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REGIONAL CONFLICTS

MEDIATION ABILITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE) IN THE CASE OF THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

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In 1988 the Armenian representatives of local authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh decided to secede from Azerbaijan. The first Azerbaijanis were killed, and expelled from Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. As a consequence, the same occurred in some parts of Azerbaijan in relation to Armenians. In 1989 the Parliament of Armenia took a decision "on reunification of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh." These actions led to the conflict the essence of which is a territorial claim. From the very beginning of the conflict Azerbaijan regarded Nagorno-Karabakh as its inviolable part and proceeded from the OSCE principles of sovereignty, inviolability of frontiers and territorial integrity. Whereas Armenia believed that Nagorno-Karabakh was an Armenian territory, its Armenian population was suppressed and it must secede from the Azerbaijani sovereignty and obtain independence in order at a later stage to unite with Armenia. Armenians justify their claims by the OSCE principle of self-determination of peoples.

In 1991 Azerbaijan regained its independence and in 1992 was admitted to the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, after 1 January, 1995—OSCE) and the United Nations (U.N.), which implies that the U.N. and the OSCE member states recognized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its present frontiers. Azerbaijan being inspired by the high expectations of and "commitments under the Helsinki Final Act... to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity ... of any State, ... to settle disputes by peaceful means"

renewed in the Paris 1990 Summit Meeting[1], in 1992 agreed to settle the conflict under the OSCE auspices. The OSCE has been involved in the mediation of the settlement through its following instruments:

- The decisions on the settlement;
- Negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group;
- High Level Planning Group (HLPG);
- The Personal Representative (PR) of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO) on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference.

The expectations were very high when in 1992 then CSCE was involved in the resolution of the conflict. However more than 12 years have been passed and the problem is still there and the OSCE is powerless to do something. In this article we tried to analyze the OSCE mediation and to give a brief description of the work of its instruments through their accordance with and adherence to the decisions on the conflict, thus assessing the mediation abilities in conflict settlement of the OSCE, which is considered to be one of the pillars of the European security architecture.

[1] *Charter of Paris for a New Europe*, Paris, 1990, p. 15.

1. The Decisions on the Settlement

The history of the OSCE mediation dates back to 24 March, 1992, when the additional meeting of the CSCE Council took place in Helsinki. By its decision the Council, first of all, established a conference on Nagorno-Karabakh (to be held in Minsk) as the negotiation forum for the settlement of the conflict. Secondly, this decision set up the principles and commitments of the CSCE as the political basis for the settlement. Thirdly, in accordance to that decision the CSCE participating States had the status of the full-fledged members of the negotiation forum. Fourthly, the decision of the Council determined the status of the Armenian and Azerbaijani representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh who could be invited to the negotiations as interested parties by the Chairman of the Conference only with the agreement of the participating States of the negotiation forum. Thus, the decision provided the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh with a status that was lower than that of the participating States of the Conference.[2]

The occupation of the Azerbaijani regions in 1993 required the adoption by the U.N. Security Council resolutions 822 (30 April), 853 (29 July), 874 (14 October), 884 (12 November), which reaffirmed the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and all other States in the region, as well as the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. The resolutions demanded the immediate cessation of all hostilities and the immediate complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces involved from all occupied areas of the Republic of Azerbaijan and in this context called for the restoration of economic, transport and energy links in the region. The resolutions endorsed the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to achieve peaceful resolution of the conflict and called on the parties to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict within the context of the CSCE Minsk process. Expressing grave concern at the displacement of a large number of civilians in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the resolutions appealed to assist refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in security and dignity.[3]

At the CSCE Summit, which took place in Budapest on 5-6 December, 1994, the decision on intensification of the CSCE action in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was taken. This decision, first of all, established the institute of the co-chairmanship to coordinate all the mediation activities within the

[2] See: *First Additional Meeting of the CSCE Council. Summary of Conclusions*, Helsinki, 1992, pp. 14-15.

[3] See: The U.N. Security Council Resolutions: S/RES/822 (1993), 30 April, 1993; S/RES/853 (1993), 29 July, 1993; S/RES/874 (1993), 14 October, 1993; S/RES/884 (1993), 12 November, 1993.

framework of the CSCE. Secondly, the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Conference were asked to conduct speedy negotiations for the conclusion of a political agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict, the implementation of which would eliminate consequences of the conflict and permit the convening of the Minsk Conference. Thus, this decision as well as the U.N. Security Council resolutions envisaged a step-by-step approach formula of the settlement in accordance with which the military issues were solved first and then political. Thirdly, the participating States expressed their will to provide a multinational CSCE peacekeeping force after the conclusion of the political agreement. Fourthly, it was necessary to establish high level planning group to make recommendations on this force.[4]

The OSCE Ministerial Council held in Budapest on 7-8 December, 1995, in its decision, in particular, supported the efforts of the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Conference to achieve, in coordination with the CiO, a political agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict. The implementation of such an agreement would eliminate major consequences of the conflict and would permit the early convening of the Minsk Conference. The signing of the agreement would enable the OSCE Permanent Council (PC) to take a decision on the establishment of the OSCE peacekeeping operation. The decision welcomed the commitments expressed to establish direct contacts, in coordination with the Co-chairmanship, to achieve agreement on the principles governing the resolution of the conflict and took note of the readiness of the parties to address crucial issues with a view to reaching a compromise.[5]

This decision necessitated in 1996 the determination of the principles of the settlement. At the OSCE Summit, which took place in Lisbon on 2-3 December, 1996 the CiO and the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Group suggested to the parties the principles for the settlement. These principles were supported by all OSCE participating States except Armenia. Under these conditions the CiO Flavio Cotti had to make statement. He stated that no progress has been achieved in the last two years to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the issue of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The efforts of the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Conference to reconcile the views of the parties on the principles for a settlement have been unsuccessful. The Co-chairmen of the Minsk Group recommended three principles, which should form part of the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The CiO regretted that one participating State could not accept this. These principles had the support of all other participating States. These principles were:

- territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijan Republic;
- legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh defined in an agreement based on self-determination which confers on Nagorno-Karabakh the highest degree of self-rule within Azerbaijan;
- guaranteed security for Nagorno-Karabakh and its whole population, including mutual obligations to ensure compliance by all the Parties with the provisions of the settlement.[6]

The U.S.A., European Union (EU), Russian Federation, Finland and Turkey made statements in support of these principles. The Lisbon Summit was a good opportunity to reach a consensus on the principles or basis, which was the core of the settlement and this would have committed the parties to proceed from these principles during the negotiations. However, the OSCE community failed to do it, which had long-term negative consequences for negotiations. On the other hand, OSCE participating states for the first time clearly stated that conflict must be settled on the basis of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh.

As a result the Copenhagen (1997) and Oslo (1998) Ministerial Council meetings took no decision on the conflict. After the Lisbon Summit the outcome of these meetings, probably, was a logical one, since the Lisbon principles of the settlement formally were not bound.

In the Declaration adopted at the OSCE Summit held in Istanbul on 18-19 November, 1999 the participating States applauded the intensified dialog between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan,

[4] See: *CSCE. Budapest Document 1994. Budapest Decisions*, Budapest, 1994, pp. 4-5.
[5] See: *The Fifth Meeting of Ministerial Council. Chairman's Summary. Decisions of the Budapest Ministerial Council Meeting*, Budapest, 1995, p. 10.
[6] See: *Lisbon Document*, Lisbon, 1996, p. 11.

whose regular contacts have created opportunities to dynamize the process of finding a lasting and comprehensive solution to the problem. The heads of state firmly supported this dialog and encouraged its continuation, with the hope of resuming negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group. They also confirmed that the OSCE and its Minsk Group, which remained the most appropriate format for finding a solution, stand ready to further advance the peace process and its future implementation, including by providing all necessary assistance to the parties.[7]

Since the OSCE Budapest 1995 Council Meeting it was the first text agreed within the OSCE community and actually the language of this text shifted the responsibility for the settlement of the conflict from the OSCE to the parties.

In the decisions of the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings, which were held on 3-4 December, 2001 in Bucharest and on 6-7 December, 2002 in Porto, the importance of continuing the peace dialog was stated and a call to parties to continue the efforts on the settlement of the conflict on the basis of the norms and principles of international law was expressed.

Thus, the Helsinki 1992 decision set up the negotiation framework for the conflict settlement *on the basis of the CSCE principles*, whereby the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh had *the status lower* than that of other participants of the negotiation. The U.N. Security Council resolutions endorsed the necessity of comprehensive political settlement of the conflict on the basis of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan through negotiations. These decisions predetermined *the political basis* for the comprehensive settlement and in order to reach this settlement created a negotiation forum for the *elimination of the consequences of the armed conflict*. In this sequence of the resolution first of military consequences of the conflict and then the solution of the political issue at the Minsk Conference was contained *the formula of the comprehensive settlement*, which was fixed in the U.N. and CSCE 1994 and 1995 decisions.

2. The Negotiations under the Auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group

The Helsinki 1992 Council's decision allowed starting the mediation process within the OSCE. From the very beginning of this process the main goal of Azerbaijan was the elimination of the consequences of the armed conflict, namely the liberation of the occupied territories and return of refugees, and elaboration of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh at the Minsk Conference. The main aim of Armenia was to obtain the independent status for Nagorno-Karabakh in exchange for the liberation of some occupied territories.

The Rome Negotiations on Preparation of the Peace Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh

The first such negotiations were held in Rome on 31 May, 1992 and had passed several stages. The military situation at that time was characterized in a way that on 8 May, 1992 the Armenian armed forces having occupied Shusha (district and city in Nagorno-Karabakh inhabited by Azerbaijanis) completed the capture of the whole territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the deportation of its 50,000 Azerbaijani population. On 18 May, 1992 Lachin (city and district on the territory of which runs the road connecting Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh) was captured.

[7] See: *Istanbul Document 1999*, Istanbul, 1999, p. 50.

From the very beginning of the CSCE mediation all the negotiations and documents discussed were aimed at the elimination of the consequences of the armed conflict which would have allowed convening the Minsk conference for the resolution of political issues, namely the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. To this end during the first round of negotiations the Minsk Group prepared the document, which envisaged withdrawal of the military forces from Lachin and Shusha, return of refugees and displaced persons, and establishment of the CSCE international monitors for verification of the implementation of the above-mentioned tasks. At further rounds on the insistence of the Armenian side these tasks were extended to the part of Aghdara (district in Nagorno-Karabakh) and to former Shaumyan/presently part of Goranboy (inhabited by Armenians district outside Nagorno-Karabakh, the territory of which now constitutes part of Goranboy district), controlled by Azerbaijan.

Continued until the fall of 1992, the four rounds of the Rome negotiations did not bring any results. At the fifth round of negotiations resumed on March 1, 1993 the representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed on the text of a decision to send to the zone of the conflict the mission of international monitors. This decision had to be approved by the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), the meeting of which was envisaged to be convened in Prague on 26 April, 1993. However, from 27 March up to 3 April, 1993 the Armenian armed forces launched the operation on seizure of Kalbajar district, located between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. This undermined agreements reached.

The Rome negotiations for convening the Minsk Conference did not succeed, because the Armenian representatives in violation of the Helsinki 1992 decision have put in a claim demanding for the Armenian representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh in the negotiations the equal status with the rest of the participating States of the Minsk Conference, not revising at the same time the status of the Azerbaijani representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh. Having not reached this aim in the negotiations they unleashed in 1993 the second stage of the military campaign.

Timetable of Urgent Steps to Implement the U.N. Security Council Resolutions

During 1993 the Italian chairmanship together with the participants of the Minsk Conference prepared several versions of the Timetable of urgent steps to implement the U.N. Security Council resolutions 822, 853 and 874 and to resume negotiations.

The first Timetable of urgent steps to implement the U.N. Security Council resolution 822 was proposed by the Minsk Group on 3-4 June, 1993. This Timetable was accepted by the parties to the conflict. However, the capture of Aghdam (district outside of Nagorno-Karabakh) on 23-24 June, 1993 prevented the realization of the Timetable.

The next Timetable of urgent steps to implement two U.N. Security Council resolutions 822, 853 was suggested by the Minsk Group on 4-5 August, and its revised version—on 13 August, 1993. The Timetable envisaged complete withdrawal of occupying forces from Aghdam and Kalbajar districts. The withdrawal of all forces is verified by the CSCE Verification Mission. After that the restoration of communications begins. Nothing was said about the problems (withdrawal of occupying forces and return of refugees) of Shusha and Lachin. That contradicted the U.N. Security Council resolutions, as well as the aims of the Rome negotiations, in which the liberation of these districts was considered as a condition for the convening of the Minsk Conference. The parties had to give an answer by 19 August, 1993. However, instead of that followed the seizure of Fuzuli on 23 August, of Jabrail on 25-26 August and of Gubadli on 31 August, the districts located outside Nagorno-Karabakh.

The next Timetable of urgent steps to implement the U.N. Security Council resolutions 822, 853 was suggested in Paris on 23 September, and its adjusted version—on 29 September, 1993. This Timetable contained new elements that had lacked in the old ones. The Timetable increased the status of Ar-

menian representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh and thus violated the Helsinki 1992 decision. The Timetable proposed the withdrawal of forces from Gubadli, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrail, and Kalbajar districts, except Lachin district. This withdrawal was conditioned by reopening of communications. Such approach contradicted the U.N. Security Council resolutions, demanding unconditional withdrawal from all occupied areas of Azerbaijan. The withdrawal was understood as the withdrawal to the relevant segments of 1988 district borders, which did not envisage the resolution of the problem of Shusha. For the first time the Timetable demanded the withdrawal of the Azerbaijani forces from Aghdara. That also ran contrary to the U.N. Security Council resolutions, since they did not consider Aghdara as an occupied district and did not demand the withdrawal of forces.

It was envisaged that the parties to the conflict would sign a statement on the Timetable of urgent steps, the continuation of negotiations toward a peaceful settlement of the crisis on the basis of the principles, commitments and provisions of the CSCE and the continued implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 822 and 853. After the realization of all steps envisaged by the Timetable the opening of the Minsk Conference was planned. The parties had to give the reply to that Timetable by 6 October, 1993. Azerbaijan did not accept the proposals due to their departure from the requirements of the U.N. Security Council resolutions. As a result of the operation carried out from 1 October till 1 November, 1993 Zangelan (district located outside Nagorno-Karabakh) was captured.

The adjusted Timetable of urgent steps to implement the U.N. Security Council resolutions 822, 853 and 874 was suggested by the Minsk Group in Vienna on 12 November, 1993. The Timetable proposed the accomplishment of the following consecutive steps: cessation of military activities; withdrawal from occupied territories (Gubadli, Zangilan, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrail, Aghdara and Kalbajar districts); restoration of communication and transportation; creation of conditions for the return of refugees/displaced persons; opening of the Minsk Conference.

The necessity to create conditions for the return of refugees was new, positive element. The problems of Lachin and Shusha were intended to remain open and to be resolved at the Minsk Conference. For the first time the questions relating to the withdrawal of forces/refugees from Shaumyan/Goranboy were included in the Timetable and to be resolved at the Minsk Conference. This approach did not correspond to the provisions of the U.N. Security Council resolutions on liberation of all occupied territories of Azerbaijan, which would create a condition for the convening of the Minsk Conference. Nor these resolutions regarded Shaumyan/Goranboy as an occupied area.

The Vienna Timetable more than that of Paris linked the withdrawal of the forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan with the restoration of communications and with the outcome of the preparatory meeting for the Minsk Conference, envisaged to be convened before the withdrawal, where a discussion of procedural issues and of the decision-making process, i.e. the status of Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, was planned. Azerbaijan did not accept this document either, the Armenians did accept it.

All the timetables were aimed at the elimination of most, but not of all the consequences of the armed conflict. To this end the previous timetables proposed consecutive measures and in this way were based on a step-by-step approach. But the Paris and Vienna timetables presupposed mutually obligatory and mutually conditioned steps and were based on a package approach. The Paris and Vienna documents in this way were fundamentally distinct from the previous versions, seriously departed from the understanding of the formula of the settlement, reflected in the Helsinki 1992 decision and the U.N. Security Council resolutions and contradicted them.

Thus, several versions of the Timetables of urgent steps suggested by the mediators also did not succeed. In 1993 the Armenians toughened their position by starting new campaign of military actions and this affected the negotiation process. Failing to reach in 1992 the claim of equal status with the other participating States of the Minsk Conference for the Armenian representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh at the negotiations by peaceful means, the Armenian forces seized during 1993 six districts of Azerbaijan, located outside Nagorno-Karabakh, putting the international community before the *fait accompli*. The agreements reached by the parties in the negotiations in March 1993, Timetables of urgent steps, proposed by the Minsk Group in June and August 1993, were not realized due to the capture of new Azer-

baijani territories. While the issues of the withdrawal of the Armenian forces from one district were being discussed, they were capturing other one. This was the first reason for the failure of the mediation efforts in 1993.

Under the conditions of the Armenian expansion the Chairman of the Minsk Conference included in the Paris and Vienna timetables new and excluded other provisions, which contradicted the U.N. Security Council and the OSCE decisions. This was the second reason for the failure of the mediation efforts. That is why in comparison to Rome negotiations the timetables were steps back in terms of departure from the decisions.

Agreements on the Cessation of the Armed Conflict

By the year 1994 the Armenian armed forces occupied the territory nearly of the whole Nagorno-Karabakh and of seven districts, located around it, and expelled all the population from these territories. Such military situation certainly affected the negotiation process and complicated it. Only on 12 May, 1994 through the mediation of Russia and in cooperation with the Minsk Group a cease-fire agreement was reached.

During the chairmanship of Sweden (1994) and double chairmanship of Russia and Finland (1995-1996) within the Minsk Group numerous negotiations were conducted. In the course of these negotiations several versions of the document, later called the Agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict, were discussed.

The Agreement consisted of the main part and of four annexes: cease-fire and cessation of hostilities and their consolidation; timetable of measures regulating the situation in some occupied areas; procedure for the removal of obstacles to the restoration of normal power and transport links in the area of conflict; international assistance in implementing the agreement. Consolidation of cease-fire, liberation of territories and return of refugees, restoration of communications, and deployment of the peacekeeping forces were considered as military-technical measures and they made up the main content of the agreement. In annexes it was pointed out how to implement these measures and the terms.

The Agreement envisaged the official cease-fire and cessation of hostilities and after that mutual disengagement of the forces. Following the official cease-fire and cessation of hostilities the opening of communications takes place. The disengagement of forces creates a buffer strip-zone, where peacekeeping force is deployed. Afterwards the liberation of Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrail, Zangilan, Gubadli, Kalbajar, Aghdara, Khojavand (district in Nagorno-Karabakh partly controlled by Azerbaijan) and Lachin (without a transit zone along the Lachin road) follows. Lachin was included in the agreement only in 1996. Khojavand district was mentioned for the first time. Refugees return to the liberated territories. The liberation of territories and return of refugees take place under the supervision of the peacekeeping force. The Agreement envisaged that the implementation of these military-technical measures would allow convening the Minsk Conference, where the legal status for Nagorno-Karabakh would be elaborated and approved.

During all these years the Agreement has not been finalized, because it had not been possible to agree on some problems, which were later termed as key issues. These are the problems of Shusha, Lachin, and of former Shaumyan districts, security and status of Nagorno-Karabakh. The problems of these districts, being treated (Shusha and Lachin by Azerbaijanis; Shaumyan by Armenians) as those directly arising from the armed conflict and accordingly as a subject for the agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict, have turned however from military to political ones. Shusha and Lachin (occupied by Armenians) in accordance to the U.N. resolutions were subjects for the withdrawal, which Armenians did not accept and fulfill. Whereas Shaumyan (controlled by Azerbaijanis) only from the Armenian point of view was considered as a subject for liberation. Despite this clear-cut disparity these districts were equalized both by Armenians and by the mediators in the Agreement, which did not foresee the resolution of the problems of Shusha and Lachin, but indicated the problem of Shaumyan as

such. This, as we have already pointed out, did not correspond to the requirements of the U.N. resolutions and Rome negotiations.

While the issue of security and status of Nagorno-Karabakh was purely political one, it had to be dealt with by the Minsk Conference. But this issue was brought to the negotiations by Armenians as a bargaining chip to get desirable status for Nagorno-Karabakh in exchange for liberation of occupied territories, except Shusha and Lachin. This was a main feature of the Armenian position in the negotiations after the spring of 1994, by which they had completed the seizure of the territory nearly of the whole Nagorno-Karabakh and of seven districts, located around it.

In all versions of the Agreement the Armenian representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh were considered as conflicting party, which was higher than the status of Azerbaijani representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh. This was in contradiction to the Helsinki 1992 decision. The Agreement envisaged the liberation of the Aghdara and Khojavand districts, which were not to be liberated in accordance to the U.N. Security Council resolutions. The opening of communications was envisaged after the official cease-fire and cessation of hostilities, but not in the context of the liberation of territories, as it was established by the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Thus, this document generally preserved and even deepened approaches contained in Paris and Vienna Timetables, which contradicted the U.N. Security Council and the OSCE decisions. The Agreement was aimed at the elimination not of all, but of significant consequences of the armed conflict, which would allow in view of the mediators to convene the Minsk Conference for the comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

During 1992-1996 peace proposals have been discussed at the meetings of the Minsk Group with the participation of all its members. Each of these years (except 1996) either OSCE Ministerial Council or Summit has taken a decision. In other words, the whole OSCE through its Minsk Group has been involved in the resolution of the conflict.

Three-fold Chairmanship

After the OSCE Lisbon Summit in 1997 the three-fold chairmanship of France, Russia and the U.S.A. was set up. In April 1997 one round of negotiations was held. Since that time the negotiations had been suspended, instead the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Group started to travel to the region. On 1 June, 1997 the Co-chairmen during their visit to the region presented a draft of the comprehensive agreement to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The title of the document proves that it was dealing not only with the cessation of the armed conflict, but also with the political issues. The Co-chairmen for the first time included the elements of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh in the proposals. Azerbaijan accepted the proposals in principle, but Armenia did not.

On 19 September, 1997 the Co-chairmen during their second visit to the region presented new proposals on the secession of the Nagorno-Karabakh armed conflict. These proposals envisaged that the measures to eliminate the consequences of the armed conflict were to be implemented in two stages. At the first stage liberation of occupied Azerbaijani districts, except the territories of Shusha and Lachin districts, launching of the OSCE peacekeeping force, return of refugees and opening of communications were presupposed. In the second phase it was recommended to resolve the problems of Shusha, Lachin and former Shaumyan districts and accept main principles of a status of Nagorno-Karabakh, to be valid until the determination of its final status, and to further this way the convening of the Minsk Conference in order to finalize a comprehensive settlement.

The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan announced in a joint declaration in Strasbourg on 11 October, 1997 that these proposals represented a promising basis for resuming negotiations within the framework of the Minsk Group. This was the first time that the proposals by the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Group had been supported both by Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, Armenia's new leadership rejected these proposals in 1998. Thereafter the Minsk process was for all practical purposes at a dead end.

Over a year later, on 7 November, 1998 the Co-chairmen presented new proposals on the principles of a comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh armed conflict. The new peace plan contained agreements both on key issues, i.e. on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, problems of Lachin corridor, Shusha and former Shaumyan, and on the cessation of the armed conflict. These proposals were based on a concept of a "common state," conferring upon Nagorno-Karabakh a status of a state and territorial entity in the form of a republic and constituting a common state with Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders. Azerbaijan rejected these proposals, because they violated its sovereignty and Lisbon principles. Armenia accepted them. This was last proposal of the Co-chairmen to date.

So the OSCE mediation brought no tangible results and under these circumstances in 1999 on the margins of the NATO Summit in Washington at the initiative of the U.S. government the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan started direct talks. Since then they met a number of times. In Key West the bilateral format of the meetings were changed to the so called "proximity talks." The presidents did not talk with each other, but rather the Co-chairmen talked to each president separately trying to intermediate between them. The bilateral talks have not yet produced concrete results.

The mediation of a three-fold co-chairmanship was characterized by five peculiarities. First, the negotiations have been suspended and replaced by the Co-chairmen's visits to the region, during which they presented new plans. Second, the rest of Minsk Group participants have been discharged from the practical mediation. Third, the three-fold chairmanship for the first time included in the Agreement elements of Nagorno-Karabakh's status, which was the subject for the Minsk Conference. Thus, an elimination of consequences of the armed conflict has been linked with the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. This approach contradicted the U.N. Security Council resolutions and CSCE Budapest 1994 decision, which supposed overcoming first military consequences of the conflict and as a next step the resolution of the political problems. Fourth, by doing so the Co-chairmen completely departed from the Lisbon principles, suggested by them and officially supported by the top representatives of their countries at the Lisbon Summit. Fifth, later on the Co-chairmen's visits were substituted by the bilateral talks of the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Probably it is not accident that during 1997-1999 the OSCE Ministerial Council and Summit meetings took no decision on the conflict.

3. A High-Level Planning Group (HLPG)

HLPG was established on 20 December, 1994 in Vienna in accordance with the decision of the CSCE Budapest Summit. The HLPG superseded an earlier Initial Operations Planning Group, which was established in May 1993. It consists of military experts seconded by the OSCE participating States and has the following tasks:

- To develop a plan for the establishment, composition and operation of a multinational CSCE peacekeeping force;
- To make recommendations on, inter alia, the size and characteristics of the force, command and control, logistics, allocation of units and resources, rules of engagement and arrangements with contributing states.

The HLPG work is guided by CiO directives. To fulfill directives the HLPG started conducting fact-finding visits to the region, and began detailed conceptualization, which resulted in the Concept for an OSCE Multinational Peacekeeping Mission for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, presented to the CiO on July 14, 1995. It included four options, of which three were a mixture of armed peacekeeping troops and unarmed military observers, their strength varying from 1,500 to 4,500 personnel. The fourth was an unarmed military observer mission. At present, the HLPG is adapting the concept to the current stage of

negotiations and updating the four options through fact-finding missions to the region of the conflict.[8] From time to time the HLPG holds briefings concerning its activities.

4. The Personal Representative of the CiO on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

The PR has been acting since 28 August, 1995, when the CiO appointed PR and his assistants. Since 17 January, 1997, this post has been held by envoy Andrzej Kasprzyk from Poland. In accordance with the mandate the PR has the following tasks:

- To represent the OSCE CiO in issues related to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, assist the CiO in achieving an agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict and in creating conditions for the deployment of an OSCE peacekeeping operation, in order to facilitate a lasting comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in all its aspects;
- To report on all aspects of his activities to the CiO of the OSCE, report through the CiO to the Co-chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Conference and, as appropriate, to the Minsk Group, and receive instructions from the CiO;
- To assist the Co-chairmanship at its request;
- To assist the HLPG in planning an OSCE peacekeeping operation in accordance with the Budapest Summit Decisions;
- To assist the parties in implementing and developing confidence-building, humanitarian and other measures facilitating the peace process, in particular by encouraging direct contacts;
- To cooperate, as appropriate, with representatives of the U.N. and other international organizations operating in the area of conflict.

The headquarters of the PR located in Tbilisi. The PR and his field assistants deployed on a rotating basis in Baku, Erevan and Khankandi, visit the region of conflict, meet the people on the ground, try to establish a climate of confidence and thus contribute to a cease-fire and finally—reaching the agreement. Much of their time is spent monitoring the line of contact between the parties. PR periodically informs the PC on his activities.

The Chairmen of the Minsk Conference, Head of HLPG and Personnel Representative are subordinated to the CiO.[9]

Conclusion

The OSCE is an organization, which includes its decision-making bodies, institutions and missions for field activities. It is a comprehensive organization for dialog, negotiations and cooperation on security issues. The OSCE security concept is based on its indivisibility and comprehensiveness, covering three dimensions: political-military, economic and humanitarian. Decisions are taken by consensus. The OSCE principles and decisions relating to all security dimensions establish norms and standards, the adherence to which constitutes commitments of the participating States. The OSCE possesses operational capabilities to observe and implement its norms. All this lends the OSCE a unique character.

[8] See: OSCE. Mission Survey. High Level Planning Group, n.d. [http://www.osce.org/publications/survey/survey23htm].
[9] See: OSCE. Mission Survey. The Personal Representative of the Chairman in Office on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, n.d. [http://www.osce.org/publications/survey/survey22htm].

Proceeding from this description of the OSCE, its principles and decisions on the conflict, as well as U.N. Charter and relevant resolutions of the U.N. Security Council constitute *political basis, norms for the settlement of the conflict*. Whereas established under the supervision of the OSCE CiO the negotiation forum with the status of its participants, HLPG, and the PR of the CiO are means among the *operational capabilities* at the disposal of the OSCE to reach the resolution. Thus, the OSCE possesses both conceptual, political or normative basis, and practical or operational means of the settlement in order to translate these norms into reality. The OSCE norms and operational capabilities make up its *mediation ability* for peaceful settlement of the conflict.

From the very beginning the task of the negotiations was to terminate consequences of the armed conflict in order to prepare the convening of the Minsk Conference, where a status of Nagorno-Karabakh would be determined and in this way a comprehensive settlement would be reached. This sequence constitutes *a formula of the settlement*, which as we have already pointed, had been reaffirmed by the U.N. resolutions and the OSCE decisions.

We have already seen that different peace plans launched by the Minsk Group Chairmanship not always and not completely were in accordance with the norms of the international law, that is to say with the U.N. and OSCE decisions on the conflict. The lack of adherence of the Co-chairmen of the Minsk Group to the decisions represents a serious deficiency in their work.

The mediators proceeded not from the decisions, but rather from, on the one side, the political interests of the states they represented and on the other, military realities, prevailing on the ground. Such position of the states is a reason of a lack of the OSCE ability coercively to take and implement decisions. This is a serious deficiency in the OSCE operational capability. Inability of the OSCE to approve the principles of the settlement in Lisbon and that of the Co-chairmen to convince the parties to accept peace plans that are in accordance to the U.N. and the OSCE decisions is an evidence of the above-mentioned observation. While the work of HLPG and PR in general was in accordance with the relevant decisions.

Thus the OSCE norms and operational capabilities have not yet led to the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In the case of the Minsk Group mediation we can come to a conclusion that the OSCE norms have not yet become the only basis all participating States always adhere to.

The truth and reality is that today the OSCE is still too much dependant on the participating States, but not on its norms. It is not the OSCE that is not able to act unanimously, but its participating States that fail to do so. Very often participating States simply manipulate the OSCE and its norms for the sake of domestic and foreign policy goals. In their turn participating States justify their policy by political interests, which sometimes are not in accordance to the OSCE norms. In international relations a political interest is still also based on a power of force, but not on a power of international law. The policy of governments, whose power is not based on democracy or norms of international law, could hardly be regarded as a legitimate one. There is firm tendency to accept realities created by the use of force. The use of force could not be legitimate unless it proceeds from the requirements of international law approved within the multilateral framework.

Our analysis leads to the conclusion that one should not fully rely on the OSCE mediation abilities on conflict resolution. The OSCE may be appropriate in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, but unlikely in conflict resolution. The beginning of bilateral confidential talks between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan may prove that observation. These talks started, when it become clear that the OSCE mediation abilities were exhausted and additional impetus was required. The conflict settlement, either peaceful or military, at the end of the day is up to the direct parties to the conflict. The OSCE may suggest its mediation abilities to this end, if the parties wish to use them.

It was expected that the current Co-chairmanship, comprising France, Russia and the U.S.A., would only contribute to the speedy resolution of the conflict. Problem is that agendas of those countries toward the region are different and today probably not reconcilable. Even the view that it is parties to the conflict that should resolve the conflict is true to the extent that it meets interests of the internal policy and those of influential external actors. This is a significant obstacle in the way of the settlement on the basis of the decisions on the conflict.

Neither Armenia displays will to comply with the decisions on conflict nor the mediators are prepared to compel the parties to accept those decisions. Under these circumstances the new geopolitical destination and institutional incentive for Armenia and Azerbaijan are required. The flexibility of the countries involved in the conflicts in Balkans was supported by their NATO and EU accession perspective. It was EU membership that forced the Greek and Turkish representatives of Cyprus after 30 years of hostilities to speed up negotiations on unification of the island. Whereas the lack of such kind of incentive for Armenia and Azerbaijan impedes the resolution of the conflict.

THE WEST AND THE CONFLICT IN NAGORNY KARABAKH

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The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can be described as the most persistent and difficult to resolve among the post-Soviet conflicts. This is mainly explained by the geopolitical dilemma that becomes evident every time an attempt is made to settle it. I have in mind the conflict between geography and ideology, the two sides of geopolitics. The geographic side relates to geographic location, mineral riches, etc., while ideology is related to values, culture, world outlook, and history. A conflict can potentially be promptly settled if one of the sides obviously dominates in both respects; it may drag on and on if neither side predominates, or if one of them dominates geographically, while the other, ideologically. Any protracted conflict does not always mean protracted fighting. A conflict can be frozen, while the sides are left to their more or less peaceful existence. More often than not this is described as a "neither war, nor peace" situation.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict differs from many other conflicts because the sides involved have different, yet mutually balanced, geopolitical advantages. Azerbaijan's geographic location is obviously much more advantageous than that of Nagorny Karabakh (the former, found between Russia and Iran, serves as a bridge to Central Asia). On top of this, it is rich in oil and gas. Nagorny Karabakh dominates in the ideological respects, which balances out Azerbaijan's geographic advantages.

This balance between the geographic and ideological components can be clearly detected in Western policies in the Southern Caucasus. To acquire a better understanding let us discuss the main imperatives of the key Western players in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement process.

The U.S.

At all times, the Western powers have sought stronger positions in this strategically important region. They stepped up their activities in 1917-1920. The onslaught was stemmed in Soviet times and resumed as soon as the Soviet Union fell apart. Today the West is becoming entrenched in the Southern Caucasus under America's lead. Compared with the old players, the United States is a younger and more

dynamic actor; it is the only superpower with global interests and its eye on the Southern Caucasus as a strategically important region.

To boost its global influence, the White House will inevitably increase its military and economic potential; it will concentrate on setting up mega-regions to bring together states with different military and economic potential, confessions, cultures and, most important, strategic interests. In so doing, Washington will address several key strategic tasks. It will do its best not to let the initiative slip away. Today, the European mega-region, the EU, has become a reality to a certain extent. It serves U.S. strategic interests well: its usefulness became obvious on the eve of the (at that time, possible) military action against Iraq when the EU approved of America's plans even though France and Germany refused to do so. The West looks at the Southern Caucasus as part of the European mega-region.

There are signs that an Indo-Central Asian mega-region will be set up next, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India being its main strategic links. This will allow Washington to address several key strategic tasks. First, by tying Central Asia to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, the United States will be able to create export routes for the region's natural riches (primarily Central Asian hydrocarbons) bypassing Russia, Iran, and China. We should always bear in mind that the total population of India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (about 1.2 billion) is a promising market for Central Asian products. Second, there is the opinion in the West that democratic India can be developed into the regional pole needed to keep China in check. In turn, India, which is experiencing increasing fuel problems, will need Central Asian oil.

