus, and not because of an upswing in the real sector of the economy. If large and even medium businesses have formed close ties with the corrupted bureaucratic apparatus and employees of the "power" structures, the small businessman is having just as hard a time dealing with the burden of extortions. The only encouragement is the increase in number of highly paid (compared with the wages in the republic) qualified specialists in western companies and organizations. But they are few. For example, according to various data, approximately 20,000 jobs have been created in the oil business. What is more, many representatives of the mentioned stratum are potential emigrants. The working class has become extremely eroded, only a few enterprises actually produce anything, for example, the Baku Steel Company that opened relatively recently, at which approximately 800 people are employed. But on the whole, compared with Soviet times, production has been cut way back. At the same time, a noticeable revival in the construction business has led to an increase in the number of jobs in this branch, which is certainly encouraging, but does not solve the problem. As for the upper class, given Azerbaijan's specifics, it mostly consists of the high-ranking members of the bureaucracy, and is very small.

¹⁹ A.G. Vishnevskiy, *op.cit.*, p. 111.

THE MIGRATION SITUATION AND MIGRATION POLICY IN KALMYKIA

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The Current Situation in Citizen Migration

According to the results of the nationwide population census carried out in October 2002, there are 292,400 people living in the Republic of Kalmykia. Information on the population's ethnic composition has still not been published, but, according to similar data for 1989, Kalmyks accounted for 45.4%, Russians for 37.7%, Darghins for 4%, Chechens for 2.6%, and so on.¹

Compared with the last census, the size of the population had shrunk by 30,000 people (9.3%), and the republic was the only territory in the Northern Caucasus and the Russian South where a decrease in the number of residents was recorded.²

We will note that there is a continuous natural increment (the number of births exceeds the number of deaths) in the population in Kalmykia. But this is not enough to compensate for the migration decrement (more people are leaving than arriving), which led to the drop in its population. For example, in 2001, the natural increment amounted to 173 people, in 2000 to 92, and in 2003 to 464, with a migration decrement of 2,182, 1,237, and 1,692 people, respectively.³

Direction of Flows

The current migration situation in the republic is largely predetermined by the interregional movement of the population. The most intensive migration relations have developed with the neighboring republics of the Northern Caucasus, the Russian South, and the Lower Volga Region. The active migration exchange (in the volume of foreign migration) in 2001, 2002, and 2003 formed as follows: with the Rostov Region, 13.7%, 15.5%, and 15.9%; with the Stavropol Territory, 15.7%, 14.7%, and 14.1%; with the Volgograd Region, 11.2%, 10.9%, 10.8%; with the Astrakhan Region, 9.5%, 10.5%, 10.2%, and with Daghestan, 9.6%, 8.3%, and 8.1%, respectively.

¹ See: *Itogi Vsesoiuznoi perepisi naselenia 1989 g. po Kalmytskoi ASSR*, Goskomstat RSFMS, Kalmyk Republic Statistics Department, Elista, 1999, p. 28.

² See: *Regiony Rossii. Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie pokazateli. Ofitsial'noe izdanie 2003 g.*, Statistics Collection, Goskomstat Rossii, Moscow, 2003, p. 52.

³ Here and later migration and demographic statistics are presented according to the information in the following publications: *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe razvitiie Respubliki Kalmykia za ianvar' 2002 goda*, Goskomstat Rossii, Gos. kom. Respubliki Kalmykia po statistike, Elista, 2002; *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe razvitiie Respubliki Kalmykia za ianvar' 2003 goda*, Goskomstat Rossii, Gos. kom. Respubliki Kalmykia po statistike, Elista, 2003; *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe razvitiie Respubliki Kalmykia za ianvar' 2004 goda*, Goskomstat Rossii, Gos. kom. Respubliki Kalmykia po statistike, Elista, 2004.

The Rostov Region (in 2001—14.6%, in 2002—16%, in 2003—16.1%) and the Stavropol Territory (18%, 17.7%, and 15.6%, respectively) account for the highest percentage of those leaving Kalmykia.

A positive balance is only observed in the migration exchange with the CIS and Baltic countries: in 2001—119 people (207 arrived and 88 left), in 2002—200 people (284 arrived and 84 left), and in 2003—7 (91 arrived and 84 left). The highest percentage in 2001 was of people arriving from Ukraine (21.7%) and Armenia (16.4%), and leaving for Ukraine (44.3%) and Kazakhstan (23.9%); in 2002, of people arriving from Armenia (38.0%) and Ukraine (14.8%), and leaving for Kazakhstan (33.3%) and Ukraine (32.1%); and in 2003, of people arriving from Ukraine (19.8%) and Kazakhstan (19.8%), and leaving for Kazakhstan (44%) and Ukraine (31%).

The outflow and inflow with respect to countries of the “far abroad” has decreased, but nevertheless the scales tilt in favor of those leaving. In 2001, the decrement amounted to 205 people (219 left and 14 arrived), in 2002 it was 163 (189 left and 26 arrived), and in 2003 it was 157 (173 left and 16 arrived). Most of those leaving headed for Germany: in 2001, 204 people, in 2002, 165, and in 2003, 146. They were mainly Germans.

Description of the Migrants

People of able-bodied age predominate in the migration structure. In 2001, their percentage in the total number of arrivals was equal to 71.4%, and in the number of those leaving to 74.4%. In 2002, these figures were 73.2% and 76.4%, and in 2003, 73.8% and 77.8%, respectively.

According to national composition, the migrants were distributed as follows: representatives of the indigenous people largely moved around the republic. In foreign migration, the number of arriving Kalmyks amounted to 20% in 2001, 19.3% in 2002, and 21.1% in 2003; with those leaving amounting to 10.9%, 11.2%, and 10.5%, respectively.

The greatest migration movement is observed among Russians. Their percentage in the foreign migration turnover is close to 50%. For example, they contributed to 40.6% of all the arrivals in 2001, 40.5% in 2002, and 45.1% in 2003, and to 54.8%, 53.3%, and 51.5% of those leaving, respectively.

Third place among the arrivals is stably occupied by Chechens (2001—12.9%, 2002—8.1%, and 2003—5.8%), and among those leaving by Darghins (2001—7.8%, 2002, 4.5%, and 2003, 4.1%).

The migrants gave the following reasons for the need to move: personal and family reasons (in 2001, 58.4% of those leaving and 39.1% of those arriving, in 2002, 60% and 43.8%, and in 2003, 60.7% and 36.6%, respectively); returning to their former place of residence (in 2001, 12.2% of those leaving and 35% of those arriving, in 2002, 10.3% and 32.8%, in 2003, 9.9% and 39.5%); job-related (in 2001, 9.9% of those leaving and 13.6% of those arriving, in 2002, 9.0% and 12.8%, in 2003, 11.0% and 13.9%, respectively); and study-related (in 2001, 13.9% of those leaving and 5.8% of those arriving, in 2002, 13.8% and 6.0%, and in 2003, 12.1% and 6.5%, respectively).

Forced Moves

As of 1 January, 2002, 1,699 forced migrants had been registered, including 429 registered in 2001, 392 of whom were Chechens, 30 Russians, and 3 Kazakhs. They mainly arrived from Ingushetia (381 people) and Tajikistan (25 people). By January 2003, the picture had changed somewhat: 1,387 forced migrants were registered, including 39 registered in 2002, 38 of whom were Chechens who came from Ingushetia. As of 1 January, 2004, there were a total of 1,240 such people (in 2003 forced migrants were not registered in the republic).

As we can see, migration is a determining factor in the change in size of the republic's population, and one of its dominating features is people migrating out of the country, particularly those of able-bodied

ied age. In so doing, the positive migration balance of members of the titular people, the Kalmyks, remains stable. Of the other relatively large national communities, the number of those arriving is higher than those leaving only among the Chechens, and even this index has been dropping in the past three years. Among Russians and Darghins, the number of those leaving is higher than those arriving.

How the Local Population Perceives the Migration Processes

On the whole, Kalmykia is one of the most stable territories in the Russian South. It is characterized by mutual understanding and cooperation among the members of different nationalities, and essentially all of the republic's public sociopolitical and cultural-enlightenment activity is supported in a spirit of favorable ethnic communality.

The old-timers are largely tolerant of the newcomers. For example, they feel a genuine empathy for forced migrants, most of whom appeared in the republic as the result of the armed conflict in Chechnia. It was no accident that the local press frequently published letters from Chechen refugees and statements from the leaders of the Chechen community thanking the Kalmykian official institutions and their leaders, as well as individuals, for their attention and humaneness.

Indicative in this respect was the report on the activity of the human rights ombudsman in Kalmykia for 2002, which stated that he had received more than 800 appeals, only 2% of which were complaints about violations of the rights of forced migrants,⁴ mainly with respect to people from Chechnia obtaining housing.

However, most of Kalmykian society (both in its ethnic and civil sense) has a negative attitude toward the North Caucasian and Central Asian migration vectors. As early as 1999, a poll of local residents conducted under the supervision of the author of this article showed that 44.2% of the respondents did not approve of Caucasians coming to the republic to live, and only 10.0% of the respondents were in favor. Thirty-six point nine percent of the respondents related negatively to Central Asians coming to live in the republic, and 11.5% positively. By way of comparison, 54.2% of the respondents approved of Russians migrating to the republic, while only 6.9% did not approve.⁵

Recently, the negative attitude toward the above-mentioned groups of migrants has not improved much. The periodic (several times a year) local clashes between groups of Kalmyks (less frequently Russians) and Caucasians remain a reality. They occur for everyday, interpersonal reasons. Escalation occurs when ethnic support groups become involved in these frays. Although almost all of these conflicts are short-lived and restricted to a small area, they can be very severe.

One such clash took place in June 2001 in the village of Sadovoe, the administrative center of the Sarpa District, in which more than 1,000 Kalmyks and Darghins participated, whereby both sides used hunting guns. Luckily no one was hurt. Effective interference and emergency measures by the authorities and law enforcement structures made it possible to defuse the situation.

These events had strong repercussions in society and generated a broad discussion on the reasons for ethnic tension. An analysis of the newspaper articles during this time shows that the migration theme is seen as one of the most urgent.

It should be noted first of all that a certain percentage of the republic's population has formed an unfavorable stereotype of migrants for several reasons. For example, the migrants take jobs away from the local residents, and young migrants of call-up age are moving to evade army service. What is more, supposedly "poor" refugees are often seen dressed from head to foot in furs and barely able to stand up straight under the weight of their gold adornments. They buy houses and apartments without haggling for

⁴ See: *Khalimag unen*, 25 June, 2003.

⁵ For more detail, see: V. Volgin, "Kalmykia. Sostoianie mezhetnicheskikh otnoshenii," *Set etnologicheskogo monitoringa i rannego preduprezhdeniia konfliktov*, Bulletin No. 26, July-August 1999.

the best price, set up large personal farmsteads, have quite a large number of cows, sheep, and poultry, take over the local markets, and give bribes to resolve their registration and job problems.

The following aspects are singled out in the migration version of the reasons for ethnic conflicts.

The Caucasian Aspect

There is a popular opinion that the main conflict-prone factor is the growing number of Caucasian migrants itself. This can hardly be said for the entire republic, but in some areas the size of the Caucasian communities has perceptibly grown. For example, according to the data of the 1989 census, there were 503 Darghins (2.9% of the total size of the population) and 788 Chechens (4.5%) living in the Sarpa District. By the middle of 2001, according to the Kalmykian Interior Ministry, these numbers had grown to 1,376 and 1,306, respectively. Many of the indigenous residents were not happy about this. Here is the opinion of one of them: "Riding around Sadovoe is like riding around the Northern Caucasus."⁶ Another said, "In the evenings, it is like some Daghestani settlement here, their cars are everywhere, and all you hear is their foreign tongue. And they all behave aggressively. They have local vagrants working for them at all the trading points, and they act as though they are the boss."⁷ The village, which is usually referred to by the locals as "Sadovka," has recently acquired the name of "Caucasian prisoner."

When the potential for conflict increases, there are frequently proposals to toughen up the passport system with respect to people from the Northern Caucasus, right down to adopting a corresponding republic-level law, and to introduce other restrictions, even refuse to register Caucasians and deport them. This gave rise to a heated discussion, for example, at a gathering of citizens in Sadovoe on 11 July, 2001.

Officials are forced to remind the locals again and again that free movement and free choice of place of residence is the constitutional right of every Russian citizen, regardless of nationality, and it cannot be restricted. Kalmykian President Kirsan Iliumzhinov has stated repeatedly that there can be no talk of deporting Caucasians.

But radical sentiments are still evident and, what is important, even among some of the Caucasians who have been living in the republic for a long time. For example, the Chechen community made a decision to make anyone who does not observe the local traditions leave the district within 24 hours. Its leader, U. Zukhairaev, who has lived here for 35 years, suggested that the Daghestanis do the same thing. He noted: "Kalmykia and the Saratov Region are the Russian regions most kindly disposed toward people from the Northern Caucasus. Darghins who complain about oppression calmly engage in business here and have 3-4,000 sheep each. But this should be appreciated and the local customs respected."⁸ The titular population is happy to hear such words.

The Ethnostructural Factor

Some members of society believe that the problem is not so much migration as such, as the dramatic change in the ethnic composition of the population it causes. For instance, in the same Sarpa District, according to the data of the interior structures, between 1989 and 2001 the number of Russians dropped from 9,955 (56.5%) to 8,443 people. The number of Kalmyks also decreased slightly, from 5,243 (29.7%) to 5,000. The advocates of this point of view note that the local Russians are a special ethnic group, the descendants of those who lived for centuries side by side with the Kalmyks. They have always enjoyed mutual respect and understanding, based on long years of living together and a common outlook. Today,

⁶ *Sarpinskie vesti*, 17 July, 2001.

⁷ *Izvestia Kalmykii*, 9 August, 2001.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

North Caucasians are taking the place of the departing Slavs, and these people need a long time to adapt to the new ethnocultural environment and establish civilized mechanisms of interrelations with the Kalmyks and local Russians.

The Ethical-behavioral Question

It is the behavior of some of the Caucasian migrants, which goes against the local norms, that is considered one of the most important determinants in ethnic confrontations. For example, at gatherings in the villages of Arshan-Zelmen, Kirovskiy, and Korobkin, the people noted primarily the disrespectful attitude of the people arriving from the Northern Caucasus toward the traditions, customs, and everyday life of the local residents. What is more, upon closer examination, it turns out that nothing supernatural is required of the newcomers. Here are some of the “complaints” mentioned by Nikolai, a 35-year-old Russian: “The Caucasians should be put in their place, they just don’t know how to behave. What, do they think they are a breed apart or something? They think they can stop their cars in the middle of the road to talk to friends coming the other way and hold up traffic. And they do not even give pedestrians the right of way. They are hail-fellow with the local policemen. And they don’t respect our women.”⁹

Such reproaches are aimed primarily at young Caucasians and, what is interesting, their compatriots say almost the same thing. For example, a resident of Svetly village, A. Omarov, lamented, “We Caucasians have very ancient traditions—maintaining good relations with our neighbors. But our young people do not observe these traditions. At times they do not even give us, their elders, the right of way.”¹⁰ Director of the tax inspection office in Sadovoe, a forced migrant from Chechnia, V. Vystropova, mused, “When I lived for nine years in the national republic (Chechnia.—V.V.), I subordinated to the local customs, I didn’t wear open dresses, I wore a scarf on my head, and I learned conversational Chechen. The people who come here (to Kalmykia.—V.V.) should do the same thing. Newcomers should not drive the local people to extremes, they should pay attention to them and do as they say, what’s so hard about that?”¹¹ She said she was sorry that the local residents were the ones being insulted by the newcomers, not the other way round. It is also unfortunate that the Daghestani diaspora openly flaunts its financial achievements before the less enterprising steppe residents.¹²

The lack of desire of newly arriving nouveau riche Caucasians to observe elementary decency and their aggressive behavior are creating an ingrained stereotype of “foreigners” as a whole in the minds of the titular population. The words of G. Batyrov, co-chairman of the republic’s public movement Home Territory, are characteristic in this respect: “Caucasian nationals are guests on Kalmykian soil, so they should behave accordingly.”¹³ Russian Federation State Duma deputy A. Burataeva was even more categorical about them, “You should thank us every day for giving you the opportunity to live on peaceful land.”¹⁴ But not everyone shares such sentiments. For example, the newspaper *Sovetskaia Kalmykia segodnia* found A. Burataeva’s statements unacceptable for a politician of her rank.¹⁵ G. Batyrov confessed however that the Caucasians gave his words “a hostile reception.”¹⁶ The newspaper *Komsomolets Kalmykii* raised the question, “Is it sensible to set the indigenous population against the newcomers? Yes, migrants are taking part of the local budget, but they are the same Russian citizens as every indigenous resident. As soon as we begin to infringe on migrants’ rights even a little, we are asking for big trouble.

⁹ *Sarpinskie vesti*, 30 June, 2001.

¹⁰ *Rassvet*, 11 August, 2001.

¹¹ *Izvestia Kalmykii*, 9 August, 2001.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ *Rassvet*, 10 August, 2001.

¹⁴ *Sarpinskie vesti*, 17 July, 2001.

¹⁵ See: *Sovetskaia Kalmykia segodnia*, 30 July, 2001.

¹⁶ *Elistinskie novosti*, 7 August, 2001.

This has been verified by the practice in many regions, and it would be unwise to make the same mistakes in Kalmykia.”¹⁷

Quite self-critical opinions are also encountered, the authors of which question the behavior not so much of the migrants, as of the indigenous residents. Here is one of them, “By demanding respect, we should first look at our own behavior from a distance. Are we acting in a way that demands respect? Not always, and we need to admit this. We do not observe elementary decency in everyday life, we drink, fight, scold, swear. When newcomers see this they immediately understand there is no order here, so this gives them license to be rude and lord it over us.”¹⁸

Journalist N. Kumenova believes that the rise in ethnic aggressiveness is encouraged by the undignified lifestyle of many Kalmykian men. “Of course,” she notes, “we cannot stand it when others reproach us for drunkenness, lack of initiative, and empty conceit. But this does not make the ‘behavioral distinctions’ characteristic of many Kalmyks less noticeable or reprehensible.”¹⁹

Problems of Adaptation

Some members of the republic’s society believe that the necessary and inevitable adaptation of the Caucasians is being made harder than it need be. “Let’s be honest and admit that no one is welcoming them here, and no one is really helping them to settle in. The attitude toward so-called Caucasian nationals is extremely prejudiced. A local is ready to see a combat fighter or a terrorist in practically every Caucasian he meets, and officials see him as a way to extort money. They settle in as best they can, by giving bribes, buying residence permits, and putting up with all kinds of humiliation. There is no need to explain how this affects the attitude of one nationality toward another.”²⁰

Myths and Fears

Along with the image of Caucasians as “foreigners”, they are also considered “dangerous.” In so doing, these phobias are often clearly mythologized. For example, one publication described the situation no more and no less as Caucasians slowly but surely taking over the local population.²¹ In this respect, P. Ivikov, the director of a territorial structure of the then Russian Ministry of Federation Affairs and National and Migration Policy in Kalmykia, was forced to explain that there were no grounds for such alarm. At that time, there were 24,000 North Caucasians among the republic’s residents (7.6% of the population).

In turn, certain fears about the titular population also exist among its ethnic counteragents. For example, Marina, a 47-year-old Georgian, is worried about the fact that “Kalmyks seem to want to deport the Caucasians.”²² Of course, mutual fears and myths add an element of increased caution in relations between the old-timers and migrants.

Special Features of Regional Migration Policy

The specifics of the migration situation, the migration processes, and the way the locals perceive them cannot help but have an effect on how the republic’s power structures draw up migration policy. For

¹⁷ *Komsomolets Kalmykii*, 15-21 August, 2001.

¹⁸ *Iskra Kalmykii*, 1 February, 2003.

¹⁹ *Izvestia Kalmykii*, 9 August, 2001.

²⁰ *Sovetskaia Kalmykia segodnia*, 13 August, 2001.

²¹ See: *Vecherniaia Elista*, 1 August, 2001.

²² *Sarpinskie vesti*, 30 June, 2001.

example, in 2001, a policy aimed at intensifying the role of the Kalmykian Interior Ministry in this sphere was supported. For example, A. Sidorenko, deputy chairman of the republic's National Khural (parliament), was in favor of abolishing the Russian Ministry on Federation Affairs and National and Migration Policy and transferring the migration issues to the jurisdiction of the Interior Ministry. In particular, he noted, "The problem of uncontrolled migration has become a real headache for the power structures and the local population."²³

In the report mentioned above on the activity of the human rights ombudsman in Kalmykia in 2002, it was also emphasized that uncontrolled migration is threatening the stability of our republic. Data were presented: approximately 40% of the Meskhetian Turks, who settled in its southern regions, are living there illegally.²⁴ The report stated that in 2002, relations between local residents and migrants in the Sarpa, Tselinnoe, and Chernozemel'skii regions became aggravated. After visiting these regions and meeting with representatives of the municipal power structures, old-timers, and migrants, the ombudsman asked the republic's government to hold round tables on "Human Rights and Migration Processes in Kalmykia" in some of the regions, and these meetings indeed took place.

The republic's authorities declared the need to strengthen the legal base for combating uncontrolled migration. However, the presidential elections in Kalmykia and the campaign leading up to them in 2002 prevented this task from being carried out with the determination required. But in 2003, an attempt was made to change the approaches toward the regional migration policy. For example, on 20 January, head of the republic Kirsan Iliumzhinov signed a decree on measures to organize state regulation of migration processes on its territory. The goal of these efforts was to step up state regulation of these processes, protect the constitutional rights and freedoms of all the people legally residing in the republic, and secure public order. The decree was based on the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Art 11.3, sub-item "b" of Art 72 of the Russian Federation Constitution, and Arte 3 of the republic's Steppe Code (Constitution).

We will explain that the first of the named provisions of the Russian Constitution declares that "the scopes of authority and powers of the bodies of state authority of the Russian Federation and the bodies of state authority of the subjects of the Russian Federation shall be delimited under this Constitution, Federal and other Treaties on the delimitation of scopes of authority and powers." The second says that the "protection of the rights and freedoms of man and citizen, protection of the rights of ethnic minorities; ensuring legality, law and order, and public safety; and the border zone regime" are under the joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and the Russian Federation constituencies. The aforementioned norm of the Kalmykian Basic Law envisages: "In the Republic of Kalmykia, human and citizen rights and freedoms are recognized and guaranteed pursuant to the Russian Federation Constitution, the Steppe Code (Constitution) of the Republic of Kalmykia, and the generally accepted principles and norms of international law. The Republic of Kalmykia is striving to create conditions that ensure the dignified life and free development of its citizens."

The decree we have been looking at calls efficient state regulation of migration processes one of the republic's priority tasks and, in particular, envisages drawing up provisions on organizing coordinated work between state and municipal structures to ensure observation in Kalmykia of citizen registration regulations. In this respect, the Interior Ministry has been entrusted with stepping up work to identify people who are violating the residency registration and entry regulations. It is to immediately apply an entire set of measures envisaged by the law, as well as deport foreigners and stateless citizens who are residing illegally on Russian territory. The local self-government structures have been asked to cooperate with the State Sanitary Epidemic Supervision structures to draw up normative acts on municipal control over migrants in order to observe sanitary norms and regulations aimed at preventing the spread of infectious and other dangerous diseases. The directors of enterprises, institutions, and organizations, regardless of form of ownership, as well as private businessmen, have been ordered to unconditionally carry out

²³ *Izvestia Kalmykii*, 31 October, 2001.

²⁴ See: *Khalimag unen*, 25 June, 2003.

the legislative requirements regarding the registration of Russian citizens and the use of foreign labor when hiring citizens under a work or civil-law contract.

Two more items of the decree also draw attention to themselves. One calls for strict observance of the demand set forth in the law on the state of housing facilities (including the amount of living space per person) when resolving citizen registration problems. The other envisages preparing a conception for organizing a state housing fund bought up from people who leave the republic to live permanently elsewhere.

At the same time, a long statement by the head of the republic was published, explaining the appearance of this decree and the special features of migration policy.

- First, when evaluating the current migration processes, the authorities recognize their objective nature and development “in keeping with the laws governing the nature of human society.”²⁵
- Second, the leadership is against uncontrolled migration. According to the republic’s leader, we should “not just be impartial observers of the process, only noting and registering the changes occurring in the ethnic, age, and professional composition of the population. It is perfectly clear that this route is not acceptable to us. Today we are faced with a whole set of extremely complicated socioeconomic questions generated by uncontrolled migration and the lack of proper state attention to the demographic situation. Tomorrow we may have problems of a much more serious nature.”
- Third, the head of the republic is in favor of stepping up control over observation of the registration regulations for all newcomers. “In no way are we restricting or do we intend to restrict the rights of Russian Federation citizens to freedom of movement, we only want to intensify control over the observation of registration regulations for all people who come to Kalmykia.” “In other words, we will no longer allow the practice whereby there are ten or more legally registered people to one square meter of living space. We will not hide the fact that there are cases when employers in search of easy prey are taking advantage of the unregistered labor of illegal migrants, which of course is cheaper for them and means they do not have to worry about social security, work safety, and ensuring technical safety standards for these workers. There can be no two ways about it: the strictest order must be established.”
- Fourth, the president of Kalmykia is in favor of a regulated procedure regarding the purchase of land, housing, and other real estate by newcomers. “We know of cases where migrants bought up whole sections of apartment buildings, the former occupants of which had left the republic. We also intend to impose regulatory measures in this area. Of course we will not prohibit anyone from buying housing in Kalmykia, but priority must go to our own citizens. I have issued corresponding orders to the republic’s government, which is to draw up a conception for organizing a state housing fund bought up from people who have left the republic to live elsewhere. The organization of this fund is an additional opportunity to resolve the housing problems of the indigenous population of the steppes.”

In the republic’s official circles, the Interior Ministry primarily expressed support of the president’s initiative. Deputy minister V. Badaev said, “The president has clearly defined a problem that concerns not only the law enforcement and executive structures, but the republic’s entire population. This addresses the recent trends toward an increase in the uncontrolled movement of citizens not only from the regions of Russia with a difficult socioeconomic situation, but also from outside the country.” The Interior Ministry representative believes that “complaints by the local population about the buying up of whole sections of apartment buildings are legitimate” and in this respect warned, “Today whole sections and apartment buildings are being bought up, and tomorrow they will start divvying the population settlements up. This could lead to ethnic conflicts, which might escalate into open confrontation between one nationality and another.” V. Badaev specified that the coercive regulations should not affect law-abiding citizens,

²⁵ Here and later the statement is quoted from *Khalimag unen*, 22 January, 2003.

but those residing illegally in the republic and "leading a lifestyle that is not in keeping with the elementary standards of decent behavior."²⁶

The local press related positively to the initiatives of the republic's leadership. The following commentary is characteristic: "The viewpoint expressed by President Iliumzhinov on migration policy in the republic and on the need to establish order here brought a sigh of relief among our citizens. No matter how the governor of the Krasnodar Territory is criticized for the special migration conditions he introduced, only those kinds of measures can save the region from chaotic settlement. We intend to adopt the same tough regulatory measures. We should have done it ages ago."²⁷

The newspapers are full of positive responses from citizens. Strangely enough, even those who were in the unenviable role of migrants to other regions and have experienced infringement of their rights approve this practice and are in favor of introducing it. The confession of some A. Ovchinnikov is worth noting, "We left for the town of Gulkevichi in the Krasnodar Territory. We lived there for eighteen months, and then came back. Our eldest son who did not go with us said, 'You will be treated like foreigners there.' And that is exactly what happened. Things are really hard there for migrants, the locals are the first to be provided with work. In this respect I approve the policy of the governor of the Krasnodar Territory. We should do the same thing here. Apartments, work, and tickets for resorts should go to the locals first."²⁸

On 11 April, 2003 the Law on Staying and Residing in the Republic of Kalmykia and on Measures to Regulate the Migration Processes in the Republic came into force. It regulates migration and only allows it in a volume which permits the geopolitical and socioeconomic conditions to ensure the rights and freedoms of citizens legally living in the republic, as well as state and public security. What is more, the law envisages the creation of a Migration Control Commission as a structure for resolving questions related to granting rights to staying and residing in the republic. The commission was invested with important authorities. For example, foreigners and stateless citizens may only be granted the right to permanent residence in the republic with its consent. With respect to citizens of the Russian Federation, a commission decision is mandatory for residence in Kalmykia if the place of residence does not meet the living space standards per person envisaged in the Russian Federation housing legislation. Based on the commission's proposals, the government must set the annual maximum number of migrants to be granted permanent residency in the republic. The commission is also responsible for observing migration legislation. But this law was not destined to go into full effect: six months later on 11 October, 2003, the National Khural was forced to render it null and void since the public prosecutor structures found it contained contradictions to federal legislation.

In this way, the process of forming a regional migration normative-legal basis has still not been completed and, it is thought, will be continued.

C o n c l u s i o n

The quantitative migration indices and dimensions of the migration problems in the republic are perhaps less impressive than in several other regions of the Russian South. But this does not mean they are less important to the population, particularly the titular, and the authorities of Kalmykia.

We are sure that migration helps to reduce the size of the population to a certain extent: the migration decrement is higher than the natural increment. And the republic attracts migrants in particular from the Northern Caucasus and Central Asia (Chechnia, Ingushetia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan), since on the whole it is distinguished by a calm sociopolitical and ethnoconfessional situation. But even more people are leaving Kalmykia.

²⁶ *Militsia Kalmykii*, 24 January, 2003.

²⁷ *Vecherniaia Elista*, 25 January, 2003.

²⁸ *Ekonomika i zhizn—Kalmykia*, 7 February, 2003.

In this respect, the conclusion can be drawn that the main task in migration policy is to create conditions for reducing the outflow of people (both from among the old-timers and the newcomers) beyond the republic, particularly people of able-bodied age.

What is more, judging by the moods of the old-timers (primarily representatives of the titular population), the greatest concern is not aroused by the constant decrease in the number of residents, as by the arrival of new residents, primarily Caucasians, with whom conflicts episodically arise. To be fair, it should be noted that these conflicts are often provoked by the behavior of the newcomers.

Migration policy in the republic also has a clearly marked characteristic: the emphasis is on stepping up state regulation of the migration flows, or to be more precise, one of them, entry and observation by newcomers of the registration and residence regulations.

Without diminishing the importance of the regulating and controlling components of migration policy, in our opinion the need has arisen for adding another component to it, the idea and measures for integrating law-abiding migrants (including Caucasian and Central Asian) into the local community. If this does not happen, the level of tolerance in relations between the old-timers and newcomers will continue to drop, the essentially transit nature of migration will be retained, and the size of the Kalmykian population will go on shrinking.

CAUCASIAN DIASPORAS IN UKRAINE

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Geographically, Ukraine is close to the Caucasus, which made contacts between their populations much easier. People moved across the western fringes of the Eurasian steppes or across the sea that separated the Caucasus and the Crimea. At the turn of the first millennium A.D. Armenians (who were mainly traders) had to migrate along one of the arms of the Great Silk Road from Trabzon to the Crimea and then on to Kamenets-Podol'skiy, Lvov, and Western Europe under pressure from the Seljuk Turks, who spread into Asia Minor. Armenians, in turn, settled in compact groups in the Crimea and Western Ukraine; they were especially active in Eastern Crimea (Feodosia and Sary Krym where dozens of mediaeval Armenian churches can still be seen), the Christian principality of Feodoro (in the foothills of the peninsula's western part), and in central and Western Ukraine. In the 13th-17th centuries, there were over 20 Armenian colonies in Western Ukraine with local self-administration granted by the Polish-Lithuanian state.¹

Under the influence of their Turkic-speaking neighbors, the Armenians living in the Crimean Khanate started using the so-called Armenian-Kypchak language; in the 18th century the local Armenians embraced Catholicism in Rzeczpospolita and, together with the new faith, the Polish language. Practically no de-

¹ See: Ia.R. Dashkevich, *Istoriko-demograficheskoe izuchenie armianskoy migratsii na Ukraine (XI-XVIII vv.)*, Riga, 1977.

scendants of this diaspora can be found in Ukraine today: in 1948 they all emigrated to Poland under the treaty on population exchange between the Polish People's Republic and the Soviet Union (according to the Polish 2002 population poll, only 1,100 descendants of this ethnic group remained in Poland). Long before that, in 1779, on the order of Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, the Crimean Armenians (whose ethnic roots were close to those of the Armenians of Western Ukraine) were moved from the Crimea to the area where Rostov-on-Don is found today.

Under the Ottoman Empire, even Georgians, a small group of Turkic-speaking Christian Orthodox Gurjis, lived in the Crimea. During the Christian exodus from the Crimea provoked by Catherine the Great, they, together with the Crimean Greeks, settled on the Azov shores; there they founded the village of Staroignatievka (now in the Donetsk Region). Their Russified descendants lost their Georgian self-identity and regard themselves as Turkic-speaking Greeks.² Larger groups of Georgians came together with the Georgian Czar, Vakhtang VI, who immigrated to Russia from the Ottoman Empire in 1724. His retinue was organized into a Hussar company later enlarged to form a regiment. In 1738 they were granted landed possessions in what is now the Poltava Region; about 1,500 Georgians moved to Ukraine from Moscow. This highly Ukrainianized community produced several outstanding personalities, including Prince Nikolai Tsertelev (1790-1869), the founder of Ukrainian folklore studies, and talented sculptor and film director Ivan Kavaleridze (1887-1989).³

During the Golden Horde rule, small groups of Adighe (Circassian) origin came to the right bank of the Dnieper and blended with the Zaporozh'e Cossacks. At that time, the Ukrainians were quite favorably inclined toward the newcomers: several times Circassians (the tribe of the Zhene/Zhenevtsy), together with Cossacks under Prince Dmitri Bayda-Vishnevetskiy (?-1563), the founder of the Zaporozhskaia Sech (Cossack republic), marched on Azov held by the Turks. Moreover, in the 16th-18th centuries it was commonly believed in Ukraine that the Adighe-Piatigortsy (who were Orthodox Christians at that time) had Slavic ancestors.

There were practically no contacts with Azerbaijan at that time: it was dominated by Safavid Iran, far removed from Ukraine, rather than by the Ottoman Empire. It was only during Peter the Great's occupation of the Iranian Caspian provinces in the early 18th century that regular Ukrainian Cossack regiments were stationed in Azerbaijan.⁴

The relations between Ukraine and the Caucasus rapidly developed in the 19th century when, thanks to the efforts of the Black Sea, Kuban, and Terek Cossack regiments, bolstered by Ukrainians, Russia finally managed to conquer the Caucasus. As a result, for almost 200 years Ukraine and the Caucasus remained within one state, first called the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Russia's newly acquired strength gave rise to a wave of pro-Russian sentiments among the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and the Caucasus. Some of the local peoples even moved to the south of Russia (which is Ukraine today). The place of the Nogai Tartars evicted from the Danube and Azov shores was taken by Christian Orthodox Bulgarians, Gagauzes, and Albanians. The Black Sea coastal states received new waves of Caucasian peoples (Armenians and Pontic Greeks, some of whom spoke Greek and some, Turkic tongues). It was this wave that brought back the ethnic groups earlier resettled by Catherine the Great's decree.

According to the 1897 population census in Russia and the 1900 population census in Austria-Hungary, there were 15,500 Armenians, or 0.1 percent of the total population, in the territory now occupied by Ukraine; half of this number (9,400) lived in the Crimea. Like those who had come before them in the Middle Ages, they were mainly urban dwellers: nearly 2,000 of them lived in Simferopol; 2,400 in Feodosia, Sary Krym, and neighboring villages; 800 people in Karasubazar (now Belogorsk); 400 in

² See: M.A. Aradjioni, "Kratkiy otchet ob osushchestvlenii Krymskim otdeleniem Instituta vostokovedeniya NAN Ukrainy trekhletney programmy kul'tury potomkov krymskikh khristian-grekov Severnogo Priazov'ia," *Etnografia Kryma XIX-XX vv. i sovremennye etnokul'turnye protsessy. Materialy i issledovania*, Simferopol, 2002, pp. 407-413.

³ See: *Etonatsional'ni protsesi v Ukraini: istoria ta suchasnist'*, ed. by V. Naulka, Kiev, 2001 (in Ukrainian).

⁴ See: D. Doroshenko, *Naris istorii Ukraini*, Vol. II. Munich, 1966, pp. 165-166 (in Ukrainian).

Armiansk, and the same number in Sevastopol. Up to 50 percent of the Armenians in Feodosia were foreign (probably Turkish) subjects: this diaspora was obviously a relatively recent one. The Russian subjects among the Armenians belonged to the lower middle class; only in Simferopol, Karasubazar, and Feodosia large groups of them belonged to the privileged social groups of merchants, nobles, and the clergy. This structure in which there were practically no peasants set the Armenian diaspora aside from other foreign colonists of southern Ukraine (Germans, Bulgarians, Greeks, Czechs, Estonians and Swedes), who mainly worked in agriculture.⁵

The earliest information about members of North Caucasian peoples living in Ukraine dates back to the 19th century: for some time imam of Chechnia and Daghestan Avar Shamil, who had been taken prisoner, lived in Kiev; and Kosta Khetagurov, an Osset writer and revolutionary, was exiled to Ochakov. On the whole, not many members of the North Caucasian peoples lived in the Tavrida Gubernia in 1897: 28 men and 1 woman; there were over 100 Georgian peasants in Sevastopol probably serving in the local garrison.

The first Assyrian refugees came from the Southern Caucasus to Ukrainian cities during World War I; the majority soon adopted Orthodox Christianity and worked, as a rule, as street cobblers. It should be said that Ukrainians readily accepted Georgians who were Orthodox Christians and found it hard to tolerate Monophysite Armenians. This cannot be explained solely by confessional differences; the Armenians were an endogamous group engaged in trade, a profitable but little respected occupation.

The ethnic structure of Ukraine remained approximately the same in the first half of the 20th century: according to the population censuses of 1921-1926, a considerable number of Armenians (21,100, or 0.1 percent of the total population) lived in the Ukrainian part of the U.S.S.R., Poland, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia. In 1939 the majority of them (13,000) were still living in the Crimea, where they accounted for 1.1 percent of population. Their share among the village population had somewhat increased, yet the majority remained city dwellers. They did not escape Stalin's repressions: in 1922 their churches were robbed of their valuables; and in the 1930s Armenian churches in Melitopol, Lugansk, and other Ukrainian cities were closed. The last functioning Armenian church in Ukraine (in Odessa) was destroyed during World War II.⁶

The post-war population censuses in Ukraine supply much more information about people of Caucasian origin (see Table 1).⁷

The above shows that in 1959 only representatives of the three largest South Caucasian nations lived in Ukraine, as well as Ossets and members of Daghestanian ethnic groups (3,823 people in all). The number of Armenians continued rising, though their share in the total population was never more than 0.1 percent. It should be added that on 24 June, 1944, they were once more evicted from the Crimea on Stalin's order (in 1779, 8,750 people had been moved away from the peninsula under Catherine's decree). The property of mediaeval Armenian monasteries was removed to Erevan. This time, Crimean Armenians and Greeks spent less time in exile than the deported Crimean Tartars. Immediately after Stalin's death Armenians were allowed to go back, yet only a small part of them used this chance. At least the 1959 population census contained no information about large groups of Armenians either in Crimea or Sevastopol.

As before, the Caucasian diaspora remained an urban phenomenon: in 1959, 90 percent of Armenians, 88 percent of Georgians, and 82 percent of Azerbaijanians lived in cities. The diaspora was still taking shape—it still had no firm roots. This is amply testified by the following figures: men predominated in all ethnic groups (87 percent among Azerbaijanians; 83 percent among ethnic groups from Daghestan; 76 percent among Georgians, and 60 percent among Armenians). In addition, a large share

⁵ See: *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis' naselenia Ros imp., 1897*, Vol. XLI, St. Petersburg, 1904.

⁶ See: K. Pivovars'ka, "Virmens'ka apostol's'ka tserkva v Ukraini," *Aragats*, No. 12, 2001; No.1, 2002 (in Ukrainian).

⁷ See: *Itogi vsesoiuznoy perepisi naselenia 1959 goda. Ukrainskaia SSR*, Moscow, 1963; *Natsional'nyi sklad naselenia Ukraini*, Kiev, 1991, Part 1, pp. 4-12 (in Ukrainian); unpublished materials of the 2002 population census of the State Committee for Statistics of Ukraine.

Table 1

Numerical Strength of People of Caucasian Origin in Ukraine

	1959	1970	1979	1989	2001
Armenians	28,024	33,439	38,646	54,200	99,894
Azerbaijanians	6,680	10,769	17,235	36,961	45,176
Georgians	11,574	14,650	16,301	23,540	34,199
Meskhetian Turks				262	9,180
Ossets	3,325	4,554	5,257	6,345	4,834
Lezghians		1,708	2,354	4,810	4,349
Assyrians		2,765	2,991	2,759	3,143
Chechens		939	1,046	1,844	2,877
Kurds +Yezidi Kurds				238	2,808
Darghins		634	595	1,550	1,610
Avars		893	1,211	2,677	1,496
Abkhazians		476	941	990	1,458
Lakhs		574	662	1,035	1,019
Tabasarans		118	300	932	977
Kumyks				868	718
Udins				109	592
Kabardins		554	673	959	473
Ingushes				466	455
Nogais				331	385
Adighes				688	338
Kalmyks				635	325
Balkars				244	206
Circassians				447	199
Karachais				342	190
Population of Ukraine	41,869,046	47,126,517	49,609,333	51,452,034	48,240,902

of the diaspora members described the languages of their nationalities as their native tongues (69 percent of Azerbaijanians and 63 percent of Georgians). These figures look high in comparison with the figure for the old Armenian diaspora (41 percent). At that time both the former and the latter were

scattered across the regions; the population census offers no information about the diaspora's numerical strength by region.⁸

The data of population censuses of 1979 and 1989 showed that people from the Caucasus continued migrating to Ukraine. This can be said of nearly all the other Soviet regions; there were several factors behind this trend: a desire to speed up the process of unification of the multinational population by blending ethnoses in order to create a new historical community of people—the Soviet people; overpopulation in the Caucasus, and geographic proximity of the Caucasus to Ukraine. It was at that time that fairly large ethnic groups of North Caucasian extraction (mainly men) first appeared in our republic; as a result, the number of mixed marriages increased; traditionally, children in such families were registered by their fathers' nationality, yet they were never vehicles of the corresponding ethnocultural traditions. This and the impossibility of acquiring an education in the native tongue outside the historical homeland in a country where Russian predominated are responsible for the noticeable decline in the number of people of Caucasian extraction who could speak their native tongues. Most of them never tried to master the Ukrainian language and satisfied themselves with Russian, which in the Soviet Union was considered the language of inter-ethnic communication.

I have already written that in the latter half of the 20th century the number of Armenians, Azerbaijanians, and Georgians steadily increased. The diasporas became even larger after the Armenian earthquake of 1989 and the Soviet Union's disintegration. Post-Soviet destabilization (the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Karabakh, the civil war in Georgia, and the conflicts in Abkhazia and North Ossetia) caused considerable migration shifts in the Southern Caucasus. The resultant ethnic tension and economic collapse, together with traditional pendulum migration from overcrowded agrarian areas to Russia and Ukraine, sent even more people to these two republics. According to the 2001-2002 population censuses, the number of Armenians in Russia doubled compared with the last Soviet census of 1989 to reach 1,130,000; and in Ukraine it almost doubled to reach 100,000 people. Today, there are 621,000 Azerbaijanians living in Russia (a two-fold increase); and in Ukraine, 45,000, or a 20 percent increase. The number of Georgians in Russia grew from 130,000 to 198,000, and in Ukraine, to 34,000 (an increase of 1.5-fold).

Together with the titular nations of the newly formed South Caucasian states, their ethnic minorities were also involved in migration. In the last ten years, the number of Azerbaijani Udins (600) in Ukraine has grown six-fold (in Russia, four-fold to reach the figure of 4,000), and of South Caucasian Yezidi Kurds (2,800) fourteen-fold. Russia experienced a ten-fold increase: there are 20,000 Kurds and 31,000 Yezidi Kurds living there now. Today, the diasporas are larger than the ethnic groups in the historical homelands. For example, according to the 1999 population census in Azerbaijan, there were 4,000 Udins and 13,000 Kurds living in the republic. We should bear in mind that the number of Abkhazians in Ukraine doubled (1,400); several hundreds of Georgian Greek Urums migrated to the Crimea, while recently the demographically stable group of Assyrians has been rapidly growing.

Another fairly closely-knit group of transit migrants of South Caucasian extraction has appeared. I am referring to the Meskhetian Turks (Akhyska) who, prohibited from returning to Georgia, settled in the Northern Caucasus (95,000), in the Mugan steppe of Azerbaijan (43,000) and in the Kherson Region of Ukraine (9,000).

When the Soviet Union fell apart and Ukraine became independent, most people of North Caucasian extraction (unlike those from the Southern Caucasus) went back to their homeland in the Russian Federation or opted for Moscow and Petersburg. The size of the fairly old groups of Ossets and Avars in Ukraine, as well as of groups of Western Caucasian origin dropped considerably. (A group of Osset sportsmen, two of whom, Z. Zazirov and E. Tadeev, won several free-style wrestling champion titles as Ukrainian citizens, was an exception.)

⁸ See: *Itogi vsesoiuznoy perepisi naselenia 1959 goda. Ukrainkaia SSR*, pp. 186-194; *Itogi vsesoiuznoy perepisi naselenia 1979 g.*, Vol. IV (Part 1, Book 2), Moscow, 1989, pp. 3-16; unpublished materials of the 2002 population census of the State Committee for Statistics of Ukraine.

The Chechen community was another exception: during the post-Soviet years it reached 2,800 because of the war. With the help of the right-wing Ukrainian parties, the Chechens set up information centers in Odessa and Lvov, while the Mejlis (parliament) of the Crimean Tartars organized summer camps for Chechen children in the Crimea.

It should be added that not all Caucasian diasporas intend to remain in the republic. This is testified, among other things, by that fact that in the predominantly Ukrainian-speaking Central and Western Ukraine, the percentage of children of Caucasian origin in the schools that teach in Russian is higher than could be expected—their families are potentially ready to move to Russia.

Table 2

**Linguistic Preferences of
Ethnic Groups in Ukraine**

Nationality	The share (%) of those who believed their native tongue to be								
	Language of their nationality			Ukrainian			Russian		
	1959	1979	2001	1959	1979	2001	1959	1979	2001
Ukrainians	93.5	89.0	85.2	—	—	—	6.4	10.9	14.8
Russians	98.1	98.6	95.9	1.8	1.3	3.9	—	—	—
Armenians	41.5	38.0	50.4	2.3	2.6	5.8	55.7	59.0	43.2
Azerbaijanians	69.1	60.1	53.0	3.3	3.7	7.1	27.2	36.0	37.6
Georgians	62.1	48.2	36.7	3.1	4.0	8.2	33.5	47.6	54.4

The above shows that only half of the members of the Caucasian diasporas consider the languages of their nationalities their native tongues (this is also typical of other ethnic groups: from 25 percent among the Ossets and Assyrians to 56 percent among the Kurds; the Meskhetian Turks with 89 percent are the only exception). In the last ten years the percentage of those who regarded Armenian as their native tongue greatly increased among the Armenians because of an immense upsurge (an increase of 100 percent) in emigrants from Armenia.

Over 40 percent of the Caucasian migrants have accepted Russian as their native tongue, because they mostly live in the Russian-speaking cities of Eastern and Southern Ukraine. In 2001 there were Armenian communities with a population of over 10,000 each in the Donetsk, Kharkov, and Dnepropetrovsk regions and the Crimea, and communities with over 5,000 people in the Zaporozh'e, Lugansk, and Odessa regions. Azerbaijanian communities with over 5,000 people each were found in the Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov regions; there are over 7,000 Georgians living in the Donetsk Region; and the Kharkov and Zaporozh'e regions each have 4,000-strong Georgian communities. A similar distribution pattern among the economically developed industrialized territories is typical of the small Caucasian groups as well. Fifty percent of Lezghians live in the Donetsk and Kharkov regions; 50 percent of Abkhazians in the Odessa and Donetsk regions; over 50 percent of Darghins in the Dnepropetrovsk Region; over 30 percent of Assyrians in the Donetsk Region, and 20 percent of Kurds in the Lugansk Region.

These peoples obviously prefer to live in compact groups: new migrants join the already existing communities in the justified hope of getting support from relatives and compatriots when looking for employment and adjusting to the new, preferably Russian-speaking ethnocultural environment. At the same time, a considerable number of mixed marriages assimilate their children into the Ukrainian cultural milieu as well. In the last twenty years the number of Armenians, Azerbaijanians, and Georgians who

regarded Ukrainian as their native tongue doubled. This group is not yet large, but it has already produced several outstanding personalities: People's Artist of Ukraine A. Khostikoev, whose father is an Osset, and an opposition journalist G. Gongadze, the son of a Ukrainian mother and Georgian father, who died a tragic death. The so far low percentage of Ukrainian-speaking people of Caucasian origin is explained by the fact that in the Ukrainian-speaking central and western areas, the population of Caucasian origin is not large.

The ethnocultural situation changed dramatically during perestroika, which gave rise to a wave of ethnic awareness and enthusiasm among the majority of the Soviet nations. In 1991, the Kiev Armenian Society was set up in Ukraine; under a decree of the Catholicos of All Armenians Vazgen I, the Ukrainian eparchy of the Armenian Apostolic Church was restored; it was headed by Archbishop Nathan Oganessian until his transfer to the U.K. in 2001. Today, it is functioning under Grigoris Buniatian. During the post-Soviet period, the eparchy recovered its mediaeval churches of St. Sarkis (with the tombs of the family of famous painter Ivan Aivazovski) and of St. Archangels in Feodosia; the old Surb-Khach monastery in Stryi, as well as the Church of the St. Virgin Ripsime (1905-1917) in Yalta. The rededication service of the restored Cathedral of the Assumption of the Mother of God (1363) in Lvov in May 2003 was attended by Catholicos of All Armenians Garegin II, speaker of the Armenian parliament A. Khachatrian, and Charles Aznavour, French singer of Armenian extraction. This crowd of dignitaries emphasized the long history of the Armenian presence in Ukraine and the importance of the 100,000-strong diaspora for Armenia. It is active and rich, which has been confirmed by the new Armenian churches built in Odessa, Makeevka, and Kharkov, as well as by chapels in Kiev and Simferopol.

Since 1994 the Armenian and Ukrainian versions of *Aragats* monthly have been published with the financial support of the Ukrainian state. This stability amid the prolonged economic crisis is exceptional, especially compared with the mainly irregular publications of other ethnic minorities in Ukraine. There are branches of the Union of the Armenians of Ukraine in nearly every regional center; there are Sunday schools based on state educational establishments, and folklore ensembles. All national holidays are regularly celebrated.

The Armenian diaspora in Ukraine demonstrates the same high business activity and has the same influential Armenian lobby in the power structures as other places in the world with large Armenian diasporas. Early in the 1990s, the Party of Economic Revival of the Peninsula, a political organization of local Armenian businessmen, was fairly active in the Crimea. After its defeat at the parliamentary elections in Ukraine, its founders, headed by A. Danilian, emigrated to Karabakh when the political situation in the Crimea had stabilized. In Karabakh they blended into the elite of this unrecognized state. Unanian, who was behind the shooting incident in the Armenian parliament, is also from the Crimea. All of this testifies to the fact that the Ukrainian Armenians are very much involved in what is going on in their historical homeland.

In 2002 four Armenians were elected deputies to the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, a sort of a record among the ethnic minorities. After the elections Roman Balaian, prominent film director from Kiev, ceded his post as President of the Union of the Armenians of Ukraine to people's deputy Nver Mkhitarian, owner of a large construction company Pozdniakizhilbud, which operates in Kiev. The Armenian lobby in Ukraine is following in the footsteps of the Armenian lobbies in Russia and America, though with less spectacular results: so far, relations with Armenia are much less developed than relations with Georgia and Azerbaijan within GUUAM and TRACECA, as well as a number of bilateral agreements in various, including military, spheres.

At the same time, other Caucasian diasporas are much less active; they have established their cultural societies, yet only Georgians and Azerbaijanians opened Sunday schools and are represented in the state structures along with Armenians. The periodicals published by those diasporas appear irregularly and have limited circulation; the communities meet mainly on large state and religious holidays. The Christian Orthodox Georgians, Ossets, and Assyrians have no religious structures of their own in Ukraine and attend local Orthodox churches. The monument to the Georgian soldiers killed in World War II in Kerch, paid for by a local businessman and consecrated by a Georgian clergyman, is the only exception. The Muslims of Caucasian origin living in Ukraine are less active in the religious sphere than the Tartar

and Arab diasporas, the only exception being the Kiev Islamic Cultural Center headed by a Lezghian who maintains active contacts with the local Azerbaijanian community.

All Caucasian ethnic communities are working hard to create a positive image of their nations in the eyes of Ukrainians; they emphasize that mutual cultural contacts go way back; they are doing a lot to translate the best literary works of their national writers into Ukrainian and are striving to establish friendly ethnic relations.

I should say that compared to Russia, the local people in Ukraine are much more tolerant toward Caucasian migrants, there are no racist organizations in our republic. In everyday life, however, there is a certain amount of alienation: it is commonly believed that the Caucasian migrants are all hucksters; people do not like their provocative behavior; the press associates them with organized crime, and people prefer to keep away from them. This widens the gap between these communities and the local people.

On the other hand, the larger part of the Ukrainian elite supports the Caucasian nations seeking greater independence from Russia. This is explained by the traditional support of weak and oppressed nations.

Integration processes are developing in our republic in a favorable atmosphere, which leads us to assume that the Ukrainians will continue living peacefully side by side with the Caucasian communities and will preserve their traditional tolerance for ethnic minorities.