Baku has an important role to play too. Today, the United States is laying its access route to Central Asia through Azerbaijan. There are several relevant facts here: in the south it is Iran that holds the keys to Central Asia. Indian-Pakistani relations remain strained; much time will be needed to teach the public on both sides to accept the idea that better relations between the two capitals are an absolute necessity. Afghanistan has not yet recovered. In the north, there is Russia; in the east, there is China. This makes Azerbaijan the only bridge the United States and the West can use to penetrate Central Asia. During his meeting with President of Azerbaijan Ilkham Aliev in November 2003, Zbigniew Brzezinski said, among other things: "Our choice of Azerbaijan as the main U.S. partner in the region was a deliberate one. We are fully aware of the fact that Azerbaijan is very important for us."[1]

Azerbaijan is just as important to the West in the energy sphere too. The West intends to use its territory to move Caspian hydrocarbon fuels to the world markets. According to certain sources, the Caspian seabed contains from 110 to 243 billion barrels of oil (totaling $4 trillion). The combined reserves of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are assessed at 130 billion barrels, three times more than America's reserves.[2] Several oil giants (ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco, and British Petroleum) have already invested over 30 billion in the Caspian oil and gas infrastructure. In the past five years Western companies have invested $5.2 billion in the Azerbaijani economy.[3] The United States will use Caspian oil to diversify its oil imports and decrease its dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

The above suggests that Washington should have supported Baku in the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. The U.S., however, is demonstrating a fairly balanced approach, probably because of the equilibrium between the geographic and ideological components mentioned above. I should say that top American officials and political analysts always emphasize that the balance between these two geopolitical components is prominent in the White House's treatment of international issues. In one of his program speeches on U.S. national security strategy, President George W. Bush pointed out that his country was resolved to support political and economic freedoms, peaceful relations with other states and to respect human dignity.[4] He added that these aims could be achieved only when human dignity was protected, alliances were strengthened, to be able to defeat international terrorism and prevent attacks against the U.S. and its allies, efforts were made to resolve regional conflicts, our enemies and the enemies of our

[1] R. Gariboglu, "Ilkham Aliev pobedil, i eto glavnoe," *Zerkalo*, 8 November, 2003.
[2] See: L. Kleveman, "The New Great Game," *The Guardian*, 20 October, 2003.
[3] The Khabarliar Program, AzTV1, 17 May, 2001, 14:00.
[4] See: President Bush, West Point, New York, 1 June, 2002, The White House [http://www.whaitehouse.gov/nsc/nssall.html].

allies were prevented from using WMD against us, a new global era based on the free market was launched, and development frameworks were extended with the help of free society by building an infrastructure of democracy.

The program unveiled by the American president demonstrates that the balance among the main geopolitical components is the main factor, democratization and development of an open society being regarded as absolute priorities. This was true during Clinton's presidency too. At one time, Stephen Sestanovich, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the CIS, said: "The U.S. policy starts with strategic, rather than economic interests."[5] The same person confirmed on several occasions that Washington saw its main mission in supporting democratic political institutions.[6]

The above has made it abundantly clear that the White House regards democracy as one of the pivotal points of its geopolitical ideology. Nagorny Karabakh has outstripped Azerbaijan where democratic development is concerned—this is one of the key components of its ideological advantage. Political practices and statements made by international observers bear witness to Baku's mainly declarative and fictitious devotion to democracy. Elections at all levels (presidential, parliamentary, or to the bodies of local self-administration) are one of the best indicators of the state of democracy in any country. In Azerbaijan they are never free from violations and obvious cheating, which is invariably detected and commented on by foreign observers. Democratic principles are violated in many other ways too. The political elite, both in power and in the opposition, is united in its anti-Armenian stand. Here is what Ilkham Aliev said at a sitting of the Editorial Board of the *National Encyclopedia of Azerbaijan* : "I have discovered that the names of many prominent scientists and political figures present in the *Azerbaijanian Soviet Encyclopedia* I have in my office are absent from this edition. There are numerous Armenian names though. I should say that I was baffled: Arutiunian, Arutiunov, Gevorkian, Eremian, Martiros Sarian, Sasunlu David… Why, I ask you?! Why?! Are they the backbone of our national encyclopedia?! I was appalled… Azerbaijanis disappeared while Armenians took their place? Why?"[7]

Here is what Wafa Gulu-zadeh, former foreign policy adviser of President Heydar Aliev, had to say on the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement: "I have already said that an autonomy of Nagorny Karabakh would develop into independence… I insisted that Nagorny Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan should be refused any status. I mean to say that the Karabakh problem cannot be resolved by granting a status to the Armenians. I want everybody to bear in mind that it is a crime to grant Armenians Azerbaijanian citizenship. You all know that in the past there were scores of Armenians at our enterprises. Today, there is not a single one. When they receive citizenship they will no longer remain in Nagorny Karabakh. They will all come to Baku where they will acquire all the rights and shares. If we infringe on these rights they will rebel. Today we cannot cope with one woman, Arzu Abdullaeva (a prominent human rights activist.—*D.B.*), who defends the rights of Armenians in Azerbaijan. What shall we do with many such people?"[8] This and similar statements come from the so-called pro-Western politicians.

Baku does not limit itself to anti-Armenian policies—other nationalities are also discriminated against. Isfendiakh Vagab-zadeh, who represents Azerbaijan in the U.N. Geneva Office, says that the problems his state has to cope with worldwide are created by sham Azerbaijanis who wormed their way into Azerbaijanian diplomacy. In an official letter to speaker Murtuz Aleskerov, he wrote that there were too many aliens among the diplomats. "It should not be tolerated," he wrote further, "because the diplomats born of Armenian, Jewish, or Russian mothers or even of mothers belonging to ethnic minorities will never serve Azerbaijan with dignity and loyalty."[9] The United States has to bear these

[5] "Statement of Stephen Sestanovich, Ambassador-at-Large, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Newly Independent States, before the House International Relations Committee, 30 April, 1998," *Turkistan Newsletter*, 6 May, 1998.

[6] See, in particular: F.T. Csongos, "Central Asia: Official Outlines U.S. Policy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline*, 18 March, 1999.

[7] For more detail, see: "Verbatim report of a sitting of the Editorial Board of the *National Encyclopedia of Azerbaijan*," *Day.Az* [http://www.day.az/news/politics/6292.html, 9 April 2004].

[8] Speech Wafa Gulu-Zadeh delivered at a sitting of the Milli Mejlis of Azerbaijan which discussed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, *AzTV1*, 24 February, 2001.

[9] See, for example: A. Useynov, "Chuzhaia krov," *Vremia MN* (Baku), 5 June, 2001; Sh. Abbasov, "Otozvan polpred Azerbaijana v OON Eldar Guseynov," Internet newspaper *Ekho*, 5 June, 2001.

facts in mind and cannot support a superficially democratic state. Such a state cannot be a predictable or reliable partner. There are people in Azerbaijan who know this. For example, Khikmet Gadzhizadeh, a prominent political scientist, has pointed out: "Even if Azerbaijan is three times stronger than Armenia, the world will never allow a state that oppresses its own citizens to spread its inhuman power to the Armenian ethnic minority in the same way as it prevented Serbian dictatorship to restore its power in Bosnia or Kosovo."[10]

The very process of nation-building in Nagorny Karabakh is very different from what goes on in Azerbaijan. Elections are free and transparent; and international observers invariably confirm that there are no gross violations of the election procedure. The recent elections to the local self-administration bodies held in August 2004 fully confirmed this. Even though the candidates nominated by the parties of power had strong support, independent candidates won in many places and in the capital. This kind of thing is impossible in Azerbaijan. This shows that Nagorny Karabakh is much closer to the democratic community made up, in particular, of all the major centers of power, at least in the Southern Caucasus. The democratic community, in turn, will profit from another democratic entity of international relations (albeit an unrecognized one) in the Southern Caucasus, a strategically important region. It is much more important than contacts with a state which has a very advantageous geographic location yet fails to side with the ideology supported by all the power centers.

The historical specifics of the Armenians are another feature of the ideological component. Their tragic fate scattered them all over the world. A considerable part of the nation is found outside their national states—Armenia and the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh. The nearly 10-million-strong nation lives in diasporas in different civilizations; they have preserved their national identity and imbibed the cultures and values of their new homelands. Such an ally cannot be overestimated; these people are a valuable ally because in all countries where they live Armenians are perceived as part of the main nation or, at least, as a loyal element. Ideologically, Armenians are a unique geopolitical component in the Southern Caucasus and outside it. It should be said that complementarity as Armenia's key foreign policy doctrine is a natural choice rooted in the past. Armenia is a traditional partner of Russia, their ties go back many centuries. Armenia is maintaining close contacts with the United States, home of a multi-million Armenian diaspora. The United States is building its largest embassy in Erevan. This is another confirmation of Armenia's ideological value for the West. Armenians have good relations with Iran. There are large Armenian diasporas in Central Asia and the Middle East. Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh's ideological potential is much greater than that of its South Caucasian neighbors.

Normally Armenian diasporas are fairly influential in the countries they live in. This is especially true of the United States, where the Armenian lobby (along with the Jewish and Greek ones) is actively influencing Washington's foreign policy. While Armenians account for about 0.5 percent of the total American population, the Armenian Support Group in the U.S. Congress has 136 members, or 25.4 percent of the total number of congressmen.[11] They obviously cannot be ignored: their role in domestic policies and during elections is immense. It is mainly thanks to Congress' efforts that Armenia receives one of the world's largest per capita shares of American aid. Every year, on 24 April (the day of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915), the U.S. president addresses the Armenians in the United States. This practice is unique. In his speech the president never uses the word "genocide," yet the meaning is clear. The American president says: "On this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire."[12] The president points out that his country is proud of its close ties with Armenia, which is building a democratic state and market economy. When talking about

[10] Kh. Gadzhi-Zadeh, "Vechnaia voyna ili vechny mir?" *Ekho,* 30 July, 2004.

[11] See: "136," *Golos Armenii,* 31 August, 2004.

[12] Armenian Remembrance Day, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 24 April, 2004 [http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040424-1.html].

Nagorny Karabakh, the president does not mention Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and points out that his country supports a peaceful settlement.

The very fact that Stephen Mann, the present cochairman of the OSCE Minsk Group, occupies two posts—the U.S. State Department's Special Negotiator for Eurasian Conflicts and Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State on Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy—indicates that there is a balance between the two geopolitical components in the approach to the Nagorny Karabakh settlement. The energy-related projects take into account the strategic, or geographical, component, while the post of U.S. State Department's Special Navigator for Eurasian Conflicts makes it possible to concentrate on the ideological side.

Europe

European approaches also stem from the balance between these two components. As former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana stated, Europe could not feel itself completely protected if the Caucasus were left outside the European security system.[13] In this context, Europe is growing increasingly concerned with its own energy security; this adds more importance to the oil and gas of the Caspian. European oil companies are working actively in the region; all their projects concentrate on Azerbaijan as the bridge between the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia and, consequently between Europe and Asia, bypassing Russia and Iran. Geographically, Baku is much more important than Stepanakert and Erevan, yet Europe is not siding with Azerbaijan when it comes to the Karabakh settlement. Documents of the OSCE summits bear witness to this. The final documents of the 1994 Budapest Summit do not mention the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan; the largest part of the summit declaration (717 words) deals with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The subject is discussed under the title "Intensification of CSCE Action in Relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict," while the Abkhazian, South Ossetian and Trans-Dniester conflicts are discussed in the sections entitled "Georgia" and "Moldova." The Europeans are obviously concerned about the territorial integrity of these two states.[14] The declarations of the Lisbon (December 1996) and Istanbul (November 1999) summits were worded similarly.[15]

This graphically demonstrates that the geographic and ideological geopolitical components in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict are balanced. At the same time, Europe and America exercise different approaches to Nagorny Karabakh's ideological pre-eminence over Azerbaijan. I have already written that it is important for the U.S. that Nagorny Karabakh's ideological pre-eminence is based on its faster democratic development than Azerbaijan's and also on a strong and politically well-organized Armenian diaspora in the United States. Europe mostly proceeds from democratic changes when assessing the ideological component. There are two reasons for this: first, the European Armenian diaspora is not as formidable as the American one. There is a well-organized diaspora in France, yet Europe is obviously much larger than France. Second, and most important, Europe looks at the Southern Caucasus as part of Europe and does not conceal its intention to incorporate it into Europe. The local leaders have repeatedly stated that this is what they want.

Integration is not limited to political or administrative integration—it calls for shared values. Even if the region becomes part of Europe administratively, it will take a long time for it to become a spiritual part of Europe as well. It is very important to grasp the philosophy and spirit of democracy, otherwise

[13] See: G.E. Howard, "NATO & the Caucasus: The Caspian Axis," *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, ed. by Blank Stephen, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1998, p. 152.

[14] Budapest Summit Declaration [http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/buda94e.htm#Anchor-BUDAPEST-37580], 5-6 December, 1994.

[15] See: Lisbon Summit Declaration, DOC.S/1/96 [http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/lisbo96e.htm#Anchor-LISBO-3409], 3 December, 1996; Istanbul Summit Declaration, SUM.DOC/2/99 [http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/istadec199e.htm], 19 November, 1999.

conflict settlement and European membership will never become a reality. To become part of Europe, the local nations will have to change their psychological make-up; they will have to learn to tolerate the opinions of others and respect human rights, the cornerstone of European civilization. This alone will allow the Southern Caucasus to become an equal participant in the European processes. So for Europe, the conflicts in our region are a sort of litmus test of democracy.

CIVIL SOCIETY

POLITICAL PARTIES OF TAJIKISTAN ON THE EVE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

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1

On 15 July, 2004, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmonov approved the amendments to the Constitutional Law on the Elections to the Majlisi Oli (the national parliament) of the Republic of Tajikistan passed by the lower chamber of the parliament on 16 June and by the upper chamber on 8 July. This saw the end of many months of political efforts exerted by the local political parties (the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT), the Communist Party of Tajikistan (CPT), the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), the Social-Democratic Party of Tajikistan (SDPT), the Democratic (DPT), and the Socialist (SPT) parties) striving to improve the law on parliamentary elections.

The process that ended on 15 July, 2004 started back in February 2003 when a group of deputies from both chambers came up with both important political and social amendments to the constitution. The amendments in the social sphere were intended to significantly narrow down the range of free social services, primarily in medicine and education. Those who formulated them argued that by 2003, the state was no longer able to shoulder the entire range of social services inherited from Soviet times and envisaged in the constitution. The fundamental law adopted in November 1994 had to be adjusted to meet the current realities—it was an inevitable and objectively necessary measure.

The purely political changes were related to the institution of presidency: they extended the term of office to two consecutive seven-year terms instead of one, as suggested by the 1999 amendments.

This jolted the political parties, which had been hibernating since the previous elections, into frenzied activity even though they did not wake up until 19 March, 2003 when the parliament approved the amendments and offered them for discussion at a referendum. Typically enough, the parties found fault with those who had started the ball rolling, not so much because they disagreed with the content, than

they were irritated by certain procedural lapses: the amendments were offered for nationwide discussion not before, but after the parliament had approved them.

Posing as representatives and defenders of the common people, the opposition parties (all those that pass themselves for the opponents to the presidential PDPT) deemed it necessary to respond to the social and "presidential" amendments. They claimed that the presidential amendment was designed to give the head of state a chance to remain in power until 2020. As sober-minded politicians, they could not but accept the fact that the PDPT-dominated parliament would adopt the amendments. They had no choice but to use the chance to promote their interests in anticipation of the next parliamentary elections scheduled for 2005. To start scoring they initiated broad discussion in order to rivet public attention.

Early in April 2003, the parliamentary parties set down to the business of improving the Constitutional Law on Elections to the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan by amending it. The law adopted in December 1999 when the country had just started its transition from the civil war to stability no longer corresponded to the new realities, therefore amendments were badly needed. Since 1999 the situation has changed a lot: regional strife and the rule of omnipotent warlords convinced that regulations and laws were written to be ignored were things of the past. The republic's political leaders had managed to reunite the country under unified rules and laws. Political pluralism and a national dialog, which is going on uninterrupted in various forms, are helping to develop civil society and nongovernmental media (including the publications of parties and public organizations). The election laws obviously had to be adjusted to the new developments.

2

On 3 April, 2003, a Working Conference on Preparing the National Elections of 2005 chaired by Mahmadsayid Ubaydullaev, speaker of the upper chamber, was held in Dushanbe. It was attended by representatives of both chambers, people from the executive apparatus of the head of state and from the ministries and departments, as well as politicians, journalists, and members of international organizations accredited in the republic.

The conference created a workgroup staffed by politicians and deputies which had to gather and summarize all the suggestions and arrive at a final version of the amendments to the constitutional law to be submitted for consideration to the Majlisi Namoyandagon (the lower chamber). It was expected they would be discussed and edited before being offered for nationwide discussion.

By late October, the group had come up with a final text which gave political parties a more important role to play in forming election committees of all levels, and in controlling the process of preparing and holding the elections. In particular, it was suggested that the body of national observers should be enlarged to cope with the new functions: a greater role in monitoring the elections, vote counting, publicizing the results, and other activities. It was felt that the executive power should be less involved in the election process to avoid possible falsifications. Those who suggested this wanted to increase the chances of their representatives getting into parliament through straightforward and transparent elections.

At the crucial moment, however, those members of the workgroup who represented the parliament and the PDPT refused to sign the final document, therefore head of the OSCE Center in Dushanbe Yve Bergen and Vladimir Sotirov, who represented the U.N. Secretary General in the republic and headed the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-Building (UNTOP), sent the document in their own name to the executive apparatus of the head of state and to both chambers. This happened in November 2003.

The parliament refused to consider the document under the pretext of a procedural lapse: only drafts submitted by entities with the right of legislative initiative could be accepted for consideration. Neither the workgroup that drafted the document, nor the international organizations that sent it to the parliament

had this right. It was absolutely clear, however, that the procedure had little to do with rejection: there was no consensus at the very top about the need to amend the law. Some people believed that different times required different, or amended, laws. This explains why the establishment and the ruling party sent their representatives to the workgroup in the first place.

Those who completely disagreed with this had enough clout to prevent the signing of the document and its consideration in the parliament. Still, they could not bury the draft, which explains why it was rejected for purely procedural reasons. It was for the head of state to resolve the conflict, yet the president took his time and did not hasten to make his decision public.

3

While the campaign was unfolding, the republic finally acquired a post-Soviet pattern of president-dominated statehood (shared by all the CIS countries): the president ruled the country and was expected to formulate all the significant political initiatives.

It is not surprising that many of the PDPT members (the party of parliamentary majority) did not look favorably on the project: indeed, no party would have hailed amendments giving its rivals a potentially stronger position. But it was clear, at the same time, that the president, who was the party's chairman, shared these apprehensions.

As president, Emomali Rakhmonov, who had headed an essentially non-existent country and managed to reunite it, achieve national unity and build up a new Tajik statehood, could not ignore the interests of the diverse political forces without damaging his political image. It was obviously wrong to ignore what the opposition (the aggregate potential of which was great enough) thought about the amendments. There was another important factor: the developed democracies, stable and diverse contacts with which were high on the list of priorities of the state and its leaders, approved the suggested changes.

As a highly intuitive politician, President Rakhmonov felt that the legitimacy of his power should be diversified to be accepted by all public strata. Throughout the 1990s, Tajik society urgently needed the speediest possible healing of the wounds inflicted by the civil war: the ruined economy had to be restored, the widely spread legal nihilism overcome, etc. No democratic changes or transfer to a market economy would be possible if these tasks remained unresolved. The absolute majority of the younger population groups (between the ages of 25 and 30) accept Emomali Rakhmonov as the president because he managed to resolve these tasks, achieve a peace settlement, and guarantee peace and political stability in his country.

The republic has reached a new stage of its post-Soviet history, at which peace and political stability are accepted as a reality. The public is eager to satisfy its social and economic needs and the political and other ambitions it had to shelf in anticipation of a better future. In fact, it was the elder population groups (born and educated during Soviet times) who had to wait to satisfy their needs because of the political upheavals and the civil war. These people regarded the possibility of finally satisfying their social and economic expectations as a sign that the country would not tumble back into the abyss of political chaos it experienced during the first years of independence.

The new generation, who in five to six years will become the most active part of the country's population and later will dominate in it (because of the high birthrate and the fact that nearly half of the population is young), has a very different idea of the recent past. They are too young to remember the Soviet Union and even the political calamities and the civil war of the early 1990s. They were unable to share the emotional experiences of the elder population groups, therefore they treat the past neutrally at best. For them peace, political stability, the new statehood, and the country's manageability are real and unshakeable. They do not share the urgency with which their parents look at the task of preserving this reality. This explains why the president's legitimacy rooted in his achievements of the 1990s is not all-important for those who are now 20 or 25.

They grew up in a country with a developing market economy and know no other economic patterns. Having grown up in a country with more or less developed political pluralism and a multi-party system, they have no idea about a one-party system. These people want a system with legal, social, economic, and political conditions conducive to the realization of their social, economic and political ambitions, which entails having access to economic, information, and political resources. The new generation will accept anyone as a legitimate president if he manages to mobilize the state and society's potential to resolve this problem and be successful.

4

Being aware of the need to pay more attention to this new element of his legitimacy created by changing society and absolutely acceptable throughout the world, the president has to ponder on practical measures. The country needs socioeconomic reforms, democratic changes, more resolute efforts to uproot corruption, regulate the legal status of Tajik guest workers in Russia, etc. The possibility of success while dealing with all problems at once is limited by the country's scarce resources. Priorities should be correctly identified: it seems advisable to concentrate primarily on one of the less resource-consuming problems, which would make it possible, first, to promptly achieve acceptable results; and second, to build on them to move toward more complicated time- and resource-consuming tasks.

Priorities have suggested themselves: the president's position ignited an interest in amending the law on elections among the public and outside the country. It became obvious that this campaign should be brought to its logical conclusion. In February 2004, the PDPT faction and a group of independent deputies submitted the amendment draft to the parliament.

This was done after the Communist Party and the Islamic Revival Party factions submitted their joint draft of amendments to the Council of the Majlisi Namoyandagon by way of a legislative initiative on 13 February, 2004. The joint project, based on the workgroup document, contained proposals for setting up an institution of national observers; for better protecting ballot papers against frauds; for displaying the protocols of the election committees at polling stations for three days for everyone to see; for setting up elections funds by all parties and self-nominated candidates, etc.

The PDPT and the people behind it were obviously concerned lest the amendments cripple their election chances. This explains why the PDPT draft did not contain many suggestions designed to increase the role political parties play in election campaigns and to considerably diminish the degree of involvement of the executive power in the election process. The PDPT came up with the idea of a deposit. Self-nominated candidates were expected to pay a sum equal to 1,500 minimum wages; and the parties an amount equal to 33,000 minimum wages. With the official minimum wage being seven somoni, such deposits would have amounted to 10,500 and 231,000 somoni.

In an effort to improve their election chances, the Communist and the Islamic Revival parties borrowed all the suggestions from the workgroup document related to the greater role the parties could play in the election campaign at all stages, to less involvement of the executive power in the election process, and to increasing the transparency of the voting process and vote counting.

Today, in all the post-Soviet CIS countries the election results depend on the efficiency of those in power, their ability to control the political processes and the skill with which this is done, as well as on the attitude of the local people, the world community, and the opposition toward the domestic political developments. The quality of the election laws is of secondary importance because they are drawn up under the supervision of the ruling groups, which are naturally not inclined to help their political opponents. This made the political battles and maneuvering around the amendments much more interesting than the verbal clashes and the parliament-formulated amendments themselves. In other words, the political struggle was determined by the desire of both sides to push through their own amendments. The opposition relied on a wide media campaign, seminars and round tables designed to involve the highest possible number of structures of the emerging civil society, international organizations busy

promoting democracy in our country, and some of the embassies. The international community, represented primarily by UNTOP and the OSCE Center, was engaged in a dialog with the sides in an effort to identify common positions.

5

By late April 2004, it became clear that the discussions were driving the parties into an impasse. A similar situation regularly reemerged during the peace talks between the sides in the civil war in 1994-1997 and repeated itself while the General Peace Agreement was implemented in 1997-2000. At that time, only the involvement of the country's president helped to find a correct solution. And now once more the sides were bogged down: neither could push its alternative through the parliament while ignoring the other side, because the world community obviously insisted on a mutually acceptable solution. In his address to the nation delivered in the parliament on 30 April, 2004, President Rakhmonov came up with a solution by calling on the deputies to heed the arguments of all political parties.[1]

From that time on, the president's leading role in the amendment process became public and tangible. All those directly involved in the process, as well as the world community accepted him as the driving force behind the process and also behind the wider process of the country's democratic development. This, and his suggestion to adopt a moratorium on the death penalty he put forward at the same parliamentary sitting, together with his acceptance of political pluralism, an ongoing national dialog, and improvement of the numerous media functioning in the republic, strengthened his image as a democratically minded politician. From that time on, all political parties concentrated on reaching a consensus on the amendments. This added strength to the democratic elements of the legitimacy of the president's power.

His advice to heed the opinions of all political parties and forces was accepted, yet the discussions held on 3-4 June in the parliament failed to settle the contradictions. Finally, it was decided to set up a deputy workgroup that included Djumaboy Sanginov, head of the PDPT faction; Shodi Shabdolov, chairman of the Communist Party and head of its parliamentary faction; Nasruddin Sayidov, who represented the IRPT; and Sherhon Salimov, who represented the PDPT. The workgroup was expected to reach a more or less acceptable version of the amendments and present the final document to the lower chamber. This was done when the PDPT deputies agreed to play down somewhat the role of the executive structures in the election process and to lower the deposit to a more acceptable level of 200 minimum wages for self-nominated candidates and for those included on the party lists. They also accepted some of the suggestions designed to reach more openness and transparency. The opponents, for their part, agreed to remove the clause about the parties' greater involvement in forming election committees at all levels and holding elections. The results were made public at an international round table held on 10 June, 2004. The president endorsed the joint version of the amendments adopted by the parliament.

Some of the parties, however, mainly those that had been left outside the parliament, were dissatisfied with the results. According to Rahmatullo Valiev, executive secretary of the DPT, far from improving the law, the amendments made it even worse. He was especially displeased with the new clause about the deposit of 200 minimum wages (an equivalent of $500),[2] which he found exorbitant.

Speaking at the round table Rahmatullo Zoirov, SDPT chairman, described the new clause as an attempt to create a property barrier of sorts to keep away some of the self-nominated candidates and parties. Experts from these parties described the clause as a violation of the constitutional right of any citizen to elect and be elected: $500 is a huge sum in a country where 80 percent of the population live below the

[1] See: "Poslanie Prezidenta Respubliki Tajikistan E.Sh. Rakhmonova Majlisi Oli. Dushanbe, 30 aprelia 2004 g.," *Djumkhuriat*, No. 48, 1 May, 2004.

[2] See: *Ruzi nav*, 17 June, 2004.

poverty level. Muhiddin Kabiri, IRPT deputy chairman, said that while the law had been considerably improved, the amendments could hardly be described as great political progress.

6

The political parties dissatisfied with the draft addressed the president twice: on 12 June (the eve of the voting in the lower chamber) and 26 June (the eve of the voting in the upper chamber). They called on the president, whom they saw as the real guarantor of the country's democratic development, to veto the amendments, which (they were convinced) the parliament would adopt. The 26 June address said that the amendments "might prevent them from taking part in the elections, events of great importance." This sounded a bit like an ultimatum and was intended to put pressure on the deputies. By the same token, the political parties accepted the president's leading role in the amendment process and in the much wider process of the country's democratization. The addresses failed to produce the desired result. In fact, being displeased with the greater chance the president had of being reelected as a result of the 2003 referendum, the parties stepped up their activity designed to change the election law. At the same time, they recognized the president as an opportunity to bring about a satisfactory solution and an arbiter in their dispute with the PDPT and the parliament.

The parties opposing the PDPT and the authorities on the amendment issue failed for purely objective reasons. Tajik society is obviously moving toward political pluralism confirmed by the positive response to the efforts of many political parties, the PDPT among them, to improve the law.

It is equally clear that there are still forces opposed to this trend. What is more, the absolute majority of the adult population fails to pin its hopes for a better social and economic situation on political pluralism: it is convinced that the multi-party system which emerged in the Soviet Union during the final stage of perestroika is to blame for the hardships. This is quite natural. People over the age of 25-30 are basically Soviet people who grew up in a country with one party, whose life was well padded and organized, and whose future was assured. Today, they are look back with nostalgia; they fail to trust political pluralism as an idea and as political practice. These feelings of the larger part of the republic's able-bodied population are translated into corresponding political positions. The country's leaders and the PDPT should bear this in mind.

Time is needed to allow people to readjust their attitudes so as to achieve a breakthrough in the desired direction. When the younger generations born during perestroika and later (who have no idea about the one party system, take the multi-party system, the market economy, and the state's very limited social obligations for granted) come to the fore to dominate in the country's population, public sentiments will change. In other words, quick results and instant solutions cannot be expected. In fact, the parliamentary consensus among the leading political forces (the PDPT, CPT, and IRPT) meets the current situation.

7

Today, nobody could have expected a different response from the head of state. The addresses were an attempt to revive the practices of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) applied to the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), the main instrument used in 1997-2000 to put the General Agreement into practice. At that time, the UTO never missed a chance to suspend its involvement in the NRC when implementation of the General Agreement stalled for any reason. The UTO never hesitated to disseminate its statements and addresses worded in a harsh or even irreconcilable manner across the country. It was its method to invite the other side to look for mutually acceptable solutions.

This worked well in a country that was slowly emerging from a crisis and had barely begun to reunite. The statements and addresses helped rivet the attention of the republic's leaders, the public, and the international structures to the painful issues requiring attention.

Today, we are living in a different country, in which the opposition parties have no political weight, real influence, or potential comparable to the former UTO, therefore they cannot expect similar attention to their statements and addresses.

The outside world has responded positively to the developments in our country, which explains why the president and the deputies treated the addresses neutrally. Everybody knows that Russia, China, and the United States can affect the situation in Tajikistan (and across Central Asia, for that matter) to a great degree. Russia's role is determined by the close military-political cooperation between the two countries and a huge number of Tajik guest workers who find employment in Russia and who, according to Prof. Khodjimuhammad Umarov, sent back $1.2 billion (a sum equivalent to about four of the republic's budgets) in 2003 alone.

Moscow has not criticized the recent amendments; in fact, the domestic developments in the RF and its desire to return to a region that it left on its own free will for ideological reasons, rule out such comments. Indeed, it can only come back if the present Central Asian leaders remain in power. It has no political and ideological reasons to complicate the process of its return to the region and of restoring its former influence (even though on a smaller scale) by pointing to election specifics, which every Russian citizen knows about from personal experience.

China is very positive about the fact that the President of Tajikistan signed the amended law and about introducing the changes. In fact, China has been able to carry out successful economic, social, and political modernization thanks to the country's leaders and the Communist Party of China, the leading political force. China will hardly criticize a similar model taking shape in our country.

It was Richard Armitage, the U.S. deputy Secretary of State, who made public America's opinion about the amended election law. The man who represents a country engaged in the counter-terrorist struggle in Afghanistan and wishing to keep reliable regimes in power in the neighboring countries (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan) approved of the law on elections. When visiting Tajikistan he pointed out that the law was a step in the right direction and that all that was left to do was to ensure that the February 2005 parliamentary elections were fair and transparent.[3]

It should be added that as soon as the incumbent U.S. administration chose to rely on the Central Asian regimes in its war on terror, the world community concentrated on supporting those efforts of the Central Asian regimes and political elites that might push forward the process of democratization. There are several reasons for this. First, the forces in power are much more predictable than their opponents; second, they can control the situation and maintain stability in their countries, which the world badly needs to go on with the operation in Afghanistan; third, the forces now in power in Central Asia (at least, in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) are carrying out democratic reforms (even though their efforts are not always consistent).

8

Guided by political pragmatism, the "old" parties (dating from Soviet times), the CPT, IRPT, and DPT, carried out a multi-level policy, while fighting for the amendments. They addressed two tasks: promoting the amendments and preserving, or even improving, their mutual understanding and constructive cooperation with the PDPT, the country's leaders, and the president.

They have coped with the task by assigning different roles to their leaders. It was the deputy heads (Tuygun Karimov in the CPT, Muhiddin Kabiri in the IRPT, and Rahmatullo Valiev in the DPT) who dealt with the practical issues. It was they who worded the first version of the proposed amendments and appeared at all related public events. The leaders (Shodi Shabdolov, Sayid Abdullo Nuri, and Mahmadruzi Iskandarov) were engaged in a direct and indirect dialog with the authorities and the PDPT at a higher level. Their public response to all the developments was more balanced: their criticism was constructive, whether they were addressing other parties or the authorities.

[3] RIA "Novosti," 17 July, 2004.

This tactics allowed the three parties to broaden their possibilities in the dialog with the PDPT and the country's top crust and demonstrated that their leaders were determined to carry out a dialog and look together for a mutually acceptable solution for the sake of the nation, rather than start another round of political confrontation. On the other hand, they had no choice: their political legitimacy was rooted in their image as people working for peace and stability and prepared to actively cooperate with the head of state. They recognized that the president had done a lot to reunite the country, which almost ceased to exist in 1992, and restore its manageability.

It is not a great overstatement to say that it was one of the best forms of cooperation between the CPT, IRPT, and DPT and their partners at all levels of the political vertical, which made it possible to hold a political dialog that produced an amended law on elections and that was appreciated throughout the world.

The two other parties involved in the process—the SDPT and the SPT—had no chance of being involved in a dialog with the country's leaders directly or indirectly. They concentrated on formulating the amendments and on promoting their ideas through the media and participating in numerous seminars, conferences, and round tables. They did a lot to set up a political coalition for fair and transparent elections. The process started back on 3 November, 2003 when the SDPT and the DPT signed a corresponding agreement. Since that time the IRPT and SPT have joined it.

The future election campaign and related political maneuvering will go on against this backdrop. On the one hand, political life in the country is highly fluid. On the other, the president, whose amazing adaptability in the rapidly changing domestic and foreign conditions has earned him international support, obviously holds a dominant position. The PDPT and the forces in power, rather than their rivals, will find the situation more favorable: being at the helm they are carrying out many of the economic, social and political reforms which their opponents only formulate as their program aims.

The parliamentary parties, the CPT and IRPT, will find themselves in a less advantageous position mainly because they will be afraid of failure. It seems that the DPT has little chance of winning: it has no deputies and is working hard to reach the desired aim by establishing rational relations with the authorities.

The SDPT will look at the coming campaign as preparation for future, so far distant, election battles. It has still to acquire a fairly wide and fairly solid social basis. We can expect that closer to the election day, the parties may be badly hit by internal disagreements and dissent brought about by internal strife and the efforts of political rivals. In fact, in mid-August 2004 Balhier Zamirov, head of the regional (Gorno-Badakhshan) SDPT structure announced that his organization had decided to withdraw from the coalition: the amendments rendered their continued membership meaningless.

The SPT has not yet overcome its internal crisis created by the fact that it split in two, each of the parts claiming the name and announcing itself to be the genuine SPT. The dissidents headed by Abduhalim Gafforov and Kurbon Vosiev moved against the party's leader Mirhusein Narziev. In June 2004, they gathered their supporters together and announced it was a party congress. The same congress removed Narziev from party leadership and announced that it was withdrawing from the coalition. On 14 August, Narziev and his supporters staged a congress of their own, which re-elected him as chairman of the party. Since the law forbids any two parties to carry the same name, a source in the republic's Ministry of Justice said that the ministry was looking into the problem. He added: "This issue belongs to the party's jurisdiction; we cannot interfere. The court alone may rule which of the parties is legitimate—if the parties choose to go to court."[4] In other words, the issue has not yet been settled.

9

I would like to say in conclusion that the political parties are doing their best to meet each other halfway, even though each of them has strict and even implacable positions. Mutual concessions are making

[4] *Asia-Plus "Blitz,"* No. 161, 25 August, 2004.

movement possible, until their positions coincide at some point. So far, we have adopted the amendments approved by the parliament, which means we have only passed a certain stage on our way toward a radically improved election law. There is hope that we shall continue consistently moving toward the desired aim.

We can say that the main participants in the process—the president, the political parties, and the society—have won. The head of state strengthened his legitimacy with another element—he became the guarantor of democratic developments, while all the political parties accepted him as an arbiter in the relationships among themselves and their relationships with power.

By putting the very issue of changing the election law on the agenda, the political parties scored a victory. By waking up almost two years before the next parliamentary elections, they acquired a good opportunity to begin talking to each other, to the authorities, and to the potential voters in a direct and public way, through the press, at seminars, round tables, etc. They used this opportunity to put on the agenda and discuss many urgent issues of emergent Tajik statehood and of economic and political reform. Today, political parties are no longer viewed as organizations coming to life on the eve of elections, but as active and constant participants in the political process. The very fact that they are actively involved in the republic's political life and in the republic's political and information expanse is contributing to the positive changes in the country.

The recent political processes have proven beneficial for the nation. The dialog and competition among the political parties and their involvement in a dialog with the powers-that-be have already created conditions conducive to political pluralism. Slowly but surely the system is leaving the confines of the republic's capital to reach its outlying regions and become part of the political landscape. The atmosphere of political tolerance has helped the media to develop; it boosted their creative potential and was responsible for the appearance of rather critical and non-conformist periodicals.

These positive changes are contributing to the country's obvious, albeit slow, drift along the road of change.

REGIONAL SECURITY

ARMS CONTROL IN THE SOUTHERN CAUCASUS

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Introduction

Today, the Southern Caucasus, given its relatively small territory and population density, is among the most militarized parts of the world. Each of the three states in the region has a military capability not only comparable with but sometimes even superior to that of an average European nation (this applies mainly to Azerbaijan and to a lesser extent to Armenia and Georgia). Adding in the military capability of the unrecognized "countries" and state formations that emerged here following the breakup of the Soviet Union—the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, as well as the Russian military bases in the Transcaucasus—the picture will be even more formidable. The bloody ethnic and internal state conflicts in the region, caused by the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of independent states in the region with three national armies could not but precipitate a huge concentration of arms and military equipment here. Therefore, problems of arms control, limitation, and reduction are among the key aspects of security in the Southern Caucasus.

How the Region was Armed

The root causes of militarization in the Southern Caucasus should be looked for, above all, in the situation that evolved there following the break-up of the U.S.S.R. and the formation of three independ-

ent states, recognized by the international community, as well as of several countries and state entities, although unrecognized, still no less important and self-sufficient militarily and politically. In the last few years of its existence, the Soviet Union had in the region bordering Turkey, an active NATO member state, a strong military presence, including large combined-arms units of the Transcaucasus Military District (ZakVO) and the Transcaucasus Border District, the 19th Independent Air Defense Army, the 34th Air Army, the Caspian Flotilla, and a brigade of Black Sea Fleet warships. In addition, several units under central command were based in the region: space reconnaissance facilities (not far from Tbilisi) and missile early warning and space track systems (the Gabala radar station, Azerbaijan), as well as Soviet Interior Ministry and KGB subunits.[1]

The Transcaucasus Military District was comprised of the 4th Combined-Arms Army, the 7th Guards Army, the 31st Army Corps, the 104th Airborne Division, and the 171st Training Center (see Table 1).

Table 1

Deployment of Soviet Military Equipment and Manpower in the South Caucasian States as of 1991

	Tanks	AFVs*	Artillery systems	Helicopter gunships	Combat aircraft	Man-power
Azerbaijan	**391**	**1 285**	**463**	**24**	**124**	**66,000**
Armenia	**258**	**641**	**357**	**7**	**0**	**20,000**
Georgia	**850**	**1 054**	**363**	**48**	**245**	**30,000**

*Armored fighting vehicles.

Sources: *The Military Balance 1991/1992,* IISS, London, 1991, pp. 45, 61, 92; *World Armament and Disarmament, SIPRI Yearbook 1992,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 347.

As for ammunition and military equipment, Azerbaijan had far more of those than Georgia and Armenia taken together. The aggregate amount of ammunition in Azerbaijan was put at more than 11,000 rail cars, as compared to about 2,000 cars in Georgia and approximately 500 cars in Armenia.

As a result of the breakup of the Soviet Union, the bulk of arms and military equipment from Soviet Army subunits deployed in the region went to the South Caucasian states and was used in the course of armed conflicts that subsequently broke out there. Meanwhile, the division of property between the three republics was extremely unequal: Most of the weapons, military hardware, ammunition, and gear and equipment went to Azerbaijan. A considerable part of it was seized by subunits of its emerging national army, some of it was sold off by 4th Army command and officers who found themselves in dire financial straits following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, while the rest was officially transferred to Azerbaijan by the RF Defense Ministry. As a result, Baku took control of all military subunits stationed in the republic's territory, as well as of a considerable share of warships and ground infrastructure of the Caspian Sea Flotilla. Furthermore, Baku appropriated all ammunition and military equipment depots.[2] As a matter of fact, only the 104th Airborne Division, deployed in Ganja, was withdrawn from Azerbaijan, still losing a substantial amount of its military hardware as a result. The only Russian military installation that remained in the republic was the Gabala radar station as part of the ballistic missile early warning

[1] See: M. Pyadushkin, "Arming the Caucasus: Moscow's Accidental Legacy," in: *The Caucasus: Armed and Divided*, ed. by A. Matveeva, D. Hiscock, Saferworld, TSAST, London, Moscow, February 2004, pp. 2-5.

[2] See: V. Baranets, "Tak vooruzhali Zakavkazie," *Obshchaia gazeta*, 22 October, 1998.

(BMEW) system. In addition to tracking ballistic missile launches in the Indian Ocean, it helps monitor the air space over the territory of Iran, Turkey, India, Iraq, Pakistan, and partially China as well as a number of Asian and Pacific countries. As of 2002, the Gabala radar station received the status as an RF military base, leased from Azerbaijan for a 10-year period.[3]

Thus, despite the 1992 Tashkent agreements and its accession to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), Azerbaijan "privatized" far more arms and military equipment than was allowed under these documents. This was to a very large degree the result of an ill-considered and irresponsible position of the RF Defense Ministry leadership that proved unable to fully supervise and control the process. That caused difficulties over the withdrawal of the arms and military equipment of former Soviet military units from Azerbaijan, disrupting the established time frame for the withdrawal. Furthermore, even the official division and transfer of military equipment to Azerbaijan proceeded under strong pressure on the part of the country's authorities who needed weapons for combat operations against Nagorno-Karabakh. Oftentimes that equipment was seized with the approval of certain representatives of the 4th Army command that, amid the breakup of the centralized military command and control system, did not always coordinate its actions with the RF Defense Ministry, which also was not entirely aware of the situation on the ground. For example, under the ministry's Directive No. 314(3)022 (22 June, 1992), 237 tanks, 325 armored fighting vehicles, and 170 artillery systems were transferred to Azerbaijan, as a result of which the equipment transferred to Baku under this directive alone on some categories exceeded its CFE entitlements several fold. Overall, in 1992, Azerbaijan received more than 325 tanks, 789 armored fighting vehicles, 458 artillery systems, a large number of combat aircraft, and more than 100,000 small arms and light weapons (SALW).[4]

Despite the fact that in Georgia, just as in Azerbaijan, the division of former ZakVO assets proceeded to a very large extent via forcible seizure, Russia retained control over approximately one-half of arms and military equipment deployed in its territory. That was to a considerable degree due to the political situation and the civil war that had broken out in Georgia itself. Furthermore, the main ZakVO subunits in Georgia were based in ethnic minority concentrated settlements or in autonomous regions (Akhalkalaki, Batumi, Gudauta, Tskhinvali, and so on) whose governing authorities and population prevented a forcible seizure of arms and equipment. According to the RF Defense Ministry, in the 1992-1995 period, Tbilisi officially received 12 helicopter gunships, 147 tanks, 169 BMP-1 and BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, 92 armored personnel carriers, 40 armored reconnaissance vehicles, 263 guns and mortars, 26 multiple rocket launchers, 210 antitank guided missiles, 436 surface to air missiles, 47,000 units of SALW, and more than 3,000 vehicles, worth an estimated $400 million to $600 million, in all.[5] Still, Georgia forcibly seized a certain amount of ZakVO weapons, military equipment, and ammunition. In the mid-1990s, the Russian military units that remained in the country were reorganized as military bases: the 147th Motorized Rifle Division (Akhalkalaki) as the 62nd base; the 145th Motorized Rifle Division (Batumi) as the 12th base; the 405th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 10th Motorized Rifle Division, which was moved to Vaziani, and a part of the 171st district center as the 137th;[6] and the 346th Independent Airborne Regiment (Gudauta) as the 50th.[7] The units of the RF Federal Border Service and the Russian naval base in Ochamchira were pulled out by the end of 1999, with all of their arms and military equipment. Also deployed in Georgia are the headquarters of the Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus (GRVZ) of the North Caucasian Military District (SKVO) and a number of small logistic support installations and depots.

The division of military equipment in Armenia proceeded in the most organized manner, although it got several times less equipment than Azerbaijan. Under a number of agreements signed in 1992 be-

[3] See: I. Korotchenko, "Opredelen status Gabalinskoi RLS," *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, 8 February, 2002.

[4] See: A. Yunusov, "Azerbaijan: The Burden of History—Waiting for Change," in: *The Caucasus: Armed and Divided*, p. 12.

[5] See: V. Velichkovskiy, "Pochem strategicheskoe partnerstvo? Vzaimoottalkivanie Tbilisi i Moskvy ne prekrashchaetsia," *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, 12 July, 2002.

[6] Disbanded in 2001.

[7] Disbanded in 2001.

tween the Armenian and the RF defense ministries, the Armenian side received the arms and military equipment of the 164th and the 15th Motorized Rifle Divisions, while the 127th Motorized Rifle Division, deployed in Gyumri, stayed under RF control and in 1995 was reorganized as the 102nd GRVZ base. Units of the Transcaucasus Border Military District deployed in Armenia were incorporated into the RF Federal Border Service Operational Group Armenia. Considering that only two army division ammunition depots (in Kirovakan and Balaovit) were transferred to Erevan, it received a total of approximately 300 rail cars of ammunition. The division and transfer of arms and military equipment of the former Soviet Army to Armenia was not completed until late 1996.[8]

As for the high-profile case of purportedly illegal arms transfers to Armenia by Russia (in 1992 through 1996), in circumvention of the OSCE and U.N. embargo, that in fact applied to the ongoing division of the former Soviet Army property. Meanwhile, some figures about arms transfers to Erevan were either distorted (due to researchers' incompetence) or simply inflated out of propaganda considerations. A commission, set up on orders from then President B. Yeltsin to investigate the case (comprised of representatives of the defense ministries of Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), failed to prove the illegality of the arms transfers. Furthermore, many of the allegations had no basis in reality, while the commission found no evidence of any wrongdoing. On the other hand, according to both Russian and international experts, the transfer of arms by Moscow to Erevan (as well as to Tbilisi) in 1993 through 1996 did not violate the embargo imposed by the OSCE and the U.N. on arms transfers to conflict zones: It was a case of Soviet military equipment being divided up under bilateral agreements between Russia and the South Caucasian states.[9]

Thus, arms transfers to Armenia in the 1993-1996 period were part of the ongoing treaty-based division of Soviet military equipment, not transfers in circumvention of the international embargo. Still, the canard, on the one hand, was used for internal political speculation in Russia and on the other, was designed to justify militarist statements by Azerbaijan and Turkey.[10] Allegations that the transfer disturbed the military balance are also groundless. Rather, the opposite was true: The division and transfer of former Soviet Army assets to Armenia in the 1993-1996 period was, in the admission of experts, a factor of stability and security in the region.[11] As a result of Azerbaijan's de facto "privatization" of the bulk of weapons belonging to Soviet military units stationed on its territory, Baku achieved an absolute military-technical superiority over Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Thus, according to Russian sources, the amount of Treaty limited equipment (TLE) transferred to Azerbaijan was far in excess of its entitlement under the CFE and the Tashkent Treaties.

As of 1993, the correlation of forces between Baku and Erevan was as follows: Azerbaijan had 286 tanks, 480 infantry fighting vehicles, 372 armored personnel carriers, 330 artillery units, 50 combat and 50 training aircraft, and eight helicopter gunships, while Armenia had 160 tanks, about 200 IFVs and APCs, and 257 artillery systems.[12] It should be noted here that these figures do not include the arms and military equipment that Azerbaijan lost in the course of combat operations in Nagorno-Karabakh and on the border with Armenia: Otherwise the difference (between the sides' military capabilities) would have been far greater.

The unrecognized states of the Southern Caucasus came by their weapon arsenals in a different way—as a result of armed conflicts, mainly by seizing them from the armies of their former "parent state." For understandable reasons, the unrecognized states could not count on their share in the property of the former Soviet Armed Forces. Nonetheless, some ZakVO units were deployed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while armed formations of these two republics seized or bought a certain amount of weapons from them, mainly SALW. Although Nagorno-Karabakh served as a base for the 366th Motorized Rifle Regiment of

[8] See: M. Pyadushkin, op. cit.

[9] See: B. Hagelin, "Arms Transfers to the South Caucasus and Central Asia Compared, 1992-2002," in: *Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, SIPRI, Stockholm, 2003, p. 28.

[10] See: E. Nuriyev, "Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy Strategy and National Security Concerns," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), p. 19.

[11] See: M. Kenzhetaev, "Oboronnaia promyshlennost' Respubliki Armenia," *Eksport vooruzhenii*, No. 3, 1997, pp. 7-11.

[12] See: *The Military Balance 1993/1994*, IISS, London, 1993, pp. 71-73.

Table 2

Declared TLE Levels in the CFE Area, as of August 1992

	Tanks	AFVs	Artillery systems	Helicopter gunships	Combat aircraft
Azerbaijan*	**134**	**113**	**126**	**9**	**15**
Armenia**	**77**	**189**	**160**	**13**	**3**
Georgia	**77**	**28**	**0**	**0**	**0**

* Including combat losses in Nagorno-Karabakh.
** As of December 1992.

Source: *World Armament and Disarmament, SIPRI Yearbook 1993*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993, pp. 602, 609.

the 23rd MRD, military sources note that virtually all of its military equipment was destroyed in February 1992, during the evacuation of the regiment's personnel from Stepanakert by helicopter. The bulk of military equipment in the arsenals of the unrecognized states are trophies captured from Georgian or Azerbaijani troops. For example, according to some Russian sources, in fighting with Georgian regular army units in 1992-1993 period, Abkhaz armed formations seized more than 100 tanks and armored fighting vehicles, five BM-21 Grad multiple rocket launchers, more than 80 artillery systems of various calibers, 42 mortars, and a considerable amount of ammunition.[13] A similar pattern was observed in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR): Most of the military equipment in the NKR Army was seized in battles with Azerbaijani troops. According to Maj. Gen. A. Ter-Tadevosian, former army commander, during that period NKR servicemen seized a substantial amount of arms and military equipment, including more than 100 tanks.[14]

Arms Transfers

Talking about arms transfers (especially in the first half of the 1990s, when armed conflicts in the region had reached their peak), it should be taken into account that in the majority of cases this refers to the so-called gray or even black export schemes—that is to say, the bulk of these transfers moved via unofficial channels, but with sanction or approval by some government agencies in an exporting country.[15]

Azerbaijan

As of 1992, Kiev became the principal supplier of military equipment for Baku. According to Radio Liberty, in September 1993, 85 T-72 tanks were sent from Ukraine to Azerbaijan. In about the same period, it received approximately 50 T-55 tanks and several MiG-21 combat aircraft, while following queries from a number of arms control organizations, Baku had to admit the fact and notify CFE member

[13] See: V. Mukhin, "Sukhumi gotov ko vsemu," *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, 19 October, 2001.
[14] From the author's conversation with A. Ter-Tadevosian (Sept. 1994).
[15] See: K. Makienko, "Cherno-bely spektr v oruzheinom eksporte," *Pro et Contra*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Winter 1999, pp. 95-99.

states about it. In the winter of 1993-1994, Ukraine transferred, in addition to that, more than 50 T-54/55 and T-62 tanks.[16]

Responding to an official note of protest from the Armenian Foreign Ministry, in September 1993, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry denied transferring tanks to Azerbaijan: Apparently it only returned tanks that had been repaired at Ukrainian enterprises.[17] Nonetheless, units of the 4th Army, which was in its time stationed in Azerbaijan, had T-72 tanks, but not T-54, T-55, or T-62 tanks—moreover, not in such large numbers. Therefore Azerbaijan must have received these types of tanks, which were widely used in combat operations in Nagorno-Karabakh, from other states. True, in a 1993 report that it presented to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), Ukraine admitted that it had transferred 100 tanks and 10 combat aircraft to Azerbaijan. Later on, in 1994, new information came to light about Ukrainian tank shipments to Azerbaijan.[18]

As far as other exporters are concerned, in 2000, Ankara transferred to Baku an AB-34 class PCC, while Azerbaijan received yet another PCI from the United States.[19] Prior to that, in 1995-1996, the Turkish Defense Ministry sent large shipments of field clothing and more than 100,000 pairs of footwear. In 1996-1997, the Turkish firm Aselsan exported military communication facilities to Azerbaijan, in 1998 completing the training of specialists in the maintenance and repair of this equipment (at a cost of almost $20 million), which, according to experts, enables the Azerbaijani military to adopt Western-standard communication systems, almost fully replacing previously used systems.[20] In the context of Azerbaijani-Turkish military cooperation, it should also be noted that Ankara transferred to Baku Soviet-made arms and equipment from the former GDR Army that (following the German reunification) the FRG had been transferring to Turkey since 1992. Thus, in addition to the so-called "cascade" deliveries, Ankara received a total of more than $3 billion worth of military equipment from the former East German Army.

Considering that Turkey's arsenals include almost exclusively NATO standard equipment, experts note that these weapons were intended for the subsequent transfer to Azerbaijan or for re-export to the gray market. German TV Channel 1 in its time reported on the export of German-made arms and military equipment to conflict zones in the CIS, above all, shipments to Azerbaijan (via Turkey).[21]

Armenia

As far as Armenia is concerned, the only reliable information about the import of arms to the republic is the delivery of four WM-80 Typhoon 273-mm multiple rocket launchers from China in 1998-1999.[22] Russian government officials describe the arms transfers to Armenia (in the 1993-1996 period) as a "process legally independent of the OSCE imposed embargo since it was subject to and regulated by RF international obligations—namely, bilateral agreements on the division of the military equipment of the former Soviet Armed Forces." So these shipments were made as part of the division of Soviet military assets and equipment and were not arms transfers in the technical sense of the word. Therefore all assertions to the effect that arms supplies to Erevan violated international rules are entirely groundless. At present Russia refrains from supplying arms to South Caucasian states, strictly adhering to the OSCE imposed embargo.[23] Within the framework of the existing Collective Security Treaty Organization mechanisms, Arme-

[16] See: S. Shakariants, *Politika postsovetskoi Rossii na Kavkaze i ee prioritety*, ATsSiNi, Erevan, 2001, p. 164.

[17] See: *RFE/RL News Briefs*, 13 September, 1993.

[18] See: I. Anthony, P.D. Wezeman, S.T. Wezeman, "The Trade in Major Conventional Weapons," in: *Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, SIPRI Yearbook 1995*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, p. 496.

[19] See: *The Military Balance 2002/2003*, IISS, London, 2002, p. 269.

[20] See: S.I. Cherniavskiy, "Azerbaijan i Turtsia— strategicheskoe partnerstvo," in: *Nezavisimy Azerbaijan: novye orientiry*, ed. by E.M. Kozhokin, Vol. 2, RISI, Moscow, 2000, pp. 186-187.

[21] See: K. Makienko, "*Sery* rynok oruzhia i voennoi tekhniki v gosudarstvakh SNG: tendentsii i perspektivy razvitia," *Nauchnye zapiski PIR-Tsentra* No. 8, *PIR-Tsentr politicheskikh issledovanii v Rossii*, 1997. *Nauchnye zapiski* No. 6, pp. 18-19.

[22] See: *The Military Balance 2002/2003*, p. 269.

[23] See: B. Hagelin, op. cit., p. 28.

nia may receive arms and military equipment supplies at internal Russian (preferential) prices, but in recent years there has been no information about such shipments.[24]

Georgia

In the second half of the 1990s-early 2000s, Georgia was also importing arms and military equipment. But in light of the country's economic difficulties, they were transferred to it by NATO states, including the United States, mainly on a gratuitous basis or at preferential prices. Thus, in the second half of the 1990s, the republic received (mostly as part of technical assistance for its armed forces) several warships and patrol boats from NATO countries and Ukraine. In particular, Turkey provided an SG-48 class PCI; Germany, two Lindau MSCs; Britain, two patrol boats; Ukraine, a Konotop-class PFM, while the United States transferred (in 2000-2001) 10 Iroquois UH-1H multi-mission helicopters.[25] Furthermore, in the second half of the 1990s, 120 Soviet made T-55AM2 tanks were bought in the Czech Republic (the first 11 tanks were delivered in 2000). According to Georgian sources, the contract for their transfer was signed at a fairly preferential price—approximately $30,000 to $35,000 per tank,[26] which was politically rather than economically motivated, possibly under U.S. pressure. By the time the contract was signed the Czech Republic was already a candidate for NATO membership and Washington could have used that situation to provide indirect support to the armed forces of its principal partner in the Southern Caucasus. This also applies to the transfer to Georgia (again as part of a military-technical assistance program) of 10 U.S. made UH-1H helicopters (four of them for spare parts). This part of the program, including, besides the price of the helicopters themselves, the costs of their operation and maintenance as well as flight and technical personnel training, was worth a total of approximately $14 million.[27]

As for SALW, back in 1991, on Z. Gamsakhurdia's watch, the republic leadership bought a large consignment of SALW (mostly 7.62-mm Kalashnikov automatic rifles) in Romania. Some of the rifles, which were delivered after the overthrow of the Z. Gamsakhurdia regime, were distributed among the country's population. Later on, 5.45-mm and 7.62-mm Kalashnikov automatic rifles were shipped in from Romania and the Czech Republic, respectively. Tbilisi received about 8,000 to 9,000 Kalashnikov rifles from Tashkent, thanks to personal contacts that V. Nadebaidze, Georgian defense minister at the time, had with senior officials at Uzbekistan's Defense Ministry.[28] SALW were also supplied from conflict zones in the Southern Caucasus and Chechnia to Georgia and back.[29]

Export from States in the Region

Since the states of the Southern Caucasus acquired independence, Georgia has probably been the only large arms exporter. In addition to this, Armenia transferred a small shipment of SALW and ammunition to Kyrgyzstan at the height of Islamic armed separatist activity in 2000, as part of military assistance to a partner/party to the Collective Security Treaty.[30]

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[24] See: S. Minasian, "CIS: Building a Collective Security System," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (19), 2003, pp. 135-137; M. Pyadushkin, op. cit., p. 8.

[25] See: *The Military Balance 2002/2003*, p. 270.

[26] See: I. Aladashvili, "Georgia Should Not Rely Only on Armament Imports," in: *The Army and Society in Georgia*, CIPDD, Tbilisi, November 1998.

[27] See: "SShA peredali vooruzhennym silam Gruzii 6 vertoletov 'Irokez'," *RIA "Oreanda,"* 23 October, 2001.

[28] See: I. Aladashvili, op. cit.

[29] See: S. Demetriou, "Politics from the Barrel of a Gun: Small Arms Proliferation and Conflict in the Republic of Georgia (1989-2001)," in: *Small Arms Survey*, Geneva, 2003, pp. 13-14.

[30] See: *Vecherniy Bishkek*, 25 September, 2000.

The relatively large volume of Georgian arms export is due to the fact that back in the Soviet era the 31st Tbilisi Aircraft Factory (now AO Tbilaviastroi) was building Su-25 ground attack planes of various modifications, while after the breakup of the Soviet Union the remaining parts and components were used to repair them and build several new aircraft. Thus, a contract was signed to repair Su-25s of Turkmenistan's Air Force to count toward Georgia's debt for Turkmen natural gas shipments. In 2001, 22 aircraft were repaired, each at an approximate cost of $1 million. Georgian specialists also participated in training Turkmen pilots at the Mary-2 air base.[31] At the same time, Ashghabad expressed the intention to buy two new combat and training aircraft. The deal is estimated at $20 million,[32] while the total number of ground attack planes repaired for Turkmenistan could have exceeded 40[33] (in all, Turkmenistan's Air Force had 46 Su-25s).[34] In addition, Georgia supplied Su-25s to Croatia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (four aircraft) and was also in negotiations with Uzbekistan on selling it two Su-25s.[35] In 1997, there were reports about the transfer of three ground attack planes (it could have been a case of re-export or repair).[36] There is no information about Tbilisi's exporting other types of arms and equipment except SALW.

Arms Control

Reciprocal constraints on the acquisition of weapons, regardless of whether they are nuclear or conventional, is the foundation of both international and regional security systems. This holds true for virtually all conflict regions—be it in the Balkans, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, etc. In a situation where states continue to regard regional security issues as a zero sum game—i.e., where a strengthening in the security of one side is automatically perceived as a loss by another—the concept of "arms control and limitation" has yet to catch on. This greatly complicates the application and enforcement of arms control regimes, and the Southern Caucasus is not an exception here.

It should be noted that international experience in the application of arms control regimes and mechanisms was gained mainly during the era of the bipolar system and the confrontation between the superpowers as well as military-political blocs such, e.g., the Warsaw Pact and NATO during the Cold War. By contrast, regional arms control regimes are still relatively undeveloped and ineffective. True, even here there are some success stories, but they refer mainly to nonconventional arms control—e.g., creation of nuclear free zones, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, missile technology, etc. On the whole, the Southern Caucasus is characterized as a region sufficiently stable in terms of WMD and missile technology proliferation control.[37]

Still, conventional arms control regimes in all regions with ongoing, potential or latent interstate or ethnic conflicts are still imperfect, coming up against numerous problems. Except for security and confidence building measures, periodic inspections and other activities provided for under the CFE Treaty or implemented within the OSCE framework, there are virtually no viable mechanisms to control or limit the main types of conventional weapons in the Southern Caucasus with only first steps being made to establish control regimes over the spread of SALW.

The study and analysis of arms control problems in the conflict rich Southern Caucasus is accompanied by a number of difficulties and mistakes that have to do with the fact that experts oftentimes ig-

[31] See: R. Burnashev, I. Chernykh, "Turkmenistan's Armed Forces: Problems and Development Prospects," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), p. 39.

[32] For more detail, see: A. Alexeev, "Vooruzhennye sily Turkmenistana," *Eksport vooruzhenii*, May-June 2002.

[33] See: "Military Chronicle," in: *The Army and Society in Georgia.*

[34] See: *The Military Balance 2002/2003*, p. 136.

[35] See: "Military Chronicle."

[36] See: K. Makienko, "Peregovory, kontrakty i transferty vooruzhenia i voennoi tekhniki iz Rossii i stran SNG v noiabre 1996-dekabre 1997 godov," *Yaderny kontrol'*, Vol. 37, No. 1, January-February 1998, p. 77.

[37] For more detail, see: *Yaderny doklad. Yadernoe oruzhie, yadernye materialy i eksportny kontrol' v byvshem Sovetskom Soyuze*, Issue 6, December 2002, Washington, Moscow, 2002.

nore reality or allow themselves to be affected by partiality and bias, taking sides. A large number of specialists from the Southern Caucasus, let alone journalists, often do not bother to get to the heart of the matter, using isolated facts pertaining to regional arms control problems, taking them out of context and using them as elements of information and propaganda wars. Without setting out to provide a comprehensive analysis of these problems, let us first of all try to assess the prospects for this process in the Southern Caucasus and set the record straight on its main aspects.

Most experts believe that a key to the arms control problem in the Southern Caucasus is to estimate the number of weapons transferred to countries in the region and actually used in armed conflicts. After all, the OSCE embargo applies only to deliveries to armed forces engaged in combat in Nagorno-Karabakh (i.e., the local forces of Nagorno-Karabakh and those of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh).[38]

This is closely connected with the problem of so-called gray zones where South Caucasian countries do not apply CFE provisions, hiding or distorting the amount of their holdings of Treaty limited equipment (TLE). These include the unrecognized states of the Southern Caucasus and regions of Georgia and Azerbaijan bordering them. Furthermore, recently something strange has been happening with TLE levels that Azerbaijan declares in its annual reports. Whereas during the first few years following the cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh the number of tanks, armored fighting vehicles, and artillery systems declared by Baku greatly exceeded its TLE levels, today it declares exactly as much as it is allowed to have under the protocol on territorial holdings of conventional Treaty limited equipment (see Table 3) without reducing its holdings. Even Azerbaijani researchers admit: "In so far as this agreement (the CFE Treaty.—*M.S.*) imposes strict numerical limits on manpower, arms and military equipment, it has to hide the real numbers."[39] Baku attributes this to the fact that it is purportedly impossible to provide TLE information about its army units deployed in areas bordering the NKR.[40] As for Georgia and Armenia, on the whole, they do not violate the basic provisions of the CFE and the adapted CFE Treaty.[41]

Of course, arms control regime is a rather tricky instrument since disarmament measures can serve as a front or cover used to hide the existing threats to regional stability. There is no sense in upholding the essentially abstract arms control idea as an end in itself. On this score, Alyson J.K. Bailes, director of SIPRI (the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), one of the most authoritative international centers for disarmament and international security studies, notes: Under certain circumstances, arms control as such can be counterproductive; if it is imposed on some party by way of punishment, without any effort to change and improve the security situation by other means, it is quite likely that this subject will be obsessed with the idea of regaining its weapons and will be able to find even more dishonest and dangerous methods of doing this in the future.[42]

Another threat that can be posed by an inadequate application and enforcement of an arms control regime may be the imposition of this regime (e.g., an embargo on arms supplies to a conflict region) on a certain territory where for some reason one side has achieved a substantial priority in arms and military equipment over another. In this case an embargo on arms supplies to conflicting sides could hurt the weaker side. It would end up at a disadvantage, which would in and of itself create a potential aggressor and upset the balance of forces in the region. A case in point is the embargo (OSCE, 28 February, 1992 and UNSCR 853, 29 July, 1993) on arms supplies to the Karabakh conflict zone, when one of the sides involved (Azerbaijan), having already appropriated a substantial amount of

[38] See: B. Hagelin, P.D. Wezeman, S.T. Wezeman, N. Chipperfield, "International Arms Transfers," in: *Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, pp. 388-389.

[39] A. Iunusov, op. cit., p. 17.

[40] See: Z. Lachowski, "Arms Control in the Caucasus," in: *Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, pp. 34-36.

[41] See: Under the adapted CFE Treaty, the ceiling on IFVs in the AFV category for the South Caucasian states is limited to 135 units. The number of IFVs declared by Armenia in 2002 was 168, while after approximately 60 IFVs were transferred to Interior Ministry troops, it declared 110 IFVs (in 2003).

[42] See: Alyson J.K. Bailes, "Kakovo budushchee kontrolia nad vooruzheniiami?" *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia*, No. 11, 2003, p. 36.

Table 3

The Declared Levels of Basic TLE and Manpower in the 1992-2003 Period and the National Ceilings on Conventional Weapons and Manpower (indicated in the brackets) of Azerbaijan under the CFE and the Adapted CFE Treaty

Year	Tanks (220)	AFVs* (220)	Artillery systems (285)	Combat aircraft (100)	Helicopter gunships (50)
1992	134	—	126	15	9
1993	278	338	294	50	6
1994	279	822	350	48	23
1995	285	835	343	58	18
1996	300	580	302	46	18
1998	270	361	301	37	15
1999	262	331	303	48	15
2000	220	490	282	50	15
2003	220	516	282	48	15

* Including MT-LB armored towing trucks.

Sources: *The Military Balance (1992/1993, 1994/1995, 1996/1997, 1998/1999, 2000/2001, 2002/2003); SIPRI Yearbook (1996, 1998, 2000, 2002); Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia.*

arms and military equipment of the former Soviet Armed Forces, was able to secure an absolute military superiority over Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, stepping up its combat operations in the area.