RELIGION IN SOCIETY

**RELIGION AND POLITICS:
INTERACTION AGAINST
AN AZERBAIJANIAN BACKGROUND**

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

There is a religious upsurge in the Azerbaijanian Republic (AR) directly connected with the country's political and ideological transformations and the transition period that followed the Soviet Union's disintegration in 1991. The Soviet Union collapsed along with the bankrupt Soviet totalitarian regime and the Communist ideology, allowing freedom of conscience to flourish in the republic in the absence of the "hand of Moscow" as a centralizing and controlling instrument.

A religious renaissance is taking place in the independent country; it draws its strength from the spiritual legacy rooted in our nation's ancient culture and traditions. This is primarily true of Islam, the dominating religion, yet other traditional religions have also acquired a chance to revive and develop. At the same time, new hitherto unknown nontraditional religious trends have made their way into the republic. To a certain extent, this is ex-

plained by more than seven decades of the Soviet society's "spiritual" blindness, the current quest for religious answers to the most burning issues of today, and the activity of foreign forces and foreign missionaries.

The present religious upsurge, mainly owing to the resurrection of Islam, does not allow "Western influences" to penetrate the AR, thus depriving our citizens of a chance to learn and embrace universal values found outside Islam.

The leaders of our republic are using religion as an instrument to influence the masses and strengthen their power, while foreign forces, in turn, exploit this instrument to penetrate Azerbaijan and gain a stronger foothold. This is happening in many other countries, too. The result is a situation in which it is sometimes hard to predict how it will affect the relations between religion and political power and the attitudes of the faithful. Therefore I

have chosen the following aspects: the situation in the religious sphere—the zones and confessions; ethnoconfessional minorities—territorial distribution and size; and freedom of conscience and security of the state.

The guarantees of a secular state in the religious sphere are one of the pivotal points: the state's religious tolerance has its limits. In fact, tolerance ends where the threat of religious totalitarianism appears, that is, when there is a potential threat of a

secular political system turning into a theocratic one. In a secular society, religion and the state, faith and politics cannot blend, otherwise the secular social-political order will disappear along with the democratic institutions. This will destroy the constitutional pillar of any secular state and violate the corresponding framework documents issued by the world community that regulate the relations between religion and political power and between faith and civil society.

The Current Situation in the Religious Sphere: Zones and Confessions

I have already written that Islam is the main religion in our republic, yet Christianity and Judaism also have their followers. The majority of the Muslims are Azeris, nearly all of them being Shi'a; the Sunnis are in the minority and can be described as an ethnoconfessional minority.

The country has two "Muslim zones" divided along the Baku-Shemakha-Evlakh-Ganja-Kazakh-Nakhichevan line. The southern zone is found to the south of the line and reaches the Iranian border. It is predominantly a Shi'a zone with an Azeri, Talysh, Tat, and partly Kurdish population. There is a small number of Sunnis there, too: Akhyska, Tartars, and some Kurds. There are also Christians: Orthodox Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Greeks, and Georgians; Russian Christian schismatics and sectarians; German Catholics and Lutherans; monophysitic Udins; Gregorian Armenians; Juur (Mountain Jews), Ashkenazim (European Jews); Ebraeli (Georgian Jews); and Geras (Russian Judaists). At the turn of the 21st century certain nontraditional trends reached Azerbaijan: Wahhabis and Nursists, Naqshbandis and Suleymanis, Ali-Ilyahis, Fayzullists and Ibrahimis among the Muslims; Hindu Krishnaitis and certain Christian Protestant sects.

The second zone goes up north to the border with Russia and Georgia; it is populated mainly by Sunni Muslims (Lezghians and Avars; Kryzes and Tsakhurs, Budugs and Khinalugs, and some Ingiloes and Azeris. The local Russians are Christians (schismatics and sectarians); the local Udins are monophysitic; some of the Ingiloes belong to the Georgian Christian church; and the local Juurs are Judaists.

This division into zones creates a clear picture of the localization of confessions and their followers, and of the places where ethnoconfessional minorities live, identifies the places populated by the followers of nontraditional trends, as well as the foreign influence on believers (activities of foreign religious organizations and missionaries in the republic), and shows the reasons for the state's persecution of followers of nontraditional trends and the results of the persecution.

Azerbaijan has never known religious conflicts among Muslims of different trends, between Muslims and the followers of other confessions, or among ethnoconfessional minorities for religious reasons; the republic was fortunate to avoid anti-Semitism and Jewish pogroms. The local Shi'ites and Sunnis are not divided: they read the Koran and its Al-i-Imran Surah, which are devoted to the primacy of monotheism and punishment of the apostates. There is no ethnoconfessional segregation either: for many centuries different confessions and numerous ethnoconfessional minorities have been living side by side in towns and villages. Take, for example, the town of Sheki: the majority of its 60,000 inhabitants are Sunni Azeris who live in peace with the local Shi'a Azeris; there are many relatives among them, they help each other in times of trouble, and attend the same mosques. They celebrate Novruz Bayramy, Gurban Bayramy and Uraza Bayramy together and live next door to each other. During the Shi'a days of mourning, the Sunnis

never celebrate their holidays or perform marriages. In Nakhichevan, the local Shi'a prefer to marry their daughters to Sunni Turks rather than to Shi'a Iranians. About 65,000 of the local people are currently working in Turkey.

By the beginning of 2004, the country had over 1,300 mosques and other Islamic cult facilities, and over 40 buildings belonging to other confessions. Today three Russian Orthodox churches are functioning in the capital of the republic. Back in 1907, one of the richest philanthropists, an Azerbaijani named Kh.Z. Tagiev, built a Cathedral of the Holy Myrrh Bearers in Baku, which fell into disrepair under Soviet power. It was restored using the money of another Azerbaijani, philanthropist A. Gurbanov, and was opened and consecrated in the presence of political leaders and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2003. Christian schismatics and sectarians have prayer houses of their own; there are seven synagogues in the republic: two in Baku, three in the so-called Krasnaia (Red) (formerly Evreiskaia, or Jewish) Sloboda (Quarter) of the town of Guba, and two in Oguz. One of the Baku synagogues built in 2003 with the help of the money of the Joint organization is the largest in the Caucasus. The old Catholic church in Baku was reconstructed; the foundation of another one was laid in 2002 during the Pope's visit to Azerbaijan. There are over 500 places of worship in the republic: burials, caves, and tombs attended by followers of different confessions.

In 2003 the Albanian Udin Christian community was registered in Azerbaijan; later the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church will be restored. It functioned in Azerbaijan from the fourth century until 1836 when it was closed down by a decision of the czarist government and the Russian Orthodox Church at the request of the Armenian Church that seized the Albanian churches in Azerbaijan and Jerusalem (according to an old tradition, each of the autocephalous churches had its own quarter in Jerusalem). An Albanian church in the village of Nidzh (Gabala District), the home of an Udin ethnocultural community, is being restored with the help of Norway, a considerable part in which was played by Thor Heyerdahl, a famous traveler and academic. Norway also paid for restoration of an Albanian church opened in 2003 in the village of Kish (the Sheki District).

There are educational establishments and courses teaching the fundamentals of all the traditional confessions: the Baku Muslim University with branches in several districts; and madrasahs in Sheki, Zakataly, Lenkoran and Baku. Mosques, churches and synagogues offer religious courses to their congregations (women, men, and children). There are several religious periodicals: *Islam*, the official newspaper of the Caucasian Muslims; *Islamskiy mir* (Islamic World), *Golos Islama* (The Voice of Islam), *Jamaat* and *Nur*; and another newspaper *Islam-Press* started coming out in 2003. The heads of all confessions, senior clerics of the mosques, churches, and synagogues, and teachers at religious schools have specialized education; the majority of them are citizens of the AR.

The Zakataly District in the Northern zone has the largest number of cult buildings: there are 42 mosques for the population of slightly more than 80,000; the district center has a branch of Baku Muslim University with a boarding school and a mosque. The Nakhichevan Republic comes second with 30 mosques per 200,000; the village of Nekhram is a sort of champion: it has 10 mosques per 20,000 members of the population.

Formally, the mosques are not divided into the Shi'a and Sunni ones (with the exception of the Wahhabi mosques in the cities of Baku, Khachmaz, Gusar, and Khudat, and in the villages of Gobu, Grakhi, Neredjan, Gotagly, Gusar-chai, and Murshid-oba attended only by the local Wahhabis). The mosque in the Alley of Shakhids (Martyrs) in Baku is frequented mainly by the Sunni Turks working in the capital; they belong to the nontraditional trends of Nursists and Suleymanis, Ibrahimis and Naqshbandis, Ali-Ilyahis and Fayzullists.

By 2004, 230 religious communities completed the process of obligatory registration at the State Committee for Religious Organizations (hereinafter referred to as the Committee); 201 of them are Muslim communities; others are Christian communities of Orthodox Russians and Georgians; Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, followers of the New Apostolic Church; the Molokans, the Seventh-Day Adventists; the Pentecostals (Eastern Star); Nehelamites; the Church of Laudation; The Life-Giving Grace; and the Jehovah's Witnesses. There are also Judaic communities—of the Mountain Jews, Ashkenazim, Georgians, and Geras.

Starting in the 1990s foreign religious organizations and missionaries have been stepping up their activities; they brought in nontraditional trends with its headquarters in the United States, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, and the Arab countries.

The Church of Laudation has been functioning in Sweden since 1995; its missionaries came to Azerbaijan with the slogan “God Loves Azerbaijan”; it was registered in 1999 at the request of foreign religious organizations: the registration process took some time because some of its charter provisions contradicted the Azerbaijanian Law on the Freedom of Religion. At first the church had 500 followers; now it has much more: its members live in Baku, Sumgait, and a few other towns and districts. In fact, its following is the largest among the nontraditional Christian communities in Azerbaijan. Nearly half of its members are young people, 50 percent of whom are Azeris. Its scope of activity and financial status allow it to organize bi-annual conferences with foreign guests; its members receive humanitarian aid and financial support; it maintains contacts with the Word of Life international humanitarian organization set up by the Swedish Church in 1983 with its headquarters in Uppsala.

The Life-Giving Grace is quite successful among young people; and the Krishnaites are fairly popular in Baku.

Local Wahhabism is not aggressive; it attracts followers with its ideas of “simplicity of religion.” Significantly, it acquired followers among the ethnoconfessional minorities (Lezghians, Avars, and Tsakhurs) who, after being removed from administrative and other structures, felt uneasy. Wahhabism has offered an outlet for popular discontent among these groups caused by ethnic discrimination and an infringement on their constitutional civil rights. It should be added that this form of protest is readily accepted by the faithful because of its commonly understood religious tinge.

On the whole, the nontraditional trends appeared because the rivaling foreign forces are prepared to go to any length to increase their influence on the local people—religion being one of their instruments. Their missionaries find eager listeners among the destitute, who need humanitarian, material and spiritual assistance—regrettably their number in the republic is large.

The spread of the nontraditional trends challenges the secular state, which fails to show enough concern for its citizens. At the same time, their popularity shows an inadequate understanding of the freedom of conscience, while very primitive propaganda of a return to the nation’s spiritual sources and the unconvincing personal example of the political and spiritual leaders are disorienting society, which has just obtained a chance to go back to their traditional spiritual roots which fit their mentality and self-identity, as well as ethnic psychology, culture, and the national idea (ideology). As a result, not only the titular nation, but also the ethnoconfessional minorities are at a loss. The nontraditional trends offer seemingly “fresh ideas,” while the missionaries fake an interest in the material and spiritual needs of their followers.

The nontraditional trends add a lot of politics to religion—this is especially true of the most popular religion, Islam. In other words, there are attempts to blend the dominating confession into the secular state and promote certain Islamic trends under the guise of “understandable” Islam. This can be interpreted as the potential transformation of the secular state into a theocratic political system, something that had never existed in Azerbaijan.

Freedom of Conscience and Security of the State

In 1991 Northern Azerbaijan became independent, while society found itself in a spiritual vacuum. This caused concern among the political leaders because the void created by the collapsed communist ideology was filled by foreign religious organizations and missionaries flocking to the republic in huge numbers. Foreign forces and nontraditional trends might have tried to replace Moscow as the dominant factor. Not only theocratic states (Iran and the Arab countries) showed a lot of interest. Secular Turkey

and through it the NATO countries were also very active. Religious influence came from the Northern Caucasus (Daghestan and Chechnia), while the U.S., Georgia, the Vatican, Armenia, Great Britain, Afghanistan, France, Pakistan, Germany, and Scandinavia were also involved.

Our country is mainly a Shi'a zone, therefore the Iranian influence was most pronounced. Tehran is acting through its diplomatic representatives, religious charities, missionaries, and the media, as well as through "agents of influence," mainly in the Southern zone. Talysh (the Lenkoran, Astara, Lerik, Masally, Yardymly, and Jalilabad districts) attracts a lot of attention.

Most of the Iranian-speaking Talyshes live in Iran, therefore the ethnoconfessional minority in Azerbaijan and Iran are doing their best to implant the idea of reunification under the aegis of Tehran. There are madrasahs that teach a politicized version of Islam and are oriented toward Iran; the same can be said about itinerant missionaries, and the radio and TV broadcasts reaching the republic from Iran.

The Iranian organization Imdad (with its headquarters in Ganja) is working in other regions, even with Sunni majorities (in Sheki, for example); it promotes the ideas of Imam Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 Iranian revolution, and supports its ideas with humanitarian aid. There is a cultural center of the Iranian consulate and a Center of Islamic Propaganda in Nakhichevan. Tehran paid for a mosque with a capacity of 1,000 in Nakhichevan and for another one in Shakhbuz; it organizes pilgrimages to the holy places of Iran. There is a bookshop called Alkhoda in Baku that offers a wide range of Islamic works, including Khomeini's writings; its branch functions in Khachmaz, a city in the Sunni zone. According to certain sources, Tehran is promoting Hezbollah, a pro-Iranian extremist organization, well-known across the Middle East for its terrorist activities.

It follows from the above that Iran's confessional presence in Azerbaijan is highly politicized; this is further confirmed by the activities of the local Islamic Party with its headquarters in Baku and branches in some of the regions, including Zakataly in the Sunni zone. This political organization is a vehicle of Iranian propaganda and political Shi'ism. Its offices abound in works and portraits of Khomeini. The same can be said about the Teaching Complex functioning at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Baku.

Turkey, a secular republic in which Sunni Muslims predominate, is acting through its official structures and religious organizations mainly in the Southern zone (Baku and Nakhichevan). Since 1992 the Ministry for Religious Affairs of Turkey has been cooperating with certain religious communities of our country. The Turkish Youth Foundation paid for 20 mosques and madrasahs in our republic and is supporting several religious educational establishments. They are headed either by Turks or Azeris trained in Turkey. The Akhyska who found shelter in Azerbaijan receive aid from Turkish organizations; emigration to Turkey is encouraged; and they have a journal called *Akhyska* published in Turkey. Turks helped set up a department of theology at Baku State University and are now teaching there; they built a mosque of the "Ottoman type" in the Alley of the Shakhids attended by local people and Turks working in Baku. During the greatest Muslim holydays, Gurban Bayramy and Uraza Bayramy, certain categories of Baku dwellers and even deputies receive food parcels. There is a Turkic university, Kavkaz, in the capital.

In Nakhichevan Turks built a mosque for 1,000 people, the Turkish consulate runs a Cultural Center to work with the local people; and there are Turkish students at the local university. A Turkish lyceum and a bookshop selling religious and secular literature are also functioning there; two other cities have similar lyceums: one for girls in Ordubad and the other for boys in Sharur.

Ankara is prominent in the Northern Sunni zone, especially at the local mosque and madrasah in Zakataly. Turkey pays for over 100 students of the local branch of Baku Muslim University. There are Turks at the central madrasah in Sheki: teachers and the headmaster; they pay for 150 students.

Even though a Sunni country, Turkey has established closer relations in Azerbaijan, is acting in a wider area, and has more "agents of influence" than Shi'a Iran for many reasons. First, the Azeris cannot forget that for over 2,500 years the Persian states have been trying to deprive the non-Persians of their ethnic identity; this was done in relation to the Azerbaijanian autochthonous population. Early in the 1960s,

Iranian monarch Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi formulated a clear and succinct state policy of protecting Iranian interests during the White Revolution. (It is still going on in the theocratic Islamic Republic of Iran: a united territory, common history, culture, religion, and language for a single ethnos.) Second, the Turkish and Azeri tongues are close relatives, which cannot be said of the Persian language. Third, Iran is actively developing its contacts with Armenia, which seized over 16 percent of Azerbaijan's territory and is supporting the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh republic. Fourth, in Iran the local Armenian community enjoys certain privileges: it is allowed to produce ethyl alcohol in a country where prohibition is absolute. On top of this, one of the Armenian churches was declared "a valuable historical monument" to be placed under state protection. Fifth, Turkey supports Azerbaijan militarily and politically; through its territory our country can reach the rest of the world: the Muslim world of Hither Asia, the OSCE, and NATO countries.

The Sunni Arab East has strong positions in Azerbaijan as well. The most active are its organizations Ansar al-Islam, the Federation of the Islamic Front of the East, Wahhabi emissaries, and missionaries of other nontraditional Islamic trends. Several groups headed by an organization of Muslim students in Baku acting under the slogan "Back to Early Islam" is also rather active. A Kuwait-based society for supporting Islam built the Abu Baqr mosque and pays for it. It is the gathering place for the Baku Wahhabis. An organization called Revival of the Muslim Heritage also based in Kuwait funded construction of over 60 Muslim cult facilities in the republic. They mostly appeared in the Northern Sunni zone. Kuwait missionaries are teaching Islam in free courses of the Arabic language, the Koran, and the Shari'a. They send some of their pupils to Arab countries to continue their religious education. The Nidjat society from Saudi Arabia opened its main office in Baku and branches in Sheki and other places in the Northern zone. It does not limit itself to religious propaganda and is very active in charities which focus mainly on children under 15. The London-based Palestinian Society of Islam Support is also engaged in charitable work; in Sheki it helps orphaned children.

In 2003 the Muslim World League headed by Dr. Abdullah ibn Abdulmuhsin Al-Turki from Saudi Arabia visited our republic.

Missionaries from Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, and London were especially active in the Northern zone in 1991-1992. In 1993 their place was taken by belligerent members of the Taliban; later Turks replaced them.

The Arabian organizations are the main vehicle of nontraditional Islamic trends, primarily Wahhabism. Today, it has gained enough supporters to become another ethnic-confessional community composed mainly of Lezghians, Avars, and Tsakhurs, there are also Azeri and even Russian followers.

Wahhabism is an official form of Islam in Saudi Arabia, one of the richest and most influential Muslim states. Significantly, it is a strategic partner of the United States in the Arab world. We can even presume that the spread of Wahhabism in our country is not only of a confessional, but also of political nature. The Arab countries' activity earned them a niche, side by side with Iran and Turkey, in confessional and political life and "agents of influence" of their own.

Wahhabism penetrates our country from the Northern Caucasus, too: from Daghestan and Chechnia. Lezghians, Avars, and Tsakhurs living in Azerbaijan bring in Wahhabism from Daghestan, while Chechens traveling between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Northern Caucasus, or staying in the AR for rehabilitation or treatment, studying at local higher educational establishments or just living here, bring Wahhabism from Chechnia.

The Christian West uses all sorts of channels, including religious ones, to contact ethnoconfessional minorities. This is true, in the first place, of the United States, Sweden, Great Britain, Germany, France, and the Vatican. There are conferences and seminars dealing with religious issues organized in Azerbaijan along with local NGOs or the State Committee for Religious Organizations, as well as with the ethnic policy advisor to the President of Azerbaijan. They are attended by the heads of ethnoconfessional minorities, members of diplomatic corps in Baku, the U.N., the OSCE, and Western governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The following international forums of confessional-political nature were held in Baku:

- “State Politics in Relation to the Ethnic Minorities of Azerbaijan” was held under the aegis of the Ethnic Policy Department of the presidential administration and the London Information Network for conflicts and state development “Caucasian LINKS—for Peace and Democracy in the Caucasus” (1991);
- “Attitude of Islam to Terror: True Meaning and Distorted Interpretations” convened at the Committee’s initiative (2001);
- “How to Ensure Religious Freedom when Fighting Extremism: Problems and Positive Experience in Azerbaijan” under the aegis of the Committee and the OSCE (2001);
- “The Role of Religion in Contemporary Society: Looking for Ways to Combat Terrorism” under OSCE guidance (2002);
- “Islam in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan: Religious Freedom and Regional Security” organized by a local NGO, the Institute of Peace and Democracy, under the aegis and with the financial support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (2003).

In October 2003 the Constituent Conference of the Union of Churches of Evangelical Christian Baptists of the AR was held in Baku. It was attended by delegates from the capital, Ganja, Sumgait, Aliabad, Zakataly, Neftechaly, Agdash, Gusary, Alibayramly, the village of Ivanovka, and guests from Russia, America, Ukraine, and Moldova.

For over 200 years now the Georgian Church has been working among the Ingiloes of Azerbaijan living along the Georgian border in the Zakataly zone. It has already baptized some members of this ethnoconfessional minority. Now these people are regularly invited to Georgia to study, where they are given Georgian names. They come back as “agents of influence.”

Since the 1990s the zone has been frequented by Vatican emissaries. In 2002 Pope John-Paul II visited the Azerbaijanian Republic. He was received at the top level. The Pope participated in founding a new Catholic cathedral in Baku and conducted a ceremonial mass for the local Catholics. Today, there are 1,200 of them in our country. It should be added that the Vatican gave \$100,000 to the victims of the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan.

In 2003, Bartholomew II, Patriarch of New Rome, visited Azerbaijan to familiarize himself with the republic.

Armenia is pursuing its own aims when working with the local Kurds. In the 1980s, the local community reproduced a map of Kurdistan delivered from Armenia that showed some of the border areas of Armenia and Azerbaijan with Kurdish population as parts of a hypothetical Kurdish autonomy. This fictitious state included the Lachin, Kel’badjar, Gubadly, Zangelan, and Jabrail districts of Azerbaijan captured by the Armenian aggressors in 1988-1994.

Incited by the Avar People’s Society Jamaat, the Avars who have been living in Azerbaijan since the 17th century are claiming their territory in the Northern zone.

In turn, the Lezghians inspired by the international organization, the Lezghian Popular Movement Sadval, and the Lezghian National Council are talking about uniting the border areas of Azerbaijan and Daghestan into a free economic zone to be later transformed into a Lezghian state.

All sorts of organizations are working among the Jews, yet none has made any territorial or other claims. Three Jewish communities and their foreign partners are busy helping the Jews living in Azerbaijan. The republican authorities are quite satisfied. The authorities’ attitude toward the Akhyska is the same.

A Greek community, which has no territorial or other claims, receives humanitarian and other aid from the Greek embassy in Baku. The authorities are quite satisfied with them too.

Since 2002 an NGO, the International Association for Religious Freedom, which unites many confessions (its headquarters are in Washington), has been functioning in the republic. It has already held several events dedicated to religious freedom and plans to open a School of Religious Freedom in Baku.

All religious and other organizations based in the Near and Far Abroad are pursuing similar aims: exerting stronger influence on believers, ethnoconfessional minorities, and political power structures. Their methods are highly varied, ranging from charities to brainwashing; from missionaries to active dissemination of their political, confessional, cultural, and ideological views; from personal contacts to “agents of influence.” They employ all possible official channels and do not hesitate to use illegal methods to distribute their printed matter and broadcast radio and TV programs. While pressing along confessional lines, our near and far neighbors seek political and other advantages in Azerbaijan, they want to protect their positions and their investments. One of their main tasks is to find out how the religious situation can affect the activity of foreign companies; whether their presence in the AR is safe enough; whether the Azeris and ethnoconfessional minorities are free in their choice of employment; whether the local people are loyal enough to the local religious and political structures and to the states with interests in Azerbaijan; what factors (political, confessional, intellectual, cultural, economic, investment, or financial) can promote or impede the foreign presence in the AR; and what can be said about the confessional or political affiliations of potential partners.

Relations between Political Power and Confessions

The Constitution of the Azerbaijanian Republic says that all confessions are equal before the law; it bans dissemination and propaganda of religions that humiliate human dignity and contradict the principles of humanity. Our republic is a secular state in which religion is separated from the state; the educational system is secular, which means that it, too, is separated from religion. A secular state should not interfere in the confessional sphere and infringe on freedom of conscience. All cases in which the state should act differently are envisaged in the Constitution.

In real life the relations between religion and the state are guided by laws and decrees, through which official structures can control the confessional sphere and believers. These forms of continuous monitoring have been inherited from the Soviet system and the Communist Party, which strictly controlled everything around it and did not tolerate any noncommunist manifestations in any sphere, religion included.

Today, relations between the state and religious organizations are based on the following documents: constitutional articles “Religion and the State” (Art 18) and “Freedom of Conscience” (Art 48), the Law on the Freedom of Religion, a presidential decree On Setting up the State Committee of the Azerbaijanian Republic for Religious Organizations, and a corresponding document; an instruction On the Rules of State Registration of Religious Organizations, and the Rules of Administrative Measures.

The documents related to the Committee set up in 2001 allow it to monitor the conditions conducive to freedom of conscience, register religious organizations and create a data bank; and invite experts to check the curricula of religious educational establishments, as well as the constituent documents and charters of religious organizations. The Committee is expected to regularly inform the president about the religious situation in the country; it represents the state in conflicts with religious organizations, holds meetings designed to regulate relations between the state and religion, supervises the fulfillment of corresponding laws, and permits or bans the publication, export, or import of religious printed matter and other materials. It is entitled to take all necessary measures in cases of confessional or religious-political dissent, threats to the republic’s national security, or attempts to infringe on the religious freedom and lawful activities of religious organizations. It can contribute to drawing up curricula for religious educational establishments, etc.

In other words, the Committee represents the state, which is closely watching the religious sphere. It has local structures (Commissions for Religious Affairs) and a Department for Religious Affairs in the

Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic set up in 2002. Together with other official structures, the Committee regularly convenes conferences, seminars, and meetings (there were 18 of them in the past three years held in Baku and elsewhere) to explain the state's policies and intentions in the religious sphere and to issue relevant instructions (for example, the "Propaganda of Documents Regulating the Relations Between the State and Religion," and a conference-seminar was held in the city of Shemakha in 2002). Twice a month the Committee invites heads of religious communities to a seminar, at which they learn about the history of confessions in Azerbaijan and have a chance to discuss their communities' activities. The Committee is preparing a *Handbook on the Religious Organizations in the Azerbaijanian Republic* for publication to keep the broad public and believers well informed; and it publishes a *Bulletin*, which repeatedly stresses that religion should serve political power. It is distributed free of charge among all executive structures and religious organizations, diplomatic missions and offices of international organizations, and legal and physical entities. By early 2004, eight issues had been published with a total circulation of over 11,000.