Nonetheless, the aforementioned problems are not the only impediment to an effective application of arms control regimes in the Southern Caucasus regional security system. This process (as well as arms transfers) as an essential component of the security concept should be associated only with the problem of ensuring a military balance between regional states. It should not be targeted both at removing or reducing asymmetry in the countries' military capabilities and at creating a system of mutual trust, based on transparency and predictability. An important institutional role here is played by international security organizations and major world powers (provided that they have political will) whose economic and political resources can help put such a system in place. The current situation in this sphere, according to Alyson J.K. Bailes, shows that it is very difficult to persuade states to subscribe to arms control, let alone fully observe the provisions of these agreements unless they are backed up with other regional security enforcement measures. The prevailing situation in the world increasingly necessitates package-type agreements whereby arms control is linked to and predicated on other provisions. This happens not only because certain powers are losing interest in arms control per se but also due to the increased complexity of ensuring security and other interrelations between states, resulting from the disappearance of the Cold War barriers and under the impact of globalization. Thus, CFE member states are involved in cooperation in the defense sphere and at the same

time jointly participate in armed interventions, while the majority of them will soon end up in the same alliance.[43]

This assessment could also be applied to the Southern Caucasus where package-type agreements may only be effective if they go together with a further deepening of cooperation in the sphere of security, integration, confidence building measures, and concerted efforts to settle ethnic conflicts. Incidentally, a number of such measures, envisioning the application of CFE mechanisms, are provided for under OSCE documents (e.g., the OSCE Vienna Document on CSBMs) as well as other documents.[44]

It is necessary, based on the relatively successful international experience in arms control, confidence building measures, and cooperation in some conflict zones, to consider whether these measures can serve as models for regional security in the Southern Caucasus. For example, Appendix 1B to the Dayton Agreements empowered the OSCE to exercise sub-regional and regional arms control in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Agreement on CSBMs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, signed in January 1996, "provided for a comprehensive set of measures to enhance mutual confidence and reduce the risk of conflict—such as exchange of military information, notification as well as observation and constraints on certain military activities, restrictions on military deployments and exercises in certain geographic areas, withdrawal of forces and heavy weapons to cantonments or designated emplacements."[45] Implementation of this document did not meet with any serious impediments. After it was signed, more than 130 inspections were carried out that did not identify any serious violations. Six months later, the Florence Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control was signed between three conflicting sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The agreement imposed numerical limits (ceilings) on five categories of conventional weapons. By the end of the established time frame the sides reduced approximately 6,600 units of arms and military equipment of the specified categories. European experts considered both of these agreements to be quite successful. Given the apparent similarity of the conflicts, it was suggested that analogous activities could contribute to facilitating the arms control process and help implement confidence building measures and promote cooperation in the Southern Caucasus.[46]

There is, however, one fundamental difference between the Balkans and the Southern Caucasus. In the former instance, the aforementioned agreements were to a very large extent imposed by the United States and NATO and were backed up with the deployment of multinational forces (with the requisite capability) within the framework of the so called humanitarian intervention in the former Yugoslavia. By contrast, the regional context and the degree to which neighboring states are involved in security problems in the Southern Caucasus raise serious doubts about the viability of such action.[47] Furthermore, the deployment of a regional arms control regime as well as security and confidence building measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not follow until after the sides achieved a formal political settlement of the conflict.

This suggests that the process of setting up viable arms control mechanisms, implementation of confidence building measures, and cooperation between the conflicting sides in the Southern Caucasus is at the very beginning of a tortuous path and to a very large extent hinges on prospects for a political settlement of regional conflicts.

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[43] See: Alyson J.K. Bailes, op. cit., p. 38.

[44] See: M. Shelepin, "Ravnaia bezopasnost' dlia stran OBSE," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, No. 2, 2000, pp. 64-75.

[45] See: *OSCE Handbook* [www.osce.org/publications/handbook/9htm].

[46] For more detail, see: N.S. MacFarlane, "Arms Control, Conflict and Peace Settlements: The Caucasus," *GCSP Occasional Paper*, No. 8, Geneva, August 2000.

[47] See: A Kotanjan, "Mezhetnicheskie konflikty v Kosovo i Nagornom Karabakhe: Sravnitel'nye perspektivy," *Upravlenie* (Erevan), No. 3, 2002, pp. 5-15 (in Armenian).

RELIGION IN SOCIETY

SPREAD OF JIHAD: THE ORIGINAL FACTORS AND THE SCOPE OF ISLAMIC RADICALIZATION IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS

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Russia has been trying to put out the flame of resistance in the Northern Caucasus for 200 years now. Historians and political analysts came up with all sorts of explanations: the mountain peoples' predatory nature; British and Turkish influence; the mutinous leaders of Sheik Mansour, and imams such as Ghazi-Muhammad, Shamil, and Najmuddin Gotsinsky; the socioeconomic crisis; and the subversive activities of foreign extremist organizations. In fact, resistance has been fed by the simple fact that the Caucasian Muslims cannot accept the rules, laws, and sociopolitical norms of the Russian state.

In his article "O znachenii nashikh poslednikh podvigov na Kavkaze" (The Meaning of Our Latest Exploits in the Caucasus), Nikolay Dobroliubov, a 19th-century public figure, identified the main reasons for the mountain peoples' violent resistance: "From what we know about the history of the Caucasus we can conclude that the anti-Russian revolts of the locals were not brought about by chance people like Shamil or even by the very strict teaching of the Murids. The main reason was hatred of Russian domination."[1] Our contemporary Iakov Gordin says the same: "To harshly impose European ideas transformed into an 'over-regulated' variant typical of Russia on a fundamentally different system of world perception was a fatal mistake."[2]

Many of those who try to analyze the reasons for the region's mutinous nature fall into the same trap. They follow their own logic (far removed from the cast of mind of a Caucasian Muslim re-

[1] Quoted from: Ia.A. Gordin, *Kavkaz: zemlia i krov*, St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 30.
[2] Ibid., p. 84.

solved to fight the state) in an effort to explain why extremist and radical movements are gaining momentum. Even though such researchers do not go beyond the superficial and secondary causes of political-religious extremism, they claim a profound and exhaustive analysis of its roots and further development. Here I would like to dwell on the deep-rooted factors which go back to the violently tectonic layers of the local nations' consciousness and their historical memory and are feeding the radical movements and resistance in the Northern Caucasus.

1. Inertia of Resistance

An objective analysis of history will say that resistance to the Russian statehood in the Caucasus, which started under Sheik Mansour, has been going on in ebbs and flows throughout the entire period the region has been part of the Russian state. Periods of active fighting alternated with periods of latent discontent among the mountain peoples, its main stages being: the movements of Mansour, Beybulat, the apogee of the Caucasian resistance movement under three imams of Daghestan and Chechnia; the smaller gazzavat of 1877; the Najmuddin Gotsinsky movement; the anti-Soviet riots and revolts of 1920-1940 and, finally, the two Chechen wars and the Shari'a coup in the Kadar zone of Daghestan. At different times, official power applied different names to this phenomenon—Muridism, plundering, rebels, banditry, separatism, terrorism, but the meaning and aims remained the same. This phenomenon can be described as Islamic resistance, which for more than two centuries now has been pursuing the same aim: independence from Russia and an Islamic state ruled by the Shari'a laws.

It would be extremely naive and even wrong to believe that during the 150 years of their existence as part of Russia's political and legal expanse, these nations have completely reconciled themselves to the state's imperatives. The Russian and the Soviet state created the phenomenon of an axiological and ideological gap. It separated those who accepted the new values and completely identified themselves with the new state (people in the valleys and towns, and the intelligentsia) from those who, generation after generation, remained implacable opponents of the Russian/Soviet state. They lived high in the mountains, belonged to secret religious communities, and remained loyal to Islam.[3] Today, these people are still convinced that jihad and armed resistance should be continued. In fact, the idea of an independent state within the current boundaries of Daghestan, Chechnia, and Ingushetia remains the most viable among the other ideas of Caucasian statehood. It has been nurtured by the traditions of the mountain dwellers and their sociopolitical culture, and has finally acquired a sacral nature.

All those who are now talking about the mounting ferocity of resistance and the transfer to political extremism and terrorism should look into the past. The imams of Daghestan and Chechnia and their naibs were even crueler: Imam Gamzat-bek liquidated the entire family of the Khunzakh khans (including the small crown princes). It was Shamil, a comrade-in-arms of imam Gamzat-bek, who threw the youngest of them into a precipice. His naib Kebed Muhammad personally slew 18 people, among whom were children who belonged to the clan of the Kazikumukh khans. Naib Labazan from Andi, who headed a Chechen detachment, surrendered his fellow villagers to Shamil with sword and fire.

[3] According to Bagautdin (who is an Avar) and belongs to the Naqshbandi tarekat headed by Shek Said-Afandi Atsaev (of Chirkey), in Soviet times too there were people in the remote villages of the Gergebil District of Daghestan who studied the Koran and the Shari'a in underground places for so long that they could no longer stand the daylight. Muhammad-rasul (Darghinian), imam of the mosque in the town of Izberbash town, who represented the village of Gubden, the people of which were known for their continued devotion to their religious duties (including the hijab), during cruel repressions said that the rural and district administrations had refrained from opposing the local ban on burying Communist party functionaries at the local cemetery. According to Zelimkhan, a Chechen, his uncle, the Minister of the Interior of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, secretly prayed five times a day in his office.

2. The "Anti-Constitutional" Nature of Islam

As distinct from other world religions, Islam offers its followers detailed social, economic, and political doctrines; and it can potentially mobilize its adepts to realize them. In other words, from the very beginning, it has been a politically biased religion, it has always called for social and political activity, and has always insisted on the Shari'a in both political and social spheres. At all times, public and political involvement has been regarded as a form of religious worship.

At the same time, the Islamic political doctrine is anti-constitutional; it contradicts the basic legal principles of the Russian state and even rejects them. Islam recognizes no other authority and no other laws except the authority and the law of Allah. Power and law are two central issues in Islam; they test each Muslim and show him the right faith and the right road. All Muslims who submit to secular authorities and secular laws are considered to be unfaithful because they put secular rulers and secular laws above Allah. The Koran says: "…the command is for none but Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Him, that is the right religion…" (Surah "Yusuf," ayat 40); "Have you not turned your vision to those who declare that they believe in the revelations that have come to you and to those before you? Their (real) wish is to resort together for judgement to [the?] Satan, though they were ordered to reject him" (Surah "The Women," ayat 60); "If any do fail to judge by … what Allah has revealed, they are … Unbelievers (Surah "The Table Spread," ayat 44).

The key Islamic dogma speaks about the unique nature of Allah (*tauhid*), which means that power cannot be divided between Allah and man. Power, legislative initiative, and the right to enjoin belong to Allah. Anyone unwilling to accept this ceases to belong to Islam and becomes an unfaithful (*qafir*).

In this way, Islamic resistance to non-Islamic power is caused by the issue of the nature of power. The Muslims cannot be satisfied with the niche restricted to spiritual requirements which the state has reserved for Islam. Veneration is but part of the whole. At the very early stages of the anti-Russian jihad, the czarist authorities did nothing to encroach on this part of Islam, Islam of veneration. The imams of Daghestan and Chechnia fought against the claims of the Russian state to power.

In the first third of the 19th century, imam Gazi-Muhammad explained this in his "Ustanovlenie dokazatel'stv verootstupnichestva praviteley i sudey Daghestana, priznaiushchikh adat" (Proofs of Apostasy of Those Rulers and Judges of Daghestan who Accepted Adat).[4] Taqfir, accusing those Muslims of unfaithfulness who departed from the state-forming principles of Islam, was the main ideological instrument he used to justify a jihad against any non-Islamic system (be it the Russian state or the Daghestanian khanates ruled by adat).

The above shows that the idea of a war against the non-Islamic state and accusing those of unfaithfulness who refused to accept the idea of the power of Allah as unique and indivisible is not an imported novelty. The tradition of taqfir and an irreconcilable jihad appeared in the Caucasus two centuries ago and have remained essentially the same.

3. Islamic Renaissance and an Unprecedented Military and Political Revival of the Muslim World

Islam as a civilization and an alternative political, economic, cultural, and international model is not merely reviving. While remaining in a state of psychological, cultural, and economic depression, the

[4] See: G. Alkadari, *Asari Daghestan*, Makhachkala, 1929, p. 54.

Islamic world witnessed successive collapses of cultural, ethical, and sociopolitical systems. It lived through the rapid destruction of traditional social structures brought about by imposing alien standards, and accumulated a lot of destructive energy now being freed very much like nuclear fissure.

For the next 100 years, Russia will coordinate its Caucasian policy with the Islamic factor. It has come to the fore thanks to the mounting Islamic religious and political activity the world over, as well as because of Islam's huge integration potential boosted by the latest information and communication technologies, which will inevitably bring the scattered Muslim communities together. In fact, the Muslim demographic and ideological onslaught coupled with the Islamic countries' rapidly growing economic potential threatens to develop into another wave of Islamic expansion. Today, we are all witnessing an Islamic wave in the Caucasus.

It seems that further developments will prove unfavorable for Russia: the two centuries of resistance under the green Islamic banners in the Caucasus coincided with the general decline of Islam on a global scale. Today, however, the mounting Muslim resistance is synchronous with the Islamic onslaught all over the world.

4. Response of the Caucasian Peoples to the Lawlessness, Crimes, and Anti-Islamic Policies of the Russian State and the Local Political Elites, as well as to Repressions against Muslim Activists

In the past, the local people responded to the use of force and to the Russian troops in a violent or even suicidal way, following Shamil's defeat, the mountain people moved to Islamic countries in great numbers. As soon as Russia established its domination over the Northern Caucasus, a wave of what is known as the abrek movement engulfed the region. Pushkin, who visited the Caucasus at the very beginning of the Caucasian war, described the results of pacification: "The Circussians hate us. We drove them away from their vast pastures; the villages were plundered and whole tribes completely liquidated. They are moving higher up into the mountains to make their inroads from there. One cannot rely on friendship from the *peaceful* Circussians: they are always ready to help their mutinous relatives."[5]

Andrei Rozen (who took part in the Decembrist uprising in 1825) said that the "amazing and heroic deeds" of Russian military leaders, "the names of Zubov, Lazarev, Prince Tsitsianov, Kotliarevskiy, Yermolov, and Paskevich," as well as the permanently deployed Russian troops in the Caucasus (there are over "110,000 of them" together with the Cossacks), "which would have been enough to subjugate many states," "proved useless against the mountain peoples."[6] After analyzing the situation, Rozen concluded: "It seems that everything went wrong from the very beginning; we followed the patterns of the old times: like Pisarro and Cortez, everything we brought to the Caucasus was weapons and fear, which made our enemies even more wild and belligerent."[7]

During the Civil War, and later when Soviet power was being established in the Caucasus, and still later during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, the ties between certain social strata and between the mountain-dwelling and certain other peoples and the state snapped. Repressions and replacement of Islamic values, elements of religious rituals, and traditional world outlook and social patterns with the new Soviet ideology, official rituals, attributes, and "norms of Soviet lifestyle" caused indigna-

[5] A.S. Pushkin, *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy,* in ten volumes, Vol. VI, Moscow, Leningrad, 1949, p. 647.
[6] See: A.E. Rozen, *Zapiski dekabrista,* Irkutsk, 1984, pp. 389-390.
[7] Ibid., p. 390.

tion and fierce resistance. Certain categories of the mountain peoples became spiritually alienated from the regime.

The state resorted to the following measures to impose its integration and administrative doctrine: ruthless confiscation of agricultural products; forced collectivization; strong pressure on Islam and adat; and complete annihilation of the local elite—scholars of Arabic, alims, imams, and elders. This caused more revolts. It should be added that deportation and prolonged existence among alien people in exile strengthened the unity of the Vaynakh peoples (Chechens and Ingushes). They became even more dedicated to the national traditions and even more hostile toward the system, which they treated with animosity. Psychologically, they were prepared to put up fierce resistance.[8]

Today, many of those who belonged to moderate Salafi communities had to hide to avoid unjustified repressions; while others are fighting high up in the mountains together with mojaheddin. Those who come back to their republics bring radical ideas and military skills with them. Abdurashid Saidov, who saw how Salafi communities of Daghestan were destroyed, wrote: "The usual crude methods—repressions and persecution—the authorities used to fight religious ideology triggered a massive exodus of those who disagreed with this to Ichkeria… Persecutions and the exodus to rebel Ichkeria forced fundamentalists to close their ranks, they were inspired and more determined to win. They acquired better weapons and learned how to fight better."[9]

The second Chechen war created even more intransigent and hostile Muslims who hated Russia. The analytical community has not yet realized the scope of rotation going on in the resistance ranks in Chechnia. The old leaders who grew up in the Soviet Union had many things in common with Russia: history, shared culture, and the shared Soviet mentality. They could feel a certain amount of guilt when attacking civilians. Many of them were criminals who had compromised themselves by cooperating with the Russian special services. In the first Chechen war, they disgraced themselves by actions described as criminal by the Russian and Shari'a laws. This made them easy prey for the federal propaganda machine.

This war is waged by a new generation of the Chechens—they are crueler and less reserved than the old one. In ten years of fighting, a new generation grew up in Chechnia which neither studied at school nor belonged to the Komsomol—it has nothing to do with Russia. Those who were 8 or 10 in 1994 are almost twenty now. They perceive everything Russian—language, culture, symbols, and laws—as absolutely hostile. They wish to pay back Russia in kind with blood, death, and fear.

Within a very short period, the second Chechen war developed from a national-liberation war of the Chechens into a Caucasian Islamic war. Resistance is no longer an ethnic Chechen phenomenon: it attracts more and more adepts of the protest ideas from the neighboring republics and territories. There is information that mobile semi-autonomous terrorist groups were formed in Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Ingushetia, and even in the Stavropol Territory. According to the *Vlast* weekly, the majority of the terrorist acts in the Northern Caucasus and Russia in general were prepared outside Chechnia, in peaceful territories where the fighters feel free to store weapons and explosives and to attract people to their ranks.

Fighting in the town of Baksan (Kabardino-Balkaria), in which grenade launchers were used, the terrorist acts in the Stavropol Territory, fighters detected in the Tsuntinskie woods of Daghestan, the rapid development of fighting in Ingushetia, and the Beslan tragedy say that Russia's appeasement policy in Chechnia failed and that jihad is slowly but surely spreading in the Caucasus.

The last eighteen months in Daghestan were the most difficult period after the 1999 events. Local fighters delivered numerous attacks on the Russian military and the militia. According to official information, about one hundred members of the law enforcement bodies were killed, the head of the Administration for Fighting Extremism and Criminal Terrorism among them. Makhachkala has become the scene

[8] See, for example: A.S. Kulikov, S.A. Lembik, *Chechenskiy konflikt. Khronika vooruzhennogo konflikta 1994-1996*, Moscow, 2000, p. 23.

[9] A. Saidov, *Tayna vtorzhenia* [www.chechpress.com].

of repeated street fighting, in which the federal side uses helicopters, special units, and heavy machinery. Leaflets calling for a jihad in the name of Rabbani Khalilov, amir of the Daghestanian mojaheddin, are fairly widespread.[10]

The building of the Federal Security Service of Ingushetia was blasted by Stavropol and Ingush Wahhabis (the act was carried out by a Nogai family from the Stavropol Territory). Any demonstrative act of retribution and intimidation may trigger at least a Daghestanian-Vaynakh uprising, even if the rest of the Caucasus remains outside it. This forecast is becoming more and more real: the rhetoric of jihad and the subversive and terrorist activities of the radical Muslims are finding an ever growing number of supporters among the local people.[11]

The Caucasus is living through another crisis. In its report published late in 2003, the International Institute of Strategic Research quoted figures of the Russian losses in Chechnia in 2002-2003 according to Reuters: 4,749, which is the maximum annual loss of life since the beginning of the current conflict. The institute's researchers were not amazed at the growing number of deaths: during the peacekeeping operation in Iraq, America is losing more men than at the initial stage of heavy fighting.

Islamic resistance in Chechnia is growing more organized and more coordinated. The remains of Maskhadov's, Basaev's and Khattab's forces scattered in the mountains by the large-scale federal operations are reuniting on a different basis. The fighters have abandoned the tactics of extensive operations using large detachments. It took them a year-and-a-half or two years to test and synchronize their new tactics. Today, they are operating in small, mobile and semi-autonomous groups able to change camps, maneuver and, if needed, to pool forces with other groups.

So far, the Russian law enforcement bodies have not been able to stem the "creeping radicalization" of the Caucasus. Vladimir Kravchenko, public prosecutor of Chechnia, has to admit: "Terrorism has become international. To deal with it we should treat the republics adjacent to Chechnia as border territories responsible for exercising strictly control over the movement of people and transport." It is hard to say whether this is possible at all: the sealed off borders will make coordination of the terrorist groups acting in every nook and cranny difficult, but will hardly prevent the spread of radical ideologies. This requires different methods.

Nobody knows how much blood must be shed for people to realize that the current methods employed against the guerrillas and terrorists in the Caucasus do not work. No matter how many heavy machines are used in the mountains of Chechnia and Daghestan, they cannot defeat ideology. Military measures are obviously not enough. We have already passed the point of no-return, when it was still possible to stem radical ideology and prevent its proliferation. Today, no state, no matter how strong, can dam up the flow of protest Islamic ideology: the people are only too willing to accept it despite the persecutions and probably even because of them.[12] Today the state should concentrate on preventing the radicalization of these ideas.[13]

It was clear from the very beginning that, under certain conditions, the most active branch of Caucasian Islam (Salafism) could be a moderate and peaceful movement. According to Vladimir Muratov,

[10] Significantly, in recent years the ranks of mojaheddin in Daghestan have been swelling with people from regions that were least Islamic under Soviet power: Lakhs, Lezghians, Nogais. Rabbani Khalilov and Idris Bakkunov, one of the leaders of a terrorist group which kills members of the law enforcement structures, are Lakhs. A large group of mojaheddin taken prisoner or killed during the fighting in June 2004 in Makhachkala were Lezghians. Nogais who took part in blasting the building of the Federal Security Service of Ingushetia were found and destroyed in Kizliar in the summer of 2004.

[11] During the fight between federal forces and the Gelaev group in the Tsuntin District of Daghestan, two Russian soldiers left to guard an armored carrier that had lagged behind the army column were killed by civilians who acted on their own. What is more, for over 18 months the law-enforcement structures have been unable to track several terrorist groups of Daghestanian mojaheddin who live in secret flats and move around Makhachkala in their cars. They are obviously supported by the local people—something that was impossible two or three years ago.

[12] See, for example: A. Larintseva, T. Samedov, O. Alenova, "Kol'tso kavkazskoy natsional'nosti," *Kommersant-Vlast*, 29 September-5 October, 2003.

[13] V.D. Krotov in his article "Geopolitika i bezopasnost Iuga Rossii" has written: "The current crisis can be weakened, but not eliminated altogether. This is the main thing to be said about it." *Sovremennye problemy geopolitiki Kavkaza*, 2002.

who heads the Administration of the Federal Security Service of Daghestan, "not every Wahhabi is a criminal. Anyone has the right to his faith, as long as he does not injure others. We are concerned about those who violate law and order."[14] At the height of the struggle against terrorism and religious extremism, this good principle was abandoned; the borderline between the radical and openly anti-state groups and absolutely loyal religious communities was ignored. This damaged beyond repair the cause of preventing radicalization of those Muslim communities which, from the very beginning, were keeping away from anti-state slogans and acts.

Rather than being concerned about an upsurge in Muslim social and political activity, the state should pay more attention to the fact that both the Salafi and the tariqat supporters are growing more radical and more destructive. Instead of completely squelching the social activity of all Muslims (which would inevitably invite unrest), the authorities should channel it in a positive direction. After all, Islamic revival obviously possesses powerful constructive potential.

Persecutions have not uprooted the radical protest Islamic movement in the Caucasus. In fact, history has shown us that the methods used against it could not defeat the modernist and reformist Islamic ideologies. In this case force is powerless. At all times, the radical ideas presented at the level of an alternative reformist goal under conditions of a grave socioeconomic and political crisis, the rising wave of religious awareness, and continued religious ignorance will remain attractive.

Power should enter into a dialog with the supporters of moderate Islam (primarily Salafi) and look for common issues. This should be done because their influence in the region is mounting. Spiritual structures and their heads (both Salafi and tariqat), as well as the heads of all sorts of groups inside the tarekats should distance themselves from official power. This corresponds to the constitutional provision of separating the church from the state to a much greater extent than state patronage of one branch and one religious trend.

We should distinguish between the radical and moderate Salafi trends; statesmen, the law enforcement bodies, and the common people should be taught this. In areas where moderate Salafism is still weak and is still developing, we should do our best to encourage it in order to oppose the ultra-radical and radical trends. This will make it possible to attract some of the radicals to the moderate side and invite them to hold a dialog with the authorities.

Moderate Salafism should be given the chance to become legal in order to shift the contradictions between Salafi and tariqat to the realm of theology. This will help remove the growing radicalization potential present in all Salafi movements and prevent their radicalization for the sake of survival, thus averting the possibility of organized Salafi forming underground ideological and political opposition to the tariqat and the authorities and creating an ultra-radical and militant branch.

In light of the growing legal skepticism of the secular state structures and the constitutional-legal norms, the republican authorities should devise ways and methods for bringing together the traditional and Islamic legal heritage and the Russian laws. This will help remove contradictions at the legal level of Daghestan's political culture. The possibility of this merging has been theoretically substantiated in the conception of legal pluralism called upon to clarify the situation in which two or more legal systems have to coexist in one social context. If the problem continues to be ignored, large groups of Muslims will turn to the Islamic legal system as an alternative to the Russian laws. In the future, the legitimacy of state power and the Russian laws in Daghestan will be completely undermined. This will invite another crisis of power relations and a new round of disintegration.

[14] "Kto budet vospityvat imamov?" *Novoe delo,* No. 45, 7 November, 2003.

THE RADICAL ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA

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Those Islamic political parties using relatively peaceful, non-violent, yet illegal methods to achieve their aims (unsanctioned protest rallies, illegal distribution of printed matter, etc.) are described as radical. Any student of Central Asian political developments should be able to distinguish between Islamic radicalism and Islamic extremism. The latter uses all means, including terrorism and subversion, to push ahead.[1]

The Ferghana Valley, a densely populated ethnic patchwork, is the center of Central Asian radical Islam. Due to scarce water supplies, appalling unemployment, and lack of information the local people are living on the brink of violent protest under religious slogans.[2]

An analysis of the available literature and media publications suggests that the radical organizations of the Central Asian Islamic movement greatly vary: since 1990 there have been two generations of radical Islamic organizations in the region.

[1] See: M. Khrustalev, "Diversionno-terroristicheskaia voina kak voenno-politicheskiy fenomen," *Mezhdunarodnye protsessy*, No. 2, May-August 2003, pp. 55-68.

[2] See: E.V. Abdullaev, L.F. Kolesnikov, "Islam i religiozniy faktor v sovremennom Uzbekistane," in: *Uzbekistan: obretenie novogo oblika*, in two volumes, Vol. 1, ed. by E.M. Kozhokin, RISI Publishers, Moscow, 1998, p. 252.

The First Generation

It came into being at the turn of the 1990s and can be best described as a group of Islamic parties and organizations which used peaceful means and methods to promote their program goals and avoided any opposition to the regional powers. The dialog between them and the state, however, which was becoming less and less effective, finally pushed them outside the sphere of law. They became illegal and, after being exposed to repressions, the radicals cut short the dialog and took to the road of uncompromising ideological confrontation.

Geographically, the first generation of the radical Islamic organizations can be described as "traditional" (limited to certain areas and never going beyond Central Asia).[3] As distinct from the "non-traditional" Islamic parties and movements acting in many countries across the world, the traditional parties never depart from their rather limited program goals, such as establishing the Caliphate in Central Asia and removing the ruling regimes.

The Islamic Revival Party (IRP), which dates back to the 1970s when it first appeared in the south of Central Asia, is one of the best examples of the above: the Caliphate and the triumph of Islamic values were its stated goals. The party lived on donations and commercial proceeds. After 1991, it acquired two republican branches—the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) and the Islamic Party of Revival (IPR) of Uzbekistan. This generation also includes the Adolat and the Odamiylik va insonparvarlik movements, as well as the Tablikh, Adolat uiushmasi (Society of Justice), Islom Lashkorlari (Warriors of Islam), Tovba (Repentance), Nour (Light) in the south (Feghana Valley), Akylsunat Ual-Zhamagat, Daiva't

[3] See: R. Takeyh, N. Gvozdev, "Do Terrorist Networks Need a Home?" *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2002, p. 97.

Ul'-Ishrat in the north, and the radical Muslim communities, the Kokand Ir and Tarikhatshylar, in Kazakhstan.[4]

They have passed through several stages of their life cycle.

Emergence

Like many other nationalist Islamic movements of Central Asia, these groups appeared back in 1991as Muslim groups with no political aims. Adolat, for example, was set up with official permission as a group that patrolled the streets, detained violators of public law and order, and fought drugs and prostitution. The detained were displayed at the mosque for everybody to see and had to pay fines. The group investigated economic crimes, such as illegal export of commodities locally in short supply. The group, which had about 12,000 members in the Namangan Region alone, was not alien to robbery and plunder. The leaders cleared their activity with A. Gafurov, the kazi of the Muslims of the Ferghana Valley.

The quasi-party Odamiylik va insonparvarlik followed the same scenario. In 1991-1992, it operated in Kokand where, together with the authorities, it uprooted the protection racket on the local markets.

Stepping Up Activities as an Absolute Priority (1990-1991)

It was at that time that the majority of the local Islamic movements, having reached the peak of their activity and won popularity, began their systematic efforts to revive Islam in the region using legal methods. They planned to obtain high administrative posts and seats in the parliaments (at this stage the IRPT tried to raise a wave of spiritual revival, to achieve the political and economic independence of Tajikistan, and to awaken citizens politically and legally to the Islamic values). In 1991, it ran for parliament, together with Rastokhez and Lali Badokhshan, under the blanket name of the Union of Democratic Forces. They lost to the nomenklatura nominee Rakhmon Nabiev.

At this stage, the IRPT formulated its program aim as introducing fundamental Islamic values among the republic's Muslims; the party, as well as other groups (Adolat), based their cells on traditional religious and social structures (mosques, makhallia, family groups).

Confrontation (1992-1993)

In late 1991, the IRPT launched a series of anti-government rallies, hunger strikes, and even armed clashes. This forced the republic's leaders to outlaw it; as a result the majority of the national Islamic organizations went underground.

In the middle of 1991, the Adolat movement started losing its prestige among the common people, partly because its leaders were obviously abusing their powers. Not infrequently, its members (mainly socially deprived youths between 18 and 27 skilled in Oriental martial arts) lynched criminals, detained and beat the people they did not like, and sentenced them to fines, which they pocketed, and to forced labor in mosques.[5]

Adolat became radical to the extent that it was outlawed after the December 1991 40,000-strong protest rally. Presidential candidate Islam Karimov had to come and promise certain concessions. In 1992,

[4] See: S. Zhusupov, "Islam v Kazakhstane: proshloe, nastoiashchee i budushchee," *Islam na postsovetskom prostranstve: vzgliad iznutri,* Moscow, 2001, p. 121; E.S. Kuandykov, "Religiozniy ekstremizm—ugroza stabil'nosti strany," *Stabil'nost i bezopasnost Kazakhstana na styke vekov,* Astana, 2000, pp. 194-198.

[5] See: A. Bazarov, "Islamskiy fundamentalizm i obshchestvenno-politicheskaia stabil'nost v Uzbekistane," in: *Etnicheskie i regional'nye konflikty v Evrazii,* in three books, Book 1, *Tsentral'naia Azia i Kavkaz,* ed. by A. Malashenko, B. Coppieters, D. Trenin, Moscow, 1997, pp. 120-126.

under the pressure of official repressions, the movement had to fold up, yielding their niche to the armed Islamic organization Islom Lashkorlari (in the past, the radical branch of Adolat). It was a quasi-military structure headed by the emir and his deputy.

Opposition (1993-1996)

As a result of the 1992 parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, Davlat Usmon, one of the IRPT leaders, received the post of vice-premier in the coalition government. In the fall of 1992, a group of IRPT members formed a Garm Islamic Republic in Karategin. The IRPT was seeking political independence while pooling efforts with other political organizations (the Democratic Party was one of them). On 21 June, 1993, the Supreme Court of Tajikistan banned it. This made the IRPT the unquestioned leader of the United Tajik Opposition, yet many of its leaders had to leave the country after that (the majority went to Afghanistan and Iran).

In 1992, many of the Adolat activists had to flee to Afghanistan and Tajikistan to avoid persecution. They still remained members of radical or even extremist regional Islamic movements and acted on a different level. Some of them joined the ranks of the armed Tajik opposition.

The repressions either liquidated some of the parties and movements (Adolat uiushmasi, Odamiylik va insonparvarlik, Islom Lashkorlari, etc.) or forced them to cooperate with the powers-that-be (in 1999, the IRPT, which came up with a peaceful program, became a registered parliamentary party).

There is the opinion that the first generation was defeated because it relied on the traditional local structures (makhallia, etc.) rather than building up party networks.[6] To some extent, their failures can be explained by the fact that they relied on a non-formal system of acquiring new members (the formal procedure allows political structures to rigorously test the aspirants).

The Second Generation

Having learned from the mistakes of its predecessors, the second generation armed itself with absolutely new means and methods. Rather than using the traditional protest forms (rallies, leaflets, etc.), they confront the authorities with the means used in information wars: they place their stakes on disseminating their ideologies at the grass-root level. They are distributing illegal Islamic publications right and left and are actively working on the Internet.[7] They also try to recruit officials to their side.[8]

They are transnational organizations; as distinct from their predecessors, they belong to the class of "non-traditional" religious organizations formed according to the network principle. This makes it hard to control their activities. As repressions mounted, they adopted an even more formalized recruitment system, which makes it next to impossible to detain and interrogate them. The structures are built as cell (khal'ka) networks, each of them limited to 5 to 6 people to lessen the possibility of failure. New members are sought among young men with higher education, or among social outcasts. Each of the new members is invited to set up his own cell.[9] Contemporary communication means make it possible to spread far outside the region, to Europe and the Arab East. The latest information technologies have brought the struggle to the third countries beyond the confines of Central Asian law. Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami (the Islamic Revival Party) can be described as one such structure.

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[6] See: A. Zelkina, "Islam and Security in the New States of Central Asia: How Genuine is the Islamic Threat?" *Religion, State and Society,* No. 3-4, September/December 1999.

[7] See: K. Mukhabbatov, "Religiozno-oppozitsionnye gruppy v Tajikistane," in: *Religiozniy ekstremizm v Tsentral'noy Azii*, Dushanbe, 2002.

[8] See: A. Nikolaev, "Khalifat podstupaet k rossiiskim granitsam," *Mirovaia energeticheskaia politika*, No. 9, November 2002, p. 30.

[9] See: AFP, 20 May, 2002.

Much has been written about it—there is no sense in going into details here. I want to point out, however, that the party came to Central Asia as soon as the Soviet Union fell apart. Its first cells appeared in Ferghana, Andijan and Tashkent in 1992-1994; later they came to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.[10] At first it used peaceful means to disseminate its ideology and avoided confrontation with the official structures. Its growing popularity, however, caused displeasure among the country's leaders, who drove the party underground. The amendments to its charter spoke of the need for strictest secrecy of its leaders, while dissemination of literature remained at the top of the list of priorities.

As distinct from the first-generation parties and movements with fairly simple programs (Adolat, for example, never looked beyond its immediate demands), the second generation chose the "multiple purpose" method (two or more strategic aims instead of one). The Hizb ut-Tahrir three-level program is one such example: formation of an Islamic party, integration into the world Islamic movement, and setting up the Caliphate.[11] Its leaders have described the Central Asian governments as non-Islamic and explained their non-Islamic governance as the reason for all the problems plaguing the local states.[12]

Even though the party was banned, it is skillfully exploiting the discrepancies between the laws of the Central Asian republics, inadequate cooperation among their law enforcement bodies, and the porous state borders to secretly roam in all states, mainly in the Kyrgyz part of the Ferghana Valley.

In 1996-1998, two groups (Akromiylar and Hizb an-Nusra), which are inclined to more secrecy and radical measures, detached themselves from Hizb ut-Tahrir.[13] The party is not alien to the latest information technologies: its site [http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org] offers its program and describes its aims and tasks in eight languages, as well as lists of leaflets and books in circulation.

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The worldwide Islamic movement is busily adjusting to the current and far from simple domestic and foreign policy contexts (the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Chechnia, etc.), which have already pushed its organizations, including those operating in Central Asia, to a qualitatively different level of political struggle.

Encouraged by the use of force elsewhere, the radical Islamic leaders in Central Asia are toying with the idea of moving toward even more radical methods of struggle. In October 2001, when the counter-terrorist operation in Afghanistan was launched, Hizb ut-Tahrir announced that it was readying itself for an armed struggle against the coalition.[14] We cannot exclude the possibility that, not content with bellicose statements, the party was involved in the March-April 2004 terrorist acts in Uzbekistan.[15] (There is preliminary information that its fighters helped organize the blasts.)

The above suggests that in the near future we can expect a third generation of the radical Islamic movements. While relying on the second generation's expertise, it will move to subversion and terror. This means that we should expect a convergence between the radical and extremist Islamic movements in Central Asia.

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[10] See: T. Razzakov, "Spetsifika poiavlenia terrorizma i ekstremizma v Kazakhstane (doklad)," *Tsentral'noaziatskiy zhurnal*, 18 June, 2002 [http://ctaj.eclat.kg/].

[11] See: D.V. Makarov, "Radikal'niy islamizm v kontekste vzaimodeystvia 'mestnogo' i 'inostrannogo' islama v Tsentral'noy Azii (na primere Ferganskoy doliny)," in: *Aziatsko-Tikhookeanskiy region i Tsentral'naia Azia: kontury bezopasnosti*, a textbook, ed. by A.D. Voskresenskiy and N.P. Maletin, MGIMO Press, Moscow, 2001, p. 325.

[12] See: IRP web-site [http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org].

[13] See: V. Khamisov, "O problemakh religioznogo ekstremizma v kyrgyzskoy chasti Ferganskoi doliny," in: *Problemy religioznogo ekstremizma v Tsentral'noy Azii*, Almaty, 2001.

[14] See: Iu.P. Laletin, "Situatsia v Afghanistane i ee vozdeystvie na iuzhniy flang SNG," *Iuzhniy flang SNG. Tsentral'naia Azia-Kaspy-Kavkaz: vozmozhnosti i vyzovy dlia Rossii*, Moscow, 2003, p. 260.

[15] See: V. Soule, "L'Ouzbekistan entre islamistes et dictature," *Liberation*, 31 mars 2004.

THE REPUBLIC OF ADIGEY: ISLAM AND SOCIETY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

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So far the Republic of Adigey (RA) has received much less attention from researchers of Islam than other Muslim regions of the Russian Federation. This is explained by the fact that in the 1990s Islam was less developed there than in other RF regions, as well as by the republic's more "peaceful" social and political development. Today, Islam is developing at a fast pace.

This is amply demonstrated by the growing number of newly built mosques and newly organized Muslim communities. During Soviet power all mosques were closed down; the mosque in the village of Takhtamukay was the first to reopen after the Soviet era in 1992; the village preserved the old building, which was then restored.[1] According to information supplied by the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Adigey and the Krasnodar Territory (hereinafter SAM RA and KT), early in 2004 there were 30 functioning mosques in the republic and the same number of registered Muslim communities, the most active among them being the communities of the Takhtamukay and Teuchezh districts, and the least active the communities of the Shovgen and Krasnogvardeyskoe districts.[2]

Today, the total population of the Krasnodar Territory is 5,300,000. There are about 160,000 Muslims among them (counted as such for purely formal reasons), including 20,000 Adighe; there are 103,000 Muslims among the total RA population of 440,000. The largest communities are found in the RA capital of Maykop (about 500 members) and in Adygeisk (about 150 Muslims).[3] Small communities (about 20 to 40 members) are found in mountain villages. Ethnically, the communities are usually patchy: there are Chechens, Daghestanis, and Tartars in the Maykop community together with the Adighe. In 1999, the administration of the RF Southern Federal Okrug moved about 4,000-5,000 Chechens to Adigey (mainly to Maykop), who became the core of the Maykop Muslim community; it also has several Russian members.[4]

The communities of Adygeisk and of the Takhtamukay and Teuchezh districts are also ethnically mixed. This is explained by their closeness to Krasnodar, which has no mosque of its own: the large ethnically mixed Muslim community, which includes Azeris, Afghans, Chechens, Daghestanis, Kurds and other ethnic groups, has to attend the nearest mosques outside the territorial center. Muslims in other cities and towns of the Krasnodar Territory also pray in the mosques of Adigey. On Fridays, the Muslims of the town of Kurganinsk (Daghestanis and Chechens) attend the mosque in the village of Koshekhabl.

The Tartar and Chechen communities are the largest in the RA; they take part in all events organized by the SAM RA and KT. The Tartar Cultural-Educational Society Duslyk functions in Adigey; its leaders are also involved in Muslim activities. It was at their request that one of the community's representatives in the SAM RA and KT was replaced. This shows that the SAM RA and KT takes into account the opinions of the leaders of the Tartar community (who, together with the Adighe, are Hanafis[5]) when it comes to training mosque heads and teaching the fundamentals of Islam to community members. Local

[1] Field data gathered by the author (hereinafter FMA), Adigey, March 2004; FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 8, File 3.
[2] Archives of the Main Mosque of Maykop. Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 9 April, 2003.
[3] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 8, File 2.
[4] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 3, File 2; Inventory 1, File 3; Inventory 2, File 1.
[5] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 21 January, 2004.

Chechens who are Shafiites (a madhab practically unknown in the North-Western Caucasus in the previous period) find it hard to blend with the local religious activities.

While in Maykop and Adygeisk the communities have mainly young members, in the mountain villages religious communities attract older people. Women actively attend both urban and village mosques; knowing no Arabic, the older generation has to learn the prayers by heart. Many of the older women actively attend courses on Islam and the Koran. Muslim women, especially the wives of young imams, have started wearing hijabs. At the same time, many of the newly built mosques in villages are inactive even on Fridays: there are not enough clerics to conduct Friday namaz and hutba; and not all the communities have imams. But the main reason for the poor attendance is that the majority of the local population is either totally indifferent to Islam or even hostile to it. There are strange things too: in the village of Koshekhabl, for example, where the mosque has been functioning since 1995, there is a liquor shop next to it on the same plot of land.[6]

The majority of the village imams are elderly people who live on their pension; and the younger imams have jobs at private or state enterprises. In the village of Takhtamukay, the local imam works at the local Heat and Power Office; he only has time to conduct the morning and evening namazes in the mosque, and all the other prayer services have to be held in the office during working hours.[7]

There are no waquf lands in Adigey to be leased out to earn money for the mosques. There were no such lands in the past, in the 19th century. In April 2003, the Council of SAM RA and KT discussed a government document called "On Allocating Agricultural Lands to the Muslim Communities of the RA." The republic's mufti N. Emizh invited "all those who wish to till land in support of the mosques to send applications stating the exact size of the land plots and their location." No applications were forthcoming. It should be added that the Adighe who moved to the RA from Kosovo in 1990 had experience with the waquf system: in Kosovo all the mosques had such land plots. They were leased out, and the revenue earned was used to support the mosques.[8] The Kosovo Adighe, however, refused to continue this practice in Adigey.

Under Soviet power, as distinct from Kabardino-Balkaria, the Adighe observed Islamic rites at home. Some of older villagers knew Arabic prayers and could perform Muslim burial rites; they were called efendis. Their children and grandchildren preserved this tradition by heading the local Muslim communities. It should be said that few of them know Arabic and have fundamental knowledge of Islam. In fact, this is true of the entire North-Western Caucasus. There are exceptions to the rule, too. For example, the imam of the Kabardinian village Koshekhabl learned Arabic when he was 60 and attended 3-month courses on the fundamentals of Islam in Syria.[9] It was the Soviet efendis who convened the first congress of the Muslims of Adigey on 25 October, 1990 in the village of Adamiy.[10] This generation is gradually disappearing; young Muslims are moving to the fore. They predominate in the communities and use the term "imam" to describe the mosque leaders. In some places, the young imam conducts Friday hutbas, while the old efendi is responsible for burials. The community members get together to elect imams who are approved by the SAM RA and KT; it is the mufti's responsibility to appoint community leaders.

The new Islamic leaders are recruited from three categories of the faithful. The first group consists of repatriate Adighe who came back from the Middle East in the 1990s. Some of them still hold their posts. Ibrahim Nihad-hajji, imam of the main mosque of Maykop, started working with young Adighe who began coming from the Caucasus to Damascus in the 1990s. Then he came to Maykop. At that time, there were practically no Islamic activities in Adigey and he started teaching in the Islamic institutes of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia. He was offered the post of imam in the newly built main mosque of Maykop. Two other Adighe repatriates teach the fundamentals of Islam in a school which functions at the mosque. Repatriates from the Middle East organized the republic's first Arabic and Koranic courses in the old mosque. Very soon they were replaced by repatriate Adighe from Syria and Tur-

[6] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 5, File 2.
[7] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 4, File 1.
[8] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 9 April, 2003; FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 6, File 1.
[9] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 5, File 2.
[10] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 5, File 3.

key.[11] Many of the latter were students of Kransodar higher educational establishments and visited the nearest villages of the Takhtamukay and Teuchezh districts of Adigey to give lectures about Islam. At the same time, Zeytdin from Turkey, an abadzekh by nationality, was teaching in the village of Takhtamukay. His lessons were popular among all age groups, including the older generation. Some time later he tried to open a madrassah; when the local authorities declined his request for land for his school he went back to Turkey. A repatriate Adighe Hussein was teaching in the same district.

The Syrian Muslims, who had been exposed to strict control over Muslim activities in their home country where so-called political Islam was banned, proved to be highly successful: they treated the authorities with respect and maintained close contacts with them. Early in the 1990s, Faiz Autaev, an Adighe from Syria, made an important contribution to Islamic activities in the republic. He was the first to publish Islamic literature in Maykop. His books are still widely used.

The second category consists of the Kosovo repatriates. In the late 19th century, their ancestors emigrated *en masse* to the Ottoman Empire. They came back in 1998 on an invitation from RA President Djarimov when the conflict between the Kosovo Serbs and Albanians flared up. Today they live in Maykop, in the Adaptation Center, and in the village of Mafekhabl built for them. Those who received an Islamic education in Kosovo or Turkey claim the posts of mosque heads and community leaders. Some of them were appointed imams of the mosques in the village of Afipsip and in Adygeisk. Those who came earlier managed to become imams. For example, N. Abaza has been filling the post of imam since 1994. The young Kosovo repatriates are convinced that they could have held more posts. Not being exposed to the Soviet 70-year long ban on Islam, they are fully aware of the difference between the "Kosovo" and "Adighe" versions of the faith.

The local people trained in the Middle East or the Northern Caucasus comprise the third group. Since the latter half of the 1990s, they have been playing an increasingly important role in the republic's religious activities.

I have already written that Middle East Arabs contributed to a religious revival in the republic. Being more active in Kabardino-Balkaria they also affected, to a certain degree, the religious processes in Adigey. The imam of the village of Takhtamukay was introduced to Islam by the Syrian Arabs who studied medicine in Krasnodar in the 1990s.[12] It was Middle Eastern Arabs who opened the first Arabic and Koranic courses in the old mosque in Maykop. Krasnodar Muslims also had an immense influence on the people in Adigey. Farid Rashidi from Afghanistan, who is member of the SAM RA and KT Council, plays a prominent role in this organization.

At the same time, Mufti Nurbiy E. Emizh, a 65-year-old Muslim, plays an important role in Adigey. In Soviet times he filled various posts in republican structures. He believes that Islam should be developed under strict state control (the law enforcement structures in particular).

In contrast to Kabardino-Balkaria, there are no contradictions in Adigey when it comes to electing the village Islamic leaders, the main problem being the lack of imams. Over time, the posts will be filled by young educated Muslims—in the absence of an adequate number of educated religious leaders of the older generation, this will not cause many problems (as was the case in Kabardino-Balkaria). Today, the old and young generations cannot agree on certain issues (the use of skullcaps, the position of the hands during the namaz, etc.). Some of the young Muslims would like to change the content of the Friday hutbas offered by the imam of the main Maykop mosque. The young Muslim community in Takhtamukay headed by imam A. Mamiy cannot agree with the Maykop Islamic leaders on certain points. Ramadan Tsey, a Kosovo repatriate, is even more radical, yet few people side with him.

I have written above that the republican Muslim community is patchy with respect to its ethnic composition. It is made up of Hanafis and Shafiites (Chechens, Ingushes, and Daghestani peoples). There are no contradictions among them, even though the majority of the local and Middle Eastern and Kosovo repatriate Adighe are Hanafis. There is a small number of Shafiites among the local people.

The correlation between the Adighe and Islamic cultures, the Adat and the Shari'a, is the key problem. It has already caused serious disagreements in the republic and affected both Muslims and atheists.

[11] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 2, File 1.
[12] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 4, File 1.

The traditional Muslims and the intellectuals, who are mainly atheists, have found themselves in one camp, while the young Muslims form another camp. The older generation and the intellectuals cherish the local traditions, while the younger generation is attached to the Islamic rules. This also happened in Kabardino-Balkaria where the younger generation too has been engaged in reassessing the local culture.

Here are the results of a sociological poll called "The State and Future of Islam in Adigey" conducted in 2000 by the department of philosophy and sociology of the Republican Institute of Humanitarian Studies. Four hundred people were polled. The question on the correlation between the Islamic and Adighe cultures produced the following answers: 6 percent are convinced that "Islam is more important than traditional culture," 16 percent said: "Islam and traditional culture of the Adighe completely overlap," while 40 percent were convinced that they partially overlap.[13]

On the whole, the Council of the SAM RA and KT and its mufti N. Emizh support the desire of the young Muslims to modernize local Islam and introduce "pure" Islam among the Adighe (and not only among them). One of the republic's prominent Islamic leaders, Najmuddin Abaza, imam of the mosque of the city of Adygeisk, said that at first mufti Emizh supported the idea of closer contact and a compromise between the local culture and traditional Islam. Later, in the course of numerous discussions with Faiz Autaev, one of the ideologists of Islamic revival in the republic, the mufti came to the conclusion that the Islamic and traditional life of the Adighe should be altered somewhat.[14]

On the whole, the Muslims headed by their mufti are convinced that the Islam the local people inherited from Soviet times, which authors call "traditional," is in fact "impure" and should not be revived and promoted. It should be restricted, and genuine Islam, which is free from Adighe and other local traditions, be offered mainly to teenagers and young people. It should be said that the mufti supported the younger generation in its discussion of the skullcap issue: the older generation continues wearing skullcaps during namaz. A. Nibo pointed out that young Muslims do not wear skullcaps even for funeral services.[15]

The young Muslims are convinced that the following changes should be made in traditional Islam and traditional Adighe culture:

— the dance culture should be limited: men should be allowed to dance while joint dances of men and women can be permitted only if the women are dressed according to the Islamic tradition (long dresses with long sleeves and a kerchief), their partners should not hold their hands;[16]

— liquor should be banned during holidays and at marriage feasts. When attending marriage feasts the young Muslims sit at separate tables where no liquor is served;[17]

— the local tradition of bride abduction should be limited. The local imams completely agree with this: if such couples approach them with a request for the *nekyah* (religious marriage), they normally refuse to conduct the ceremony.[18] The forms of Adighe culture (Adighe khabze) common among the Middle Eastern and Kosovo Adighe, who actively disseminated Islam among the local people, are different from those of the Adighe of Russia. The imam of the main mosques of Maykop Ibrahim Nihad-hajji pointed out that at no time did the Syrian Adighe practice bride abduction;[19]

— funeral feasts should be banned (they normally take place on the day of the burial and on the 7th and 40th days after death). Mourning on the burial day should be limited to the dua (prayer); "Jewish"-style hats should be banned, as well as taking money for washing the dead (the ritual has already developed into a business);[20]

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[13] See: R.A. Khanakhu, O.M. Tsvetkov, "Islam v Adygee: sostoianie i perspektivy," *Izvestia Tsentra sistemnykh issledovaniy Maykopskogo gosudarstvennogo tekhnologicheskogo instituta. Filosofia, sotsiologia, kulturologia,* Issue 3, 2001, pp. 71-72.

[14] Interview with Najmuddin Abaza, 15 March, 2004. FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 8, File 2.

[15] See: A. Nibo, "Okh, tiazhela adygskaia papakha," *Shapsugia,* No. 2, 28 January, 2004.

[16] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 1, File 1.

[17] Ibidem.

[18] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 4, File 2.

[19] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 2, File 2.

[20] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 8, File 2.

— reverence for the older generation should be limited. According to imam of Adygeisk Najmuddin Abaza, the custom should be observed only outside the mosques.

Today, the SAM RA and KT mufti and the imam of the main mosque are visiting one mountain village after another requesting that some of the burial rites (funeral feasts on the 7th and 40th days) not be performed. Some of local efendis and imams have joined the campaign and set personal examples. In one of the villages, the young deputy of the imam limited the burial rites for his dead father to three days according to the Islamic tradition and announced that nothing would happen on the 7th and 40th days. To placate the insulted villagers, his mother had to buy a bull and secretly distribute the food among the local people on the 7th and 40th days.

The young Muslims are trying to change the burial rules established during Soviet times. The Adighe still put up gravestones on family burial sites and small fences around them. This is gradually changing. In Takhtamukay, for example, the local efendi banned family burial lots; and in Mamkheg and Maykop all fences were removed from the Muslim cemeteries.

Little by little, the young faithful are forming a new Islamic culture: during the Kurman-Bayram celebration, a concert in the Maykop Palace of Culture included zikirs in Arabic and Adighe languages performed by the Islamey ensemble. The young reformers suggest that children be given Islamic names, a tradition partly lost during Soviet times.

The press became a battleground between the Muslims and the Adighe intelligentsia. The dispute began in September 2003 when the *Adighe Mak* newspaper published an article called "Adigeyskie obychai i obriady" (Adighe Customs and Rituals) written by M. Bedjanov, a researcher at the Republican Institute of Humanitarian Studies (in the past he held the post of advisor of the RA government Committee for Ethnic Issues). He was resolutely opposed to substituting Islamic customs for Adighe ones. Historian Asker Sokht, head of the republican organization Adighe Khase and publisher of the district newspaper *Nasha respublika* (Our Republic) (the Takhtamukay District) supported him by publishing R. Gusaruk's article "Islamism ili adygstvo, chto voz'met verkh?" (Islamism or the Adighe Customs: Which Will Prevail?)[21]

There are more moderate people who want the Islamic and Adighe cultures to cooperate. S. Muskhajiev, a Chechen and member of the Maykop Muslim community with a Ph. D. in History, is one of them. His article entitled "Islam i adygstvo: vzaimodeystvie, a ne protivostoianie" (Islam and Adighe Customs: Cooperation rather than Confrontation) appeared in *Adighe Mak*.[22] He pointed out that the Adighe intelligentsia had joined the "bout of anti-Islamic hysteria" which had reached the media. He wrote: "It is very wrong to oppose Islam as a religious teaching and Divine rules and the Adighe customs as a traditional ethnic code. They are not antagonists; they have been living side by side for many centuries; they cooperated, were intertwined and proved their ability to coexist throughout the long heroic and tragic history of the Adighe. Their history does not know a single instance of clashes or enmity on this ground. The Kosovo Adighe are a wonderful example of this: they combine pure faith in Allah with perfect command of their native tongue."[23]

This is not completely true, however: in the past, while Islam was spreading in the North-Western Caucasus the Muslims repeatedly clashed over the discrepancies between the Adighe and Islamic cultures. Islam always modernizes ethnic life. Even though the Hanafi madhab is the most tolerant among the other madhabs, as far as ethnic cultures are concerned, it repeatedly caused confrontations between the older (and therefore more conservative) generation and young reformers.[24] In the past, too, the institution of veneration of the older generation was barely accepted.

The SAM RA and KT Council has repeatedly discussed the negative attitude toward the Islamic culture, and in some cases toward Islam in general, demonstrated by the Adighe intelligentsia. The Council members responded to the articles by M. Bedjanov, A. Sokht and R. Gusaruk differently. As a result,

[21] See: R. Gusaruk, "Islamizm ili adygstvo, chto voz'met verkh?" *Nasha Respublika,* No. 4, 2001.
[22] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 6, File 4.
[23] "Islam i adygstvo: vzaimodeystvie, a ne protivostoianie," *Golos Adyga,* 20 October, 2001.
[24] For more detail, see: I.L. Babich, A.A. Iarlykapov, *Islamskoe vozrozhdenie v sovremennoy Kabardino-Balkarii: perspektivy i posledstvia,* Moscow, 2003, pp. 10-66.

the Council decided to "hold meetings in the villages to discuss issues relating to the Islamic revival and national traditions."[25]

There is another problem related to the correlation between the Islamic and Adighe cultures created by the Kosovo repatriates. The middle and older generations of the Kosovo repatriates are aware of the great differences between the local Islamic and ethnic cultures and the culture they were exposed to in Kosovo. On the one hand, their Islam is closer to the Turkish rather than the Adighe version. Until their resettlement in 1995-1998, they had village Sunday schools and madrassahs, while those who wished could receive higher religious education in Turkey.[26] On the other hand, the norms of Adighe conduct at home and outside the home (Adighe khabze) changed a lot: certain Adighe traditions were absent in Kosovo. At the same time, the Kosovo Adighe preserved customs no longer observed in Adigey. It should be said that "Kosovo Islam" helped the Adighe preserve their ethnic culture, for example, the tradition of veneration of the older generation. It was normal in Kosovo to reserve the two front rows for the old people. In Adigey and Kabardino-Balkaria, those who come first pray in the front rows—something that invariably arouses displeasure among the older people.[27]

Modernization has affected the legal sphere of Islam, the Muslim laws which, according to the faithful, should be gradually introduced to replace the adat (the legal system of the past which has been partially preserved). Today, the imams perform marriage rites in the republic's mosques and issue marriage certificates. It should be said that the legal norms of the Shari'a related to the family sphere are applied when the bride and bridegroom enter into property relations, namely when the concept of makhr (property which goes to the wife and not her relatives in case of divorce) was introduced in Adigey. Field data show that when a couple gets married they still agree on kalym (the adat norm) received by the bride's relatives and returned in case of divorce rather than makhr. Today, when Islam is being revived in the republic, the faithful insist on makhr rather than on kalym. Since 2000 the imam of the main mosque of Maykop has performed nekyah for 200 couples from Adigey and Krasnodar.[28]

Those village imams who received marriage certificate forms from the central mosque can also perform nekyah. Few men have two wives. There is a Kabardinian in one of the mountain villages who has two wives—a senior and a junior. So far there have been no divorces or division of property according to the Muslim rules in Adigey, yet people frequently ask the imam of the central Maykop mosque for Shari'a divorces and division of property. On the whole, the Adighe avoid the rather complicated Shari'a process in favor of the adat rules, which demand that the woman be satisfied. The Kosovo repatriates stick to the Muslim rules of inheritance and draw up their last wills and testaments.

In 1991, the first congress of the republic's Muslims held in the village of Adamiy created the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Adigey and the Krasnodar Territory. Since then seven congresses have been held, which changed muftis several times. This happened for several reasons: two of the muftis were old and soon died, and another went into business.[29] The seventh, special, congress was held in November 2003. It was attended by 166 people, including Premier N. Demchuk, deputy chairperson of the Republican Press Committee M. Shkhalakhova, and the Bishop of Adigey and Maykop Panteleymon. The congress elected Nurbiy E. Emizh the new mufti.

The SAM RA and KT has a Council of 25 members and an Executive Committee made up of 5-7 active and respected Muslims. It is the task of the Executive Committee to discuss all issues related to the Islamic revival and proliferation of Islam in the republic before they are submitted for the Council's consideration. The latter consists of representatives of all districts and all ethnic groups of the republic and territory.

The SAM is engaged in mosque construction and proliferation of Islam. The Council members meet local people to discuss the ways and means Islam can be restored in the republic; the media are also in-

[25] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 29 March, 2003.
[26] Interview with Iskander Tsey, 14 March, 2004. FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 6, File 2.
[27] FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 6, File 2.
[28] Interview with Ibrahim Nihad-hajji, 17 March, 2002. FMA, Notebook 1, Inventory 2, File 2.
[29] Interview with Mufti of SAM RA and KT N. Emizh, Maykop, 9 March, 2004. FMA, Republic of Adigey, March 2004, Notebook 1, Inventory 1, File 1.

volved in the process.[30] An Islamic newspaper *Din-Khase* has been published in the republic since the mid-1990s. The *Adighe Mak* newspaper publishes an appendix in the Adighe language on the fundamentals of Islam. Its editor is Azamat Bogus, deputy of the State Council-Khase and member of the SAM Council. He is also responsible for a series of broadcasts about Islam regularly shown on republic TV. Mufti Emizh is responsible for Islamic programs aired on local radio. The Takhtamukay community publishes an Islamic paper called *Chitay*. Our polls in mountain villages showed that people are interested in TV and radio broadcasts and Islamic publications. Recently Al-Jazeera opened its branch in Maykop to cover the problems of the North Caucasian Muslims. There are new forms of Islamic propaganda. For example, imam of the Djerokai village plays football with the local teenagers to develop their interest in Islam; leader of the Maykop community A. Kardanov opened a fitness and a computer center to attract young people.

Religious education is another concern of the SAM RA and KT. So far the republic has no complete system of religious education. The process is very slow: in 1992-1994 there were 23 Sunday schools in the republic, today only 10 of them are still functioning, even though they constantly experience shortages of classrooms, books, chairs, tables, and programs. There is a school in Djerokai at which the local imam, an abadzekh from Turkey, teaches. The mosque schools are not particularly popular with the local people; the majority cannot teach even the fundamentals of Islam. The system must be developed; with this aim in view the SAM plans to distribute religious literature. I have already written that early in the 1990s F. Autaev started publishing Islamic literature in Maykop. The venture was a success. There is another important aspect of the SAM's efforts: it is actively working with the Islamic leaders of all generations; the village imams attend short-term Islamic courses in the main mosque in Maykop.[31] So far, the results are not impressive.

In the 1990s, Nurdjular and Suleymandji, two Turkish radical organizations, as well as certain Muslim structures of Azerbaijan tried to set up Islamic schools in Adigey (in 1994 a private lyceum was opened in Maykop; in 2003, a school in Afipsip, in which Mina Saliam was director, etc.).[32] The law enforcement structures and the republican Federal Security Service are closely watching what the Turks are doing in the republic; and the SAM is in complete agreement with this. In 2003, by way of responding to certain active efforts of opening Turkish religious schools, the SAM Executive Committee issued a decision that all those wishing to open a school at a mosque should acquire permission from the SAM RA and KT and the Federal Security Service.[33]

Mufti Emizh respects the young Muslims and their plans and maintains close contacts with them. He initiated a youth center (based on the Muslims of Adygeisk and the Teuchezh and Takhtamukay districts) within the SAM. The SAM and its youth branch are working toward purification of Islam; they are seeking closer contacts with other public organizations, including the Adighe Khase—there are Muslims among its members.

In the 1990s, certain international organizations tried to organize and extend the range of their activities in the republic. The World Islamic Call Society (hereinafter WICS) headed by Eliachkhammudi Abdunnabi was the most successful among them; during Muslim holidays it organized charity events.[34] Recently, the state republican structures, including the law enforcement bodies, have been limiting or even banning similar activities. The bans and limitations were imposed not only on the radical Turkish organizations, but also on WICS very much approved of by the SAM and the Islamic communities. Foreign foundations frequently act like sponsors giving money to the Islamic activities in this republic and elsewhere in Russia.[35]

The good contacts between the SAM leaders and the republican authorities, as well as with the young Muslims, some of whom are in opposition, created an atmosphere in which Islam, like Christian Ortho-

[30] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 9 April, 2003.
[31] Ibidem.
[32] See: Iu.N. Ansimov, V.N. Altunin, *Antiterroristicheskaia deiatel'nost i bor'ba s ekstremizmom: opyt, organizatsia, pravovaia osnova*, Maykop, 2003, p. 197.
[33] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 15 July, 2003.
[34] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 15 December, 2003.
[35] Archives… Verbatim report of the sitting of the SAM RA and KT Council of 15 July, 2003.

doxy, is developing within the mainstream and does not take on radical forms (this is what happens to a certain extent in Kabardino-Balkaria). There is no anti-Wahhabi or anti-Islamist propaganda in the republic. Still, there are certain elements of political censorship: the law enforcement structures, the FSS Administration headed by Iu. Ansimov, the Regional Antiterrorist Commission headed by N. Demchuk, who is member of the government, and V. Altunin carefully study all the publications about the Islamic revival in the republic to spot pieces which they think "fan national and religious strife."[36] They are out to stop attempts by international radical structures (mainly Suleymandji and Nurdzhular) to put down roots in the republic. Certain authors say that the Turkish Muslims use Islamic rhetoric to give "ideological justification" to their openly separatist and corporate aims. These authors say: "It cannot be excluded that the nationalists will use ideological propaganda to present traditional forms of social organization among the North Caucasian peoples (*khase* among the Adighe, *mekhk-khel* among the Chechens and *jamaat* among the Turkic-speaking peoples) as the traditional forms of Islamic collectivism."[37]

The above-mentioned structures do not infringe on religious life; there are no cases of discrimination against the Muslims, even those who criticize the SAM RA and KT. There is no interference in Muslim rituals; Sunday schools are closed not because they are banned, but because they are highly unpopular among the republic's atheist population. The militia normally keeps away from mosques. There were several cases when militiamen entered mosques during services: they checked documents during an evening prayer service in the Adygeisk mosque on the strength of information that it was being used to store drugs. The same happened in the mosque of Novaia Adigey (New Adigey). It seems there are no prerequisites for a worsening of the sociopolitical situation in the republic because of the Islamic revival and proliferation of Islam. On the whole, Islam in Adigey is very tolerant of those who think differently and loyal to state power and the law enforcement bodies.

[36] Iu.N. Ansimov, V.N. Altunin, op. cit., p. 201.
[37] Ibid., pp. 197, 200.

MUSLIMS IN UKRAINE: IS THERE FREEDOM OF FAITH?

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Since the early 1990s, the number of Muslims in Ukraine has been increasing by leaps and bounds: the traditionally Islamic peoples are regaining their faith; the demographic and migration processes are being intensified; and the Crimean Tartars are flocking back to their historical homeland, while a certain number of ethnic Ukrainians and Russians embrace Islam every year. In the wake of the Soviet Union's disintegration, religious life in Ukraine has been following a more or less normal course within the democratic standards of the freedom of faith. In 2004, there were 445 legally registered Muslim communities in the country with charters and rules of their own and 22 non-registered communities (operating strictly within the Ukrainian laws), the corresponding figures for the Crimean Autonomous Republic

being 349 and 20. There are seven Islamic educational establishments with 276 students, 90 Sunday schools, and 5 periodicals. They employ 433 clerics, 20 of whom are foreign citizens. It should be said that the Muslim communities have160 mosques and prayer houses at their disposal, 44 of them belong to Muslims, 18 are used by them, and 98 were adjusted for religious purposes. Ten out of 160 buildings are architectural monuments (the Ibn Fadlan, An-Nour and Ar-Rakhma mosques being the best known among them). Fifty-four mosques date to 1992-2003; twenty-three mosques have not yet been completed. The Muslims are guided by the Spiritual Administration of the Crimean Muslims, the Spiritual Center of the Muslims of Ukraine, and the Spiritual Administration of the Ukrainian Muslims. There is also the possibility of new organizational structures appearing.

Until recently the Ukrainian academic community betrayed no interest in the state of affairs among this important, large and highly dynamic religious group, or in its social orientations. Nobody knew how many Muslims lived in Ukraine. In the absence of state support such costly sociological studies are hard to organize.[1]

In 2003, the Arraid Association of Public Organizations launched a sociological poll called "Muslims in Ukrainian Society" to fill in the blank spots and obtain reliable information about the social life of the local Muslims. The poll and preliminary analysis were completed in 2004. The sociologists employed the focus group methods, the groups being composed of Muslims in places of their compact settlement (the Crimean Autonomous Republic, Donetsk, Lugansk, Kharkov, Zaporozhie and other regions, and in Kiev). Sunni Muslims mainly associated with the Hanafis were polled. A complete analysis of 3,589 questionnaires will make our knowledge about the Ukrainian Muslims' social ideas about contemporary developments and worldviews related to their right to the freedom of faith more specific.

The respondents admitted that in the post-1991 period the newly independent country experienced important positive shifts. They all agree that the political, economic, and ideological system has changed a lot and that Ukraine has positioned itself as a sovereign state moving toward democracy and good, equal, and friendly relations with its neighbors. All those polled positively assessed the downfall of the totalitarian system and their experience of being citizens of an independent European state; they pointed to positive changes in the cities' outlook and the way the people dressed; they approved of the developed food industry and large-scale construction projects. Naturally enough, they all hailed the newly established freedom of faith and conscience and said that the Muslims persecuted under Soviet power gained even more from the new state of things than other religious groups.

The respondents pointed to the following positive changes: 15.62 percent were pleased with the possibility of building more mosques; 8.66 percent approved of the Sunday schools; 6.96 percent rejoiced at the ever increasing number of Muslims; 4.24 percent considered public Muslim organizations to be a great achievement; 3.23 percent are satisfied with the genuine freedom of conscience; 2.89 percent believe that Islam can be freely promoted; 2.5 percent point to the increasing number of Muslims performing all religious rituals; 2.21 percent are satisfied with Islamic books becoming accessible; and 1.7 percent are convinced that an Islamic revival did take place. In addition, 1.53 percent pointed out that an ever increasing number of people are embracing Islam; the same share of people are aware of the fact that new Muslim communities are being formed, that the economic situation has stabilized, that Muslim newspapers and books are being published and that the radio broadcasts Muslim programs; 1.36 percent say that mutual understanding and religious and ethnic tolerance are facts of people's daily life; 1.19 percent are satisfied with the Islamic spiritual centers; 1.02 percent like the fact that they can freely perform religious rites, the same share of people are pleased they can organize Muslim summer youth camps.