The Committee is involved in organizing free courses teaching the fundamentals of the traditional religions; it draws up curricula for them, which include the principles of statehood of the AR as a special subject. It has already organized courses at which members of the Russian religious communities study the state language; the Committee is also involved in publishing literature related to the spiritual sphere. In 2003 alone, it published and distributed free of charge a textbook *Osnovy religii* (Fundamentals of Religion) for secondary schools (15,000 copies in Azeri and 5,000 in Russian) written by Prof. Rafik Aliev, the Committee's Chairman. He has also written another book *Islam*, published in 2000. When speaking at an international forum on Religious Freedom and the Freedom of Conscience held in Vienna in 2003, he presented the official conception of the AR in the religious sphere and pointed out, in particular, that though his country had been involved in numerous wars, none of them were religious. He also said that his Committee had to explain to the public that strong power alone could protect religion and religious freedom, therefore religion and power had common tasks, with the latter working hard to create adequate conditions for the former and to preserve religious pluralism and religious purity as the cornerstone of morals. The state helped its citizens to make the right choice in the religious sphere.

The Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus helps political power work with the Muslim religious organizations and educational establishments. A. Pashazadeh has been its head since 1980, when Heydar Aliev was at the helm of the Azerbaijanian Soviet Socialist Republic. His name is associated with the Soviet system, therefore he is not trusted. As distinct from the spiritual leader of the Muslims of Russia, he offers no initiatives in the confessional and civil life of our republic.

The state ethnic policy advisor to the President of Azerbaijan, who is in charge of the ethnoconfessional minorities, has more general tasks to tackle. Political leaders look at power structures as efficient instruments when dealing with the religious and ideological spheres.

In this way the official documents, the Committee, the Spiritual Administration, the state advisor, and the power structures form a strong network that reliably protects the state's political positions in the religious sphere and supervises confessional life and the believers. The NGOs, however, are convinced that the country does not need these structures, since not one genuinely democratic society has such a thing. They regard this pyramid as a Soviet legacy, a sign of the state's political weakness, which was unable to formulate a national idea.

Political power and its structures are doing their best to protect the religious community from outside influence: religion has developed into a pillar of spiritual life that can be easily damaged by excessive politicization. Control alone can guarantee political security and religious tolerance in the confessional sphere and in the society as a whole, as well as prevent the penetration of nontraditional trends. In fact, political power looks at them as a "nonsecular" form of the main confession, as an attempt to destabilize the religious sphere and, through it, the political situation. The youth is especially responsive to nontraditional religions. This explains why the political establishment regards them as "extremist," "alien," and "fundamentalist."

On the other hand, the majority of the titular nation treats the nontraditional trends negatively as contradicting the nation's spiritual and mental makeup, self-identity, and culture. It should be said that the difficulties of the transition period are making hearts vulnerable to these trends. This is especially true of the ethnoconfessional minorities who are treated as lower-class citizens.

Political power employs nontraditional methods to fight "religious dissidents" (primarily among the ethnoconfessional minorities) in the Northern zone where Lezghians, Avars, and Tsakhurs live. The beards of the local Wahhabis are shaved off; physical violence is used against them; they are made redundant; and they are accused of high treason and brought to court. Under the pretext of combating terrorism and religious extremism (which became especially topical after the events of 9/11 in America and 23-26 October, 2002 in Moscow), all Wahhabi mosques were closed. These "legitimate" measures stabilized the situation, yet latent tension remained and a stand-by situation developed.

The local Wahhabis explain these actions by political power's desire to strengthen the influence of official Shi'ism by weakening the positions of the Sunnis in the Northern zone. At the same time, the authorities tried to defuse separatism among the Lezghians, Avars, and Tsakhurs of Russia and Azerbaijan who wanted reunification. To a certain extent, this is also true of the Talyshes, the majority of whom live in Southern Azerbaijan.

There is another important reason: the nontraditional Islamic trends are very popular among young people, the socially least protected group, and among the ethnoconfessional minorities. In these two groups unemployment is very high.

On the surface, the Wahhabis are tolerated in Baku—they have preserved their Abu Baqr mosque; those who frequent it are not persecuted; and Wahhabi literature is sold freely. The same can be said about the Nursists, Fayzullists, Ali-Ilyahis, Suleymanis, Ibrahimis, and Naqshbandis who congregate in the mosque in the Alley of the Shakhids. This can be probably explained by the fact that many of them are Turkish guest workers.

The nontraditional trends are persecuted for political, rather than religious, reasons. These efforts are intended to actively oppose separatism among the Lezghians, Avars, Tsakhurs, and Talyshes, as well as to stem, or limit, the efforts of states from the Near and Far Abroad to influence some of the Azerbaijani citizens (especially those infected by separatist sentiments) through religious channels. For example, there are more vigorous efforts to counteract the influence of Daghestan and Chechnia in the Northern zone and of Iran, in the Southern. This can be said about Nakhichevan, where Iranian and Turkish influence is being actively trimmed down. Foreign missionaries are deported; in August 2001, 22 madrasahs were temporarily closed: the sources of their funding were vague, while curricula non-existent. The graduates received diplomas that differed from those required by the state; the teaching was going on in a foreign tongue, while not all headmasters and teachers were citizens of our republic. The AR Ministry of Justice suspended the groups acting under the slogan "Back to Early Islam" guided by an organization of foreign Muslim students of Baku higher learning establishments who preached religious dissent. The republican authorities prohibited missionaries from Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, and the U.K. from entering the Northern zone, where in 1991-1992 they not only promoted religion, but also gathered intelligence of non-religious nature. In 1993 they were replaced with members of the Taliban who pursued similar aims; there were "Wahhabi fighters" among them. They were also deported.

In 2003, 50 communities did not receive official registration for various reasons. By a court decision, the activities of the Baptist organization, the Church of Love, was suspended for "manifestations of religious intolerance and propaganda of hatred of other religions." For similar reasons the Jehovah's Witnesses received a "final official warning." The Christian community Adra, acting among the Muslim Lezghians in the towns of Yalama and Nabran, was banned for the same reasons.

Political power is controlling the confessional sphere and can influence the believers and the ethnoconfessional minorities. Its efforts proceed in two directions: inside and outside the country, for the simple reason that not only the nontraditional trends are dangerous, but also the attempts of foreign forces to influence the believers and, through them, the political structures. In their fight against religious dissidents and separatism, the political leaders rely on official political, religious, and power structures.

C o n c l u s i o n

Both the believers and the authorities are speaking loudly about religion, yet they are not hearing one another; for this, and certain other reasons, their relations should be discussed within the “ethnos-religion-power” formula.

The titular nation of our republic (the Azeris) is mostly Muslim; the domestic and foreign policies of the AR take this into account. At the same time, power does not infringe (at least obviously) on the rights of other traditional confessions and the ethnoconfessional communities, yet it has a negative attitude toward all nontraditional religious trends as often being politically biased.

So far, it is not absolutely clear who are the “believers” and who are “religious people.” This applies to the entire post-Soviet expanse, of which Azerbaijan is a part. Faith and religion are two different things: not all believers are religious people. There is any number of people in the republic still burdened by the communist ideas; others have reached a crossroads and are looking for spiritual guidance. In the absence of clear indications and a genuine spiritual leader, this is not easy. Still others are not sure that their faith answers all the questions brought up by the difficulties of the transition period; they are not sure that their spiritual and political leaders know these answers. There is another group that asks itself, what if the religious organizations are just instruments used by the authorities? What if they serve politics rather than those who follow them and fail to provide them with much-needed moral and spiritual support? And, finally, the logical conclusion, can the confessional-political tandem be trusted?

Today, just as in the distant past, religion and politics are marching together; they are hand in glove, or two sides of one coin. A state and society might be secular or theocratic—this is irrelevant. A meeting of the highest hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox, Georgian, and Armenian churches and the spiritual head of the South Caucasian Muslims on 26 November, 2003 in Moscow provided one more confirmation of the above. They met to look for a political solution to two important problems: the Karabakh crisis and the “velvet revolution” in Tbilisi. A joint document recommending political solutions for all problems was the outcome.

Still, the separation of religion from politics is one of the main prerequisites for the continued existence and development of a secular, multi-ethnic, and multi-confessional democratic state guided by common human values. In such a state, religion should take into account the traditions and foundations of the state, and its political structure, as well as the desire of the local people to follow the familiar confessional forms.

To normalize relations within the formula described above, the state needs a conception of ethnic and religious policy to formulate the nature, aims, tasks, vectors, and mechanisms of the framework relations between religious confessions and ethnoconfessional minorities, on the one hand, and the state, on the other.

This is closely related to the following regularity: stable power runs little risk of losing its position in the state; it does not create foes in the religious sphere and is not engaged in witch-hunting; it is not tempted to shift its guilt onto confessions or ethnoconfessional minorities; and its presence in the religious sphere is hardly felt.

In the same way, a strong power, with considerable economic potential, is not afraid of confessions. As a result they are free to act, while society is less affected by nontraditional trends. In this context foreign forces are unlikely to penetrate the country under the guise of “new” religious ideas. The traditional confessions, in turn, are not pressed by the state. In fact, under these conditions there is no need to set up specialized structures for religious organizations: the believers, satisfied with their life and social status, cannot be distracted by nontraditional ideas.

Today, after the events of 9/11 in the U.S. and 23-26 October, 2002 in Moscow, a secular state regards open control over religious organizations its right and duty. It has become important for the secular state to promote “enlightened” religious feelings; to start an open theological discussion; and to create “ideological immunity” to the virus of nontraditional trends which may add political dimensions to religious processes; and the same can be said for traditional religions too.

This does not give the secular state the right to control the sphere of religious feelings; education is the most effective form of protecting any secular state and its political order if and when it reaches socio-economic and confessional-ideological stability. A secular state needs spiritual beacons, therefore, morality should be rooted in common human values and religion; together they should serve as the ideological foundation of any state (including a secular state). What is needed is a rational balance between the secular and the religious. In other words, a secular state and its political leaders should draw clear boundaries of their tolerance in relation to religion and ethnoconfessional minorities and work within the formula: “ethnos-religion-power.”

REGIONAL POLITICS

**GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS OF RUSSIA,
THE U.S. AND CHINA
IN CENTRAL ASIA**

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After the Soviet Union collapsed all of its former republics became independent states; as a result Central Asia, a closed, enigmatic, and hard-to-reach region of Eurasia, again found a worthy place in the very heart of the continent. This changed Eurasia's geopolitical map and revealed the global geopolitical and strategic weight of Central Asia. A region that during the long Cold War years remained in the background has reclaimed the attention of the world leaders and a key role in their global strategy. Geographically, Central Asia is the core of Eurasia, a link that connects it with the Middle East, and a transit corridor that spreads the influence of the world powers in all directions.

American strategists are convinced that, together with control over the region, the United States will gain control over economically developed Europe and East Asia and, probably, over Africa and other areas. The region is rich in energy fuels: there is the opinion that Kazakhstan's reserves amount to at least 1 to 1.7 trillion barrels of oil (or nearly 2 percent of world's oil reserves).¹ According to other sources, Central Asian reserves are estimated at \$3 trillion. Together with the neighboring coastal Caspian areas, the figures reach astro-

¹ See: K. Tokaefu, "Hasakesitande duiwai zhengce" (K. Tokaev, "Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan"), *Waijiao xueyan xuebao*, No. 3, 2002, p. 11.

nomical dimensions. The Caspian reserves of natural gas are estimated at 1.4 trillion c m, while the prospected oil reserves amount to 0.7-1 trillion tons. This has earned the Caspian area the name of "second Persian Gulf." About 60 to 70 percent of oil is con-

centrated on the Caspian shelf next to Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. This suggests that Central Asia will remain an arena of rivalry among the world and regional powers. Let us discuss the geopolitical strategies of three of them: Russia, the U.S. and China.

Russia's Geopolitical Strategy

In the past Russia has pursued an aggressive policy in Central Asia designed to extend its influence in the region and Russify it.² When this influence reached its peak the Soviet Union fell apart due to its internal contradictions. This happened more than 12 years ago—so far, Russia has been unable to restore its former influence, while the road to its resurrection is a long one.

Today, especially after 9/11, Moscow's geopolitical strategy in Central Asia, as an inalienable part of its foreign strategy, has acquired special importance. It is expected to help Russia revive, therefore Moscow will constantly readjust it to the changing political situation. The very essence of Russia's strategy, however, will remain the same; in the foreign policy context it will include long-term friendship with Afghanistan and Iran; closer to home, it will rely on cooperation with Kazakhstan, control over Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and efforts to win Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan over to its side. This is determined by Russia's geographic position in relation to the regional countries and serves as an objective basis of Moscow's Central Asian strategy.

At the same time, Russia is growing weaker—it can no longer dispatch adequate forces to Central Asia. The Soviet Union's downfall deprived Russia of a large share of its strategic expanse and the larger part of its seaports. Today, Russia is facing even greater dangers created by the fact that although the Warsaw Treaty Organization has disappeared NATO continues to move eastwards. Its international position is worsening with each passing year. First, the Russian Federation lost nearly all of its political influence in every region of the world, with the exception of few CIS countries, even though it joined the G8 (according to the G7 + 1 formula). The Western countries accepted it so as to console it and keep it by their side because of its nuclear potential, which is very troubling to them. Second, Russia's effort to embrace the market economy has not yet produced the desired results: its GDP shrank by half in the last ten years and the standard of living dropped considerably; class differences are becoming more and more obvious, while public discontent is rising. Third, even though Russia does have nuclear weapons its conventional armaments are obsolete, while its army is not strong enough to stand up to the West. Being aware of this, Moscow has to concentrate on the CIS and frequently readjust its Central Asian policies.

In the region itself, all five countries are living through a period of economic and political transformations and the instability caused by them. The transfer to the market economy and the political changes led to unequal development and mass unemployment, and brought many enterprises to the brink of bankruptcy. This could easily develop into internal conflicts. Together with state sovereignty these countries recovered their ethnic identities; today they are building a new economic system. Suppressed in the Soviet Union, nationalism flared up, especially in the multinational republics. Today Russia cannot afford its control over Central Asia, which is a costly project; its current policies there may lure it into a trap similar to that of the Afghan war. In addition, today when Russia finds it hard to cope with its domestic problems, American and Western investments are very tempting for the Central Asian countries.

² See: Wang Jing, "Dui Zhongya shehui 'eluosihua' gainiande lilun tantao" (On the Problem of Russification of Central Asian Society), *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu*, No. 5, 2002, p. 64.

American Strategic Expansion

Attracted by its key strategic situation and rich fuel resources the United States looks at Central Asia as an inalienable part of its global strategy. Under Soviet power, the region was “a courtyard” of the Soviet Union to which America had no access. The Soviet Union’s disintegration gave Washington a key to the region’s political, military, and economic doors. Today, America is working toward turning Central Asia into a base of its strategic resources and a center from where it can keep the reins on Russia; it is gradually including the region in its global strategy. The U.S. geopolitical strategy in Eurasia aims at maintaining an American presence in Central Asia and protecting the U.S.’s growing economic interests there, in Europe, and the Far East. The United States is penetrating Central Asia in three directions.

First, politically the process is aggravating the relations between Russia and the region’s countries. The United States is forcing the local states to embrace Western values and democratic ideology in an effort to make them part of the Western system. Second, America is gradually building up its military presence in Central Asia; it is extending its influence and role in ensuring the region’s security; it is out to “help” the local states liberate themselves from their dependence on Russia in the security sphere. Third, Washington is using its economic might in the form of financial aid and direct investments to gain control over the largest enterprises in the key industries; it is especially active in the sphere of mining and transportation of natural resources.

After 9/11 American troops entered Central Asia, thus making it one of the main fronts of the global war on terror. The United States has successfully employed the slogan of antiterrorist struggle to penetrate the region; today it is gaining control over its hydrocarbon resources and Caspian oil; it is moving aside the oil export projects that America does not need and keeping Russia on the sidelines of the process. As a result, the Central Asian states are gradually moving away from Russia.

America’s successful penetration into Central Asia has eclipsed NATO’s eastward movement by far: Washington realized to a much greater extent what the North Atlantic Alliance wanted or planned to achieve. Strategically this means that in the future Russia will feel pressure from two sides and that Russia’s and China’s leading roles in the region will be ignored.³

China’s Strategic Interests: Their Basis and Development

Since the times of the Great Silk Road China has been maintaining close political, economic and cultural contacts with the region. Some people in the West expected Chinese influence to fill the post-Soviet vacuum in Central Asia. They were wrong.⁴ For a long time Beijing refused to be as actively involved in the regional developments as was expected. China displayed caution by watching the changes and taking time to formulate its own long-term Central Asian strategy. This should not be taken to mean that Beijing underestimated the region’s geopolitical importance and the value of its energy resources: the situation was too vague to interfere. On 15 June, 2001 the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was set up—this proved an important landmark in China’s policies, which meant that after a long period of deliberations and careful preparations Beijing acquired its Central Asian strategy. Since then, China has been using the SCO to be actively involved in all regional issues, to develop its relations with the

³ See: “Zhanlue shijiao: Mei zhu jun Zhongya chungji Eluosi” (Point of View: American Military Bases in Central Asia Threaten Russia’s Interests), *Lianhe zaobao* (Singapore), 8 February, 2002.

⁴ See: K.Sh. Khafizova, “Mezhdunarodnye sily v Tsentral’noy Azii i globalizatsia. Mezhdunarodnaia nauchno-prakticheskaiia konferentsia, posviashchennaia Godu Rossii v Kazakhstane,” in: *Kazakhstansko-rossiiskoe vzaimodeystvie v XXI veke i vyzovy globalizatsii*, Kazakhstan Publishers, Astana, 2004, p. 90.

local countries, to contribute to their stability and prosperity, and to look after its own strategic interests concentrated on developing local resources. By 1993 China had become an oil importer: its domestic production meets only 70 percent of domestic consumption. The Institute for International Energy Studies forecasted that by 2004 China will consume 330 thousand barrels of oil a day. China's developing economy will need more and more oil—the country will become even more oil-dependent, thus moving Beijing's energy strategy to the top of the list of priorities. Industrial resources are the worst headache in China and its most important security problem. Today, the country's energy sphere depends on the Middle East: 62 percent of imported oil comes from this region. The war in Iraq that started on 20 March, 2003 dealt a heavy blow to China's foreign trade and investments and slowed down its economic growth.

To avoid similar negative developments in the future, China should pay attention to Central Asia, Russia, the Caspian, and other regions. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have agreed to lay an oil pipeline to China; and the PRC extended a loan of \$69.7m to Uzbekistan to modernize drilling equipment in places of joint oil production. China's resource strategy in Central Asia and Russia is aimed at avoiding the negative results of oil disasters in the Middle East. Since Central Asia comes third after the Middle East and Siberia in terms of oil reserves, the SCO is doomed to an important role in world politics.

In 2001, China and Kazakhstan signed an agreement on good-neighborly relations and bilateral cooperation in the military and antiterrorist spheres, which allowed the sides to cut down armaments along the mutual border and increase mutual confidence; both countries are exerting greater efforts in the joint antiterrorist struggle.

The policy of "overall development of the western districts" now unfolding in China is an important part of China's economic integration with the Central Asian states. If continued, the present oil extraction rates in Russia may deplete its oil reserves by 2040—this adds importance to Central Asian energy resources when it comes to ensuring China's development in the 21st century.

China and the local states are facing a number of problems intimately related to the future: they should decide how they can strengthen cooperation within the SCO; how they can improve its trade and economic contacts; and how to use the resources together in order to combat terrorism and other threats, etc.

Post 9/11 Evolution of the U.S.-Russia-China Triangle

New Relations

American troops came to Central Asia after the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 under the slogan of the antiterrorist struggle. At the same time, Russia was secretly promoting its own interests. On the one hand, it extended considerable assistance to the Northern Alliance, representatives of which could occupy posts in Afghanistan's interim cabinet after the war. We should bear in mind that Moscow returned to Afghanistan not without Washington's help. On the other, by coordinating the struggle against the Afghan terrorists and liquidating threats to Central Asian stability with the help of the United States, Russia cut off foreign assistance to the illegitimate forces in Chechnia. Today, Russia is using the antiterrorist struggle to finally resolve the Chechen question, which is still causing concern in the West. The relations between Moscow and Washington improved not because Russia had grown stronger, but thanks to the Kremlin's correct diplomacy.

The relations between China and Russia also improved. After the Russian-American summit, the leaders of China, Russia, and four Central Asian states adopted the SCO Charter at the SCO summit held in 2002 in St. Petersburg. They agreed that the organization was neither a military bloc, nor a closed al-

liance. This provided the new regional structure, which lived through a period of turmoil after 9/11, with legal and political foundations for its cooperation with other international structures; it can admit new members and it acquired other useful aspects.

Despite certain differences in the triangle countries' bilateral relations, a certain breakthrough was made in this sphere in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States. Chinese-American relations became more active at the top level: after 9/11 President Bush visited China twice, while the newly elected Chinese leader Hu Jintao visited the United States. This means that both leaders cherish their bilateral contacts and hope to establish constructive relations. International incidents, of which the 9/11 attacks were one, are forcing nations to seek a balance between further expansion and the existing structures and to cushion contradictions between the further development of relationships and national interests.

At the same time, the events of 11 September added a new edge to the rivalry among China, Russia, and America for influence in Central Asia; they changed, to a great extent, the balance of forces among them. The United States gained access to Central Asia, invaded Iraq, withdrew from the ABM Treaty, and continues to ignore China's and Russia's opinions. The latter, however, have chosen to disregard this for the sake of common future interests; they are doing their best to display flexibility when dealing with the superpower and reach a consensus on issues of common interest.

The Central Asian Countries and the Triangle's Development

Before 11 September Central Asia presented no threat to the United States as a nuclear or a conflict-ridden zone. After 11 September the situation changed radically. Had the United States not emerged from the Cold War as the only superpower, had globalization not given it its present might and unique position, had post-Soviet Russia's might not declined dramatically and forced it to seek Western economic aid, the agreement between the U.S. and Russia over Central Asia would have probably been different from what it is now. In other words, Moscow would have never reconciled itself to the U.S. military presence there.

After 9/11 the local states established much closer ties with America and other Western countries. It should be noted that Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Uzbekistan became involved in NATO's Partnership for Peace program in 1994 (Tajikistan then also wanted to join). Uzbekistan carried out several military exercises with the United States. As soon as the military operation in Afghanistan began, Tashkent and Washington published a joint statement to the effect that they would be building new relations with the aim of further strengthening regional security and stability. In the latter half of 2003, Russia opened its military base in Kyrgyzstan near the town of Kant, thus making the republic the only country in the world with military bases of former political and military rivals on its territory.

Much will depend on how long the United States remains in the region: from the very beginning Washington announced that it intended to remove its troops from Afghanistan as soon as the war was over. Today, the United States speaks vaguely about the exact dates of the end of the war and the withdrawal of its troops. There is no doubt that the continued American presence in Central Asia greatly affects the structure of forces and the strategic balance and that all countries have become drawn into another round of rivalry and cooperation, therefore we urgently need a mechanism of continued dialog to preserve Central Asian security and avoid clashes among the great powers.

China did not stand by passively and watch as this dialog took off after 9/11 in the wake of the active antiterrorist movement that swept the world, but became actively involved in the process. Beijing clearly stated its attitude toward the post-war Afghan government and insisted that it should represent the interests of all sides, should be accepted by them, and should seek friendly relations with all countries.

The Position and Functions of the SCO in the Triangle

The SCO is intended to develop China's cooperation with the Central Asian countries in political, economic, security, scientific, technological, and other spheres. The ties between the Central Asian countries and the United States are prompting China to be more actively involved in communication with them, explain its position to them, listen to what they have to say, and look for solutions to crises. The SCO is the most convenient and legal channel of such communication and a reliable instrument of coordination in Central Asia. There is a great deal of outside interest in this organization: Pakistan and Mongolia have already expressed their desire to join, while India is seeking an observer status.

It would not be wise for Russia and America to brush China aside in pursuit of their own leading roles in Central Asia. In fact these powers cannot agree on many things, one of the examples being Moscow's stand on the American and British operation in Iraq. The war on Iraq is having a negative effect on Central Asian security, therefore the new international mechanisms—the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty of several of the CIS countries—should contribute to averting latent threats. Today, antiterrorist cooperation has brought Russia, America, and China together, which corresponds to the SCO's aims, therefore China should build its Central Asian strategy on the SCO; it should consolidate its positions, and improve its mechanism to get rid of its functional shortcomings in order to make it the regional leader. We have already mentioned that its Charter was signed in 2002 at the Petersburg summit; the same summit decided to set up an antiterrorist center in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. In this way the SCO leaders demonstrated that they were determined to fight terrorism along with other international forces. We can say that the SCO was born at the Petersburg summit.⁵

Prospects of the Big Triangle's Central Asian Strategy

Will cooperation and mutually advantageous equality serve as the basis of the relations among the great powers in the new conditions, or will they develop into a confrontation? This is one of the most important questions of the post-Cold War world. The countries of the triangle do share certain approaches to certain problems, yet this does not guarantee cooperation and harmonized relationships in Central Asia if they do not display good will and restraint.

The United States, the only post-Cold War superpower, will seek stronger influence in the region, while China and Russia will not move aside either. Let us hope that their long rivalry will assume a peaceful, rather than bellicose, nature, which is very much needed for continued stability in Central Asia and elsewhere. The prospects for the Central Asian strategies of Russia, China, and the United States suggest three options.

1. *Continued balance of interests and status quo.* As the only hegemonist, the United States will take account of the U.N.'s role and decisions and of other international instruments. Washington will discuss with Moscow its most important decisions on global issues and seek Beijing's opinion. In its Central Asian policies the United States will restrain its egotism, it will not ignore the interests of Russia and the local states, it will seek stability and peace in the region and will contribute to creating efficient antiterrorist mechanisms. The present situation is a product of the objective balance of international forces in Central Asia; its transitory nature is obvious, which explains Moscow's cautious policies there. There is the opinion in Russia that the American military presence threatens China to a much greater extent than Russia; these Russian

⁵ See: Pan Guang, "Zong E guanside lianxing fazhan yu xin shixiade Shanghai hezuo zuzhi" (Favorable Development of the Chinese-Russian Relations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the New Conditions), *Shijie jingji yanjiu*, Special issue, 2002, p. 34.

political scientists proceed from optimistic expectations of further rapprochement between the Kremlin and the White House. The place of Central Asia in American-Russian relations, however, depends on China's policy as well. Moscow and Beijing are maintaining good-neighborly relations. During the Russian president's visit to China, the sides signed a document on strategic partnership; and they extended bilateral antiterrorist cooperation within the SCO. We are convinced that stronger ties within this organization are the best possible alternative of developing cooperation between our countries in Central Asia.

2. *Confrontation of the powers and clashes among them.* Russia is aware of the limits of its retreat in the face of the growing threat to its Central Asian interests emanating from the United States. The changed situation in the antiterrorist struggle may dramatically change American-Russian relations and provoke a confrontation. The United States will remain in the region for a long time, despite its recent statements to the contrary, under the pretext of supporting the democratic reforms in the local countries. The American military bases in Central Asia have disrupted Russia's air defenses along the North Caucasus-Siberia front.⁶ American fighter planes stationed at the Kyrgyz air base can reach Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the larger part of Kazakhstan. It is probably for this reason that Russia acquired a military base in the town of Kant mentioned earlier. Moscow's further moves depend on Washington: having realized that its vital interests are threatened Russia may risk confrontation with the United States and put great pressure on the Central Asian states.