About 1 percent of the questionnaires pointed to other positive changes: the country is acquiring a more democratic make-up; the deported people are able to return and settle in old places; there is free access to scientific and religious knowledge; women can wear hijabs, which invites fewer comments from non-Muslims; people are becoming more interested in Islam; there are Islamic events; the state returned the earlier confiscated mosques; people are free to celebrate religious holidays and to develop their spir-

[1] R. Zhanguzhin's articles are the only exception: "Islam in Ukraine," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (8), 2001, and "Problemy radikal'nogo Islama v Tsentral'noy Azii: vzgliad iz Ukrainy," *Kontekst*, No. 11, 2002 (in Ukrainian).

itual awareness; there are Islamic universities; the country has acquired the opportunity to join Europe, the standard of living is gradually improving, unemployment is down, etc.

People pointed to other changes, not all of them positive: the traditional Muslim culture is no longer oppressed; the public thinks better of the Ukrainian Muslims; the crime level is steadily declining; the number of teachers of Islam is on the increase; the ideology of Muslims has changed; Ukrainian intellectuals are displaying more interest in the Muslims; the non-Muslim population is coming to a better understanding of Islam; openness has been partly preserved; an increasing number of Ukrainians are demonstrating greediness and other negative traits; the Ukrainian Muslim Party was set up; the mosque in Simeiz (the Crimea) and elsewhere was returned to the faithful; the nation should be given more freedom of faith in the future; the Ukrainian Muslims have acquired the opportunity to make a hajj to Mecca; the deported Crimean Tartars are returning to the Crimea; there is an organization called Arraid for helping the infirm and orphans; azan (Muslims prayer call) can be heard everywhere; and people with a higher cultural level embrace Islam. People are glad that they are no longer arrested for calling on people to adopt Islam; Ukraine is developing contacts with the Muslim states, while the local people can freely meet foreigners.

The following facts were pointed to as positive: better conditions for the development of Islam; there is a Hafises Center in the Crimea, and the Ukrainian media offer more reliable information about Islam; TV never fails to inform the public about Muslim holidays; open ethnic conflicts have so far been averted; private enterprise is permitted; the public is growing more and more intolerant of discrimination and the violation of human rights; voters are free to choose their candidates; public Muslim organizations are engaged in charities; and Islamic public activity is becoming more noticeable.

At the same time, 42.78 percent of the polled did not answer the question about the positive changes in Ukraine that had taken place while they were living there; 2.21 percent failed to detect positive changes. A small group (within 1 percent) believes that either positive changes are few or not positive enough; 1.87 percent believe that the situation has worsened. Some of the respondents find their life even harder, their wages are too low from the economic and moral viewpoint and trail behind prices and transportation fares. The rest of the polled pointed out that the people in general are not cultured and do not know how to behave and that Ukraine is slowly but steadily moving toward its decline; 2.89 percent did not know how to answer this question, while 1.36 percent pointed out that they found it hard to answer it.

The poll revealed that there were still legal and administrative barriers between the Muslims and their right to freedom of conscience. The question: “Are the main freedoms and rights of the Muslims ensured and are all religions are equal before the law?” drew 33.28 percent of positive answers; 27.84 percent of negative answers (the same number was undecided), and 11.04 percent failed to answer it. It was said that hijab-wearing women find it hard to find a job and work among people belonging to different confessions; Muslim women are not always allowed to be photographed for official documents in hijabs.

The polled pointed out that in cities and towns it was hard to get plots of land to build mosques on. It was emphasized that the local administrations helped to build or restore Christian Orthodox churches and for a long time refrained from interfering with Christians in the Crimea wishing to erect their symbols close to the Muslim religious symbols. It was also pointed out that the Islamic organizations found it hard to obtain time slots on state TV and radio; that certain state agencies put pressure, directly or indirectly, on these organizations, their leaders, families, and employees. (This is done in the form of denying licenses to the media and exit visas; exit visas can be annulled without explanations; people can be denied citizenship or refugee status.) Those who work find it hard to accept that Friday visits to mosques during working hours have still not been regulated; there are also problems with providing food suitable for Muslims in the army and in prisons, as well as with permitting people pray breaks during working hours. The polled want the government to recognize not only Sundays for the Christians and Saturdays for the Jews, but also Fridays for the Muslims as non-working days. They also believe that return of the mosques on the Crimean Southern coast should be carried out at a faster pace and that the future of the waquf lands in the Crimea should at least be discussed.

The question: “Have you as a Muslim experienced discrimination or infringement of your rights by officials and power bodies in the past five years?” was answered in the negative by 58.74 percent of the

polled. They confirmed that the Ukrainian state was drawing closer to the norms of a law-based society. At the same time, 19.35 percent confirmed that they had had this experience; 12.73 percent were undecided, while 9.17 percent gave no answer. The fact that nearly 20 percent of the polled spoke openly about their problems as members of a certain confessional group shows that the problem is real. This has been confirmed by the answers to the question: "Which legal problems do the Muslims encounter in Ukraine when defending their rights?" It was 8.32 percent that said that they were unaware of this problem; 68.59 percent failed to answer; 2.39 percent found it hard to answer. Certain related problems have been identified: there is a hijab problem in educational establishments and places of work; the hijab-wearing women find it next to impossible to find work; the rights of Muslim servicemen are virtually unprotected; the Labor Code still lacks an article on the right to pray during office hours; and the problem of the waquf lands in the Crimea has not yet been settled.

Local officials were caught being prejudiced against Muslims personally or collectively. There was a lot of talk about political rehabilitation of the clerics repressed in the Crimea in the 1920-1940s and the need to open departments of Islamic studies in secular higher educational establishments.

There are even more problems: law enforcement officials treat Muslims unfairly and extort money from them; the same officials tend to pay more attention to foreign Muslims; the lack of a clear mechanism for lodging complaints against officials who infringe on the rights of Islamic leaders and functionaries and against local structures that delay decision-making related to building new mosques and the functioning of old ones, as well as educational institutions and new spiritual administrations, and registering at the place of residence.

The polled came up with specific suggestions designed to protect the rights of the Muslim minority: public human rights organizations and other NGOs; state support for communities wishing to organize normal religious proceedings in prisons; and the organization of separate swimming pools, sports facilities, hairdressing salons, etc. for men and women in places where Muslims live in compact groups (Donetsk, Lugansk, Zaporozhie regions, in the Crimean Autonomous Republic, Kiev and Sevastopol).

People also wanted to be able to set up Shari'a courts for the Muslim community; a state supervisory body to control imported religious literature and foreign sham Islamic missionaries; and a state program designed to fight everyday racial discrimination and to control the militia (some people said that Allah, rather than the state protected the faithful).

The discussions that flared up in some European countries about the right of Muslim women to wear the hijab at places of work or study raised the question: "What do you think about women not wearing the hijab in public places?" It was 44.48 percent of the polled who were negative; 12.56 percent did not attach great importance to the problem; 10.02 percent believed that women had the right not to wear the hijab in public places; 19.02 percent were undecided, while 6.96 percent offered no answer. Some of the respondents believed that women had the right not to wear the hijab in secular social-cultural milieu because of the psychological problems caused by lack of understanding in places of work or study. Some people believed that this was a personal choice or evidence of the still weak faith of recently converted women. Some people believe that wearing the hijab is a tradition preserved from childhood. However, there was the opinion that the hijab should be worn at all times—an abandonment of it may cause regret, rejection, irritation, or even denouncement.

Some people were tolerant in their opinions and tended to feel compassion for those who could not follow this important religious rule. For example, 0.68 percent of the polled pointed out that the decision to wear or not to wear the hijab should be the woman's prerogative, who would have to answer for it before the Allah. Many of the polled said that they regretted that the norm was not observed yet, being convinced that each woman had her own serious reasons, they refused to condemn them. In other words, even though rejection of the hijab should be condemned, tolerance should be demonstrated in each particular case. The hijab-wearing women attract a lot of unfavorable comments in public places, therefore temporarily the women should be allowed to decide whether they want or do not want to wear the hijab. This is a matter of her conscience and faith.

The Muslim women are aware that the hijab should be worn, yet cannot wear it for obvious reasons. They offered the following comments: "I do not approve of not wearing the hijab, yet I myself cannot

wear it because of the work I do," or "We should take into account the specific conditions: the faith of recently converted women is not strong enough."

The majority believed that women should be patiently taught to wear the hijab and that their faith should be gradually strengthened. Such people say: "I do my best to explain that the hijab is a must," "Women will wear the hijab if Allah wills it," "I would like to see our women suitably dressed," "All of us started with small things—we should move forward toward ensuring that the hijab is worn and never removed again. Women with weak convictions tend to abandon the hijab." According to some of the polled, much depends on how the issue is treated at home, in communities, and in Sunday schools. Some of the faithful believe that it is their duty to help women to wear the hijab of their own free will. They wrote: "It makes me sad to see women without the hijab; if we continue explaining our religion in the right way, fewer women will be reluctant to wear the hijab," "When I see a woman without a hijab I realize that I am not doing enough," "These cases prompt us to pay attention to such women and to patiently explain everything to them."

Many Muslims are convinced that the issue should have a legal framework and the public should be taught to accept the hijab. Progress in this respect will help the Muslims to put down roots in Ukraine.

There are other political and legal issues: the legal status of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tartars should be specified; and the social and religious activities of the Muslim public organizations need specification (in Europe, Islamic cultural centers have places for prayer). Some other issues are abstract: the use of the norms of fiqh and Shari'a and legalization of the Hizb ut-Tahrir Party.

The pilot poll (which was of a semiotic nature based on the attitude toward basic Islamic features) demonstrated that some of the problems were settled, while others should be legally and administratively regulated so that Ukrainian Muslims can realize their constitutional right to freedom of faith.

ENERGY RESOURCES AND ENERGY POLICY

THE CHINESE DRAGON IS THIRSTY FOR OIL AND GAS

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Twenty-five years ago China (despite its theoretically high annual economic growth rates of 7-8%) was teetering on the brink of hunger strikes and sociopolitical destabilization. The country was in the need of reform, the foundation for which was laid at the December (1978) Plenum of the CPC Central Committee. The reform policy is characterized by extremely careful and unhurried dismantling of the planned-distribution system and its gradual replacement with a market system. However, it is based on the well-known pragmatic maxim coined by Deng Xiaoping: "It doesn't matter what color the cat is as long as it catches mice." This "cat," the so-called "socialist market," has taken root in the local soil and, by successfully "catching mice," has led to the rapid development of the country's economy. In this way, the attempt to create a market economic system by retaining the communist party's monopoly on political power has been crowned with indisputable success. Today, the PRC is a country with a mixed economy, in which the share of the state sector in the GDP does not exceed 40%.

There can be no doubt that long coexistence of two different systems has also given rise to significant losses. But the pluses of the strategy adopted for reforming the economy still outweigh the minuses.

The Growing Economy

The policy of gradual reform led to the country's rapid upswing. From a poor country oriented toward its domestic market, it has become one of the most dynamically developing states, currently holding fifth place in the world in terms of foreign trade volume. Its membership in the World Trade Organization (2001), the inflow of direct foreign investments, and the increase in export have accelerated this growth even more.

During the past three years, the increase in China's GDP amounted to one third of the world economic growth rates (in terms of purchasing power parity), which is twice as high as in the U.S. According to the PRC State Statistics Board, in 2002, the GDP increased by 8%, and in 2003 by 9.1%. Nevertheless, many consider that even these indices do not reflect reality. For example, experts from the leading rating business, Standard & Poor's, note that in reality this growth could reach 11-12%. The International Monetary Fund forecasts that in 2004 it will increase by 8.5%, while analysts from Goldman Sachs quote a figure of 11.8%. What is more, as PRC Chairman Hu Jintao stated recently, by 2020, Beijing hopes to raise its GDP another four-fold.

Over the past 10 years, the export of the Celestial Kingdom increased from 120 billion dollars in 1994 to 438 billion dollars in 2003. And in the next five years, this index will grow by at least another 600 billion dollars, making the PRC the largest exporter in the world. Even today, its commodities have flooded many countries and continents. China is the fourth largest exporter in the world. The bulk of its production goes to the U.S. and Japan, accounting for 1% of the U.S.'s GDP and 1.5% of Japan's. Industrial production accounts for more than 85% of PRC export and primary processing products for about 13%.

In a short time, the country, which used to put out mass consumer goods—toys, footwear, and clothing—has joined the ranks of those states specializing in the manufacture of high-tech and scientific-intensive production. Today, more than 30% of Chinese export comprises electronics, household appliances, and industrial equipment. Many transnational corporations are building or have already built their own enterprises in the PRC. In 2003, the inflow of direct investments into the country reached 53.5 billion dollars. According to the forecasts, approximately the same amount is expected in 2004.

China's share in the world economy today is a little more than 4%, but, in so doing, the country consumes 40% of all the cement produced in the world, 33% of the coal, 27% of the steel, more than 25% of the copper, 19% of the aluminum, and 20% of the nickel. The Celestial Kingdom also accounts for a third of the increase in the world demand for oil, placing it ahead of Japan and only second to the U.S.

In 2003, the PRC's GDP amounted to 11.67 trillion yuan (1.40 trillion dollars), with a foreign trade turnover of 851.2 billion dollars.[1] According to the People's Bank, at the end of March 2004, the country's hard currency reserves were estimated at almost 440 billion dollars (which is four-fold higher than the U.S.'s foreign currency reserves). China today is one of the fastest developing countries in the world. Some analysts presume that by 2005, its economy will reach the level of Japan's,[2] and by 2010, it could even surpass the U.S., although others say this will not happen until 2020.[3] Many experts agree that Beijing will be able to retain its growth rates at 6-7% a year for a long time to come, that is, double its GDP every ten years.

Problems Remain

Despite the enormous achievements, the same economic growth has been creating a multitude of problems in the country in recent years, which are proving very difficult to resolve. The most serious of them are: the acute shortage of transportation, energy, and raw material resources, the weak banking sector, the widespread corruption, and the growing inequality in development between the eastern and western regions, and the cities and villages, as well as in personal incomes.[4] The high, although still latent,

[1] See: *Renmin ribao*, 6 March, 2004.

[2] See: *Financial Times Report on China*, 2 June, 1995.

[3] See: P. Dibb, *Towards a New Balance of Power in Asia. Adelphi Paper 295*, Oxford University Press for the IISS, 1995, p. 27.

[4] According to official data, the highest salary is 245-fold more than the lowest, and when taking into account other income, the difference is twice as high again. In so doing, the 50 richest people in China own a quarter of the entire property in the country, and a tenth of the population owns half of all the bank deposits.

social tension is aggravated by the low efficiency of the social security system, which for most of the country's residents is essentially non-existent.

Unemployment arouses great concern. For example, according to official data, in 1999 and 2000, it amounted to approximately 3.1%, in 2001 to 3.6%, in 2002 to 4%, and in 2003 it could hardly be kept from rising above the 4.5% mark.[5] But independent experts estimate the real unemployment level at 25% of the able-bodied population, which amounts to about 700 million people. At present, the Chinese economy, if its growth rate remains at a level of 7-8%, is capable of creating up to 8 million new jobs a year, but approximately 13 million workers join the labor market annually. And it appears Beijing does not know how to resolve the problem of finding jobs for the slowly burgeoning multi-million army of unemployed within the framework of an economy built on a mixture of market relations and strict administrative regulation.

The structural priorities of the reforms are shifting toward scientific-intensive production units and integration into both the regional and the global economy. But in the near future, the country will have to define the balance between its national and regional economic interests. How can it raise the efficiency of the economy and avoid an abrupt rise in unemployment? To what extent should it increase the presence of foreign capital? How long can the communist party's monopoly be retained on political power under conditions of a market and integrating economy? How can a balance be ensured between market conditions of economic activity and the socialist political system?

Several economists forecast "overheating"[6] of the economy and express doubts that the Chinese miracle can continue to manifest itself. In their opinion, the accumulated investments already threaten the PRC's economic stability, and the current situation is very like the one that preceded the East Asian crisis of 1997.

Residential real estate, ferrous metallurgy, and car-building are resting on quicksand, and power engineering has been stretched to the limits of its capacity. According to the estimates of IMF experts, the economic boom in the Celestial Kingdom is ensured 75% by the inflow of capital, whereas the cumulative productivity factor (the indicator of the economy's overall efficiency) only increased by 2% in 1995-1999.[7] In this respect, not only must the development model be urgently changed, but economic growth must also be reoriented toward using the potential of the domestic nongovernmental economy.

China's Hydrocarbon Resources

It is difficult to obtain real data on the PRC's proven and potential oil supplies, but most experts agree that they constitute approximately 70 billion barrels. Forty billion barrels of this amount are concentrated on dry land and 30 billion barrels are offshore. The latter are distributed approximately as follows: 40% in the East China Sea, and 30% each in the South China and Yellow seas.[8] It should be noted that due to disputes about who owns certain border territories, the potentially rich regions, which the Celestial Kingdom unofficially considers under its jurisdiction, are not included here.

Along with the South China Sea, oil exploration efforts are focused on the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region. However, the oil produced here has been used mainly for local consumption for more than fifty years now, and there are no major oil pipelines to link the XUAR with the rest of China. According to geologists, 20.9 billion tonnes of oil and more than 1 trillion cubic m of gas are concentrated in Xinjiang, which amounts to 25.5% and 27.9% of their national supplies, respectively. At the

[5] See: [http://www.airi.kz/doclad], 15 October, 2004.

[6] The term "overheating" means extreme financing of economic growth. It happens when investment, consumer and state spending are not carried out evenly, but fall on the same period and, as a rule, are accompanied by immense inflation and devaluation of the national currency. Taking into account the size of the PRC economy, "overheating" could be followed by catastrophic "compression" with a subsequent drop in global demand and a collapse in prices for resources.

[7] See: [http://www.airi.kz/doclad], 15 October, 2004.

[8] See: *China Energy Study, East-West Center*, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1988.

end of 2003, the proven geological supplies of oil in the region were estimated at 2.7 billion tonnes and of gas at 975.3 billion cubic m. In 2003, their total production volume was 21.4 million tonnes and 5 billion cubic m, respectively.[9] In order to raise production efficiency, the Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) formed three subdivisions—the Xinjiang Oilfield Company, the Tarim Oilfield Company, and the Tuha Oilfield Company. They divided the old Jungar Basin (its center is the Karamai field), the Tarim Basin, and the Tuha Basin among themselves, respectively.

In order to develop these resources, investments of more than 15 billion dollars are needed, but the CNPC is unable to independently "raise" the XUAR, especially to a level where its oil becomes one of the foundations of national economic development. Consequently, it has been holding international tenders (since 1994) for the right to carry out oil surveying in this region. But Beijing is disappointed in the results of the work conducted by the foreign companies, Agip, Elf, Texaco, BP, and Esso, since they failed to find any new large supplies. Nevertheless, this did not interrupt the positive trends, and in recent years both production and proven supplies have been growing in the XUAR.

Proven Supplies of Oil by the CNPC in the XUAR (*mill. t*)

Fields	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Xinjiang (Jungar)	102.1	108.1	141.5	145.7	148.0	148.5	150.3
Tarim	57	52	47.3	51.5	63.6	67.5	71.2
Tuha	20.6	28.1	26	25	26.8	27.3	28.5
Total	179.7	188.2	214.8	222.2	238.4	243.3	250

Sources: CNPC; PetroChina.

Oil Production by CNPC in the XUAR (*mill. t*)

Fields	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Xinjiang (Jungar)	8.4	8.9	8.9	9.2	9.4	9.9	10.3
Tarim	3.1	4.3	3.9	4.3	4.4	4.8	5.1
Tuha	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.7	2.7
Total	14.6	16.4	16	16.7	16.9	17.4	18.1

Sources: CNPC; PetroChina.

At present, approximately 80% of the oil produced at more than 60 fields is refined at the oil refineries of the PetroChina Company, located in the XUAR. In 2002, PetroChina's local subsidiaries produced more than 18 million tonnes (11% of the country's total production). In 2003, 21.41 million tonnes of oil and more than 5 billion cubic m of gas were produced in this autonomous region. On the whole, Xinjiang's share in China's total production increased from 5% in 1990 to 12% in 2003.

Despite the fact that Chinese geologists estimate the potential supplies of energy resources in the Jungar, Tarim, and Tuha basins at more than 74 billion barrels of oil and 283 trillion cubic feet of gas,

[9] See: [http://www.xinhuanet.com].

new large deposits have not yet been found. The result is legitimate: in June 2003, a representative of PetroChina announced that the fact no new large oil deposits have been found in Tarim and Tuha makes the economic expediency of investments in these basins dubious. So the company has decided not to increase its investments in exploration work in the XUAR. But this decision may also be explained by the fact that it is much more advantageous at present for the PRC to use its neighbors' resources and save its own deposits for more lucrative times.

The construction of an oil pipeline, which PetroChina plans to finish in 2005, complies with this presupposition (it is enough to look at the production indices in the XUAR). This pipeline is to pass from Karamai via Urumchi and Lanzhou to Luoyang and on to the northeast and southeast of the country. It should be noted that implementation of this project was largely promoted by the West-East gas pipeline,[10] the laying of which (from Lunnan via Lanzhou to Shanghai) is also to be completed in 2005. The Chinese oil and gas corporation intends to lay another two pipelines, which will make it possible to deliver crude oil and petroleum products, respectively, from Karamai to the interior regions of the country through Urumchi. And their construction should be finished in 2005.

A total of 80% of oil is produced on the country's northeast coast (most of the local fields have largely been processed), and offshore sources provide only 3% of the total production. However, the PRC's burgeoning economy is in dire need of oil, since at annual economic growth rates of 8%, 420 million barrels of oil a year are required, while at a 10% growth rate this amount will increase to 450 million. The situation is aggravated by the fact that between 1980 and 2002, production dropped by almost 41%, and consumption increased 1.8-fold.[11] If these trends continue, Chinese economists predict that by 2010 the country will have to import 260 million tonnes of oil.

Export and Import of Crude Oil in 1990-2000 (*mill. brls/day)*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	2000
Export	**0.5**	**0.4**	**0.2**	**—**	**—**	**—**	**—**
Import	**—**	**—**	**—**	**0.2**	**0.9**	**0.3**	**2.1**

Sources: BP, Statistical Review; China Energy Study; OPEC.

In order to satisfy growing domestic needs, Beijing is looking toward essentially all the oil-rich regions of the world: the Middle East, Southeast and Central Asia, and Siberia, but most of the oil is currently delivered on large-tonnage tankers from countries of the Persian Gulf, therefore China needs to diversify its flows. At the moment, its greatest problems in doing this are with Russia. The attempts of Chinese oil and gas companies to participate in tenders to purchase shares in Russia's Onako, Slavneft, and Russia-Petroleum, which is the operator of the Kovyktin gas field, have not been crowned with success. CNPC and YUKOS signed an agreement on the delivery of 700 million tonnes of oil between 2005 and 2030.[12] The cost of the contract is estimated at 150 billion dollars. At present, Russian oil is going to China by rail, and implementation of the mentioned contract largely depends on the Russian government's consent to build a pipeline with a capacity of 30 million tonnes of oil a year, which will have to be laid from the rich fields of East Siberia. But its route has still not been decided: one of the main arguments against this project is that Beijing, after becoming the sole customer of this pipeline, will be able to dictate its delivery conditions to Moscow.

[10] The West-East pipeline, which is 1,467 km in length and has a capacity of 12 billion cubic m of gas a year, passes through ten provinces, cities of central subordination, and autonomous regions. At present, 14,000 km of gas pipelines are functioning in the country with a throughput capacity of 32 billion cubic m a year.

[11] See: T. Brown, "Vzaimnoe pritiazhenie," *Neftegazovaia vertikal,* No. 6, 2004, p. 14.

[12] In 2002, all the Russian petroleum companies exported no more than 22 million tonnes of oil by rail (*Vedomosti,* 17 September, 2003).

What is more, the fate of the main lobbyist of this oil pipeline, the YUKOS Company, is very indefinite, since its main shareholders are under arrest for economic crimes. All of this is inclining Russia toward a project which calls for building a pipeline to its Far Eastern port of Nakhodka, being actively lobbied by the Japanese government, and not to China's Daqing.

As for gas deposits, the PRC Commission on Natural Resources has confirmed 1.37 trillion cubic m of proven and 0.5 trillion cubic m of possible supplies. In particular, the largest field in the country was discovered in 1998 in the Tarim Basin. According to the latest data, its proven supplies already exceed 700 billion cubic m. But, in contrast to oil, 70% of the supplies of blue fuel are in the west of the country and are still not accessible to consumers.

Regional Production and Supplies of Chinese Gas

Region	Production in 1999 (24.3 bill. m^3), %	Supplies as of 1 January, 2000 (1,368 bill. m^3), %
Southwest	**36.0**	**33.5**
West	**11.0**	**35.0**
Northeast	**23.0**	**7.0**
East	**13.0**	**10.5**
South China Sea	**17.0**	**14.0**

Source: *Neftegazovaia vertikal*, No. 7-8, 2000.

The pipeline network in the PRC is very underdeveloped (its total length is only a little more than 1,700 km), so approximately 70% of petroleum products are delivered by rail, 21% by road, 8% by barges and tankers, and only 1% by pipeline. What is more, there are no national gas pipelines at all, and blue fuel is usually consumed where it is produced. The country is only just starting to build a national gas system, for which there is obviously a great need. Only 30% of gas is produced in the most developed southern and eastern regions of the PRC, where 70% of its GDP is created, whereas in the west and southwest, which provide only 12% of the GDP, 47% is produced.[13]

Annual Per Capita Gas Consumption (m^3)

Country	Volume
China	**17**
South Korea	**400**
Japan	**600**

Source: *Neftegazovaia vertikal*, No. 7-8, 2000.

The government has drawn up a program for increasing gas consumption in the country from the current 24 billion cubic m to 80 billion cubic m by 2010. But since by 2010, its total import will not exceed 25 billion cubic m (only one third of the predicted increase), Beijing is looking at foreign deliveries only as a supplement to its own production. So priority goes to building domestic gas pipelines, which will cross the country in the North-South and West-East directions, keeping in mind the possibility of

[13] See: O. Vinogradova, "Vremia vbivat kolia," *Neftegazovaia vertikal*, No. 7-8, 2000, p. 127.

hooking up to future export pipelines from Russia and Central Asia. But these projects require large amounts of money. The PRC is trying to generate them by placing the shares of its petroleum companies, in particular PetroChina, on the international stock exchanges. But so far these attempts have been rather unsuccessful, since investors were permitted to participate only in construction, and not in corporate management.

Shortage of Energy Resources

Even if it becomes a space nation, in terms of its energy structure, China is still stuck at the beginning of the 20th century and remains a country with a "coal" economy. For example, 75% of the country's main requirements for energy resources are satisfied by coal, 3% by hydropower, 2% by natural gas, and the rest by oil. But the PRC is still experiencing a shortage of energy resources. Since 2003, 2/3 of the Celestial Kingdom has suffered from regular cutbacks in electricity and even its complete cutoff. Building new generating capacities will increase the demand for imported energy resources even more. China is experiencing a growing thirst for oil (at present 6.3 million barrels of oil are consumed a day). In 2003, the increase in its consumption amounted to 11%, and import to 91.12 million tonnes,[14] which is 31% higher than the 2002 index. According to the PRC Ministry of Trade, in 2004, as much as 110 mill. tonnes will be imported.

Whereas Beijing used to orient itself toward ensuring an increase in production at any price in its corresponding development programs, now it is clear that its further extensive increase is impossible. The country's Energy Program for 2004-2020 makes energy saving a top priority for the first time. This will no doubt help to ease the problem somewhat, but an increasingly large amount of energy resources will have to be bought abroad. According to the estimates of the International Energy Agency (IEA), the country is currently importing approximately 2 million barrels of oil a day, whereas domestic production is equal to approximately 3.4 million barrels/day. According to some forecasts, by 2010, import could double, and by 2030, demand will amount to approximately 10 million barrels of foreign oil a day, the amount the U.S. currently imports.[15] IEA experts believe that in the next two years, the PRC will account for one third of the worldwide increase in the demand for oil.

But at present its production in China itself is undergoing many difficulties, and Beijing is feeling a significant shortage of proven deposits. In so doing, the supplies at the old fields have essentially been exhausted. As for the "Chinese Kuwait"—the Tarim Basin, production here is fraught with extremely difficult natural climatic conditions, very complicated geological structures, and high transportation costs, which taken together make the expediency of developing these fields dubious.

The demand for oil is growing so rapidly that not one source in the foreseeable future will be able to satisfy it independently: not one country of the Persian Gulf, nor Kazakhstan, nor Indonesia, nor Russia. So the Chinese are trying to wheedle their way in wherever they can.

In order to satisfy its hydrocarbon needs, Beijing will be required to resolve several major geopolitical, economic, financial, and technical problems, which have been aggravated by territorial disputes. This particularly applies to the South China Sea, where there are large deposits of oil and gas.

The national security strategy China has been carrying out since the beginning of the 1990s envisages "concentrating the main efforts in the eastern and southern vectors, with an emphasis on the north (Russia) and after stabilizing the west (India and Central Asia)." This strategy is explained by the enormous economic significance of these vectors for the Celestial Kingdom: the Chinese Southeast Asia diaspora, which is the largest source of investments, on the one hand, and the rich oil and fish resources of the South China Sea, on the other.

[14] See: [http://russian.xinhuanet.com/htm/04091946382.htm].
[15] See: *Vedomosti*, 4 December, 2003.

The PRC's repeated attempts to resolve territorial disputes by force indicate that its growing demand for oil could give rise to serious regional conflicts. There are more than enough precedents: we only need to recall the conflicts on the Soviet border in 1969, on the island of Daman and in the region of Zhalanashkol Lake (Kazakhstan), as well as the large-scale Sino-Vietnamese war of 1979. A serious build-up of armed forces, particularly naval, will make it possible for Beijing to defend its territorial claims in the oil and gas regions of the South China Sea. For example, China used armed forces to seize the Parasel Islands (1974), and in 1988 and 1991 it again used them to establish control over some of the Spratly Islands, which the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei are also making claims to. (In 1993, the Chinese arbitrarily set up their border signs on the archipelago, and in January 1995 carried out the first seizure of territory by building barracks supposedly for its fishermen on Mischief reef, to which the Philippines claims its rights.) The Celestial Kingdom, referring to "historical use" (which is absent in the international practice of maritime law), views the entire archipelago as its own (and we are talking about hundreds of barren islets and cliffs, many of which totally disappear underwater during high tide) with an area of more than 181,000 sq km.

Despite the discouraging results of the exploratory work conducted in the South China Sea in 1980-1984 (out of 120 wells only 39 were oil- and gas-bearing, whereby they contained extractable supplies of less than 100 million barrels), Beijing is sure that the oil supplies in disputed territories around the Spratly Archipelago are comparable to the supplies in Iraq (according to preliminary data—130 billion barrels[16]). And this is why the PRC is insistently trying to make the South China Sea its own interior sea, turning it into a "Chinese lake." After establishing full control over it, the Celestial Kingdom will be able to satisfy its ambitions right up to the territorial waters of neighboring countries, correspondingly obtaining all rights to possible oil and gas fields under the seabed.

China also has such "island" conflicts with Japan (the islands of Senkaku/Diaoyutai) and Taiwan (Beijing denies the latter right to existence at all). In a book which came out at the beginning of 1994 called "China After Deng Xiaoping: Ten Essential Problems," well-known scientists Wu Guoguang and Wang Zhaojun directly raise the question of the "contradiction between the narrow natural base, on the one hand, and the size and growth rates of the population, on the other."

The PRC can resolve these "contradictions" not only by military means, but also by using its favorite strategy of "creeping" attachment: various small enterprises, joint ventures, prestigious companies and banks, hired workers and peasants, "tourists," and so on, fill up the border regions, gradually adjusting not only the market, but also the demographic situation to their own needs. The new foreign policy concept of peaceful revival of the country, "He ping jue qi," officially put forward by the CPC Central Committee in 2003 testifies to the prevalence of this strategy. According to this concept, China, by learning from past lessons, is choosing peace, and by not claiming hegemony, is not threatening other nations. The Chinese revival should guarantee the peaceful and productive development of other countries.[17] There can be no doubt that this will help China to acquire the respectable image of a partner in most states of the world, and not be viewed as a potential enemy.

The Chinese Vector of Kazakhstani Oil

Keeping in mind Astana's ambition plans to become one of the largest world oil producers in the next decade (by 2015, it plans to increase oil production three-fold, that is, to 150 million tonnes), the PRC petroleum market is very attractive to Kazakhstan. Its volume in 2003 was estimated at 1 trillion

[16] See: M. Leifer, "Chinese Economic Reform and Security Policy: The South China Sea Connection," *Survival*, Vol. 37, No. 2, Summer 1995, p. 44.

[17] See: "Premier of the State Council Wei Jiabao at a Press Conference for Chinese and Foreign Journalists," *Renmin ribao*, 15 March, 2004.

dollars.[18] In light of the acute shortage of energy resources the Celestial Kingdom is experiencing, Kazakhstani hydrocarbons are extremely apropos.

The CNPC came to Kazakhstan as early as 1997 and won a tender held at that time, thus obtaining more than 60% of the shares of AO AktobeMunaiGas (AMG) only because it offered Kazakhstan the most attractive set of obligations. One being a proposal to build an oil pipeline to China and a section of the pipeline to the border with Turkmenistan (the Iranian project). What is more, the CNPC was to provide the initial investments in a project for rehabilitating Uzen, but nothing came of all the promises. As a result, it was the Kazakhoil Company that began restoring Uzen, and the question of the Great Chinese Pipeline was essentially removed from the agenda. But most important, CNPC simply did not carry out the investment program it offered AMG, which sold it its shares. Whereas in 1998, this project was carried out by 85.4%, the next year it was only fulfilled by 59.6%, since instead of the 117.4 million dollars envisaged in the contract, only 70 million dollars were allotted. As a result, all the CNPC's activity in Kazakhstan was limited to developing the Zhanazhol and Kenkiyak fields, as well as exporting some of the hydrocarbons Kazakhstan produced by rail.

Nevertheless, over time, China was able to reinforce its foothold in Kazakhstan. In August 2003, the CNPC bought up 35% of the shares of the Northern Buzachi oil and gas fields, then purchased a set belonging to Chevron Texaco. And today the CNPC-AktobeMunaiGas company annually produces approximately 5 million tonnes of oil. And the Chinese Sinopec Corporation has a 50% share in large sections of the Tengiz field.[19] In this way, building a pipeline to China is becoming (politically and economically) one of the highest priority tasks in the development of Kazakhstan's oil and gas industry.

In 2003, the first line of the major oil pipeline to the PRC-Atyrau-Kenkiyak—was put into operation (in the northwest of Kazakhstan). And during Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev's visit to the PRC in May 2004, KazTransOil, Kazakhstan's state company on the transportation of oil, and the Chinese National Corporation for Oil Exploration and Development officially signed an agreement on its construction. A few months later on 28 September, a ceremony was held to officially open its construction. In order to implement the project, a joint company, Kazakhstan-Chinese Pipeline, has been created, the founders of which are the above-mentioned KazTransOil Company and the Chinese National Corporation for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development with equal shares.