China is fairly successfully developing economic ties with the local countries; and the majority of the Central Asian nations have friendly feelings toward it. Russia does not want any close ties between America and China; cooperation between Moscow and Beijing within the SCO and further improvement of its mechanisms may serve as a counterbalance to American Central Asian policies.

3. *The powers refuse to maintain the balance of forces in the region.* Chaos will follow. Burdened with the problems of reviving its statehood and being aware of NATO's eastward movement, Russia, after weighing up all the "pros" and "cons," will abandon its claims to regional leadership. This will become possible if Russia is confronted with insurmountable difficulties; this may cause a chain reaction and change the geopolitical situation in the region and in Russia. America's confrontational strategy will threaten Russia's continued existence and will cause it to lose control over the territories bordering on Central Asia, including Siberia and the Far East. Even in these extreme circumstances, Moscow will never abandon its Kazakhstan policy, which is one of its priorities. The continued sovereignty of Kazakhstan is Russia's key geopolitical aim. China will gain nothing from Russia's retreat from Central Asia. Effective mechanisms of the SCO are expected to help Moscow preserve its influence in the region.⁷

* * *

In summing up, we can say that the political strategies of the three countries will not cause either clashes or retreats; they will be aimed at preserving the status quo in the region. All the international forces present in Central Asia can use the SCO's cooperation potential. Each of the sides of the Big Triangle is pursuing its own interests where local resources are concerned. The SCO has extended the content of its activities, yet it remains spearheaded against terrorism. China is resolved to liquidate the Eastern Turkestan terrorist group; Russia is trying to retain Chechnia as part of the Russian Federation, while the United States would like to control Afghanistan and the Middle East. Together, while fighting terrorism they

⁶ See: *Panorama*, 2 January, 2002.

⁷ See: Li Lifan, "Zhe Zhong Mei E da sanjiao yu Zhongyade diyuan zhengzhi zhanlue" (The "Big Triangle's" Geopolitical Strategy in Central Asia), *Shijie jingji yanjiu*, No. 4, 2003, p. 25.

can help each other to achieve these aims. In the context of the antiterrorist struggle, the China-Russia-U.S. triangle has acquired all the necessary conditions to obtain the desired results without sudden radical changes in the balance of forces in Central Asia. We all know that their relations will not be free of numerous unpredictable complications and that they will have to travel a long road abounding in confrontations and compromises.

ON THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN COOPERATION ORGANIZATION WITHIN THE SCO

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Chronology of the SCO Summits

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is over seven years old; it started as the Shanghai Five (Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) set up at the Shanghai summit of 26 April, 1996, which signed the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions.

Since that time summits have developed into a regular feature. The second summit held in Moscow on 24 April, 1997 adopted the Treaty on the Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions.

The third summit held on 3 July, 1998 in Almaty concentrated on further strengthening confidence and stability in the region and enhancing trade and economic cooperation.

The fourth summit held on 24 August, 1999 in Bishkek signed a Joint Declaration on Combating National Separatism, Religious Extremism, and Transborder Crime.

The fifth summit was held on 4-5 July, 2000 in Dushanbe; it discussed problems of regional security and stability, cooperation in fighting international terrorism and religious extremism, as well as border problems. Attended by President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov it signed the Dushanbe Declaration and passed a decision on transforming the organization into the Shanghai Forum.

The sixth summit held in Shanghai on 15 June, 2001 adopted a Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and a Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism.

The seventh summit held on 7 June, 2002 in St. Petersburg adopted the SCO Charter, the Agreement on Setting Up the Regional Antiterrorist Organization (RATO), with its center in Bishkek, and the Declaration by the Heads of Member States of the SCO.

The eighth summit met in Moscow on 29 May, 2003 to make two important decisions: on the SCO Secretariat to be set up in Shanghai and on the transfer of the RATO headquarters from Bishkek to Tashkent. Uzbekistan became the new SCO chairman. The president of the member states endorsed a set of normative documents related to the way the SCO structures (its financial mechanism included) should function;

adopted a financial charter dealing with the procedure for forming and executing the SCO's budget, as well as setting forth the provisions on the councils of the heads of state, heads of government, foreign ministers, and national coordinators. The Moscow summit also adopted a document on the SCO secretariat, conferences of the ministry and department heads, and permanent representatives of the member states at the Secretariat, as well as on the operating rules for the RATO headquarters.

This shows that the organization set up to strengthen confidence-building measures in the border area has gradually embraced the issues of combating terrorism, religious extremism, and separatism as part of the regional security issue. At the time of increased threats to regional security however (acts of terror carried out by the so-called Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan—IMU, escalation of warfare in Afghanistan, and flare-ups of religious extremism and separatism in some of the countries), the SCO remained passive and ineffective even though by the time it was set up the Central Asian countries had been trying to create mechanisms for ensuring regional security.

The SCO Geopolitical Dimension

An analysis of its evolution shows that it was primarily devised as a geopolitical organization.

Let us discuss two of its dimensions: *its geographic configuration and its political composition*. There are two world powers among the SCO members and four smaller Central Asian countries. This is not a six-member structure; the participants are not equal as far as their political, economic, military, demographic, and social potential is concerned. It can be presented as 2 + 4, or as 1 + 1 + 4. The last component (four Central Asian states) cannot be further divided, in order to avoid further political asymmetry. This is confirmed by the SCO's geographic factor.

Central Asia is the key element in the new political process known as the SCO. The organization itself became possible only when (and because) the Soviet Union fell apart. It became possible thanks to the geopolitical transformation of the post-Soviet expanse, the process itself being conditioned by the new world order taking shape in the post-Cold War context. *These factors—post-Soviet geopolitical transformation and the new world order—serve as the key to the SCO's mystery.*

In connection with the above, some observers tend to concentrate on two possible scenarios of the SCO's future. The first of them suggests that the organization will develop into an anti-Western alliance, an anti-NATO of sorts. The second suggests that the "Six" will serve as the starting point for an organization integrated with Western structures on the basis of open regionalism with a great number of observers and member states. The efforts of certain politicians, especially Russian, to make the Cold War philosophy and the ideas of the already dead bipolar world part of the SCO documents confirm that the first scenario has a chance of being realized.¹ Obviously, because of their long-term interests, the member states cannot accept this alternative. The anti-Western approach will play into the hands of those political forces in the West that continue to look at the RF and the PRC as their traditional and eternal rivals; it should be added that both Moscow and Beijing are objectively interested in developing their cooperation with the West.

The second scenario is also hardly possible: any enlargement of this structure will probably make it politically and organizationally more complex. It will have to cope with the "responsibility zone" issue. Open regionalism is a vague and, therefore, inadequate conception which may undermine the foundations, destroy the meaning, and weaken the mission of the SCO. Asia, and Eurasia, for that matter, is too fragmented to be regarded as a single region; if enlarged the SCO may degenerate into the failed Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia.

There are two more possible options. In the third scenario, Central Asia may find itself under the joint patronage of Russia and China; there are indications that this option is possible. Russian analyst Dmitri Trofimov, for example, believes that "stability of the Shanghai Five/SCO structure is still rooted in Rus-

¹ See: S. Luzianin, "'Shankhaiskaia shesterka' uzhe nikogo ne ustraivaet," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 6 June, 2002.

sia and China's common interest in using its multilateral format to spur up their bilateral relations." He goes on to say: "Their link within the SCO can potentially allow Russia to address its strategic tasks in the region," for instance, to play "the role of an envoy plenipotentiary of three Central Asian states (without Uzbekistan.—*F.T.*)"² From the point of view of traditional geopolitics his recommendations are absolutely logical: "Today, Russia and China are working toward transforming the SCO, as promptly as possible, into a mechanism of dialog that will make it possible to realize, in the best way possible, certain common Russian and Chinese (underlined by the author.—*F.T.*) foreign policy tasks within the enlarging Central Asian geopolitical expanse."³ Precisely Russian and Chinese tasks! This speaks of possible joint patronage of Central Asia.

Another version of the same scenario: the SCO can serve as a mechanism to mutually balance Russia and China in Central Asia, a process that will involve local states. This is what D. Kalieva has to say: "China's participation in the Shanghai Five is not only raising the military-political potential of the union, but is also making it possible for the Central Asian participants to use it as a tool for creating a balance between Russia and China, whose interests are represented in the region."⁴

It seems that the impressive role D. Kalieva promises the Central Asian countries is a disservice. Any revived model of the balance of power on the regional scale (between the RF and the PRC, the RF and the U.S., the PRC and the U.S., among the Central Asian states, or between them and the above-mentioned states and all the rest) is in fact returning to the first scenario doomed to reproduce the Cold War philosophy and politics. It seems unlikely that the new independent Central Asian states will be able to test out the old paradigm of the balance of power on Russia and China, or among themselves for that matter. There are forces outside Russia and China that, having discovered their interests in the region, would like to impose this behavior model on the international scene on the weak independent republics, thus dooming them to perpetual dependence and backwardness (see below).

These three scenarios are inadequate and even dangerous.

Let us turn to the fourth scenario associated with an absolutely novel idea of the SCO's mission. It is rooted in recognizing an independent role for the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) within the SCO. This approach, which orients the Shanghai political process toward Central Asia, has not yet been discussed. It is highly symbolic that the Central Asian integration structure, which appeared at almost the same time as the SCO, is also called a cooperation organization.

Below I shall proceed from the development problems of the Shanghai process to analyze the fourth scenario as best suited to the Central Asian states' strategic interests.

The SCO Conceptual Problem and Central Asian Interests

When discussing the absence of concerted efforts of the SCO member states or at least their barely discernible desire to act together, especially in opposing terrorism after 9/11, Chinese academic Pan Guang has pointed out that from the very beginning Washington became the leader of the struggle against global terrorism; the SCO is not a military bloc, therefore its members could not act as such; the Shanghai Six members are also members of other international structures (the CIS, the Dushanbe Group, the NATO Partnership for Peace program); the United States wanted different types of cooperation with different SCO members. "This is the main reason why the SCO states have played different roles in the war on terrorism."⁵ It should be said that these circumstances are of a long-term, if not permanent, nature.

² D. Trofimov, "Shanghai Process: From the 'Five' to the Cooperation Organization. Summing up the 1990s and Looking Ahead," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, pp. 89, 90.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁴ Quoted from: X. Guangcheng, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the Fight against Terrorism, Extremism, and Separatism," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (16), 2002, p. 16.

⁵ P. Guang, "Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the Context of International Antiterrorist Campaign," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (21), 2003, p. 49.

From this it follows that the SCO is not destined to become an effective organization, at least in the near future.

The global antiterrorist campaign has revealed one unresolved task of the SCO: it needs organizational clarity, which, in turn, *requires a clear conceptual foundation*. We get the impression that political will in the member states outstrips their strategy; the organization itself has not yet fully tapped all its potential. So far, the SCO has not caught up with the other members of antiterrorist coalition; the same can be said about economic cooperation, which is less developed than in other similar structures.

This is confirmed, besides the factors Guang enumerated in his article, by the fact that there are structures (the Antiterrorist Center of CIS, and bilateral working groups RF-U.S.A. and RF-PRC for the antiterrorist struggle) functioning outside the SCO. On the other hand, the SCO member states have not yet demonstrated their attitude toward certain organizations (the terrorist Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the extremist Hizb ut-Tahrir party, the separatist Eastern Turkestan organization—"the three evils"), or toward concrete manifestations of the "three evils" in the SCO "responsibility zone." According to American analyst M. Oresman, "in the wake of 11 September, the SCO has had to continuously justify its existence given the fact that the United States did more for the member states' security in five months than the SCO did in five years."⁶

The foreign economic activity of the SCO member states is disunited to the extent that no one can expect them to pool their efforts in this direction. Even though they have common interests in the energy fuels of the Caspian and Central Asia and their transportation, in communication lines, and in more active trade and economic cooperation, they cannot create a common market and have not formulated this task. It seems that Li Gang and Liu Huaqin were quite right when they said that in the mid-term there are no prospects for efficient economic cooperation among the SCO members (especially in the free trade zone) since the countries differ greatly as far as their domestic economic and political situations are concerned.⁷

Can we conclude that Russia and China do not think much of this organization's potential? By attaching themselves to Central Asia from both sides, they are probably pursuing much more modest aims than those described as strategic.

There are no simple answers, they depend on the two factors mentioned above: the nature of the new world order and the post-Soviet geopolitical transformation. Here I would like to use Brzezinski's term to say that Central Asia is living through geopolitical pluralization. This is evidenced, first, by foreign policy diversification of the local states; second, by the U.S. military presence; third, by that fact that new states (China, Iran, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Japan, and the EU countries) have joined the Big Game.

Any careful study of the transformations now taking place in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan will identify *national-regional dualism* in the content, directions, and specifics of these transformations. An effort to identify or describe the essence of the post-Soviet geopolitical transformations in the region may produce the following formula: *real resurrection and enhancing of regionalism in Central Asia*.

The present world order can be described as *a globalized hierarchical political system* in place of the disintegrating Yalta international system, which, in fact, realized the balance of power principle on a worldwide scale. Today, in the post-Cold War era, we are witnessing a diffusion of power in the context of transnational mutual dependence, to borrow the description from American political scientist Joseph Nye. The author has rightly pointed out that we are dealing with multi-layered mutual dependence. The balance of power in contemporary politics, says he, looks like a layer cake, the upper layer of which (the military one) belongs to the unipolar world (the U.S.); the middle (economic), to a tri-polar world (the U.S., Europe, and Japan), while the lower one lies in the multipolar world created by the transnational

⁶ M. Oresman, "The Moscow Summit: Tempered Hope for the SCO," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, Wednesday, 4 June, 2003.

⁷ See: M. Oresman, "Judging the Future Success of the SCO," *CEF Monthly*, October 2003, China-Eurasia Forum [<http://www.chinaeurasia.org/Newsletter.html>].

diffusion of power. His conclusion is an important one: the new world order taking shape in the post-Cold War epoch is a very specific one. All attempts to fit it into the Procrustean bed of traditional metaphors with their mechanistic polarities are mind-boggling. Force is acquiring more dimensions; structures are growing more complicated, while the states are becoming more porous. This mutual penetrability means that the world order cannot hinge solely on a simple balance of military forces.⁸ In this way, the world order depends on globalization, on the one hand, and preserves its hierarchical structure, on the other.

In the 2000 Dushanbe Declaration, the SCO members made a political statement to the effect that the world needs a multi-polar order and that the member states are prepared to oppose world hegemonism. It seems that in this case Russia and China imposed their delusion of a conceptual nature concerning the character of the world order (unipolar, multipolar, American hegemony, etc.) on the Central Asia countries, thus deluding them, too.

According to Joseph Nye, multipolarity does not mean a balance of power—it means mutual dependence. This more adequately reflects the world order in the process of shaping, thus obviously contradicting, the hegemonic model. The Dushanbe Declaration fits multipolarity into the balance of power conception and views it as an alternative to American hegemony.

Applied to Central Asia this theory says that the new independent states—splinters of the old structure of international relations—have acquired the old, well-known, and habitual foreign policy instruments. It seems that both for the extra-regional powers and the regional countries the conception of the balance of power turned out to be the only possible model of international relations at a stage when, in the process of molding their foreign policies, the new independent states will have to borrow certain “well-tested” forms. It is these elements of *ersatz* policy that resulted in negative foreign policy diversification. The Central Asian countries have found themselves in a situation that can be best described as a double balancing act: on the one hand, they must provide a counterweight to the extra-regional powers; on the other, there is the hypertrophied idea about a need to achieve balance among themselves within the region.

In their recent Soviet past they were raw-material appendages to the more advanced Soviet republics (Russia, in the first place)—today the new independent states run the risk of remaining the same to the world powers in the globalized world. *To avoid this they must abandon the inadequate conception of balancing and absolutizing national-state sovereignty for the sake of a new, regional strategy.*

It is becoming increasingly clear that the SCO was created to produce an answer to the Central Asian question: indeed, its orientation toward Central Asia is so far the only possible and the most natural factor. Neither the antiterrorist struggle in Russia or China, nor the trade and economy dimensions of the relationships among the six states can be transferred to the SCO: being self-sufficient in many respects they can either deal with these issues themselves, or within the bilateral (not only the Russian-Chinese) format.

From this it follows that the Shanghai process is concentrated on Central Asia: it is an *a priori* regional process; no new members will be able to change this basic fact. This is at once the main problem of this organization and its main claim to further political existence.

It seems that today the following can serve as the main adequate principle of the SCO's activity and the conception of its future: *it should move through confidence-building measures and regional security to developed trans-regional economic cooperation.* Indeed, China, the Russian Federation, and the CACO are located in three different, yet neighboring, regions with very different strategic interests: the first of them looks at the APR; Russia, at the EU; while landlocked Central Asia is looking at the West and the East. To my mind, the only possible basic scientifically substantiated conception is the conception of trans-regionalism, or trans-continentalism. This is vitally important for all Central Asian countries: being locked on the Eurasian continent they should use the Russian Federation and China as a key to this “lock.”

⁸ See: J. Nye, “What New World Order?” *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1992.

This conception also meets the strategic interests of the two world powers-members in the SCO. While helping the Central Asian countries within this structure, China and Russia will acquire a dynamically developing, stable, secure region as a neighbor, which is integrating into the globalizing world.

The Organization's Immediate Tasks

The first command post and live exercises carried out on 6-13 August, 2003 in Kazakhstan and the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of China are a serious claim of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to its involvement in dealing with the regional security issues. Together with the future functioning of the Regional Antiterrorist Center in Tashkent, the Secretariat in Beijing, and the beginning of the budget process, the Organization members will be actively involved in these spheres. It remains to be seen how well these structures will be organized: they should be armed with a conception conducive to the SCO's mission. Indeed, we are completely aware of what the U.N., OSCE, NATO, ECO, and many other international organizations do, what aims they are striving to achieve, and what is their main mission.

Finally, the SCO should clearly state its position regarding the IMU, Eastern Turkestan, Hizb ut-Tahrir. The SCO should outline its possible approach to the problem of drug trafficking, poverty, environmental protection, sustainable development, and cultural cooperation. All SCO member states undoubtedly regard Afghanistan as an object of their common interest. It seems logical and topical to elaborate a common approach to the principles and methods of peaceful settlement and restoration of Afghanistan's statehood. Can the SCO contribute to the international efforts designed to settle the Afghan problem?

In the organizational sphere, the Secretariat should create a working mechanism of discussion and decision-making based on *the principle of consensus as the one best suited to success*. This is in the interests of the Central Asian alliance; what is more, the small number of members will make it easier to reach a consensus.

The Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism is of special interest because it has provided definitions of "the three evils," the term used in Chinese political vocabulary. Terrorism is described as an act that is considered a crime under any of the relevant international conventions, as well as "any other act designed to cause the death of any civilian or any other person uninvolved in hostilities in the context of an armed conflict or to inflict severe injuries on such person, or to cause considerable damage to any material object; or the organization and planning of such acts, complicity in their implementation and abetting in them, if the goal of such acts due to their nature or context is designed to intimidate the population, violate social security, or force the authorities or an international organization to act or to abstain from acting."

Why is a definition of terrorism acceptable to all so vitally important? So far, despite the pertinent international conventions, the world community has not coined a commonly accepted definition of terrorism. On many occasions this invited arbitrary definitions of terrorism and made it a geopolitical instrument.⁹ Today, there are attempts to create an international Convention on Combating Terrorism designed to contain a unified definition. In this way, the SCO convention has taken a step forward.

The Antiterrorist Center in Tashkent could act in the following directions:

- Collection and analysis of information about terrorist organizations;
- Exchange of relevant information and experience among the SCO members;
- Study of the regional context of terrorism, the degree of its intensity and threat;

⁹ An analysis of the counterterrorist operation in Afghanistan, for example, suggests a conclusion that the world community's antiterrorist struggle that brought the nations closer together and geopolitical rivalry in Southern and Central Asia that breeds conflicts and disunite the nations have complemented one another in an amazing way (see: F. Tolipov, "Is pytanie geopolitiki terrorizma i antiterrorizma," *SShA-Kanada: EPI*, No. 3, 2002).

- Study of different forms of terrorism, including nuclear terrorism and terrorism that uses WMD;
- Operational assessment of the efficiency of concerted efforts, as well as monitoring the antiterrorist struggle of the SCO members;
- Elaboration of new concerted approaches, methods and means of struggle against terrorism, as well as prevention methods and suggestions for bringing relevant laws into harmony;
- Establishment and development of cooperation with similar centers and organizations; encouragement of wider interstate and international cooperation in this sphere;
- Organization of seminars, conferences, symposiums, and other meetings of experts, analysts, politicians, and task force agents to discuss the problem of combating terrorism;
- Encouraging successful implementation of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism;
- Publication and dissemination of relevant materials.

The idea that the future of the ATC directly depends on its potential ability to incorporate efforts to combat drug trafficking and other types of organized crime into its mandate is worth closer attention.¹⁰

I would like to mention here that the political declaration of the Moscow SCO summit adopted on 29 May, 2003 points out that acknowledging the important role of the U.N. and its Security Council in dealing with major international issues is of fundamental importance. This is an important and well-timed statement. There are two permanent members of the U.N. Security Council involved in the Shanghai process, a fact which enhances the SCO's international prestige and opens up new vistas for the Central Asian states wishing to formulate their regional and international initiatives.

Talking at the Dushanbe summit on 5 July, 2000, PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin pointed out that the five principles of peaceful coexistence and the U.N. Charter should be strictly observed and that the SCO should protect the authority of the U.N. Security Council.

The 2003 Moscow Declaration specifically pointed out that the SCO countries intend to actively cooperate with the Counterterrorist Committee of the U.N. SC; and that they thought it important to promptly complete elaboration by the U.N. of drafts of an International Convention on Combating Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and a Universal Convention on Combating International Terrorism. The presidents of Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan pointed out that recognizing the important role of the U.N. and the U.N. SC in dealing with major international issues was of fundamental importance.

It was at that summit that the SCO members clearly stated for the first time that the U.N. should play an important role in rebuilding Iraq. The Declaration said, in particular: "Observance of the national interests and sovereign rights of the Iraqi nation, as well as concrete and efficient aid granted by the international community will serve as a prerequisite of this country's transfer to a peaceful life and the building of a flourishing democratic society."¹¹

The SCO summit (June 2004) will undoubtedly become another step in the development of the SCO. We can expect it to intensify its efforts and spread in new directions, by which I mean implement specific joint projects (economic, ecological, cultural, military, and in the security sphere, etc.) and cooperate with other international regional organizations.

Today the SCO is being actively discussed as a security provider. I have already said that this role has not been fully developed yet, compared with other bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. A comparison of the contributions the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the SCO have made to regional security is very interesting. I fully agree with American analyst M. Du Mont that the CSTO has

¹⁰ See: M. Oresman, "Judging the Future Success of the SCO."

¹¹ "Vstrecha liderov ShOS v Moskve," *Vesti.ru*, 29 May, 2003.

not achieved impressive results because Uzbekistan remains outside its scope. At the same time, the largest regional terrorist organization is called the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. He goes on to say: "The CSTO's overlapping membership with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (China, Russia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan) and the differing priorities that member states place on each organization may increasingly be an obstacle to CSTO unity in the future, particularly if the SCO gains in international stature."¹² The same is true of the SCO—if the CSTO gains in international stature, the SCO may find its role in ensuring regional security decreased.

On the other hand, there is an overlapping of functions and goals between the CIS Antiterrorist Center in Bishkek and the SCO Antiterrorist Center in Tashkent. Along with Russian-American and Russian-Chinese bilateral mechanisms and international (within the U.N.) antiterrorist cooperation on the whole, as well as when dealing with the Afghan question, both ATCs became part of the market of antiterrorist services.

The same can be said (by way of comparison) about the possibility (or impossibility) of correlating the SCO mission and its interests in the context of its cooperation with the U.N., NATO, EU, and OSCE, which are working on Central Asian security programs of their own. Can they implement division of labor in this sphere? Given the geopolitical factor, which at all times has been causing what Clausewitz called "friction," this is hardly possible.

Let us take NATO as an example. In 2003 it assumed command of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. This gives hope that the international community will step up its efforts to achieve stability and security in this country because the North Atlantic Alliance has a wide range of peacekeeping means. Today, this is the only organization capable of similar operations.

At the same time, its involvement far beyond its responsibility zone is unique. As a country involved in the Partnership for Peace program, Uzbekistan believes that trust in NATO, as well as the viability of the new international structures and regulatory instruments applied in future conflicts will depend, to a great extent, on the Alliance's efficiency in Afghanistan. It is too early to assess the results of NATO's mission in Afghanistan; at the same time, we should not add a geopolitical dimension to any discussion of its operations outside its "responsibility zone."

How does this correlate with the SCO's tasks of assisting security in Central Asia? This is not an easy question: the region is living with a sophisticated and far from ambiguous intertwining of various ideas, aims, and means pursued and employed by the current actors in the region. We should always bear in mind that each of the actors—be it a superpower, regional power, or other interested political force—looks at Central Asian security through the prism of its national interests. This brings us back to geopolitics: in the geopolitical context Central Asia has found itself in a symbolic triangle of superpowers composed of Russia, China, and America. To succeed in assisting security and stability in this part of the world, they must seek consensus on their interests and the methods employed.

In anticipating an Asian boom and the enhanced strategic importance of contacts between Southeastern, Southern and Central Asia, the global powers should ensure their future cooperation among themselves in these regions, primarily in Central Asia, since *the new independent states will do their best to avoid one-sided dependence on any of the global powers; today they are forced to manipulate the great powers' divergent interests in a way they can profit from*. The "zero sum game" in the region does not suit the interests of the U.S., or Russia, or China; actually none of them can play it single-handedly: each of them has an arsenal of geopolitical means to create a counterbalance to another power in order to prevent it from dominating in the region.

This confirms that out of the four possible scenarios, only the fourth may meet the interests of the Central Asian countries: it is for them to select those means and aims from this sophisticated intertwining that are best suited to the idea of regional unity. This brings us back to the conception of transcontinentalism/transregionalism.

¹² M. Du Mont, "That Other Central Asian Collective Security Organization — the CSTO," *CEF Monthly*, January 2004, China-Eurasia Forum [<http://www.chinaeurasia.org/Newsletter.html>].

In Lieu of a Conclusion

When analyzing the Central Asian countries' positions, R. Burnashev concluded that since Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan cannot ensure their security without stable contacts with Russia and China and cannot, at the same time, disrupt their contacts with their regional neighbors (with Uzbekistan, in the first place), they "are creating and participating in security assistance models in Central Asia that presuppose the involvement of various extra-regional forces. This ensures a balance among them and counterbalances Uzbekistan's military potential and regional ambitions (underlined by the author.—*F.T.*)."¹³

These deliberations obviously contradict his warning: "We should bear in mind that today China is treating the 'Shanghai Five' as a 'transitory structure'—the basic agreements will expire on 31 December, 2020, that is, they are valid for the period of China's possible development into a world center of power. After that China will probably act harshly, especially toward its neighbors."¹⁴ If this is well substantiated, then the Central Asian countries should stop suspecting Uzbekistan of imaginary regional ambitions and counterbalancing its military potential: they should pool forces with Uzbekistan rather than playing into the hands of ambitious China.

If we bear in mind that the geopolitical factor is fairly stable and that an obvious political, economic and military asymmetry exists among the SCO members, we can conclude that the SCO will not be always efficient.

This adds special importance to the strategy that the Central Asian countries will opt for and correlate their strategies to the best of their ability in order to achieve greater unity and use the SCO's mechanisms and goals to reach the highest possible degree of security and through this greater integration within the region. Most of those who study the SCO phenomenon tend to ignore the importance of the regional countries' positions.

Meanwhile, they are now faced with making a choice among one of the four possible geopolitical statuses: a buffer zone, a cordon sanitaire, a springboard, or a center of power.¹⁵ The last possibility looks impossible, yet since it meets the interests of the local states to the fullest extent it should be considered probable.

Today, the SCO is not so much an organization that ensures security as a political forum designed to cement cooperation and develop partner relationships. A model of transregional cooperation is probably its main task. To some extent the Shanghai process brings to mind the road traversed by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which later became the OSCE. The Shanghai Forum/SCO can be regarded as an analogous structure. At the same time, *the SCO could not only study the experience gained by the U.N., NATO, OSCE, and other international organizations in Central Asia and elsewhere, but also try to cooperate with them.*

If successful, this structure could finally reach the cooperation level described as strategic partnership. This is a special type of cooperation based on long-term relations, permanent common strategic interests, and cooperation in practically all spheres based on shared or close security interests of the sides and their close positions on key international issues. The SCO's experience should at least point the way to this type of relationship for the Central Asian countries. In other words, the SCO "school" may teach these states political wisdom and toughness.

¹³ R. Burnashev, "'Shankhaiskaia piaterka': k voprosu o regional'noy politike Uzbekistana," *Agentstvo politicheskikh issledovaniy* [<http://www.caapr.kz>], 18 June, 2001.

¹⁴ *Ibidem.*

¹⁵ See: F. Tolipov, "Are the Heartland and Rimland Changing in the Wake of the Operation in Afghanistan?" *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (23), 2003, pp. 105-106.

RUSSIA-AZERBAIJAN: BACK TO THE BEGINNING?

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For historical and geographical reasons, underestimation of Russia's role in the Caucasus as a whole, and in the Southern Caucasus in particular, as well as tension in relations with it are fraught with a great many negative effects irrespective of the foreign policy aims, sympathies, and antipathies of the ruling circles of our republic. The relatively recent events in Azerbaijan, after the Soviet Union disintegrated and our republic gained its independence, can be used as proof of the above. The same applies to Russia: the Kremlin's right tactics and adequate accents in the Caucasus, including the Southern Caucasus, are of vital importance for Moscow, which wishes to preserve its influence in this strategically important region.

Western, or, to be more exact, American political, cultural and economic expansion is another important factor to be reckoned with when talking about Russian-Azerbaijani relations. "The United States has highly assessed Azerbaijan's geopolitical potential in a region the Americans regard as strategically important to them. They describe it as a potentially key area and a 'strong point' of American policy, not only in the Caucasus, but also in Central Asia, Iran, and the Middle East."¹

Russia's self-respect is wounded: it has always regarded the Caucasus as the sphere of its interests. Today, however, the United States is holding cultural and economic sway over it in Azerbaijan (and elsewhere). Apart from the statements about a multipolar world that have been heard more and more often since Vladimir Putin came to power in Russia, Moscow unfortunately

has nothing to offer as an alternative to the ideology of Atlanticism and market economy on the world-wide scale or at least within the post-Soviet space.

The two countries established diplomatic relations on 4 April, 1992; several months later, on 30 September, their governments signed a free trade and several other agreements. Until Vladimir Putin was elected president, however, the relations could have been described as vague and even negative. In the early 1990s anti-Soviet sentiments dominated in Azerbaijan; gradually they transformed into anti-Russian feelings. They were aroused by the Karabakh conflict and concentrated mainly on the person of President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev whose position was interpreted as a pro-Armenian one. We should also bear in mind that public opinion was very much affected by the tragic events of January 1990 that took many civilian lives. The blame for this lies on the then leaders of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee. On top of this such facts should be taken into account as "the 336th motor rifle regiment's direct involvement in ethnic cleansing in the city of Khojaly,"² as well as participation of Russian troops in the Karabakh hostilities on the Armenian side. This naturally affected the relations between the two countries.

I would like to say in all justice that fairly one-sided statements of certain Azerbaijanian political scientists to the effect that in the post-Soviet period the Russian leaders treated our republic badly and that this was responsible for the far from good relations between the two countries are only meant

¹ V.F. Grunin, Azerbaijan: etot nelegkiy suverenitet [http://www.e-journal.ru/p_bzarub-st2-3.html].

² Azerbaijano-rossiiskie otnoshenia: problemy i perspektivy razvitiya [http://www.irs-az.com/files1/1.html].

to cover up Azerbaijan's foreign policy failures in its relations with Russia.

Today, the relations between Russia and Azerbaijan have the following points of mutu-

al interest: Karabakh, the status and the energy fuel resources of the Caspian, the Gabala radar station, economic cooperation and migration.

Karabakh

Today this is a stumbling block: Russia is the largest and most influential power in the region, therefore its position is very important. I have to say with deep regret that it is not pro-Azerbaijanian. Despite Moscow's direct involvement in the peace process, it has done nothing to settle the conflict for several reasons that can be described as strategic. "One good turn deserves another"—by this I mean that Russia wants to gain something from the settlement process (to stretch the metaphor). Today it cannot be expected that the ruling elite of Azerbaijan will assume a clearly pro-Russian position for any objective or subjective reason. Moreover, is Russia itself prepared for this turn?

At the same time, we should admit that the Karabakh conflict (the first in a chain of similar ethnic conflicts and one of the most powerful destabilizing factors in the still existing Soviet Union) was part of Western geopolitical tactics employed to destroy its mighty adversary, the Soviet Union. It was not so much an effort to uproot "Bolshevism" or the "Red Plague" (as Western experts are fond of saying), as to destroy the foundation of the bipolar world, the "geopolitical opponent," "the consolidated and centralized Eurasian entity." Its continued existence would have prevented the West (among other things) from gaining access to the vast natural resources of the ruined country and of other states, when natural resources in the rest of the world had been depleted while demographic growth in the Third World continued (see, for example, reports to the Club of Rome). In the bipolar world, direct expansion would have been impossible. Today, the Karabakh conflict is an instrument the West and Russia are using to channel regional developments.

There is any number of reasons why Moscow is treating the Karabakh issue in the way it is. Here are some of the ones found on the surface. First, there is a strong and well-organized Armenian lobby in Russia, which can affect decision-making in the upper echelons of power. Second, there is a near total absence of a similar Azerbaijani lobby in Russia. (I should say that there are no well-organized and smoothly functioning Azerbaijani lobbies in any country with more or less considerable Azerbaijani diasporas. It is hard to say whether the Azerbaijani mentality is to blame or an absence of adequate strategy in the Azerbaijani ruling circles and poor organizational and financial support by the mother country.) Third, the Azerbaijani ruling circles do nothing to set up and finance similar structures or, at least, to support and encourage the already existing scattered groups, which cannot compete with Armenian structures. Fourth, Azerbaijan's inadequate foreign policy toward Russia: after acquiring independence, it became radically "pro-Western" and "pro-Turkish" and preferred to ignore Moscow's strategic interests and role (even if reduced). This list should include anti-Russian pronouncements of the Popular Front's leaders while they were in power and after they were removed, as well as anti-Russian paranoid statements by certain Azerbaijani statesmen, political scientists, and experts. And finally fifth, we should not forget certain historical and confessional elements of Russia's pro-Armenian position, which became even more obvious thanks to points 2, 3 and 4 described above.

In short, ill-substantiated Azerbaijani foreign policy toward Russia produced bad results. There is the impression that after the Soviet Union's fall those responsible for foreign policy in our country tended to ignore an important thing: for objective historical and geopolitical reasons it was Russia that had, has (despite its present weakness), and will most likely continue to have a considerable influence on the situation in the Caucasus and in Azerbaijan as its part.

I am prepared to go as far as saying that the recent rapprochement between Azerbaijan and Russia was prompted by the failures of the OSCE Minsk Group's shuttle diplomacy, the failed attempts to recov-

er the occupied territories, and the U.S.-initiated failed personal meetings between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan. I should say that this rapprochement was also prompted by the fairly widely accepted conviction that “the keys to the Karabakh settlement are in Moscow” and by the failed attempts to find strategic allies in the West (are there such allies in the West at all?).

Whether we like it or not, life has shown that worsened relations with Russia are fraught with negative results for Azerbaijan in the first place. The obvious conclusion is that we should guide ourselves by reason and common sense in political decision-making. Emotions have nothing to do with this.

Status and the Energy Fuel Resources of the Caspian

The status of the Caspian issue is one of the linchpins of bilateral relations in this part of the world. Being aware of Washington’s claims to the area as a zone of its strategic interests, Moscow at first had a negative reaction to the Baku-Ceyhan project. It retreated from its negative stand when LUKoil, a Russian oil company, received 7.5 percent of the project’s shares.

During the visit of President Putin to Azerbaijan (2001), the two countries signed a document on the principles of cooperation on the Caspian, under which the sides agreed to divide the sea bottom between the neighboring states and the states on the opposite coast into sectors (zones) according to the median line method “drawn taking into account equidistance between all points and modified according to the sides’ agreements and the generally accepted principles of international law.”³ Russia and Azerbaijan agreed that as soon as the division was complete, each of the coastal states would acquire exclusive rights to mineral resource extraction and to other legal economic activity on the sea bottom. In addition, the presidents agreed that the region needed a “five-sided Caspian center” to monitor Caspian ecology. When summing up the 10th Moscow meeting of the Caspian work group, which took place in July 2003, Viktor Kaliuzhnyi, who represented Russia at the talks on the Caspian’s status, said: “Each of the five sides emphasizes that we should move ahead in order to promptly resolve the Caspian problems.”⁴ He added that all five states had agreed to meet for another round of talks a month later in Turkmenistan; he described this as a graphic illustration of their shared intention “to resolve all Caspian problems and to agree on its new legal status.”⁵

It should be added that in December 2001, when talking about the results of the visit to Baku by head of LUKoil Vagit Alekperov, it had been decided that his company would be involved not only in the Baku-Ceyhan project, but also in several other large-scale oil projects. In turn, LUKoil’s involvement in developing the offshore Araz, Sharg, and Alov oil fields may help to resolve the old dispute between Azerbaijan and Iran over these sites in favor of the former.⁶

In fact, wider cooperation in the energy fuel sphere helps develop the relations between Russia and Azerbaijan in general.

The Status of Gabala Radar Station

There is another important issue in the relations between Azerbaijan and Russia. I have in mind the Gabala radar station that was built in 1984 and commissioned in 1985. The station that monitors the sit-

³ Azerbaijano-rossiiskie otoshenia: problemy i perspektivy razvitiya.

⁴ *Central Asian News*, 25 July, 2003 [http://www.centralasianews.com/shtml/html/news.htm?new_id=5349].

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ See: N. Sokhbetkyzy, Soglashenie mezhdru Rossiey i Azerbajjanom produktovano pragmatizmom storon [<http://www.eurasianet.org/russian/departments/insight/articles/eav011402ru.shtml>].

uation in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf is of strategic importance for Russia and will prove indispensable in case of the threat of a missile strike. Political observer D. Litovkin has pointed out that Russia has five similar missile attack warning stations, while the range of the Gabala station “covers the areas of possible launches of tactical medium-range missiles, and can identify their parameters and trajectories, as well as follow the movement of space objects within its range along Russia’s southern borders. The station is manned by about two thousand people.”⁷

Under the bilateral agreement of 25 January, 2002 Russia rented the station for ten years and has to pay Baku an annual fee of \$7 million. Under the same agreement, the Azerbaijani military will not have access to the station, but they will receive information supplied by the radars. Russia agreed to hire local people as servicing and auxiliary staff.⁸ This agreement “allowed Russia to complete the system of early warning of missile attack,”⁹ while Azerbaijan, among other things, will receive \$31 million of arrears accumulated between 1997 and 2001. According to Russian experts, the radar station “will make it possible to complete research and smoothly commission similar objects on Russian territory.”¹⁰ Heated discussions about environmental effects of radar stations are going on unabated.

Economic Cooperation

The agreements on avoidance of double taxation and on debts are the two best signs of the level of economic and trade cooperation. These documents testify that the partners have recognized the need for a legal and normative basis conducive to closer cooperation.

The Russian president’s visit to Azerbaijan in January 2001 and his Azerbaijani’s colleague visit to Moscow a year later (January 2002) produced a series of documents, the most interesting among them being an agreement on international road transportation (newly built highways between the countries will promote freight movement, which the sides find very important), as well as an agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance in the field of taxation. The presidents signed a declaration that registered the sides’ readiness to resume international transport communication in the region. Russia pointed out that Azerbaijan should be linked to the future North-South transportation corridor and emphasized its readiness to participate in the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transportation corridor (TRACECA).

When commenting on the results of President Putin’s visit to Azerbaijan, Vladimir Lukin, then a State Duma Yabloko deputy, said: “The South Caucasian countries have reached the time of ‘shedding illusions,’ the main one being ‘the West will help us and we shall be happy.’”¹¹

Today, Azerbaijan sells Russia foodstuffs and other agricultural products, raw chemicals, electrical engines and oil equipment, while Russia exports grain and flour, construction materials, medicines, newsprint, metal, drilling pipes, turbines for power stations, and cars to Azerbaijan. On top of this, Azerbaijan buys 4 billion cubic m of gas from Russia every year; since 2002 it has been buying 1.5 billion kWh of electric power a year; it annually exports about 2.5 million tons of its oil along the Baku-Novorossiisk pipeline.¹²

⁷ D. Litovkin, “Opasnost s iuga,” *Izvestia*, 30 October, 2002.

⁸ See: N. Sokhbetkyzy, op. cit.

⁹ D. Litovkin, “Bezoblachnoe nebo,” *Izvestia*, 28 November, 2002.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ [<http://www.yabloko.ru/Press/2001/010111.html>].

¹² See: Ikham Aliev’s press conference in ITAR-TASS on 23 March, 2002, *Central Asian News* [http://www.centralasiannews.com/shtml/html/news.htm?new_id=2548].

Russia is also prepared to take part in modernization and reconstruction of the metallurgical, energy and agro-industrial complexes of Azerbaijan and to help set up joint financial and banking structures within investment projects. Such projects include the reconstruction of the Baku underground; shipbuilding; restoration of the poultry industry; development of pharmaceutical and light industries; and joint ventures in agricultural products processing and the production of electrical devices. Under an agreement between the Azerbaijani State Marine Transport Company and a Russian shipbuilding enterprise on construction of four tankers to be used on the TRACECA marine stretches, Azerbaijan will soon receive the first of such vessels.¹³

In fact, the closer economic and trade contacts mean that Russia is determined to extend its economic presence in Azerbaijan in order to preserve or even strengthen its strategic influence in the Southern Caucasus.

Migration

As in other former Soviet republics, migration in Azerbaijan was spurred on by the ethnic conflicts that had flared up in Soviet times and the post-Soviet period.

According to different Russian sources, there are at least 2.5 million Azeris living in Russia today. In the past four years the Administration of Internal Affairs in Moscow registered 800,000 people from Azerbaijan; and about 400,000 Azeris live in St. Petersburg. Our compatriots can be found in other Russian regions as well. There are nearly 17,000 in the Irkutsk Region, about 60,000 in the Krasnoyarsk Territory, 50,000 in Volgograd, about 30,000 in the city of Sverdlovsk, and 30,000 in the Tver Region.

Migration is caused by several factors: the lower living standards in the republic after it switched to a market economy; the social and economic problems, which created a wide property gap between different social groups; the loss of about 20 percent of its territory and over 300,000 jobs it provided as a result of the Karabakh conflict; the 1 million refugees and forced migrants in the republic, while the mainly agricultural regions and those connected with the agro-industrial complex are in an appalling social and economic state. Unemployment adds tension: "It is one of the major migration-inducing factors. In 2001 the able-bodied population of Azerbaijan (both employed and unemployed) was 3,752,500 strong, or 47 percent of the total population. Since 1990 the number of people employed in the public sector has been dropping dramatically: in 2001 only 32.4 percent of the gainfully employed remained in the public sector. Industrial decline changed the structure of employment by branches; the share of industrial workers dropped from 9.8 percent in 1995 to 7 percent in 2000, while the share of employed in trade and services increased."¹⁴

Money that Azeris working in Russia transfer to their families back home (about \$5 billion every year) is another important factor.¹⁵ The money supports a huge number of unemployed or poor relatives and eases sociopolitical tension.

For many reasons the majority of migrants are living and working in Russia illegally and have to bribe the local policemen. Hypothetically, all our citizens now working in Russia are a weighty factor that Russia can use to put pressure on Azerbaijan. We can easily imagine the effect produced by the purposeful use of them during elections in Azerbaijan or by deportation of at least half of them. This may destabilize the situation in our republic and produce a wave of crime and of political and social unrest of the most active, both politically and criminally, population groups. In fact, the larger part of our compatriots now working in Russia can be described as such. It is not easy to earn money abroad,

¹³ See: *Central Asian News*, 30 July, 2003 [http://www.centralasiannews.com/shtml/html/news.htm?new_id=5349].

¹⁴ G. Alieva, *Migratsia: kuda i radi chego edut azerbaijantsy?* [<http://www.caucasusjournalists.net/ItemPrint.asp?id=39>].

¹⁵ See: G. Alieva, op. cit.; N. Suleymanov, "V SNG migratsia plokho sovmeshchaetsia s demokratiey," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 24 July, 2003.

and it is even harder to do this in a country plagued by its own (economic and other) problems and high crime rate.

The demographic crisis in Russia, in which the mortality rate is higher than the birth rate, belongs to the general context of the relations between the two countries. Russian analytical studies have shown that Azeris, as members of a particular ethnic group, assimilate with the Russian super-ethnos easier than others. In other words, these investigations demonstrated that the second generation of children of mixed Russian-Azeri marriages lose their Azerbaijani identity to a great extent.

The above shows that the "Azeri element" in Russia's demographic situation is very important. It helps the country overcome the population crisis without sacrificing its ethnic identity.

It seems that the recent tightening of migration control is aimed against Southeast Asian peoples who are actively penetrating Russia. It was discovered that these migrants practically never assimilate. On the contrary, they are more likely to assimilate members of other ethnic groups (Russian included) who find themselves in their midst. Indeed, China Towns are typical of places with more or less large Southeast Asian diasporas. More often than not those who live in them cannot speak the local language, which means that they do not intend to adapt to the local conditions and to blend with the autochthonous ethnos.

From this it follows that a total deportation of citizens of other countries (Azeris included) from Russia will, among other things, not only deprive their families and Russian policemen of their incomes, but also produce negative effects in Russia: a catastrophic shortage of manpower (it is migrants from the former Soviet republics who are engaged in minor and sometimes dirty but very much needed work), and a worsened demographic problem that might, in the distant future, deprive Russians of their own ethnic identity.

It seems that the above considerations help Baku to repeatedly convince Moscow not to introduce visas and not to tighten up measures with respect to Azeris. In other words, Russia "turns a blind eye" to violations of the law by people of Caucasian nationality and corruption in the law enforcement structures and allows South Caucasians to blend into the vast Russian landscape.

C o n c l u s i o n

Naturally enough, this article has not exhausted the entire range of relations between the two countries. I have touched on the key aspects of their bilateral relations that have recently been slowly but steadily improving. The process became even more pronounced after Vladimir Putin was elected president of Russia. Earlier, as prime minister, he signed a document called the Main Provisions for Developing Relations between Russia and the CIS Countries at the Present Stage, which discussed, among other things, how to ensure Russia's strategic interests in the Southern Caucasus. Obviously, the present Russian leadership treats the situation in our region as one of its priorities; it does its best to control the process and to return this strategically important zone to the sphere of its direct influence.

Azerbaijan is also making positive moves, signs of which became more obvious during Heydar Aliev's second term when he supported the idea of a direct dialog formulated by his Russian colleague.

The positive shifts testify that the sides are determined to restore stable and mutually advantageous relations. Russia looks at Azerbaijan as one of the key South Caucasian and Caspian states, while Azerbaijan recognizes that it should use more common sense when choosing its strategic allies.

COOPERATION BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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Relations between our republic and the European Union began to develop right after Azerbaijan officially announced its independence and the EU recognized this independence on 31 December, 1991, that is, right after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. Prior to this, relations were largely maintained on the basis of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed between this European structure and the Soviet Union in 1989.

Between 1991 and 1999 several agreements were signed, including a bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed on 22 April, 1996 in Luxemburg for a preliminary term of ten years. In October 1997, both sides entered an intermediate agreement that envisaged putting several articles of this document into effect early, before all the members of the European Union ratified it. And on 1 January, 1999, this agreement finally came into force.

On the whole, until 1999 the EU's policy regarding Azerbaijan was purely instructive, since in the beginning the Europeans tried to follow the Americans in the "big game." The Paris Charter of the European Union (1990) called Azerbaijan, as part of the Caspian Region, a sphere of "general European interests," but the EU still did not have enough courage to deal independently with our state. Nevertheless, our country received significant aid from it in the amount of 370,194,000 Euro between 1992-2002/3¹ (the largest amount of aid among all the post-Soviet countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia). We should note in particular the EU's role in rendering technical aid under the TACIS program aimed at developing market reforms by providing consultation services, know-how, and passing on practical experience. Between 1991 and 2001, more than 150 projects were implemented in the republic, and between 1992 and 2001, the European Union spent a total of 370 million Euro on technical aid to our country.²

What is more, efficient aid is being rendered under the TACIS program in the transportation sphere. For example, several documents were adopted at a conference held on 7 May, 1993 in Belgium, including the Brussels Declaration and an agreement on introducing a technical assistance program financed by the EU. The TRACECA Program (the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transportation corridor) envisages reviving the ancient Great Silk Road and creating an East-West transportation corridor, which should bring the countries of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia out of geostrategic isolation, as well as out from under Russia's control.

Today, the TRACECA Program is financing 28 technical assistance studies (for 37 million Euro) and 10 investment projects on infrastructure rehabilitation (for 48 million Euro).³ The TACIS projects in Azerbaijan are related to reconstructing the Baku port, eliminating the weak link on the Georgian-Azer-

¹ See: *Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006. National Indicative Program 2002-2003. Azerbaijan. Official document of European Commission*, 2003.

² See: Iu.A. Borko, "ES i vneshni mir. Otnosheniia s drugimi stranami SNG," *Evropeiski soiuz: fakty i komentarii*, No. 28, March-May 2002.

³ Documents from the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry.

baijan border, building a new and restoring the old Red Bridge, the arch of which was erected as early as the 12th century, as well as to resolving the transportation problems caused by the rise in level of the Caspian Sea.⁴

The growing interest of commercial shippers in the possibilities presented by this corridor, particularly in the Caucasus, is significantly raising the TRACECA's influence in the region. During recent years, shipments along the Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia route have increased 2.5-fold. For example, whereas in 1996, they amounted to 2 million tons, in 1999 they increased to 5 million tons, and in 2002 to 8 million tons.⁵

The EU also supports other programs, the purpose of which is to develop cooperation with the countries of the region and reinforce their economic independence, in particular: creating southern air ring routes and the INOGATE project—building oil and gas pipelines.

One of the most important areas of cooperation is implementing the European Commission Humanitarian Office program (ECHO), restoring population settlements in Azerbaijan that have suffered damage during combat action, and implementing a special program to clean up mine fields (mine action) in the liberated areas of the Agdam and Fizuli regions of our country. For example, between 2000-2002, the EU spent approximately 2,820,000 Euro on mine action.⁶

It should be noted in particular that the EU Commission approved the Indicative Program of main areas of assistance to Azerbaijan under the TACIS program for 2000-2003, which represents the general principles of cooperation between the European Commission and the government of our country. The republic was included in the TACIS⁷ program at the beginning of the 1990s.⁸ During its implementation, the main aspects of cooperation were defined, in particular improvement of the procedure for preparing the budget and budget legislation, reform of the state purveyor system, creation of a higher auditing institution in the form of an Audit Chamber, and reform of licensing and certification conditions, as well as of the statistics system for providing the government, businessmen, and society with reliable, high-quality and up-to-date information.⁹

The Indicative Program is being carried out in two stages, based on two-year plans, whereby the amount of financing of each amounts to 14 million Euro. According to the main areas of action for 2000-2001, assistance was distributed as follows: support of institutional, legal, and administrative reform—3.8 million Euro; support of the private sector and assistance to economic development—4.6 million Euro; and improving the infrastructure network—2.5 million Euro. In addition, a small project program is being carried out with a total budget of 2.4 million Euro, including the TEMPUS project (in education), the training of managerial staff, etc.¹⁰

Until 2006, under the EU Indicative Program, Azerbaijan will be allotted 35.5 million Euro in grants, which will be used to improve infrastructure, reduce poverty, develop private business, and reform court proceedings.¹¹

After the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement mentioned above came into force on 1 January, 1999, the European Union began to develop its relations more actively, not only with our republic, but with other countries of the region as well.

- First, meetings of the European Union-Azerbaijan Cooperation Committee have been held since 1999. For example, on 30 October, 2001, the regular session of the European Union-Azerbaijan Cooperation Council was held in Brussels, where a joint statement was adopted for the first time, in which the EU confirmed its willingness to play a more active role in the region, mainly

⁴ See: S.I. Cherniavskiy, *Novy put Azerbaijanana*, Moscow, 2002, p. 280.

⁵ Documents of the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry.

⁶ See: *The European Union Mine Actions in 2000-2002. Official Document of European Commission, 2000-2002.*

⁷ See: M.V. Baba-zadeh, *Azerbaijan-ES: napravlenia sotrudnichestva i vzaimodeistvia*, Documents for the Scientific Conference Dedicated to the 80th Anniversary of President Heydar Aliyev, 25 April, 2003, p. 47.

⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

¹¹ See: Country Strategy Paper 2002—2006. National Indicative Program 2002—2003. Azerbaijan.

by supporting the efforts to prevent and settle conflicts. The participants also confirmed their joint determination to fight international terrorism.