Reference: The oil pipeline (with a pipe diameter of 813 mm) will join the Atasu oil-pumping station in the Karaganda Region (Kazakhstan) to the railroad station of Alashankou in China. The length is 988 km, throughput capacity at the first stage of the project (2006) is 10m tonnes a year, at the second (2011), up to 20m tonnes, projected cost of the work—700 million dollars, 100 million of which are authorized capital and 600 million borrowed funds. An agreement on cooperation in the oil and gas industry between the governments of China and Kazakhstan defines the financing scheme for construction of the oil pipeline as 50/50. In so doing, 60% of the construction of the linear pipeline will be carried out by Kazakhstani contractors.

The important linear part of the oil pipeline from western Kazakhstan to the western regions of China will be the Atasu-Alashankou section, the total length of which exceeds 3,000 km. After construction is complete, this route will be the first to export Kazakhstani oil without passing through Russian territory. By the way, the possibility is envisaged of pumping Russian oil through this pipeline as well (a proposal to hook up the branch being built for its transportation was made quite a while ago). As Russian Minister of Industry and Energy V. Khristenko noted, the final decision on this question will depend on the operating conditions of this route. In particular, Transneft, which will have to deliver Russian oil to Kazakh-

[18] See: *Vedomosti*, 4 December, 2003.

[19] See: E. Grebenshchikov, "Rossiia-Kitai na perekrestkakh aziatskoi diplomatii," *Aziia i Afrika segodnia*, No. 9, 2004, p. 10.

stan, stated: "We still do not know the parameters of the project, including the tariff Kazakhstan intends to levy." Nevertheless, reference to "operating" makes it possible to assume that the "conditions" might include not only economic, but also political aspects.

At present, the export of Kazakhstani oil to China is much lower than the anticipated capacity of the pipeline being built even at the first stage of its operation. But as Russian Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources V. Shkolnik stated,[20] in compliance with the signed documents regulating the implementation of the project, "the Chinese side is responsible for filling the pipeline." It is presumed that at the first stage, this pipeline will be filled with oil from the South-Turgai fields of Kazakhstan and Russian supplies from West Siberia. It is obvious that hopes are being placed (taking into account the complicated situation with the prospects of the Angarsk-Daqing pipeline in the Russian Far East) on Beijing being able to come to an agreement with Moscow about delivery (at least for the next few years) of the necessary volumes of oil to be transited through Kazakhstan via this route.

In so doing, if this oil pipeline goes into operation, China will reduce is energy dependence on the Arab countries (Oman, Yemen, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are currently covering almost 60% of the oil imported to the Celestial Kingdom). And Kazakhstan, which is planning to raise its hydrocarbon production, for which it will have to create a technically reliable and economically efficient infrastructure for making deliveries to the international markets, "will cut itself a window to the world." What is more, implementation of the "Chinese" pipeline project could change the vector of development in Kazakhstan's export strategy. Instead of the western vector, the eastern will most likely move to the forefront, at least in the political respect, which could have a great impact on the fate of oil projects throughout the entire Caspian Region.

But despite all the attractiveness of the idea of a Great Chinese Pipeline for pumping Kazakhstani oil, there are a multitude of economic, technological, and other obstacles hindering its implementation. For example, the enormous length of the pipeline, the low quality of western Kazakhstani oil (which requires heating during transportation), the absence of an infrastructure, the mountain relief, and the high seismic-risk zones will significantly hike the cost of the project. What is more, a route of this length and with huge investments will only pay for itself if no less than 20 million tonnes of oil a year are pumped along it. And this is only possible if oil production is significantly raised in Western and Central Kazakhstan. At present, our republic is producing a total of a little more than 50 million tonnes (in 2003, 51.2 million tonnes were produced). Of this amount, approximately 9 million tonnes are consumed on the domestic market. The rest go to export, but this export is tightly "attached" to the traditional markets, often via offshore zones, against which it is even difficult for state interests to fight. What is more, if such large amounts of oil go to the East (taking into account the sensitivity of the oil market), the price of oil in Europe will go up. So it is very doubtful that western companies producing oil in Kazakhstan will agree to reorient deliveries to China and fill this pipeline.

The shelf fields of the Caspian could make up the deficit. But their development, assuming enough oil is found, is a long-term prospect. So the Chinese project will most likely repeat the fate of most oil plans in the Caspian Region, where the main thing is not so much oil, as divvying up the sphere of influence, and oil acts only as a tool for resolving geopolitical problems.

Nevertheless, the route to the PRC is creating an alternative to exporting oil to Europe and has competitive advantages compared with its transportation to the West, which involves immense outlays. What is more, implementation of the conceived projects for developing the domestic infrastructure of the Celestial Kingdom will create a potentially vast oil and gas market in this part of Asia. And for Kazakhstan, the economy of which depends on the export of energy resources, it is important not only to retain its position on the traditional European markets, but also gain access to new and promising segments in other regions.

[20] See: *Kursiv*, 30 September, 2004.

REGIONAL POLITICS

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN AND THE POLITICAL PROCESSES IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS

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The U.S.-led worldwide counter-terrorist campaign of the post-9/11 period placed some of the Central Asian and Caucasian countries in the political limelight. They have become sort of an outpost in the struggle against the terrorist networks woven by al-Qa'eda and other similar structures. The changing geopolitical situation will undoubtedly affect post-Soviet Eurasia. A clear idea of political processes and trends is impossible without a clear understanding of what international terrorism is.

Terrorism as a Globalization Phenomenon

The blanket term "international terrorism" is grossly overused by the political community. Its numerous interpretations used for purely political purposes baffle the public. The tag "international terrorist organization" is stuck indiscriminately on any Muslim organization a government might see as dangerous.

Political deliberations about purposeful and coordinated global terrorist activities are frequently tuned to the positions of the only superpower, which is unilaterally waging the "war against terror" on a global scale. Viewed at a closer range, this is a war against the "axis of evil" and the war Israel is waging against "Islamic terrorism." Not infrequently, those who organize the terrorist acts and those

who sympathize with them (European and American anti-globalists among others) describe them in geopolitical and geo-economic terms. They are seen as the response of the destitute South to the rich North (the notorious "golden billion"). There is another opinion, according to which there is no such thing as international terrorism. The term was invented to screen the great powers' "real politics" and interests. Those in opposition to the American Administration insist that it was evoked to justify the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, to bring pressure on Iran and other countries. The same people say that the U.S. used the counter-terrorist operation to achieve world domination: America is trying to exploit slackened international cooperation and the diminished role of international organizations to consolidate its leading role.

In Russia, international terrorism has become closely associated with the Northern Caucasus or, rather, with the religious and political situation in Chechnia. Moscow has stated time and again that the armed resistance there is supported by the international terrorist network and, probably, by the West, which wants to weaken Russia and its foothold in the Caucasus. On the other hand, the opposition in Russia insists that North Caucasian terrorism was, first and foremost, a product of Moscow's inadequate policies. It ascribes the rise of Wahhabism to the religious, ideological, and political soil that feeds terrorism (a grave economic crisis that forces young men deprived of social prospects to seek justice in radical Islam). This economically biased argument does not hold water: indeed, there are no terrorists and suicide bombers among those who live in the Russian European region and the Far East and who, by the way, are much worse off than people in the Northern Caucasus.

The Central Asian regimes have their share of trouble too. Certain European, American, and Russian politicians and human rights activists, as well as a small group of those who share their views in the Central Asian countries themselves, go out of their way to prove that the antiterrorist struggle is being used to mete out punishment to the regimes' political opponents.

This is partly true. At the same time, terrorism is obviously a very real global threat. It is becoming much harder to follow all the changes of the al-Qa'eda network since its base in Afghanistan and the Taliban have been destroyed. This and similar organizations are very flexible—not infrequently they use respectable charity funds and corporations as their fronts. The enemy is hard to detect—therefore it is highly dangerous. In this context, we tend to accept the thesis about the "global networks of terror." Even if those holding forth about them are politically biased, the terrorist threat, which seems to have adjusted itself to the 21st century, remains very real. This enemy has no specific political goals; it has transformed the national-liberation and anti-dictatorial potential of its early "romantic" period, when terrorism was an instrument of political pressure, into a subversive transnational threat. (In the 1960s-1970s Arafat, Begin, Mandela, and many of the Latin American revolutionaries were described as terrorists.)

Today, international terrorism, which imposes its strategy of social changes, has developed into the "shadow" of globalization and the most disgusting of its components. The very fact that globalization is drawing domestic and international spheres closer makes terrorism even more dangerous. Indeed, individual lives and society as a whole cannot be reliably protected against numerous risks, terrorism being one of them. It has declared a total war on Western civilization and on all "rotten regimes," structures, alliances, and individuals outside it which (the Islamic fanatics argue) have succumbed to the West and America and are cooperating with them. The large secular states with numerous Muslim communities (Russia being one such state) are exposed to destabilizing subversion and terrorist acts. This is the first-ever global attempt to implement (with the use of force) a political-religious project of a totalitarian nature which combines the ideas of armed jihad and a highly conservative interpretation of Islam close to Saudi Wahhabism. Jean Louis Brugier, a French judge and expert in the problems of terrorism, has discussed the other side of this phenomenon. He is convinced that today the world community has to deal with new "nihilists," whose aim is total destruction and physical annihilation of all those who side with this civilization.[1]

[1] See: E. Shestakov, "Ispoved terrorista," *Izvestia,* 6 June, 2003.

All those covered by the blanket term "international terrorists" and who, at closer range, turn out to include varied strata and segments of (predominantly Muslim) society are putting up fierce resistance to all attempts at building up a statehood in Chechnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. These wars are closely connected with the mounting wave of international drug trafficking and spread of Islamic extremism, which (judging by what we have seen in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Chechnia) is developing into terrorism.

Today, the terrorists' international system and the patterns of their actions have become much more sophisticated. Political Islamists, their terrorist structures, cells, groups, and societies (jamaats) are scattered all over the world. Some of them fall apart to be shortly replaced by others; they change leaders and become even harder to detect. These "networks of shadow globalization" are skillfully juggling with motives ranging from mystical to extremely tangible (such as offices and "charities" extending material support to the families of suicide bombers). This globalization of sorts of international terrorism betrays itself in slogans, rhetoric, clothes, and adverts filmed directly before an act of terror. They have developed into a ritual performed all over the world (be it Israel, Iraq, Indonesia, or Russia).

Money comes from all sides: petrodollars from the Arab countries, donations from charity and religious organizations, informal support centers, etc. The flow is not always steady, though, so terrorist organizations are actively involved in drug trafficking together with the international criminal community. These two forces—political radicals posing as religious forces and international criminals—obviously need continued confrontation and armed conflicts across the world. It is much easier to fish in the troubled waters of the Arab-Israeli, Chechen, Afghan, or Iraqi conflicts. Not necessarily involved in them as one of the sides, transnational terrorism will continue profiting at their expense. The so-called political elite that poses as the "defender of Islam" and that, in fact, is operating a conveyor belt producing suicide bombers will continue channeling the uncontrolled money flows with great advantage to itself.

The Zone of Political Risk

It is commonly believed that Western Europe, the United States, and Russia are the most vulnerable zone. Being more vulnerable than the U.S., Russia is at an even greater risk of becoming a target for terrorists in 2004.

Until recently, the Central Asian and South Caucasian countries were described as a zone of low or insignificant risk. Recent events have shown that these states too run the risk of becoming a potential (or real, as was the case with Uzbekistan) target of terrorist attacks.

Uzbekistan was the first among the post-Soviet states to be confronted in February 1999 with Islamist terrorism. On 28-31 March, 2004, there was a series of suicide bomber attacks in Tashkent; on 1 April this happened in Bukhara. The Uzbek authorities put the blame on Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami (the Islamic Liberation Party—HTI) and certain other religious groups in opposition to the officially recognized form of Islam. There were alternative opinions: the blasts were ascribed to the authorities and law enforcement bodies (the militia in the first place). They were described as repressions against religious leaders or the result of popular discontent stirred up by the economic and social situation, etc. One thing is clear: Uzbekistan is the scene of higher level terrorist risks due to its key geopolitical location and influential forces of Islamist extremism still based in the Ferghana Valley. There are other factors as well: the country's consistent and merciless struggle against all manifestations of Islamic extremism and terrorism and Tashkent's cooperation with the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) acting in Afghanistan.

To lower the terrorist risk in the republic, it is obviously not enough to follow the reasonable suggestions which influential Western organizations, analysts, and human rights activists address to President Karimov. They advised him to stem terrorism by putting an end to persecutions of the so-called peaceful Islamists (some people go as far as describing them as "builders of civil society in Uzbekistan"[2]), enter into a political dialog with those of them who do not use violence to establish Islamic order, and start genuine, not demonstrative, economic reforms. These calls obviously come from those who refuse to bow down to Oriental mentality. In the West, political culture is rooted in the idea of a consensus of civil society, while in the East, concessions are taken for weakness, which invites more pressure. There is another trap: a retreat in the face of the Islamists may replace the present "enlightened authoritarianism," a totally predictable secular regime, with an Islamist dictatorship. The critics of Karimov's "repressive regime" close to the Western human rights communities may find this replacement unpalatable.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are also exposed to the risk of destabilization, albeit to a much lesser degree than Uzbekistan. The supporters of political Islamists and its striking force—Islamist terrorists—have entrenched themselves in some regions. The situation in Tajikistan has not yet been settled—the echo of the civil war can still be heard. The republic is exposed to the vile influence of political Islamism coming from Afghanistan, where it blended with the international drug mafia. After materializing as the neo-Taliban movement in the Pashtoon provinces of northern Afghanistan, they are waving the banner of Muslim unity in the face of the Christian civilization. They have made Afghanistan and the adjoining territories a zone of risk.

Today, in Central Asia waves of activity of various organizations of the al-Qa'eda type have become everyday occurrences; religious extremism is undermining secular power and the declared freedom of conscience. Different forces are promoting this destructive political trend.

These forces are: the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which in the 1990s intended to topple the secular regime and introduce the Shari'a. Driven by the repressions in March-April 1993, its leaders and some of the members fled to Tajikistan, where they fought in the Tajik conflict together with the opposition. Later they moved to Afghanistan and joined the "government in exile" headed by the leaders of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). In the 1990s, the IMU established contacts with its supporters in the Ferghana Valley and started supplying them with money and drugs to pay for weapons and secret Islamist structures. The IMU leaders have good contacts with the foreign centers of political Islamism and international terrorism (the Taliban and al-Qa'eda), from which they received money.[3] The Central Asian countries profited from the defeat of the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban: the regime that had been threatening them was wiped out. This weakened the IMU, which acted from the Afghan territory.

HTI is another Islamist structure that the Central Asian governments accuse of subversive activities. It betrayed itself in the suicide terrorist acts in Uzbekistan. The party was founded in 1953 by the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood with the aim of "rescuing the Muslim ummah from its present cruel decline and liberating it from the ideas, systems, and laws of qufr, from the domination and influence of the qufr states, and of restoring the Islamic Caliphate."[4] Its emissaries reached Tashkent and the south of Kyrgyzstan back in 1995; its first secret cells appeared in Kyrgyzstan (in Osh and the Dzhalal-Abad Region); they were involved in the Batken events in 1999 and 2000. The anti-Taliban operation in Afghanistan, described by HTI ideologists as the U.S. war against Islam, made the Islamist rhetoric even more bellicose. The leaflets the "party" distributed in Uzbekistan extolled the Palestinian suicide terrorists, demanded that the U.S.-led coalition remove its units from Central Asia, and called on all Muslims to fight for their faith.

Dosym Satpaev believes that the region is acquiring a terrorist infrastructure of its own.[5] Together with the well-known IMU and HTI, he enumerated several other local and foreign extremist

[2] This is what Nicholas Gvozdev wrote (see: *The Washington Times*, 2 February, 2004) [http://www.centrasia.ru/news].

[3] For more details, see: A. Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, London, 2000; R. Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda, Global Network of Terror*, New York, 2002.

[4] Hizb ut-Tahrir official site. URL [http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/english/definition/messages.htm].

[5] See: D. Satpaev, "Tsentral'noaziatskiy terrarium," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 13 September, 2004.

and terrorist organizations: the Muslim Brotherhood, Tabligi Jamaat, Adolat uiushmasi, the East Turkestan Islamic Party, the Islamic Development Center, the Islamic Movement of Turkestan (an IMU offshoot), Tovba, etc. All of them found a favorable social and political milieu in Central Asia (destitution of the active population, unemployment, spiraling corruption and crime, and obvious social inequality).

There is information that religious extremists of the Wahhabi bent are stepping up their activity in Azerbaijan.

Most of the Central Asian and Caucasian elites prefer a secular state—to survive they have to fight religious extremism and terrorism. The foreign factor—the ability of the world community, its Russian and American parts included, to become resolved to fighting the global threat of international terrorism—is equally important. There are still many obstacles in this sphere.

Internationalization of Peacekeeping and the Anti-Terrorist Struggle

While underpinning its claims to global leadership and its right to regulate international relations unilaterally with the need to fight international terrorism, the United States has reduced national sovereignty to an anachronism and a hindrance. Indeed, no effective counter-terrorist struggle can be limited by state borders; this is supported by another American invention: "conditional sovereignty" and "selective legitimacy." There is another novelty in world politics: extended "multinational" interference in internal affairs of states, arbitrarily or subjectively announced to be either victims or connivers of terrorism, or even "failed states." The latter is directly related to Russia's policies in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

There is the widespread opinion in the United States and Europe that Russia, which has claimed the CIS and the Caucasus as its priority zone, cannot cope with the local conflicts and oppose terrorism. According to many influential politicians, the Beslan events of 1-3 September, 2004 sealed this verdict. It is believed in the West that the Russian authorities are using international terrorism as a pretext to go on fighting in Chechnia, to squash democracy in Russia, to make Georgia's dismemberment irrevocable, and to restore its influence (the empire) in the Caucasus and across the post-Soviet states. (The professional fighters against "Russian imperialism" are busy using an apt expression coined by Anatoly Chubays—"Russia is a liberal empire"—outside its 2003-election campaign context.) They are also fond of saying that "the Russian president has capitalized on the Beslan tragedy to undermine democracy in his country." This was what Western politicians and intellectuals said in the petition they sent to the leaders of the NATO and EU countries.[6]

Since Caucasian terrorism is potentially dangerous for the civilized world (read "Europe and the United States"), Moscow's opponents believe that the peacekeeping and political process in the south of the CIS should be "internationalized." The plan is simple: since the Caucasus is the hottest spot in the CIS, one of the republics should invite "multinational forces" there. Translated from the parlance of political correctness into the language of political reality, "internationalization of the conflict" and "a multisided counter-terrorist operation" mean NATO and American troops.

Speaking at the seminar "The Southern Caucasus: Making the Best Use of Outside Assistance for Building Stability and for Cooperation with NATO" held on 21-23 September, 2003 in Vilnius, Ms. Zeyno Baran, Director of International Security and Energy Programs at the Nixon Center, pointed out: Since a dialog with Putin can be positive, we (the United States.—*D.M*) should take into account the coming

[6] See: *Izvestia,* 30 September, 2004.

presidential elections in Russia. The Russian military-industrial complex is not overjoyed with Putin's "concessions" to the United States and has already started strengthening the Caucasian positions. Until the elections (the presidential elections in Russia.—*D.M.*), we should not drop Russia. After the elections, U.S. direct involvement will play an important role in creating a "security umbrella" for the Southern Caucasus before its countries join NATO.[7]

It is no coincidence that after Beslan official Tbilisi and certain unofficial figures, who part of the Western political establishment and their supporters in Russia regard as the epitome of the Chechens' cherished hopes, warmly supported the idea of internationalization for the sake of stability (or for protection against Russian imperialism) in the Caucasus. Those who want to extend the counter-terrorist operation to the Caucasus or other CIS regions (the Trans-Dniester region) seems to be ignorant of the fact that similar military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq triggered another bout of civil wars, intensified religious extremism and fanaticism, terrorist activity, and drug trafficking. Both countries lost their sovereignty; they are attracting soldiers of fortune from all corners of the globe, as well as terrorists posing as faithful "warriors of jihad."

In Afghanistan, the anti-terrorist operations of the International Security Assisting Forces set up by the U.N. Security Council in accordance with the Bonn Agreement,[8] which in the spring of 2003 were transferred to NATO (even though the ISAF peacekeeping contingent is not formally regarded as a NATO operation), failed to achieve a turn for the better. It controls the capital and its environs. Drug manufacture is one the gravest and underestimated threats: while under the Taliban, the country accounted for 12 percent of the world's total drug production, its share today is up to 70 percent. Significantly, as soon as the military phase was completed, the Russian special services tried to establish working contacts with their American colleagues in Afghanistan and the country's U.S.-controlled administration without much success. Normally, the United States ignored information coming from Russia for the simple fact that the Americans cherish their good relationships with the influential clans who are the main drug producers.

In Iraq, several thousand mojaheddin (mainly from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, and Syria) are fighting against the coalition forces. Every day they kill civilians and American military and their allies and take hostages. It seems that not only al-Qa'eda but also former officers and generals, as well as Baathists are behind the terrorist acts in this country. The interim Iraqi administration survives while the American and allied troops remain in the country—without them the country will degenerate into another Afghanistan. Under the Taliban and al-Qa'eda, it was a place where terrorist acts were planned.

It seems that those who want to persecute the violators of world order, irrespective of the consequences and the states' sovereign rights, are not disheartened by the example of Afghanistan and Iraq. This is amply testified by the growing attention of the U.S., NATO, and the EU to the frozen Caucasian conflicts. The West is convinced that they are destabilizing the situation along the new NATO and EU borders, which have come right up against Russia. There is every reason to believe that the West intends to keep Russia away from the peacekeeping process in the Caucasus and complete it on its own terms. It relies on its local partners (primarily Georgia, which is getting ready to join NATO in 2005), its own financial resources, and military might. What is called "active actions" (the use of forces or another variation of the "roses revolution") against self-identified Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh may produce insurmountable difficulties: ethnic cleansing, great losses among civilians, refugees, and humanitarian catastrophes. They are the inevitable consequences of all armed conflicts, irrespective of the banners (struggle against terrorism, crime, separatism, etc.) under which they unfold.

This can be described as the result of the "process of democratization and political stabilization." This happened in former Yugoslavia. We cannot be absolutely sure that the world public will accept the new wars as just. The people living in the unrecognized republics may find support for their desire to realize their right to self-identification (recognized by the U.N. and the world community and registered in many international documents). It is precisely for this reason that the West is doing its best to discredit the "self-proclaimed" republics. They are described as criminal zones, through which drugs, weapons,

[7] [http://www.nixoncenter.org/21/09/2004].
[8] See: U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386, 20 December, 2001.

and girls are shipped to the West. Baku and Tbilisi are only too willing to regularly raise the issue of "international terrorists sheltered in the criminal separatist enclaves."

Russia, which is being squeezed out of the peacekeeping process in the Caucasus, pays in kind: it is hurling accusations of inaction at Georgia that, it says, shelters fighters in the Pankisi Gorge bordering on Russia. While defining these people as terrorists, Moscow and Washington have different ideas of how they should be dealt with. So far, it seems that the RF time and again falls into the same self-prepared trap. While demonstrating its inability to overcome fighters in Chechnia, to say nothing of Pankisi, it is, wittingly or unwittingly, contributing to the internationalization of the peacekeeping process in the Caucasus. In 2002, the United States promptly responded to the Russian statements about bin Laden's people reaching Pankisi by introducing, on 27 February, its airborne assault force into a region Georgia could not control. This was the U.S.'s third counter-terrorist operation (after Afghanistan and the Philippines, where Washington tried to destroy Abu Sayaf, who had direct contacts with al-Qa'eda). This began America's fast military penetration into the Caucasus. It will never leave it, just as it remained in Central Asia, even though it promised to withdraw its units two years after the war on the Taliban.

After the Beslan tragedy, Moscow made the same mistake by talking about fighters and international terrorists camping in the Pankisi Gorge. Chief of Russia's General Staff Iury Baluevskiy even threatened (in the same way as other Russian generals had done before him and never carried out their threats) to launch preemptive attacks against the terrorist bases. Meanwhile, U.S. Ambassador to Georgia Richard Miles who, according to the press, was the force behind Mikhail Saakashvili's "roses revolution" declared: "There are still many international terrorists in the Pankisi Gorge,"[9] which invited Tbilisi's mixed response. On the one hand, the Georgian leaders knew that this was a pretext for American interference in Caucasian affairs and, hence, Georgia could count on outside help when trying to restore its territorial integrity. On the other, official statements coming from Moscow and (worse still) from Washington reduced to naught Georgia's bragging about restoring law and order and achieving peace and stability. The Tbilisi leaders have not abandoned their intention to return South Ossetia and later Abkhazia to the Georgian fold, even though the Georgian units were defeated in the summer of 2004 in an aborted attempt to penetrate the Tskhinvali Region (the name South Ossetia acquired under Gamsakhurdia); some of the units were later withdrawn. There is talk in the Tbilisi corridors of power that a full-scale war is still possible and that it might begin late in the winter of 2004/2005. South Ossetia expects a war as soon as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline is commissioned in the spring of 2005.

Meanwhile, the results of the campaign against separatists as the main enemies of Georgian and Azeri statehood may turn out to be highly dramatic. Hostilities may undermine the ruling regimes, or even contribute to their downfall, just as they will encourage extremists and terrorists. Ethnic peace and political balance in the Caucasus might be disrupted since internationalization of the conflict is unlikely to be limited to the introduction of American and NATO units. These wars will inevitably cause havoc in the Northern Caucasus and affect other neighbors (Turkey and Iran). The region will attract all sorts of mercenaries and soldiers of fortune from the Arab countries, who will flock there to swell the ranks of the local Islamist terrorists.

It should be said that far from bringing settlement of the frozen Caucasian conflicts closer, the very possibility of their internationalization has destabilized the situation. Today, as in the early 1990s, the sides have moved too close to fighting; in South Ossetia the fighting has already begun. This is very dangerous for the South of Russia. If the RF fails to protect its borders promptly and effectively, internationalization may prove fatal to its statehood.

Democratization as a Weapon against Terror?

Enforced democracy is one of the key components of the unfolding counter-terrorist campaign. A democratic system and pluralism are regarded as a mighty antiterrorist weapon. On 6 November, 2003,

[9] BBC Official Site [www.bbc.com/russia/], 13 September, 2004.

President George W. Bush presented his project of moving democracy to the Greater Middle East, which declared, among other things, that democratic reforms and economic liberalization should be used "to fight terror-breeding poverty and backwardness."[10]

There is nothing new in the idea that greater democratic manageability of the Muslim world would promote American interests. Until recently, however, the Bush Administration refrained from putting it forward, so as not to drive away the key strategic partners with far from democratic regimes. Everything changed after 9/11 largely thanks to increased pressure from the neo-conservatives, liberal internationalists, and certain European politicians who criticized America's relationships with autocratic regimes. There is a firm conviction in the United States that the common citizens of the Islamic world will profit greatly from democratization, which will help them fight corruption, ineffective administration, poverty, and other social evils. Washington is using this idea to withdraw with dignity from the Iraqi mess and to compensate for the U.S. unpopular war with a constructive and attractive program for this key region.

There is a similar program for post-Soviet Eurasia. When launching the Millennium Challenge Account program of aid to certain developing countries, U.S. Congress pointed out, in particular, that "By continuing to suppress human rights and to deny citizens peaceful, democratic means of expressing their convictions, the nations of Central Asia risk fueling popular support for violent and extremist movements, thus undermining the goals of the war on terrorism."[11] In 2003, the U.S. gave the Central Asian republics about $3 billion-worth of aid. It was not limited to humanitarian purposes alone and was intended to help them build a civil society, carry out political and economic reforms, and fight proliferation of WMD, crime, and terrorism. In 2004, out of 16 CIS countries eligible for the Millennium Challenge Account aid, only Armenia and Georgia received money ($300 and $500 million, respectively). Though being no less pro-American than Georgia, Azerbaijan was excluded as a regime that "betrayed democracy" and was busy "building up an authoritarian and corrupt family dynasty."[12]

In recent years, "the red Tbilisi rose" has been regarded in Central Asia and the Caucasus not only as a symbol of the replacement of "manageable democracy" with simply democracy, but also as a method of dealing with their very painful problems. The example of the Georgian opposition inspired their colleagues in other countries to use some of the Georgian methods of democratization (the mechanism of removing old rulers and seizing power in a democratic way).[13]

The Central Asian and Caucasian countries which have not yet progressed far along the road of democracy have to accept the Western rules of the game. They hold elections, regarded as an important indicator of democratic development, and have accepted other outward features, such as the division of powers into the legislative, executive, and judicial; political parties, an opposition, NGOs, and relatively independent media. In all Eurasian countries where manageable democracy has proven its efficiency, manipulation of the constitution and election laws is very popular. For example, under the 1994 referendum Saparmurad Niyazov extended his presidential term for five years; today, he has become president of Turkmenistan for life. Under the 2003 referendum, Emomali Rakhmonov can remain president of Tajikistan until 2020. International observers failed to describe elections in these countries as free and fair. In Uzbekistan, the opposition parties are refused official registration. The situation in other Central Asian countries is similar: all opponents of Niyazov's are either in prison or in exile. All serious opponents of President of Kazakhstan Nazarbaev were efficiently removed from the political scene in anticipation of the parliamentary elections of 19 September, 2004 won by the party of power. In Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan some of the prominent opposition leaders were imprisoned.

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[10] President Bush Discusses Freedom in Iraq and Middle East. Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy [http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031106-2.html].

[11] See: U.S. Congress Act, H.R. 1950, 108th Congress, 1st Session, 16 July, 2003 [http://www.congress.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?c108:4:./temp/~c1084hWjjP::st].

[12] R. Mirkadyrov, "Baku obnesli," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 28 May, 2004.

[13] For more detail, see: D. Malysheva, "Demokratizatsia postsovetskogo Vostoka: modeli i realii," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia*, No. 6, 2004, pp. 85-94.

A casual observer may describe the South Caucasian republics as more democratic and more devoted to human rights. A closer look, however, reveals that democracy is skin-deep, while the common people remain unprotected, if not against the abuses of the state, then against crime, ethnic conflicts, and corruption. The ruling groups, having pushed aside macroeconomic and social issues, are engrossed in property division. The omnipresent newly rich are seeking monopoly on all life-support systems. The opposition, meanwhile, is busy developing its party structures and sorting thing out among itself. The governments are exploiting the counter-terrorist campaign to restrict NGOs in their respective countries. They argue that since the campaign intends to liquidate the terrorists' financial and economic base, NGOs should be carefully checked. In Azerbaijan, for example, the authorities suggested that a careful investigation was needed to bring to light possible contacts between NGOs and international terrorist organizations. This was accompanied by a special Law on Grants (adopted in December 2002 to complement the Law on NGOs passed in October 2000). Under the new law, all NGOs have to inform the authorities about all grants they received before they start spending the money. On top of this, the NGOs will have to pay 27 percent of all grants to the Social Security and the Pension Funds.[14]

Similar attempts were made in Shevardnadze's Georgia. In 2001, the first law on grants and humanitarian aid was drafted to place international aid to NGOs under state control. In 2002, the Ministry of State Security of Georgia came up with its own draft law "On Suspending Activities, Liquidating and Banning Extremist Organizations and Organizations Controlled from Abroad." If adopted, it would have considerably limited the scope of activities of local NGOs which live on financial aid from abroad. The draft remained unapproved very much to Shevardnadze's ill fortune: unhindered by the state, the "philanthropists" supported the "democratic transfer" of Georgia, while looking after their own interests at the same time.

The new ruling classes in the South Caucasian republics are putting pressure on NGOs for the simple reason that in the context of lawlessness, weak opposition, and a judicial branch which lacks independence, they are the watchdog that informs the public about all violations. The authorities find it hard to accept this. As a result, democratic development stalls, and civil society and its institutions remain immature, which opens the door to corruption. It has assumed hypertrophied forms and developed into kleptocracy. This undermined the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of the press and the open society principles, which encourages extremist trends.

It should be said that there is no genuine democracy in most of the Central Asian and Caucasian states, while power is usurped by ruling clans. Any opposition is described as a "religious extremist group," which allowed the local regime to expect Western support. Many of the Eurasian states do need genuine reforms, in many of them the ruling elites and bureaucratic structures should be replaced. They cannot reform themselves, they are using their power for personal enrichment, and therefore concentrate on staying in power as long as possible. The special services of the Central Asian and South Caucasian countries, irrespective of whether they are efficient or not, tend to brush the laws aside, thus interfering with the development of a civil society.

These societies should reform themselves—no reforms can be imposed on them. The process should be gradual so as to preserve security and stability; it should take the local specifics into account, since each country requires an individual approach. It is extremely important to prevent religious-political extremists and terrorist groups from profiting from the reforms and the "open door" policy.

* * *

Here are several conclusions.

The struggle against political Islam and Islamist terrorism in Central Asia will continue for many years to come. In fact, terrorism may come to stay in the following cases:

(a) If Afghanistan and Iraq fail to restore normality and spread violence to neighboring countries and regions;

[14] See: C. Zullo, "NGOs—Unlikely Target of Azerbaijan's and Georgia's War on Terrorism," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst,* 23 April, 2003.

(b) If no serious effort is made to destroy the terrorist networks: so far they are winning the battle against high technologies and professional national security services armed with the latest technical and information tools;

(c) If Central Asia and the Caucasus fail to carry out serious restructuring, sort things out in the social sphere, eliminate unemployment, etc. Today, unemployment and social problems breed crime, Islamist extremism, and Islamist terrorism;

(d) If the ruling regimes fail to offer the broad masses floundering at the roadside of political and social development an alternative project or mobilization ideology to replace religious extremism and the philosophy of violence which are attracting more and more "warriors of jihad."

The relations among America, China, and Russia will greatly affect the political atmosphere in Central Asia. The local countries, as well as Russia, will have to accept the American presence, which to a certain extent protects them from the conflict-prone zone in Southern Asia and the negative processes now underway there (terrorism and drugs in particular). China, for its part, seems to tap the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for fighting domestic sources of terrorism (in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region) and for continuing its economic expansion in the post-Soviet territory.

In the Caucasus, a clash of Russian and American interests is possible if peacekeeping in Nagorny Karabakh, Abkhazia, or South Ossetia becomes international, or if similar methods are applied in Pankisi. It would be much wiser to concentrate international efforts within the counter-terrorist campaign on setting up a coalition similar to the anti-Hitler coalition to fight the Islamist terrorist international, rather than trying to squeeze Russia out of post-Soviet expanse, or to capitalize on the political and geopolitical situation. It is the Central Asian and Caucasian countries, the Eurasian periphery, which will be exposed to all the negative consequences. Their political systems are unable to withstand the destructive influence of terrorism, the plague of the 21st century.