- Second, the activity of the EU was stepped up in settling the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. In recent years, the OSCE has been passively carrying out this function, and in this situation contribution from other international organizations, primarily the EU, is extremely important. As perhaps no other organization, the European Union can develop and put into practice a concept of all-encompassing stabilization in the region, in which political and economic elements would supplement each other along the lines of the Stability Pact for the Balkans. Recently, it has been proposed on several occasions that the EU draw up a similar Stability Pact for the Caucasus as the southern equivalent of an already existing “northern dimension.” For example, at the regular meeting of the European Union-Azerbaijan Cooperation Committee (Brussels, 12 July, 2002), a document was adopted in which the European Union welcomed the proposal by Azerbaijan to liberate and rehabilitate the Fizuli, Jabrail, Gubadlin, and Zangelan regions and create conditions for restoring railroad communication along the Baku-Nakhchivan-Erevan route. Somewhat earlier, representatives of the Cooperation Committee for the Southern Caucasus of the European Parliament denied Naira Melkumian the opportunity to come to Brussels as “foreign minister” of the self-proclaimed and unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, where Ms. Melkumian intended to hold official meetings in the European Parliament.¹²
- Third, there have been frequent visits to the region by delegations of the so-called “trio” (three foreign ministers of EU countries—the current chairing country, the former chairing country, and the next chairing country). In the summer of 2003, Finnish diplomat Heikki Talvitie, who almost immediately (in August of the same year) presented his mandate to the Azerbaijan government, was appointed as special EU representative for the Southern Caucasus. His authorities included assisting in the prevention of conflicts and participating in restoring territorial integrity in the region’s countries. All of these facts emphasize the EU’s desire to cooperate more closely with Azerbaijan. As for the foreign policy “trio,” the first visit of its representatives to the capitals of the three South Caucasian states in the spring of 2001 was held at the summit level, and on 7-8 July, 2003 the EU “trio” arrived in Azerbaijan headed by Italian Deputy Foreign Minister Margarita Boniver.¹³ There were another 14 people in the delegation, including from the European Commission, as well as from the Secretariat of the EU Council of Ministers. This visit mainly involved a discussion of political questions, including relations and partnership between Azerbaijan and the EU, the conflicts in the Southern Caucasus, the role and position of the European Union in their resolution, the changes in Azerbaijan and Europe, and so on.

Along with this, Günter Verheugen, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, intends to visit the South Caucasian countries soon to discuss the possibility of their participation in activity under the European Union program in keeping with his profile.¹⁴ The Azerbaijan authorities have already asked the European Union to include the republic in the list of “new European neighbors,” which will also be a topic of discussion during the upcoming visit. This status will allow our country to have a real claim to membership in the EU, where at present only two CIS states have the status of “EU neighbor:” Moldova and Ukraine. By the way, the West European mass media have recently been giving more attention to the question of further expansion of the European Union. The press reports that after Cypress, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia enter this structure, new contenders will be considered, mainly the Balkan states and some post-Soviet countries, one of which is Azerbaijan.

¹² See: *Ekho*, No. 117 (362), 22 June, 2002.

¹³ See: RIA Novosti, 7 July, 2003.

¹⁴ See: *Azerbajjanskije izvestia*, No. 7 (07), 13 January, 2004.

Our country, which has a population of 8 million people and an 11% increase in GDP in 2001, could be a contender for membership in the EU as early as 2007. The changes going on globally are raising the significance of European integration even more. What is more, along with the unwavering desire to ensure its own security, Azerbaijan should reconsider its strategy with respect to the new political environment. All of this must be taken into account when talking about the national interests of our state with respect to the EU's expansion toward the East. A component of this scenario is the fact that Azerbaijan has already become a full-fledged member of the OSCE and the Council of Europe and feels itself a part of Europe. What is more, due to its propitious geographic location and the fact that a multitude of different ethnic groups live here in a relatively small space, our country can be called a unique hinge-state between Europe, the Near and Middle East, as well as the new independent republics of Central Asia. The Great Silk Road passes through Azerbaijan, the traditional trade route from Central Asia to Europe, and also a new transit route that should ensure access of the energy resources discovered in recent years in the Caspian Sea Basin to West European and Mediterranean sales markets.

Due to Europe's new self-definition, as well as to Azerbaijan's changing economic and political priorities, there are convincing reasons to give special attention to the question of our country joining the EU. Any form of communication between Europe and Asia can be implemented through its territory, therefore the republic can become an "energy bridge" between these continents.

Instability in the Middle East and the search for new energy resources are forcing the EU countries to pay close attention to the supplies of hydrocarbons located close to the Caspian Sea. At present, they occupy seventh place in the world in terms of volume—after Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Abu Dhabi, and Venezuela. According to the estimates, one third of the world's resources of natural gas are concentrated in this region. If we look at Germany and Italy, more than two thirds of the blue fuel requirements of which are currently provided by deliveries from the CIS countries, it becomes clear why the headache related to this topic occupies an important place on the West European agenda. For example, whereas in 2003, European states exported approximately 500 billion cubic meters of gas, according to the forecasts of analysts, as early as 2004, this index will increase to 513, and to 530 billion cubic meters in 2005.¹⁵ Therefore, Europe is striving to diversify its purchases of natural gas in order not to be dependent on one supplier. Azerbaijan is in the same position, since industrial development of its Shakh Deniz field and other deposits will permit the country in the future not only to satisfy its requirements, but also to become one of the large exporters of natural gas to Europe.¹⁶

According to several western experts, the CIS oil-producing countries, primarily the states of the Caspian Basin, are capable of compensating somewhat for decreasing or even entirely removing the threat of the energy crisis bearing down on America and Europe. As a prestigious American journal *Foreign Affairs* reports, in 2002-2006, the U.S. can increase oil export from these countries by a minimum of 2 million barrels a day.¹⁷ According to the optimistic forecasts of western specialists, if the events in the Middle East develop unfavorably for the United States, after the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline goes into use (2005), with an increase in its capacity to 50 million tons of oil a year (2010) and Kazakhstan oil being hooked up to it, the export of oil from the CIS countries could in the not too distant future come close to its deliveries from Saudi Arabia.¹⁸ When considering the alternatives, American and European specialists do not exclude that over time the oil-producing states of the Commonwealth could together present serious competition for the OPEC countries.

For example, according to British Petroleum, in 2003, 47,776,300 barrels of oil (6.5 million tons) were obtained at the Chirag field, and the company's daily production on the Chirag-1 platform amounted to 131,000 barrels, with 46.1 million barrels (6.213 million tons) of the total amount

¹⁵ See: *Azerbaijanskije izvestia*, No. 14 (14), 22 January, 2004.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ See: J.H. Kalicki, "Caspian Energy at the Crossroads," *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2001.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

of produced oil exported via the Baku-Supsa pipeline. The volume of profitable oil of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijanian Republic (SOCAR) was equal to 1.09 million tons.¹⁹ (For several technical reasons in 2004 production on the platform will decrease to 6.1 million tons, and its daily level to 125,000 barrels.²⁰)

In order to implement the prospective hydrocarbon production and transportation projects, reliable uninterrupted operation of the main pipelines must be ensured. From the viewpoint of European security, the Caspian belongs to the so-called "arc of vulnerability," that is, to the conflict zone that extends through the Mediterranean, Black Sea, the Northern and Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia, which affects the geopolitical interests not only of Russia, but of other nations as well.²¹

In this way, in order to ensure reliable control over the flows of energy resources from Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus to Europe, we need to think about the next phase in establishing the external borders of the EU and NATO. The second stage in the enlargement of the North Atlantic Alliance to the East is close to completion, today it is symmetrical to the enlargement of the EU. In the end, this also applies to the formation of European security in the Southern Caucasus, where Azerbaijan can be a candidate for the so-called "third wave" of NATO's enlargement, which will most probably be the final phase of Europe's enlargement.

At present, in contrast to the Balkans which border directly on the EU, the Europeans do not feel an urgent need to step up their activity in the Southern Caucasus, and it is unlikely that anyone in Western Europe can currently imagine Azerbaijan as a member of the EU or NATO. In the post-Soviet space, European policy is proceeding from the observation of basic human rights and requires that the Caucasian and Central Asian countries build a civil society and law-based state as quickly as possible. From this point of view, the EU policy is not a support corset, but a strait jacket, which will structurally strengthen the former Soviet republics in a new system of Western Europe.

All the projects of the European Union, which is assuming increasing responsibility for implementing them, are aimed precisely at supporting the transformation process. As for Azerbaijan, during the past 10 years, it has taken several steps toward democratization: the death penalty has been abolished in the country, certain amendments have been made to the Constitution, the Election Code has been approved, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Economic Development have been created, and certain measures have been taken to bring Azerbaijan legislation into harmony with European. But the main thing is that the EU has recognized the results of the presidential elections that were held in the republic on 15 October, 2003, announcing that in contrast to the previous elections, certain progress has been noted on the path to democracy.

Nevertheless, here it is expedient to look at two possible alternatives for the further development in events.

The first of them is that Azerbaijan may become a candidate for membership in the European Union. Regular coverage of this topic in the European mass media is ensured thanks to the activity of Olivier Dupuis, a European Parliament member and deputy from Belgium, and his supporters in the Transnational Radical Party (TRP), who organized the campaign for "immediate inclusion" of our republic and several other countries on the list of candidates for membership in the European Union. And in order to put this question on the agenda of the European Parliament meeting, the signatures of 500 deputies must be gathered from countries wanting to be included on this list (108 deputies of the Azerbaijan Milli mejlis have joined this initiative).²² The European Parliament may raise the question of instituting European Union sanctions against the leaders of the unrecognized separatist regime of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on travel to EU countries. Whatever the case, the EU already has the experience of using sanctions against separatists. For example, in 2003, it compiled a list of leaders of the so-called Pridnestrovie

¹⁹ See: *Azerbajjanskije izvestia*, No. 9 (09), 15 January, 2004.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ See: V. Kotilko, "Rossiia i Kaspii: geopoliticheskie interesy," *Observer*, No. 7 (126), 2000.

²² See: *Ekho*, No. 19 (511), 30 January, 2003.

Moldovan Republic, who were forbidden to travel to EU states.²³ The U.S., Azerbaijan, Georgia, and many other countries of the world joined these sanctions.

Ankara has been allotted a special role in these processes. Statements made in Istanbul by head of the European Commission Romano Prodi and EU Commissioner for Enlargement Günter Verheugen are evidence of a new era in European integration. For example, Mr. Verheugen noted that the leaders of the European Union member states are in favor Turkey joining this organization, based not only on considerations of security and foreign policy.²⁴ After all, the situation changed after 9/11 and today most of the leaders of the EU countries are in favor of Turkey's membership in this organization.²⁵ From the latter it follows that after becoming a European Union member, this country will help Azerbaijan enter the EU. (A similar situation happened with Poland. Not wanting its eastern border to be the eastern borders of the EU for long, it spoke in favor of Ukraine joining the European Union.)

The many Islamic diasporas of several European Union states are also in favor of Azerbaijan joining, which want to see a country with a significant number of Muslim citizens be part of future Europe. Islam has essentially become a major part of the European cultural space, for which there are several reasons: emigration, the transfer to this faith of a certain number of Europeans, and also the fact that there are states in Europe, Bulgaria for example, where Islam is the religion of the significant national minority. According to the latest estimates, approximately 12 million Muslims live in 15 states of the European Union. This number does not include unregistered immigrants, so there are undoubtedly many more followers of this faith. This makes Islam the second or third largest religion in the EU, depending on how you define Christianity, as a united whole or by separating Catholicism from it.

The second development scenario is that Azerbaijan will not become a candidate for EU membership. But if this is the case, the republic will have the opportunity to join so-called "Greater Europe," which is a purely economic bloc supported by the European Union. Romano Prodi characterized "Greater Europe" as follows: "Everything apart from institutions."²⁶ In other words, it is essentially bona fide membership in the EU. During the undertakings in Saloniki, Greece, on 19-20 June, 2003, the European Parliament proposed including Azerbaijan in this structure. And during the meeting of the foreign ministers of the European Union countries on 26 January, 2004, a decision was made to revive the debates on relations between the EU and the Southern Caucasus,²⁷ which, judging by everything, will facilitate Azerbaijan's entry into "Greater Europe." One of the pluses of this bloc is the principle of the "four freedoms" (free movement of goods, services, capital, and citizens). Among the other areas of "Greater Europe" are measures to create an unprecedented free trade zone, in which a group of states will be included that neighbor on the EU in its extended format. Among them are Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Syria.

Of course, this requires the creation of an efficient mechanism of regional cooperation to establish a so-called "Caucasian Economic Zone" (or a free trade zone), which would include Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, and other countries. It could become a fundamental part of the general European economic space. By way of example, it is expedient here to mention the European-Mediterranean free trade zone. Its current assignments are mainly related to reducing customs duties, which the Mediterranean countries levy on import from the EU. But the partner countries are already enjoying the advantages of broad duty-free access to the European Union market, which is helping institutional and economic reforms in these states, and in the future will allow them to obtain the necessary investments and raise their competitiveness.

Summing up what has been said, I would like to note that movement toward the East in itself is undoubtedly the most complicated and large-scale project of EU expansion. Never before have so many countries tried to become members of the European Union at the same time, or have never undergone such mas-

²³ See: *Ekho*, No. 6 (744), 13 January, 2004.

²⁴ See: *Azerbajjanskije izvestia*, No. 12 (12), 20 January, 2004.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ See: *Ekho*, No. 15 (753), 27 January, 2004.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

sive internal changes. Never before was the need for solidarity by the old members so urgent due to the significant lag between them and the new ones; Europe has not had to look at the East yet under the banner of globalization. In this respect, the European Union should not become a “European fortress,” on the contrary, it needs strong bridges that link it with its eastern neighbors. As for building these bridges, Azerbaijan should take a more active part in developing the EU’s strategic policy regarding its immediate neighbors. The future member states must be in favor of adopting the “eastern dimension,” in the same way as the northern dimension of trans-border cooperation. Their historical and cultural experience, as well as several other significant factors will make a contribution to developing the European Union’s new eastern policy.

KYRGYZSTAN-EUROPEAN UNION: FACETS OF COOPERATION

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Kyrgyzstan is one of the first CIS states (after Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus) with which the European Union has signed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)—a legal document which regulates the main principles in this area.¹ Before the PCA was enforced, these relations were regulated by the Temporary Agreement on Trade and Trade Measures between our republic and the European Union (signed on 28 November, 1996 in Brussels). After ratification by the parliaments of the EU member states and the Zhorogku kenesh of Kyrgyzstan, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement came into force on 1 July, 1999. It became the basis of bilateral relations in political, trade and economic, legal, and cultural spheres for the decade to come.

The PCA is particularly valuable in that the EU member states recognize Kyrgyzstan as a country with which they share “common values,”² and both sides are committed to “strengthening the political and economic freedoms.”³ The effectiveness of this document depends on “the continuation and accomplishment of the political, economic, and legal reforms” being carried out in Kyrgyzstan.⁴ The Agreement envisages the EU’s comprehensive approach to the need for broadening cooperation in the region as an important condition for “promoting prosperity and stability”⁵ in Central Asia. What is more, it notes the need for holding an ongoing political dialog on urgent issues of bilateral relations and on international problems. Not only economic cooperation, but also technical assistance to our republic is an important component of this partnership. Noting the significant differences in socioeconomic development, the

¹ See: *The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic (PCA)* (signed on 9 February, 1995) [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/].

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

European Union recognizes the Kyrgyz Republic as “a developing and landlocked country,”⁶ whereby one of the main goals of the PCA is to eliminate “disparities through Community assistance to the development and restructuring of the Kyrgyz economy.”⁷

It should be emphasized that cooperation with the EU fully meets the national interests of our state aimed at integration into the world community and active involvement in the leading international political, financial, and trade and economic structures. In this respect, it is important to recall the important positive role the EU played in helping Kyrgyzstan to join the World Trade Organization at the end of 1998. During the negotiations to define the main parameters of our membership in the WTO, a decisive role was played by the European Union states’ (particularly its key members) support of our country. Kyrgyzstan gained favorable opportunities to intensify comprehensive relations with the EU both within the organization itself and on the bilateral level.

Relations between Kyrgyzstan and the EU have currently achieved a regular working tempo and are maintained by exchanging visits at the ministerial level and by contacts between experts and specialists of the different departments, which makes it possible to focus on mutually advantageous relations in specific areas.

In order to ensure that the provisions of the Agreement are being fulfilled, three observation structures have been created: the Cooperation Council, the Cooperation Committee, and the Committee on Interparliamentary Cooperation.

The ongoing political dialog is aimed at achieving the following goals: strengthening political relations; supporting the reforms being carried out during the transformation process to democratize society, transform the state administration structures, encourage the development of a civil society; and reinforcing security and stability in Kyrgyzstan and in Central Asia as a whole. It should be noted that establishing a political dialog is a necessary condition for further strengthening trade and economic cooperation. It is not accidental that in recent years, the EU has become Bishkek’s largest trade partner.⁸ The European Union thinks it is very important that our country has accepted and is fulfilling its obligations to democratize society, form a law-based state, respect human rights and freedoms, and create a multifaceted system with free democratic elections, and liberalize the economy. An important element of bilateral contacts is retaining peace and international security, as well as observing the principles and provisions of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In this context, the EU recognizes that support of Kyrgyzstan’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity is a necessary condition for retaining peace and stability both in the region and in Eurasia as a whole.

The agreement defines a broad range of cooperation areas, and creates favorable conditions for stable and mutually advantageous development, primarily the strengthening of trade and economic ties as the foundation on which Kyrgyz-European relations are based. In economic cooperation, the EU (and our country) has singled out the following key areas: environmental protection and support of the widespread socioeconomic reforms being conducted in the republic since it gained its independence, and sustainable development of industry, agriculture, and so on, also keeping the resolution of environmental problems in mind.

With respect to the chronology of Kyrgyzstan-EU bilateral relations, it should be noted that the first meeting of the Council on Cooperation, which forms the foundation of these relations, was held in Brussels on 19-20 July, 1999. An official delegation headed by the republic’s prime minister, A. Muraliev, took part in this meeting on behalf of Kyrgyzstan.⁹ The sides confirmed their obligations to intensify political, economic, financial, and cultural relations. The EU once more confirmed its support of our country in conducting democratic reforms and transferring to a market economy. The Council on Cooperation also emphasized that peace and stability in Central Asia is of great significance for security both in Europe and all over the planet.

⁶ See: *The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic (PCA)* (signed on 9 February, 1995) [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/].

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ See: Annual Reports of the Kyrgyz Republic Statistical Committee (from 1998 to present), the publication “Socioeconomic Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic” (January-December 2002), section “Foreign Sector,” pp. 222-223 [<http://nsc.bishkek.su>].

⁹ See: *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 20 July, 1999.

The Council has held a total of five meetings, which took place in Kyrgyzstan and at the EU headquarters in Brussels. The first was held on 1 March, 2000 in Brussels. The Kyrgyzstan delegation was headed by Vice Premier Minister and Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry A. Sulaimankulov.¹⁰ During this meeting, questions relating to implementation of the Agreement were discussed, including the prospects for developing relations within the TACIS, INOGATE and TRACECA programs, the Indicative Program, the Action Program for the Kyrgyz Republic, and auxiliary programs, including in education (TEMPUS), science, and statistics.

The Committee on Cooperation has held four meetings. At the last one on 27 March, 2003, our country's delegation was headed by Vice Premier Minister J. Otorbaev.¹¹ What is more, a subcommittee has been created within this structure, at which practical questions of cooperation in investment and trade policy, standardization, macroeconomics, and the protection of intellectual property were discussed in Bishkek on 12 May, 2000 and 21 June, 2001.¹²

When reviewing the Kyrgyzstan-EU relations, the development of relations within the Committee on Interparliamentary Cooperation should also be noted. Its first meeting was held on 26 May, 2000 in our country, which was visited by a representative delegation from the European Parliament for this purpose.¹³ The second meeting took place on 9-10 October, 2001 in Brussels. The Kyrgyz Republic delegation was headed by Deputy Chairman of the Zhogorku kenesh's Assembly of People's Representatives S. Zheenbekov. The third meeting was again held in Bishkek on 3 October, 2002.

During essentially all the bilateral meetings within these structures, the European Union continues to place the emphasis on the need to continue democratic reforms and observe human rights in Kyrgyzstan as the basic conditions for developing further cooperation and rendering assistance. It should also be noted that the EU is concerned about the state of security in the region, that is, the continuing threat of international terrorism, illicit drugs and weapons circulation, and so on. In 2001, the European Union launched the Central Asia Drugs Action Plan (CADAP), within the framework of which it renders support to law enforcement agencies and departments in all the Central Asian countries engaged in combating their smuggling. The program's budget for 2002-2003 amounted to approximately 3 million euro. But after the tragic events of 9/11 and the subsequent antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan, the European Union recognized the need to link the Afghan problem with the problems of the entire region and reviewed its policy regarding the Central Asian countries, thus doubling the amount of aid rendered to them under the TACIS Program.

Technical and humanitarian aid from the European Union is extremely important for the development of the Kyrgyz Republic. In compliance with the Memorandum on Mutual Understanding between the two sides, a TACIS Coordination Bureau was opened in Bishkek on 3 April, 1992. Large funds have been allotted via the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) organized in 1992 especially for rendering emergency aid, mainly in public health and food provision. In particular, in 1996, 32 million ecu were allotted for purchasing medical supplies. And before that, in 1994-1995, grants amounting to 14 million ecu were allotted for delivering food to our country (under three programs); in 1995-1996—5 million ecu; and in 1996—10 million ecu. What is more, the program for ensuring Kyrgyzstan's food safety receives stable financing year in year out. For example, in 1997, 8 million ecu were granted for this purpose, in 1998 and 1999—8.5 million ecu each year, in 2000 and 2001—10 million euro, and in 2002—9.5 million euro.¹⁴ Since 1993, the ECHO has rendered our country a total of 25.4 million euro in gratuitous aid (mainly food and medication). This was particularly important in 1994 and 1995 when natural disasters befell the republic. In 1999, the ECHO allotted 2.2 million euro for providing the least well-off strata of the population with medication.¹⁵

¹⁰ See: *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 1 March, 2000.

¹¹ See: *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 28 March, 2003.

¹² See: *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 12 May, 2000; 21 June, 2001.

¹³ See: *Vechernii Bishkek*, 26 May, 2000.

¹⁴ See [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/kyrgyzstan/].

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

Technical assistance is rendered under the TACIS program. Between 1992 and 2001, grants to the republic in this sphere amounted to approximately 63 million euro. In June 2001, a TACIS Action Program for Central Asia for 2001-2003 (with a budget of 50 million euro) was adopted. But taking into account the new conditions, this budget was doubled and focused on the following areas: support of structural, legal, and administrative reforms (state administration, democratization, education); assistance to the private sector and economic development (business, trade, the financial sector); and improving infrastructure (power engineering, transportation, telecommunications). Another 2 million euro were allotted in 1999 under the TACIS Program to eliminate the consequences of the crisis in Russia, which also affected Kyrgyzstan. What is more, several other programs are being implemented under TACIS, in which Kyrgyzstan is taking part. In particular, the TEMPUS project mentioned above—trans-European cooperation in higher education between the EU and the CIS countries—encompasses Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Our country is also actively participating in several other interstate TACIS programs in the region: TRACECA (the Europe-Caucasus-Central Asia transportation corridor); INOGATE (modernizing oil and gas pipelines in the CIS); WARMAP (water resources management and agricultural production); MERCURY (international standards and obligations); and LIEN (financing nongovernmental organization working in the social sector to support impoverished strata of the population).

In briefly summing up the above, I would like to note the following facets of Kyrgyzstan-European Union cooperation:

- There is a solid foundation for intensifying a political dialog based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and the most favorable prerequisites are being created for filling interstate relations with new quality.
- It is extremely important that the efforts of our country's leadership aimed at developing democracy, consolidating a civil society, conducting economic reforms, and so on are met with the European Union's full support and cooperation.
- The European Union has raised the "rank" of cooperation with Kyrgyzstan to the level of partnership, which requires a careful analysis of the current relations and their prospects, as well as the adoption of a special strategic cooperation program with the European Union in areas that meet the national interests of our state. Of course, we must take into account the significant gap in socioeconomic parameters between our republic and the EU member countries. But this should not curb the progress of mutually advantageous projects.
- There can be no doubt that the EU's technical support of the economic reforms in Kyrgyzstan is a significant component of bilateral relations. At the same time, the economic component of cooperation should be raised to a new level. The potential for this is quite significant. The European Union's interest in the natural raw material and recreational resources of our country is also obvious, for the efficient use of which substantiated proposals must be drawn up.
- A serious problem is eliminating the stereotype that relations between the European Union and Kyrgyzstan are "donor-recipient" in nature. In order to do this, radical measures must be adopted to improve the Kyrgyz Republic's image as a country undergoing democratic changes and strictly adhering to the international obligations it has adopted. Here it is important to draw up a substantiated stance on all the problem issues affecting the state, nature, and level of relations.
- Kyrgyzstan's effective participation in the international antiterrorist coalition created favorable opportunities for activating relations both within the Union format, and with its individual member states in essentially all spheres of cooperation.
- The resources and influence of the EU must also be used to strengthen interstate relations in Central Asia. This will make it possible to reinforce general stability and security, and more fully activate the mechanisms of regional integration and cooperation for resolving urgent prob-

lems, primarily socioeconomic ones, which the Central Asian republics are encountering during the transition period.

- There are different ways to develop relations between the regional states and the EU countries. In our opinion, the most optimal is to establish closer contacts within the OSCE, of which essentially all the Central Asian and European Union countries are members. With this goal in mind, it would be expedient to hold a forum-dialog under the auspices of the OSCE on the topic “Central Asian and European Union States: Combating Global Threats and Challenges Together. Prospects for Interaction and Cooperation in the 21st Century.”
 - In the practical vein, cooperation in the EU-regional countries format can also be enhanced through the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) by holding a CACO-EU forum. A broad range of issues, including political, economic, and cultural-humanitarian problems, will make it possible to exchange opinions and draw up practical recommendations for intensifying relations between the countries of the region and the European Union.
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REGIONAL ECONOMIES

**THE ENERGY SECTOR OF
UZBEKISTAN:
PRESENT STATE AND
PROBLEMS¹**

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**Uzbekistan:
Politics in the Energy Sector**

The entire fuel and energy complex of Uzbekistan belongs to the state: the oil and gas branch is controlled by the National Holding Uzbekneftegaz; coal, by the Ugol firm, one of the companies that make up the State Joint-Stock Company called Uzbekenergo that is responsible for the power production sector. In other words, until recently the fuel and energy complex that remained a vertically arranged and rigidly integrated system it had been under Soviet power was never affected by the market reforms going on in other spheres. Presidential decree No. 2812 of 22 February, 2001 On Deepening Economic Reforms in the Energy Sphere of the Republic of Uzbekistan opened an era of changes in this economic branch.

The Regulatory Agencies

Until recently the regulatory functions in the energy sphere belonged to Uzneftegazinspektsia and Uzenergonadzor that were part of Uzbekneftegaz and Uzbekenergo; as such they could not be independ-

¹ Concluded from *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (32), 2004.

ent. By its decision No. 220 of 8 July, 2000 Cabinet of Ministers removed Uzneftegazinspektsia from Uzbekneftegaz; it was transformed into an independent structure the Uzbek State Inspection for Control over the Use of Oil Products and Gas (Uzgosneftegazinspektsia) at the Cabinet of Ministers. Today it has to address the following tasks:

- Consistent control over the use of oil products and gas in the country;
- Control over the norms and rules related to the quality and quantity of oil products and gas used in economic branches, control over the technological processes and the state of technological equipment used by the oil and gas branch as well as control over observing (by the organizations engaged in building objects in the oil and gas industry) the constructions norms and rules to be used in the process of construction and installation mounting of oil and gas networks;
- Contribution to elaboration and realization of energy-saving measures, programs and projects of the rational use of oil products and gas.

Under the same presidential decree Uzbekenergo lost Uzenergonadzor that was transformed into an independent State Agency for Control over Energy Production called Uzgosenergonadzor. It is accountable to the Cabinet of Ministers that appoints its general director and his deputies. Its tasks were outlined in the Cabinet's Resolution No. 94 of 24 February, 2001 as:

- Elaboration of necessary normative documents and rules of production, transportation and use of power and coal;
- Inspections and expert analysis of how electric energy and heat producers work as well as how consumers use these products;
- Control over compliance with the republic's legislation, normative acts and rules in the sphere of production, transportation and use of energy;
- Organization of licensing (in accordance with the established procedure) of production of electric energy at stationary electric power stations that are part of the unified power grid;
- Elaboration and realization of measures designed to attract foreign investments to the sphere of production and transportation of electric energy, and coal mining;
- Encouragement of competition and ensuring a non-discriminatory open access to transmission grids for all competitors;
- Creating favorable conditions for the development of renewable power sources;
- Creating conditions under which the ecological norms and requirements in the sphere of production, transportation and use of coal and electric energy are observed;
- Control over the balance of production, distribution and use of coal and electric energy.

Main Principles of Reforming the Fuel and Energy Sphere

Many of the developed countries retained state control over the fuel and energy complex; in the last 20 to 30 years they have accumulated considerable experience in reforming the branch and creating conditions for competition in it. When summarizing this experience R. Pritchard and P. Andrews-Speed² have formulated eight principles of reforming the energy sphere:

² See: R. Pritchard, P. Andrews-Speed, "Eight Principles of Electricity Industry Reform," *International Energy Law and Taxation Review*, No. 1, 2001, pp. 11-17.

- Separation of economic and state administration functions;
- Creation of a wholesale market of energy sources;
- Guaranteed access of power producers to the distribution systems;
- Creation of an independent regulatory agency;
- Legislative back-up of the reforms;
- Careful approach to independent projects;
- Admission of private property to the energy sector;
- Creating public support for these plans.

Let us discuss these principles as applied to Uzbekistan.

Separation of Economic and State Government Functions

An analysis of tasks and functions of the state structures Uzbekneftegaz and Uzbekenergo shows that their functions can be described as state government functions. The most important among them are:

- Elaboration of short- and long-term forecasts and purpose-oriented programs of the branch's development and balances of production and consumption;
- Regulation of prices and tariffs in the sphere of energy sources and power;
- Identification and coordination of strategic and priority trends in prospecting for oil, gas and coal;
- R&D in the sphere of renewable and non-traditional energy sources;
- Elaboration and introduction of measures designed to save energy sources and use them rationally, as well as decrease losses of gas, coal, and electric power;
- Control over the systems of power and gas supply;
- Attraction of foreign investments.

The other tasks belong to the sphere of economy and are found outside the scope of the present article; they should be addressed by other state agencies such as the Energy Agency. Division of the functions of the vertically integrated monopolies (Uzbekneftegaz and Uzbekenergo) also belongs to the sphere of structural reforms that the branch badly needs: the functions should be divided into extraction (generation), transmission and distribution.

Creation of a Wholesale Market of Energy Sources

The wholesale market cannot function unless the sphere acquires independent producers. This means that firms independent from Uzbekenergo should be set up; in their activities they should follow the logic of the market. The republic has already launched certain changes: public corporations are set up in the spheres of generation and distribution of electric energy.³ The situation in the oil and gas sphere is much more complicated. I have demonstrated in the first part of my article that appeared in the previous issue

³ See: Neftegazovaia promyshlennost. Uzbekneftegaz [www.uz/eng/industries/ung.htm], 19 March, 2003.

of this journal that the oil and gas national holding comprises seven major production joint-stock companies. Each of them has daughter companies and is a monopolist in its sphere. Competitive environment in the oil and gas extraction requires that this national holding should be divided into two or three more or less equal companies. The same applies to Uznefteprodukt (it has branches in all regions of the country). The larger part of the filling stations in the republic is privately owned, yet there is no competition in the sphere of distribution, which means that the monopoly of one company is not conducive to higher quality of its products. It seems that Uznefteprodukt should be divided into several firms to function at least in half of the regions. There are three oil refineries in the republic; in order to create competitive environment in this sphere as well each of them should serve as a core of a joint-stock company. The state should retain its control over Uztransgas so as to ensure equal access of mining companies to oil and gas fields. Other companies serve the above-mentioned structures and do not need restructuring.

Guaranteed Access of Power Producers to Distribution Systems

Equal access to the power transmission and distribution systems is the key issue of the market of power and gas. This should be legally registered. According to Pritchard and Andrews-Speed, a Code of Access to the Transmission and Distribution Network elaborated by an independent regulatory structure is the most effective instrument.⁴ To attract private investments to power and gas main lines and to encourage investors the code should ensure return of investments. This can be achieved by creating a stimulatory system of price formation so as to balance the interests of network owners and consumers; the pricing mechanisms should allow network owners to increase their profits together with more efficient work. In Uzbekistan the controlling interest should belong to the state: in Uztransgas and in the Unified Power Grid of Central Asia (within the republic).

Creation of an Independent Regulatory Agency

Government has a special role to play in defining the tasks of national energy policy and regulating its implementation. It should try to avoid any hampering interference; in the same way the state should avoid any interference that might negatively affect an effective distribution of resources or adjustment to changes. This means that the government should make state structures responsible for entering the market, accession to networks, price formation, service standards and protection of the rights of consumers. In other words, the state should concentrate on making regulatory structures financially and politically independent of the state and of electric power and gas suppliers. Economic expediency should be regarded as the key issue. There is any number of works dealing with the main conditions that create an independent regulator.⁵ I have discussed the main tasks the regulators should deal with in the sphere of fuel and energy complex. They are of technical, controlling and supervisory nature mainly adjusted to the requirements of centralized planned economy. In the market conditions these structures have to address

⁴ See: R. Pritchard, P. Andrews-Speed, op. cit.

⁵ See, for example: J. Stern, "What Makes an Independent Regulator Independent?" *Business Strategy Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1997, pp. 67-74; idem, "Utility Reform, Privatization and Regulation: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe and from China," *International Business Lawyer*, Vol. 27, No. 11, 1997; J. Stern, J.R. Davis, "Economic Reform of the Electricity Industries of Central and Eastern Europe," *Economics of Transition*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1999, pp. 427-460; D. Kennedy, "Competition in the Power Sector of Transition Economies," *Working Paper No. 41*, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London, 1999; idem, "Regulatory Reform and Market Development in Power Sectors of Transition Economies: The Case of Kazakhstan," *Energy Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2002, pp. 219-233; idem, "Liberalization of the Russian Power Sector," *Energy Policy*, Vol. 31, No. 8, 2003, pp. 745-758.

different tasks: they have to influence the economic entities by elaborating legislative initiatives in the sphere of economy (taxes, tariffs, and prices established for long-term periods). Today, these problems belong to the Ministry of Finance, the State Tax Committee, Uzbekneftegaz and Uzbekenergo the decisions of which are of fiscal nature alone. This explains why unless the status of Uzgosneftegazinspektisia and Uzgosenergonadzor is changed they will not become independent regulatory structures which the budding market economy badly needs.

Legislative Back-up of Reforms

In its reviews of privatization in the electric power and gas sphere in Hungary and Kazakhstan the World Bank pointed out that Hungary had scored greatest successes in reforming the fuel and energy complex among all former socialist and CIS countries.⁶ During the preparatory period the country carried out the following measures: its fuel and energy complex was divided into independent companies; in 1991-1992 the vertical administrative ties among them were replaced with contracts; the branch received a legal basis and a regulatory regime; the price formation mechanisms and principles were registered by laws. By 1994-1995 the country obtained a privatization strategy; the government abandoned its administering role and limited itself to its share of property in the energy transmission systems and to the nuclear power. Today, private sector is mainly responsible for the fuel and energy complex.

The reforms received legal back-up in the form of 150 new laws and resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, ministries and departments. The larger part (101) of the newly adopted laws and normative acts dealt with privatization of the objects of energy production and gas sectors, the rates of price rises and terms under which prices could be raised, more effective use of energy, regulation of prices and tariffs with participation by consumers, and compensations to the latter.

The government of Uzbekistan has already adopted at least 82 relevant documents, yet the number of those dealing with the issues enumerated above is much smaller. I have already noted that today the state-owned companies Uzbekenergo and Uzbekneftegaz remain uncontested monopolies in their spheres.

Careful Approach to Independent Projects

Normally independent energy projects are realized according to one of two patterns: construction-ownership-exploitation (COE) and construction-exploitation-transfer (CET). Because of inadequate institutional back-up of both patterns they are rarely used.⁷ In fact they are better suited for the countries with a developed competitive environment. To use these patterns with any degree of efficiency five of the above principles should be realized.

Admission of Private Property to the Energy Sector

Private property can and should be allowed in the sphere of energy production and distribution. To reach this goal the state should separate the regulatory and the economic functions in such monopolies as

⁶ See: "Privatization of the Power and Natural Gas Industries in Hungary and Kazakhstan," *Technical Paper No. 451*, World Bank, Washington, 1999.

⁷ See: R. Pritchard, P. Andrews-Speed, *op. cit.*

Uzbekneftegaz and Uzbekenergo. Then they should be divided into independent production companies. When private sector comes to these spheres the state-owned companies will have to compete not among themselves but with private firms under strict control of regulatory agencies.

Creation of corporations is a process in which state property in the fuel and energy complex is transformed into enterprises or companies with state property (CSP). Such companies are completely free of political control (though the main shareholders can influence their policy by appointing or removing directors). This process presupposes the following inevitable features:

- Adaptation of individual administrative structures;
- Appointment of nominally independent members to the CSP boards of directors;
- Limitation of powers and responsibilities of the CSP to a certain range of economic issues so as to prevent unsanctioned initiatives in the sphere, and performance of state administering functions that do not belong to them;
- Achievement of complete transparency of the results of their performance as well as their independent creditability;
- Creation of conditions in which CSP are responsible solely for their economic performance;
- Transformation of the bureaucratic hierarchical management system into a system that pays particular attention to the delegation of powers and accountability.

When the process is complete the CSP will have to meet the same criteria as those applied to the private sector (this is what so-called competitive neutrality is about).

Privatization of the CSP should make them completely independent and remove any need for competitive neutrality. Before any of the CSP is sold their finances should be restructured. In many of the developing countries such companies accumulated debts; their further functioning, however, depends on investment decisions rooted in political or social considerations.

In all cases structural and regulatory reforms should predate privatization so as to make the companies transparent and completely understandable for future investors. Regrettably, in Uzbekistan no corporations had appeared before privatization began in a total absence of any necessary indispensable structural and regulatory reforms. The larger part of the transformed ministries, departments and agencies preserves the tasks and functions they inherited from the Soviet planned economy.

Creating Public Support for These Plans

Public support is one of the keys to success; it predetermines success. For many reasons, however, governments are often deprived of this important instrument: more often than not the public doubts sincerity of many initiatives. There are several ways leading to a wide public involvement in decision-making: population should receive part of the shares of the fuel and energy sector; the public should be invited to contribute to planning the use of land; the regulatory structures should be accountable to the public organizations.

C o n c l u s i o n s

An analysis of the state of the fuel and energy sector of Uzbekistan suggests the following conclusions.

The republic has everything it needs to reach economic stability with the help of its fuel and energy resources and the industrial basis of fuel extraction and generation of power.

The reforms of the fuel and energy complex launched in 2001 designed to supplant the command administrative methods with market regulation have not yet gained momentum.

So far, there is no program and no clear ideas about the stages and order of the necessary structural changes because such programs and draft laws are drawn by the ministries and departments resolved to protect their narrow corporate interests that have nothing to do with the needs of the state and society as a whole.

The country needs a theoretical basis for such transformations that should reflect the principles discussed above; it should address the tasks of setting up independent state regulatory structures; of formulating the principles of price formation, tariffs, taxation and other aspects designed to limit the state's direct involvement in economic activities of both companies with state and private property.

MECHANISM FOR RESTORING THE AGROINDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IN CHECHNIA AS A FACTOR OF POLITICAL STABILIZATION IN THE REGION

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Chechnia is going through a difficult period in its centuries-long history. Apart from military events (1994-1996 and 1999-...), the republic has experienced fundamental socioeconomic trans-

formations. Their main content is a transition from the administrative-command system to a market economy. Just as throughout the entire post-Soviet space, this process involves natural crisis phenomena.

Transformations

The reform of the agroindustrial complex (AIC), which started in the Chechen Republic (CR) as in the whole of Russia toward the end of the 1990s, did not take the path of lifting administrative pressure in the localities, expanding the economic independence of collective and state farms and other enterprises in this sector, promoting efficient use of available resources or increasing the return on these resources. Instead of gradual steps to create an economic mechanism that would help to get rid of excessively centralized functions and of administrative-type methods preventing an advance to economic independence and enterprise in the localities, the selected reform option was designed to break up the state agroindustrial system.

Under the slogan of "restructuring," the Chechen "democrats" set out to destroy the established way of life in the countryside, to denationalize state property and redistribute land. Large agricultural enter-

prises in the steppe districts of the republic (Naurskiy, Shelkovskoi, Nadterechniy and Groznenskiy) were broken up, and in land-starved mountainous areas arable land was distributed on a per capita basis. Agricultural servicing and processing enterprises were privatized throughout the republic in breach of the law and often without any legal basis at all. The republic's economy assumed the ugly forms of "wild capitalism." The reforms led to drastic changes in the sectoral structure of gross agricultural output, land use and employment, to the emergence of private commercial farms and production cooperatives, and to the development of personal subsidiary (part-time) farming.

But all these transformations failed to lay the groundwork for enhancing the efficiency of the agrarian sector. At governmental level, the republic's authorities relinquished control of that sector, stopped supporting agricultural production and liberalized prices, all of which plunged the sector into a crisis. Just as the whole of Russia, the republic was in danger of losing its food self-sufficiency. That raised the question of the need to develop a special concept for a transitional system of relations that would be designed, on the one hand, to restore the agrarian economy and, on the other hand, to create a mechanism ensuring a gradual advance toward a modern model of civilized economic management and the principles of market production.

At the same time, the economic transformations of the 1990s cannot be assessed in unequivocal terms. The objective need for reform was dictated by the fact that for many decades agriculture had been cost-based, extensive, riddled with shortages and scarcities, and destructive for the environment. Such indicators as labor productivity and output per unit area and per unit of input remained low, and the gap in this sphere compared with other developed countries continued to widen. Moreover, the situation was aggravated by the outbreak of military action in the republic.

Restoration Mechanism

The systemic crisis in agroindustrial production was primarily due to a hasty choice of priorities in carrying out reforms and to a sharp decline in government regulation and support for the AIC as the market economy was taking shape. That is why in the development of a mechanism for restoring and stabilizing agricultural production in the republic it would make sense to analyze the causes behind the negative phenomena at macro and meso levels explaining the overall situation in the economy. These include the following factors: incomplete land reform; a mechanism for disposal, possession and use of land not reflected in real practice (which significantly reduces investment attractiveness and incentives to work; a mechanism for government economic regulation that is not fully operative; liberalization of foreign economic activity entailing an increase in food imports; a disparity between the prices of agricultural and other products; and failure of the existing AIC structure and infrastructure to meet the requirements of the market economy.

The mechanism for restoring agroindustrial production is one of the central problems in the efforts to reanimate this sector. "Mechanism" is usually interpreted as a system, a device for regulating some kind of activity. That is why "restoration mechanism" here is taken to mean a system (economic, legal, organizational) ensuring the solution of problems arising in the republic's AIC. But if the conflicts continue, there is no point in talking about sustainable development in the foreseeable future.

Chechnia's losses during the period of sanctions and the two latest wars are without parallel in its entire history. Politicians are always able to find money for waging wars, but money for peaceful construction (in the interests of the state) is often lacking. "Those who impose their system of dubious values by means of bombs and missiles must realize that mankind is in need of renouncing force in international relations, because otherwise the world will become bipolar."¹

¹ A.N. Tkachenko, "Integratsia—predposylka stabilnosti ekonomiki" (speech at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in July 1999), *Ekonomist*, No. 9, 1999, p. 10.

In the context of the given problem, the concept of "AIC restoration mechanism" is not encountered in Russian economic literature. Moreover, the problem itself has not arisen in Russian reality for more than 50 years (since the completion of the postwar rehabilitation work of 1945-1950). Today this is a major economic and policy problem, and its successful development and solution can do a great deal not only in the matter of regenerating the agroindustrial complex, but also in stabilizing political and ethnic relations in the South of Russia. Considering the specific features of AIC development in the North Caucasian republics, this question must also be studied at regional level, which will make it possible to work out theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of an economic mechanism for restoring and stabilizing agroindustrial production in Chechnia.

The basis for restoring the republic's AIC can be provided by a set of measures aimed to consolidate the positive trends in its development, to ensure its stabilization and improve the financial status of agricultural enterprises.

Unemployment and AIC

In the development of a mechanism for restoring and stabilizing the agroindustrial sector of the economy, special note should be taken of the unemployment factor. In the view of many economists, the sociopolitical explosion in the republic in the early 1990s occurred as the result of high unemployment, whose rate was much higher than in other regions of the former U.S.S.R. The worst affected were the rural areas, in many of which over 50% of the able-bodied population was out of work.

As the Chechen economy and social sphere disintegrated, unemployment continued to grow, especially among the young, which contributed to the development of a criminal situation in the republic. At present, over 150 thousand young people have no jobs. A solution to this problem will in large part make it possible to overcome the main obstacle to a peaceful life.

Table 1

**Structure of Unemployment
among Young People under 30 Years of Age
for 1993-1994
(thousand persons)**

Stopped being drafted for active military service in Russia	25.0
Stopped leaving the republic in search of jobs	75.0
Stopped studying at technical schools and institutions of higher education	10.0
Reduced training at vocational schools per annum	15.0
Discharged on grounds of staff reduction	30.0
Total	155.0
<i>Source: R. Aziev, S. Abuev, "Vremia sobirat' kamni," Vestnik respubliki, No. 2, 22 December, 2002.</i>	

An excess of human resources and a shortage of arable land are specific features not only of Chechnia, but also of other North Caucasian republics. At the same time, they are among the factors that caused a conflict situation in the region and reduced the republic to its current state. Thus, its socioeconomic potential has been destroyed; the Chechen society has stratified along tribal and religious lines; there is no system for protecting civil rights and liberties; the irreconcilable opposition is prepared to go its own way to the end; and criminal elements have been exploiting political and ideological differences to achieve their own purposes.

The key to political and socioeconomic stabilization in the region lies in the restoration and development of the AIC, which could stimulate a recovery in many other branches of the economy, promote domestic food production, and help to counteract crisis phenomena in the market and other negative factors.

As noted above, the current criminal situation in the republic is primarily connected with the problem of employment. In the view of V. Akaev, "the job shortage in Chechnia, especially in rural areas, starting from Soviet times up to the present, is the root of many of the ills and problems that have plagued the Chechens. A successful solution to the problem of creating jobs and conditions for normal work will become one of the main stabilizing factors in Chechnia." Under Soviet power, "we used to go to Russia in search of jobs, and today Chechnia has become something of a Klondike for the military and for government officials."²

So, the transition of the agroindustrial complex in Chechnia to market relations started in very complicated and contradictory conditions. On the one hand, the AIC is based on the successes achieved in Soviet times, on the main indicators of the prereform period, and on the other, its development is held back by the consequences of two Russian-Chechen wars, i.e., the collapse of agroindustrial production, the critical state of agrarian science, the degradation of material and technical facilities in the sector, and the poor financial position of agricultural producers and the republic as a whole.

As a result of military action, the problems of unemployment have been supplemented with the need to settle forced migrants, to restore destroyed social, cultural and production facilities, and to bring back and train specialists in various branches of production, the service sector, science and culture.

Investment Policy

Investment in the rehabilitation of branches of the economy, including agribusiness, that used to operate efficiently before the outbreak of hostilities, is a priority line in the sphere of investment. In this context, an interesting program has been prepared by the Chechen Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs under which more than 15 thousand large, medium and small enterprises with 300 thousand new jobs are to be created in the republic over the next five years.³

In the view of M. Basnukaev, "attention should also be paid to such a source of food production as mountain lands."⁴ He notes: "The question of tapping the mountain potential is connected with the need to stimulate the development and regeneration of mountain villages and farmsteads. The current massive destruction of the urban economy in Chechnia could result in a revival of its mountainous areas. But this requires a target program that would stimulate not only housing development, but also the creation of various agricultural enterprises."⁵

Rehabilitation of the economy and the social sphere in the Chechen Republic is one of the main challenges facing the Russian leadership. Within the framework of the investment program, the republic was allocated 12 billion rubles under an RF Government Decree of 12 January, 2002. Chechnia has also been given an opportunity to use extrabudgetary sources of finance and to carry on activities in attracting

² V.Kh. Akaev, "Zapadnia," *Impuls*, No. 1, 2001.

³ See: "Investitsii i vosstanovlenie," *Ob'ediniionnaia gazeta*, No. 2, 2002.

⁴ M.Sh. Basnukaev, "Problemy politiko-ekonomicheskogo razvitiia Chechni v postsovetiski period," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, No. 12, 2001, p. 91.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

nongovernmental (including foreign) investment guaranteed by the governments of the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic. The program for rehabilitating the republic's economy, including its agroindustrial production, also provides for mixed state-private funding with tight control over the spending of budget allocations, determines the goals, tasks and basic provisions of state investment policy, and lays down a mechanism for its implementation. This is expected to minimize the possible risks, including the risks of potential investors.

Legal Aspect of Restoration

A legal framework for restoring the republic's AIC is provided by RF Government Decree No. 889 of 21 December, 2001, "On the Federal Target Program for the Rehabilitation of the Economy and the Social Sphere of the Chechen Republic (2002 and Subsequent Years)." According to that document, the main purpose of the projected measures is to help provide the republic's population with locally produced staple foods. Thus, in the years ahead it is planned to use 360 thousand hectares of land for growing grain crops, sugar beet, grape vines, fruits and vegetables, and coarse and succulent fodder; cattle stock is to increase to 100 thousand head, and sheep stock to 200 thousand head. This will make it possible to increase grain output to 300-350 thousand tons per year and fully meet the population's demand for grain, to satisfy 50% of the demand for meat and dairy products (with due regard for livestock in the private sector) and 100% of the demand for fruits and vegetables. It is planned to rebuild a number of agricultural processing enterprises and to regenerate poultry farming, the most profitable branch of the AIC. The processing of sugar beet is to go up to 200 thou tons, raw sugar to 100 thou tons, fruits and vegetables to 100 thou tons, grapes to 100 thou tons, the production of poultry meat to 19 thou tons, and eggs to 120 million per year.

In addition, there are plans to restore industrial and repair facilities in the agroindustrial complex, including construction industry facilities. In order to ensure efficient use of arable land, the crumbling land improvement complex is to be put back into operation. For training agricultural specialists, it is planned to reopen the Sernovodsk Agricultural School, the Agribusiness Management School and the Shali Training Center.

Another legal document on the restoration of the AIC is the Chechen Government's Decree No. 5 of 27 March, 2002, "On the Concept for the Development of the Agroindustrial Complex of the Chechen Republic for 2002-2005." Under that decree, the republic's leadership requests the government of Russia:

- to restructure the debts of agricultural commodity producers owed to the Federal budget and to state funds for 1994-2002;
- to allocate financial resources for repayment of overdue debt owed by the republic's agricultural commodity producers to suppliers of produce for 1994-2002;
- to make a proposal to the RF Ministry of Finance on allowing the republic's AIC enterprises an investment tax credit for the amount of taxes due to be paid into the Federal budget. In 2002, taxes collected into the budget in the Chechen Republic amounted to 3,750 million rubles.

Under that decree, the CR Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the CR Government Committee on Viticulture and the Alcohol Industry were requested to organize work in accordance with the AIC Development Concept for 2002-2005, and the Committee on Land Resources and Land Management for the Chechen Republic, to complete the land inventory in the republic by 1 January, 2003.

The documents being adopted not only provide a legal basis for AIC rehabilitation, but also serve as a factor stabilizing agroindustrial production in the republic. On that basis, it is necessary to resolve the problems of economic and organizational resources and reserves of the AIC within the legal framework of the region, making use of appropriate documents of the RF Federal Assembly, materials of the RF Ministry of Agriculture, state statistical data, and other official documents of Russia. At the same time, the republic is in need of new regulatory documents of the RF government that would make it possible to

adopt urgent measures of government support by restoring agricultural engineering, eliminating price discrimination against AIC industries, restructuring AIC debts, financing the social sphere in the countryside, and organizing insurance and credits at a reasonable price. In other words, we need government regulation, administration and control.

For the time being, as noted above, the republic's agriculture, food and processing industries are in a state of grave crisis (see Table 2).

Table 2

Annual Agricultural Output Per Capita (kg)

Product	1986-1990	1995-1999	Decrease (times)
Grain	420	110.8	3.8
Sunflower	11.8	0.9	13.1
Sugar beet	152	11.5	13.2
Grapes	63.2	10.6	6.0
Fruits	33.3	1.3	25.6
Vegetables	131.4	2.7	48.7
Potatoes	21.9	—	—
Meat of all kinds	45.5	0.5	91.0
Milk	115.2	1.5	76.8
Eggs (pieces)	98	6.1	16.1

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, 1991; current records of the CR Ministry of Agriculture, 2000.

According to the AIC development forecast for the period until 2005 (based on the aforesaid Concept approved by the republic's government), per capita production is to amount to 343.3 kg of grain, 11 kg of sunflower, 10 kg of sugar, 50 eggs, 22.6 kg of canned fruits and vegetables, and 5.3 kg of vegetable oil. This is 3-10 times above the average figures for 1995-1999.

Lines of Development

Achievement of the results projected by the above-mentioned forecast⁶ is possible (and is expected) with the support of the respective Federal authorities, and also with due regard for the actual economic and sociopolitical conditions in the republic. And the purpose of the agrarian policy reflected in the Concept is to determine the main lines of development and to foster efficient and sustained agroindustrial production that would meet national standards, ensure the republic's food security, fill the market with food affordable for all groups of the population, and provide industry with raw materials.

At the same time, it must be emphasized that Chechnia's weak industrial base, excess labor resources and other negative factors will prevent the republic from becoming self-sufficient in food in the near

⁶ See: Kh.E. Taimashkanov, *Sostoianie i perspektiva APK Chechenskoj Respubliki*, Moscow, 2001, p. 88.

future. In view of that, the forecast provides for the restoration of a number of enterprises in the food and processing industry which use raw and other materials brought in from outside the republic. With this aim in view, it is necessary to strengthen integration ties and mutually beneficial cooperation with neighboring republics: Daghestan, North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Ingushetia, and also with the Stavropol Territory. The main areas of such ties include the food industry, fruit and vegetable growing, sugar beet production, corn and alfalfa seed breeding, processing of grapes, wild-growing berries, fruits and medicinal herbs, and joint participation in investment projects.

In summary, the priority tasks of further development of agroindustrial production include, first, accelerated rehabilitation of AIC facilities in order to fill the market with low-priced food; second, creation of economic and organizational conditions for profitable operation of this sector; and third, improvement of social conditions in the countryside.