CHINA, RUSSIA, AND THE U.S.: THEIR INTERESTS, POSTURES, AND INTERRELATIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA[1]

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U.S. Interests in Central Asia

They can be roughly divided into three aspects.

Counter-terrorism is the primary interest of the United States in Central Asia at present. The events of 9/11 in 2001 greatly changed the U.S.'s traditional security concept and its security

[1] Concluded from *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004.

strategy. The threat of international terrorism has become the U.S.'s most urgent security threat, and counter-terrorism is the U.S.'s central strategic concern. Central Asia is in a suitable geographic location for dealing a blow to international terrorism. Counter-terrorism is a long-term undertaking and Central Asia has not lost its geographical and political significance in the U.S.'s pursuit of international counter-terrorism.

Control of Caspian energy resources. Control over the world's energy resources, including Caspian energy, was one of the U.S's strategic goals even before 9/11. American companies have been taking an active part in energy exploitation in Central Asia during the past decade.[2] The events of 9/11 highlighted once more for the United States the strategic importance of maintaining control over world energy resources. Central Asia and the Caspian, which have huge reserves of natural gas, are considered the world's most likely candidate for future energy production. Gaining control over the energy resources of Central Asia and the Caspian is part of the U.S.'s general strategy for controlling the world's energy resources.

Counter-terrorism is not the only objective of the U.S.'s presence in Central Asia. It has another goal—geopolitical. Central Asia is Russia's traditional sphere of influence and China's strategic rear area. The U.S. is located a long way from the area and has no deep historic and strategic roots there. The U.S's sudden military presence in Central Asia in the name of counter-terrorism is, to Russia, an intrusion into its traditional sphere of influence and, to China, an intrusion into its strategic rear area. What is more, the area that the U.S. has its foot on is in close proximity to China. Never before in history has the U.S. entered Central Asia, or set up military bases there. The U.S. military presence in Central Asia could serve the purpose of monitoring and deterring China, preventing Russia from restoring its control over Central Asia, encouraging Central Asia to become independent of Russia, and restricting Iran's influence in Central Asia. Although the U.S. insists that it is not pursuing any ulterior motive in Central Asia aimed against Russia and China, and that it hopes to cooperate with Russia and China in Central Asia, geopolitical interests with respect to the U.S.'s military presence on the borders and in the regions contiguous to Russia and China are obvious. As Andrew J. Bacevich put it, "the [Bush] administration has from the outset waged its war with one eye fixed on rooting out terrorists, and the other set on gauging the prospects for advancing a variety of other U.S interests."[3] Geopolitical interests are no doubt a crucial element of the U.S.'s other interests.

The U.S. Posture in Central Asia

In contrast to Russia and China, the U.S.'s strategic presence in Central Asia is remarkable given the natural limitation of U.S.-Central Asian relations. The Central Asia nations are not sister republics to the U.S., as they have been to Russia, nor are they immediate neighbors, nor do they share a long common history with the U.S., as they do with China. The U.S. is at the other end of the world from Central Asia, which sits in the innermost Eurasian hinterland. As Prof. Charles Fairbanks puts it, "Before that date [11 September], Central Asia was one of the most obscure places on earth to most Americans… many Americans have considerable difficulty pronouncing or finding [it on a map]."[4] In the early post-Soviet period, given the enormous geopolitical upheaval in the world after the fall of the Soviet Union, the greatest challenge to the U.S. was Russia's development following these dramatic changes. The U.S. was most concerned with the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons in the former

[2] American companies which have joined energy projects in Kazakhstan include Chevron, ExxonMobil, Occidental Petroleum, Texaco, CaesarOil, IPI, Orix\McGee, AMHK (see: M.B. Olcott, *Kazakhstan: Unfulfilled Promise*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 299).

[3] Andrew J. Bacevich , "Steppes to Empire," *The National Interests*, Summer 2002, p. 40.

[4] Ch. Fairbanks, "Being There," *The National Interest*, Summer 2002, p. 39.

Soviet Union. Thus, at this stage, Russia was the core country in U.S. diplomacy regarding the former Soviet states, which was symbolically dubbed as "Russia first diplomacy." U.S. strategy on Central Asia at this stage was relatively vague and so were its interests in the region. The U.S.'s basic policy in this region was to prevent Kazakhstan from holding onto its nuclear weapons and to keep the region independent and stable. Additionally, the U.S. was interested in the energy resources in the region. As professors Svante E. Cornell and Regine A. Spector commented, "The U.S's initial engagement with the region in the early to mid-1990s concentrated on legislation to provide bilateral and economic development assistance to the region (the Freedom Support Act of 1992); the removal of nuclear weapons from the newly independent states, including Kazakhstan; and the development of the Caspian energy reserves."[5] Until 4 April, 2000, when Secretary of State Albright visited Central Asia, no high-ranking U.S. statesmen had visited the region since former Secretary of State James Baker made a trip to it in 1992.

The U.S. increased its attention toward Central Asia after the mid-1990s, which was mainly due to the following facts: the shock caused by the fall of the Soviet Union had subsided, which made it possible for the U.S. to divert its attention to other areas besides Russia; U.S.-Russian relations turned from romantic to lukewarm, their relations could be described as "cold peace," and the U.S. imposed more geopolitical constraints on Russia; the Taliban took power in Afghanistan; terrorism in Central Asia increased; and the threat of instability in Central Asia loomed large. In March 1997, U.S. National Security Advisor Sandy Berger noted that Central Asia was one of the United States' foreign policy priorities. This was the first time the U.S. had defined its policy regarding the region. In July of the same year, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Talbot expounded the U.S.'s Central Asia policy.[6] The U.S. began to increase its political, economic, and military input into Central Asia, encouraged the Central Asian nations to set up an economic cooperation mechanism without Russia's involvement—the Central Asian Economic Community, and tried its best to promote the building of the BTC pipeline, which bypasses Russia and undermines Russia's control over Central Asian energy export. Since 1997, the U.S. has been supporting the Central Asian Battalion (CENTRASBAT), including military exercises in 1997, which involved 500 parachutists from the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division landing in Central Asia. At the same time, U.S.-led NATO has been actively penetrating the region. After Kyrgyzstan's initial participation, all the Central Asian nations joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. The U.S. allotted Central Asia and the Caucuses $1.9 billion between 1992 and 1999 to promote democracy and reform.[7] But, until 11 September, 2001, the degree to which the U.S. was concerned with and involved in Central Asia was limited, and the U.S.'s strategic posture in the region was not prominent.

9/11 abruptly launched Central Asia into the center of U.S. concerns, which resulted in a tremendous rise in Central Asia's significance in U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. built military bases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan and sent its troops to Central Asia to combat the Taliban. It has greatly changed the geostrategic scene in Central Asia and there has been a remarkable increase in U.S. influence in the region. In many ways, the U.S. has squeezed Russia and China out of Central Asia and become "the de facto protector and guarantor of the region."[8] Although China and Russia still occupy an important place in Central Asia, as noted earlier, the U.S.'s standing took priority following the events of 9/11, and the balance of the three powers in Central Asia has shifted in favor of the U.S.

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[5] S.E. Cornell, R.A. Spector, "Central Asia: More than Islamic Extremists," *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2002, p. 201.

[6] Still, while recognizing Central Asia as an important region for the U.S., Mr. Strobe Talbott argued that the region was not of critical strategic importance to the U.S. (see: E.B. Rumer, "SShA i Tsentral'naia Azia posle 11 sentiabria," *Strategic Forum*, No. 195, December 2002, p. 3).

[7] See: The Security of the Caspian Sea Region, SIPRI, Oxford University Press 2001, p. 137.

[8] Ch.W. Maynes, "America Discovers Central Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2003, p. 121.

Can China, Russia and the U.S. Cooperate in Central Asia?

China, Russia, and the U.S. are playing prominent roles in Central Asia, are coming to strategic terms with each other, and are going to maintain a long-term strategic presence there. The strategic interests of the three powers, either conflicting or consenting, will certainly lead to the development of strategic relations among them.

Three scenarios can be identified in their future relations. The first is open confrontation. The second is obscure strategic relations. The third is a strategic dialog.

China, Russia, and the U.S. will not go for open confrontation for several reasons. Generally speaking, the relations among the three powers in Central Asia depend on their overall relations. In other words, if their overall relations turn sour, their relations in Central Asia will become tense. On the contrary, if their overall relations are good, their relations in Central Asia will not be hostile or openly confrontational.

Conversely, in spite of the tripartite configuration among the three powers, especially the confrontation between Russia and the U.S., like two tigers gazing at each other from their military bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, none of the three powers wants to undermine bilateral relations on the parochial issue of Central Asia. Peaceful coexistence of the three powers in Central Asia restrains their open confrontation as well. None of the three powers intends to ally with one against the other. And none of them wants to see a united front formed by two against the third. At the same time, none of them wants to see Central Asia monopolized by one power. Therefore, the game played by the three powers is good for maintaining a balance of power, but not for open confrontation in any form.

Obscure strategic relations refer to ambiguous or unstable relations, which is actually true of the relations among China, Russia, and the U.S. in Central Asia. The relations among the three powers in Central Asia are not obscure of their own choosing, rather this is attributed to their lack or uncertainty of clear policies. At present, none of the three powers has a clear policy regarding their relations. But obscure strategic relations might be their chosen policy and tactics in the future, so they could last for a considerably long time and even become the norm for their relations in Central Asia.

Obscure strategic relations are more likely to be a transitional mode. China, Russia, and the U.S. are the most influential powers with vital interests in Central Asia. Since there is no open confrontation, the three powers will probably try to form a mechanism for managing their tripartite relations, or reach some kind of agreement in order to avoid any disorder, which could be followed by uncertainty and instability in the relations among them. This kind of mechanism would be to the benefit of all three powers.

It is not only possible, but also necessary for China, Russia, and the U.S. to form a cooperation framework.

China, Russia, and the U.S. do not intend to go into conflict with each other in Central Asia. This could be a subjective prerequisite for their strategic dialog or cooperation in the region. The U.S. military presence in Central Asia is like a wedge driven into the back of China and Russia. In addition to combating terrorism, the U.S.'s basic aim is to implement its global strategic policy, although at present it does not want to provoke China and Russia or directly confront them in the region. The U.S.'s primary goal therefore is to retain its foothold in Central Asia, consolidate and expand its influence in the region, and counterbalance China and Russia's influence. But at the same time, the U.S. has made it clear that it harbors no hostility toward China and Russia and does not intend to harm their interests, but instead is seeking some kind of cooperation with them. The U.S.'s intention to join the SCO as an observer is a positive step. The U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia is not acceptable to Russia. As Professor Alexander Rar put it, Russia and the U.S. "are pursuing diametrically opposite goals. Russia seeks to get a strong foothold in political and economic terms in South Caucasus and Central Asia in order to create the possibility of resuming integration in the space of the former Soviet Union. On the contrary, the U.S.'s

goal is to do its utmost to prevent Russia from rallying the former Soviet Union around itself."[9] Following its military deployment in Central Asia, the U.S. continues to advance on Georgia in the Caucasus and be more aggressive in Eastern Europe and the Baltic Region, which was undoubtedly a long-standing strategic challenge to Russia. It implies general entry into Russia's "near abroad" from Ukraine, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and a further loss in Russia's influence in the most important strategic regions. However, since Russia is unable to drive the U.S. out of Central Asia and the Caucasus, it has to accept reality and treat the U.S. as an interlocutor with the equal right to a military presence in Central Asia.

The U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia is not acceptable to China either. Although the U.S. military presence in Central Asia does not pose the direct menace to China most have worried about, it does create a strategic posture unfavorable to China. It is a latent threat to China when Sino-U.S. relations are normal. But if relations turn sour, it will render strategic containment on China and leave China with a two-front confrontation. Therefore, the U.S. military presence in Central Asia has a dual effect on China. While it plays a certain positive role for China strategically and in the long-term, it could be unfavorable, particularly in the absence of a strategic understanding between China and the U.S. But, like Russia, China will have to face the reality of a long-term U.S. military presence in Central Asia and cooperate in some way with the United States. This does not mean that China welcomes the U.S.'s long-term military presence in the region. Instead, this merely implies China's pragmatism with respect to a *fait accompli*, i.e. China is making the most of the situation and alleviating its detrimental effect as much as possible. As mentioned above, with respect to the composition of their interests in Central Asia, there is a broad area where the interests of China, Russia, and the U.S. converge, i.e. counter-terrorism, maintaining regional security, combating religious extremism, etc. These are objective conditions on which China, Russia, and the U.S. could hold a dialog and establish cooperation in Central Asia.

Counter-terrorism is their greatest common interest and the area they can cooperate in most aptly. Counter-terrorism in Central Asia serves the U.S.'s strategic goal of combating world terrorism, Russia's goal of eliminating terrorism in its south, and China's goal of preventing separatism in East Turkestan. Therefore, the three powers share a solid foundation on which they can cooperate in counter-terrorism. Another common goal of the three powers in Central Asia is to maintain stability and development in Central Asia. Stability in Central Asia does not mean the same for all three powers, but it is vital to all of their interests. Regional stability is closely linked to counter-terrorism. The Central Asian nations as a whole are fairly weak and stricken with severe political, economic, religious, ethnic, and social problems. Therefore, it is difficult for them to prevent terrorism and extremism from intruding into their territories, and they could even become fertile ground themselves for cultivating terrorism and extremism. Any turmoil in Central Asia will trigger terrorism and extremism, then threaten the security interests of all three powers.

Their next common concern is non-traditional threats and global issues, such as drug trafficking and the environment. They have no fundamental differences regarding those issues.

In terms of real strength and influence, China, Russia, and the U.S. have formed a tripartite configuration in Central Asia. The three powers differ though in the extent to which they are wielding their power in Central Asia. The U.S. resorts to its powerful economic, military, and political resources, and strength. Russia bases its influence on the political, economic, military, cultural, linguistic, and social links it has formed with Central Asia over a span of 150 years. China is blessed mostly with its geographical proximity to Central Asia and its extensive communication lines with the region, owing to its long border with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, as well as its ever growing economic strength and influence. All three powers have recognized and accepted each other's inevitable strategic presence in Central Asia, i.e. accepted the legitimacy of each other's strategic presence, which differs from their military presence, in Central Asia, although this does not necessarily mean that they welcome this presence. This is another reason why China, Russia, and the U.S. could peacefully coexist in the region.

[9]A. Rar, "'Bol'shaia igra' na post-sovetskom prostranstve," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 29 September, 2003.

Although the Central Asia nations differ to some extent in their attitude towards the Chinese, Russian, and U.S. presence in the region, they all have an omnidirectional foreign policy in common, i.e. developing relations with all the major powers and gaining the maximum political, security, and economic advantage from the balance of power and counterbalance among the three powers. At the same time, the Central Asian nations do not want to see a direct conflict among the major powers in Central Asia lest their territories become the victims of this battleground. They could gain much more from a balance among the great powers than from confrontation among them. So they have no intention of provoking or augmenting a major power confrontation. In this way, the Central Asian nations are not precluding the presence of any of the three powers in Central Asia. This is also an important prerequisite for the long-term strategic presence and cooperation of the three powers.

At the present stage, China, Russia, and the U.S. have not created any form of mechanism or mechanical framework for their relations in Central Asia. This is largely because there is no foundation on which the three powers could engage directly. As for the subjective aspect of the problem, the issue of the "legitimacy" of the U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia has yet to be resolved. This does not mean legitimacy in terms of international law, but recognition and acceptance of this state of affairs by Russia and China. When the U.S. first made its military presence known in Central Asia, it promised it would be temporary and would not endanger China and Russia's interests. China and Russia also explicitly demanded withdrawal of U.S. troops from Central Asia once the Afghan antiterrorist campaign ended. The U.S. never claimed that its military presence in Central Asia would be permanent. Nor did China and Russia declare their acceptance of the U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia. The present state of affairs shows that the U.S. is certainly not willing to give up its military bases in Central Asia any time soon, even if the situation in Afghanistan is stabilized. In fact, U.S. troops will continue to be deployed in Central Asia for a long time to come. Of course, the U.S. is unlikely to publicly declare this intention. Nor are China and Russia likely to be unaware of it. But China and Russia will not retreat from their original stance, that is, welcoming and accepting the U.S. permanent military bases deployed in their backyards and rear area. This is an embarrassing situation. The U.S. is perpetuating its military presence in Central Asia, although undeclared. China and Russia still insist that the U.S. keep its promise. Therefore, the legitimacy problem of the U.S.'s long-term military presence is a perturbing problem in the relations among the three powers.

The "legitimacy problem" of the U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia will probably be resolved as time goes on. The three powers might be pragmatic enough to shelve the problem in order to create prerequisites for their strategic dialog.

As for the technical dimension, there are no appropriate channels for dialog or a platform for cooperation among China, Russia, and the U.S. The SCO and other mechanisms of dialog and cooperation exist between China and Russia. But there are no such mechanisms between China and the U.S., between Russia and the U.S., or among China, Russia, and the U.S. The three powers stand like a triad in Central Asia, but with no path leading to each other's door.

Another obstacle to cooperation in Central Asia is how to cooperate, i.e. in what way, in what form, and on what issues. Following the fall of the Taliban, China, Russia, and the U.S. no longer had a specific target of counter-terrorism. They do not know how to continue their cooperation in counter-terrorism and maintain stability in Central Asia.[10] There is no platform on which to base their cooperation, and it is hard to find or create one. Cooperation between China and Russia does not figure here, since the two countries have already set up a stable cooperation framework; cooperation among China, Russia, and the U.S. is about the cooperation between China and Russia, on the one hand, and with the U.S., on the other. At present and in the foreseeable future, China and Russia have no intention of threatening each other strategically. In the above context, although bilateral cooperation within the China—Russia—U.S. triad, i.e.

[10] Bates Gill and Matthew Oresman suggest that the U.S, China, and Russia could establish a range of low-level cooperation projects, including building and equipping border outposts; increasing military-to-military transparency in Central Asia; conducting de-mining operations in border areas; sharing intelligence on illegal cross-border activities; funding HIV/AID projects; and improving the social welfare infrastructure (see: B. Gill, M. Oresman, *China's New Journey to the West*, A Report of the CSIS Freeman Chair in China Studies, August 2003, p. 42).

Sino-U.S. cooperation and Russian-U.S. cooperation, is necessary and natural, development of cooperation will not yield positive results if there is no parallel trilateral cooperation. Suspicion may arise between China and Russia, which would be detrimental to the fledgling cooperation relations between these two countries. Therefore, bilateral cooperation and multilateral cooperation which go hand in hand are most desirable. What China, Russia, and the U.S. ultimately need in Central Asia is a multilateral cooperation framework. Mere bilateral cooperation can hardly settle the issue of multilateral relations. Multilateral cooperation among China, Russia, and the U.S. should consist of dialog, communication, consultation, and collaboration. Intensive multilateral cooperation is unrealistic at the present stage. There is no urgent need for China, Russia, and the U.S. to set up a separate trilateral cooperation framework in Central Asia. In addition, any cooperation framework that excludes the Central Asian nations will be problematic. A multilateral cooperation mechanism on a larger scale may be a more realistic and effective option for establishing a dialog and cooperation among China, Russia, and the U.S., i.e. they could turn to a multilateral mechanism that already exists as a venue for their trilateral dialog and cooperation. There are two possible mechanisms that could play this role: the SCO and NATO's Partnership for Peace program (PfP). As for the SCO, China and Russia are already members, and the U.S. could join as an observer or a dialogue country. As for the PfP, Russia and the U.S. are already members, and China need only join.[11] The options are themselves significant strategic choices, the importance of which exceeds the necessity of merely providing a dialog and cooperation platform for the three powers and will give rise to a range of more urgent issues.

Thus, a strategic assessment should be made before accepting the options. The SCO is highly institutionalized and dominated by China and Russia. Limited U.S. participation in SCO activities would raise the status and influence of the SCO and help the SCO to become a truly regional political and security organization.

This option has its negative aspect though. U.S. membership would decentralize the SCO, making it one of many multilateral centers, and even make it irrelevant. China's participation in the PfP would ensure its involvement in the U.S. and NATO political and security mechanisms in Central Asia, which would help China to remain active in Central Asian affairs, secure more room for maneuvering, and exert broader influence on the region at various levels and via different channels. In addition, it is inevitable that NATO will enlarge in some way in Central Asia. China is bound to engage NATO and cooperate with it in the region. Notwithstanding, the enlargement of NATO in Central Asia will deal a blow to the SCO and reduce its standing and functions, which is undesirable.

Common interests and cooperation is one thing, while the well-being and sustainability of cooperation is quite another. Firstly, cooperation, once it happens, will be passive rather than active. Secondly, China, Russia, and the U.S. have diverging, as well as converging interests in Central Asia. In terms of the traditional security threat, the U.S. military presence in Central Asia is a threat to China and Russia's security interests. The U.S. military presence in Central Asia indicates a rise in U.S. influence in Central Asia and a relative decline in China and Russia's influence, although in terms of a non-traditional threat, the stability of Central Asia contributes to an improvement in security on China and Russia's periphery. This presumption might be dismissed as zero-sum game mentality. However, this presumption is not purely ungrounded, because the players of the game have not abandoned the zero-sum mentality. The American academic community is candid enough to say, "Russian attempts to 'reintegrate' the former Soviet Union, such as they are, run counter to our diplomatic design. We can affect Russian behavior, however, not only by negotiating with them but by changing the facts with which they work. Stronger states in Central Asia will diminish Russia"s interest in a revisionist foreign policy. Thus, a policy aimed primarily at preventing and deterring terrorism can work at the same time as a bulwark against lingering imperial tendencies in Russian foreign policy."[12] These remarks show the scrambling for a sphere of influence.

[11] In October, 2003 China and NATO implemented the first official contact in their history. It is an important symbol. It demonstrates that the door to dialog between China and NATO has been opened. In light of this, cooperation between China and NATO within the framework of PfP in Central Asia would be a proper start.

[12] Ch. Fairbanks, op. cit., p. 48.

Therefore, the more they cooperate in Central Asia, the greater the contradictions in their cooperation will be. The more their interests converge in one direction, the further their interests will diverge in another direction. The root cause of the paradox lies in the contradiction between traditional security and non-traditional security, or between the new security concept and geopolitical logic. The paradox draws a boundary, be it horizontal and vertical, of cooperation among the three powers in Central Asia, which hampers comprehensive and in-depth cooperation. Whether the three powers can extricate themselves from this paradox depends on whether they can reach a strategic understanding and change their conception and mentality.

Conclusion

China, Russia, and America are the three major powers in Central Asia. They have entered Central Asia and expanded their influence in different ways since the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Central Asian nations gained their independence in December 1991. Each of the three powers has its own vital interests, upon which it formed its own foothold and niches in the region. In the wake of 9/11, the United States' presence in Central Asia loomed particularly large as its military forces suddenly appeared in Central Asia, which led to immense geopolitical changes in favor of the United States' presence in the region. Notwithstanding, the presence of the three powers and the triangle posture have remained intact, and no one has been left out of the picture. Their presence in Central Asia is strategic and enduring.

The encounter among the three major powers, China, Russia, and the United States, in Central Asia poses the critical question of how they will build their interrelations. The question is not only relevant to the interests of each of the three powers, but also to the stability and security of the Central Asian region.

The Central Asia situation cannot but remind people of "the Great Game" played out in the region in the 19th century. The frequent appearance of the phrase "the Great Game" in the media recently is no accident. Quite a number of analysts have detected a shadow of the Great Game hovering in Central Asia and so are predicting that a new version of the game will occur in the region.

This worry is not entirely groundless. The U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia will pose a geopolitical challenge to both Russia and China. In terms of strategic vision, Russia regards Central Asia as its own backyard and China sees it as its strategic rear area. Since the U.S. military deployment in Central Asia has a direct bearing on Russia and China's strategic visions, they cannot help but take the U.S.'s action seriously in strategic terms.

Reality is another reason to worry. After 9/11, Central Asia has become the region in which the military forces of the great powers have gathered. The U.S.-led coalition forces have established five military bases in Central Asia, and the number will likely increase. Russia has created its first military base in Kyrgyzstan in the name of the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization and is seeking to set up a military base in Tajikistan, since it has already strengthened its 201st Russian motorized division in the republic. China has no military base in Central Asia, although it carried out the first joint cross-border military exercises with Kyrgyzstan in October 2002. Despite the fact that the military bases and military actions of the great powers are aimed at countering terrorism, they also create new grounds for competition. The size and number of the military bases and military forces of the United States and Russia gathered in Central Asia are unparalleled in other areas of the world. The concentration of military bases and military forces could turn into distrust and a source of conflict if no mutually acceptable reasons for their continued presence are presented as soon as the counter-terrorist mission in Afghanistan is finally over.

The key issue of the relations among China, Russia, and the United States concerning Central Asia is to prevent them turning into a "Great Game" and confrontation. The higher goal is to work out an institutionalized framework of cooperation. This presumption is not only feasible, but also desirable.

China, Russia, and the United States are not pursuing their personal goals in the region and do not want confrontation, which naturally contradicts the fundamental interests and needs of the three powers. This is an important condition preventing the three powers from coming to blows in Central Asia. Fur-

thermore, this is no longer the nineteenth century, the times have changed tremendously, making any great power confrontation along the lines of a "Great Game" totally out of sync with the spirit of our times.

China, Russia, and the United States share common interests, i.e. counter-terrorism, maintaining regional stability, and combating illicit drug circulation. This is an objective base on which China, Russia and the United States can build a cooperation framework. In fact, in their action against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the three powers have shown the precedence of their cooperation in Central Asia.

At least two obstacles should be obviated if cooperation is to continue.

- The first, everyone should reconcile themselves to the U.S.'s long-term military presence in Central Asia. The United States did promise not to retain a long-term military presence in Central Asia, and China and Russia do not want to see that either. However, the United States is obviously going to retain a long-term military presence in Central Asia. Acceptance of this fact is a critical condition for cooperation among the three powers in the region. But China and Russia cannot politically and psychologically accept the fact. It is more difficult for Russia to accept a long-term U.S. military presence in Central Asia, especially in light of the fact that the United States is penetrating into the Caucasus and other regions of the former Soviet Union and that NATO is enlarging to encompass regions next to Russia.
- The second, China, Russia, and the United States must find the right way to form a real mechanism for their cooperation. There are no trilateral channels or platforms for the three powers to hold a dialogue and establish cooperation. This is a critical obstacle to dialogue and cooperation. A relevant platform is an indispensable bridge for bringing them together. There are several alternatives: (1) the United States becomes an observer or interlocutor in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; (2) China becomes an observer or interlocutor in NATO's Partnership for Peace program and takes part in its actions together with Russia; or (3) all three powers find some common ground in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

The trilateral cooperation process will be difficult, complex, and convoluted due to the contradictions and paradox between traditional and non-traditional security. In the realm of non-traditional security, China and Russia have common interests with the United States; but in the realm of traditional security, they have contradictions with the United States. These contradictions can only be resolved if the three powers change their conceptions and come to a common understanding of the need for the highest level strategy.

TURKEY'S GEOSTRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THE CAUCASUS

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The disintegration of the U.S.S.R. brought about radical changes in Turkey's foreign policy environment. First of all, there is no longer a direct threat from its northern and northwestern neighbors. Whereby, instead of one neighbor, the Soviet Union, it has gained six new ones: Rus-

sia, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. On the whole though, because of the rather complicated relations with its other regional neighbors, Greece, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, Turkey still faces demanding foreign policy challenges, which are having more of an impact on where Ankara places the emphasis in its foreign policy than on its new orientation choices.

As NATO's southeast wing, Turkey has become an independent regional nation with growing influence in the Near and Middle East, as well as among the Turkic-speaking peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia. What is more, the regional military balance in the Black Sea and the Central Caucasus has shifted in its favor.[1] And its geographical location has predetermined its role as a mediator between Europe and the Near and Middle East. In so doing, its ethnic and linguistic kinship with the Turkic nations of the Caucasus and Central Asia has helped Turkey to gain faster access to the local markets. At the same time, it is becoming a gateway for the export of Caspian oil to Europe. But as things stand today, Ankara has to take Moscow's interests into account in this area, which requires it to act cautiously and avoid confrontation with it.

Nevertheless, involvement in the affairs of these two regions is vitally important for the Turkish economy, since they have vast supplies of natural minerals and serve as a new investment market.

There are several factors in Ankara's Caucasian policy which are also related to the country's socioeconomic upswing. The economic boom, which began in the mid-1980s and earned itself the name of a "Turkish miracle," has encompassed not only the large industrial centers of the country, but also its periphery. In order to meet the needs of the growing economy, Turkey needs a large amount of energy resources, mainly oil and gas, which it does not have. At that time, the deterioration in the situation in the Near East, particularly in the Persian Gulf zone, aggravated by the difficult relations between secular Turkey, which was oriented toward the West, and the Islamic regimes of the countries of this region and the Middle East, forced it to look for alternative sources of energy. They are available in several of the independent Central Asian (Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) and Caucasian (Azerbaijan) states, which are ethnically and culturally close to Turkey. In contrast to Tehran, which was striving primarily for political expansion in the Central Caucasian vector, Ankara was focusing on economic relations, primarily with Azerbaijan, which was prompted not only by its ethnic kinship, but also by its geographic proximity. Of course, geopolitical goals aimed at increasing Turkey's influence in both the Caucasus and Central Asia were important too. Here, Turkey's interests fully coincided with the geostrategic interests of the West, which was trying to squelch the dominating positions of both Russia and Iran in this region.

Ankara wasted no time in establishing political, economic, and cultural contacts with the new political forces which have been forming in the newly independent post-Soviet Turkic-speaking republics. In so doing, it stressed over and over that its interest in the Caucasus was motivated by its desire to restore the relations destroyed during the years of Soviet power with the Turkic-speaking peoples residing there. And there are rather large Caucasian diasporas in Turkey itself. According to some data, they amount to approximately 7 million people, including about 500,000 Abkhazians and almost 400,000 Daghestanis.[2] The Shamil, Northern Caucasus, and other societies function in the country, to which parliamentary deputies, businessmen, officers from the Turkish army, and journalists belong. Ankara is trying to use these social groups to expand its influence in the region.

In 2000, the Turkish government officially stated that would focus its attention not only on Central, but also on the "Greater Caucasus." At the same time, Ankara made new statements about the possibility of creating a commonwealth of Turkic states under its auspices. And as we have already noted, it has been activating its policy in this region as early as the beginning of the 1990s, by taking advantage of the temporary hiatus in Russia's presence in the Central Caucasus. Since this region is a vast market still unassimilated by Turkish capital, as well as a convenient springboard for penetrating Central Asia, Ankara wanted to assist in creating an economic management system in the Central Caucasus with close ties to its economy. The main obstacles were the unregulated state of Turkish-Armenian relations and the danger of renewing the hostilities interrupted in May 1994 in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

[1] See: Z. Batiashvili, "Huntington's Theory and Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003.

[2] See: K.S. Gajiev, *Geopolitika Kavkaza*, Moscow, 2001, p. 348.

Being keenly aware of the trend in the developed countries toward integration, at the same time (the beginning of the 1990s) Turkey came forward with the idea of broad regional cooperation in the regions where it hoped to assume a leading role. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSECO) created in Istanbul on 26 May, 1992 and financed by Turkey is also in keeping with this goal. All three states of the Central Caucasus are members of it. The BSECO focuses its activity on regional integration, which includes forming border economic zones and building a "Eurasian corridor" (TRACECA), or the new Great Silk Road, for transporting energy resources from Asia to Europe without passing through Russia and Iran. It stands to reason that this corridor was supported by the U.S. and the European Union.

The following factors show that Turkey is becoming a regional "power center:" first, its growing role after the war on Iraq and in the Persian Gulf; second, the change in the geopolitical situation throughout Eurasia; third, the formation of a "Turkic world," stretching from the Balkans to Xinjiang, where approximately 160 million Turks live who speak in dialects of the Turkic languages (in the CIS countries alone there are 20 different dialects), which, according to UNESCO, occupy fifth place in the world in terms of prevalence, and others. On the whole though, the neo-Ottoman evaluation of Turkey as a "world power center" defines its geostrategic role.[3]

As mentioned above, the Central Caucasus offers vast unassimilated markets and convenient transit to Central Asia for Turkish business, so Ankara is promoting the idea of broad regional economic cooperation, particularly within the framework of the BSECO. The Central Caucasian states are primarily attracted to this organization by the opportunities its format provides for developing economic cooperation. For example, the 16th session of the BSECO Parliamentary Assembly (PA) on 27-28 November, 2000 in Erevan reviewed questions of political, humanitarian, and economic cooperation in the 21st century, and the 17th session on 19-21 June, 2001 in Baku discussed the problems of strengthening legislation, increasing stability, building a law-based state, and fighting organized crime.[4]

Another vector of Turkish policy in the Caucasus is security. And here Ankara is not only acting as a NATO participant and representative, responsible for carrying out its policy in the region, but also as an independent player. And its strategy with respect to the Caucasian countries is based, first, on recognition of their territorial integrity, therefore Turkey supports Azerbaijan in its opposition against Armenia and is against a split in Georgia; second, on cooperation with the U.N., OSCE, and NATO aimed at maintaining stability in the Central Caucasus; third, on support of the political and economic independence of these states; and fourth, on counteracting Russia's influence and dominance in the region.

The relations between Ankara and Moscow during that period can be described as tough rivalry in the Central Caucasus. For several reasons, primarily due to Russia's traditional geopolitical position in the Caucasus, Turkey has been unable to gain leadership in the region. It has had to concentrate on its domestic political and economic problems, as well as on its foreign policy priorities in Europe, particularly in the Balkans and in the Middle East. The wave of Islamic revival in the country, the Kurdish issue, the tense relations with the EU, and the domestic economic crisis have prevented Turkey from exerting active influence on the situation in the Central Caucasian states. In turn, Russia has been concerned with its own economic and political difficulties, which were complicated by its changing foreign policy priorities, largely conditioned by Moscow's relations with the U.S. and NATO.

At the same time, despite the fact that both these countries have incompatible interests in the Caucasus, post-Soviet Turkish-Russian relations regarding this region have been developing within the framework of a model which prevented them from engaging in Cold War rhetoric. Of course, Ankara and Moscow openly clashed on such issues as Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, the Caspian pipelines, flanking restrictions in the Caucasus, the continued Russian military presence in Georgia and on the Armenian-Turkish border, and the Chechen problem. But nevertheless, both countries have been manifesting immense caution in order to prevent these contradictions from infecting the entire spectrum of bilateral relations. After all, for historical and geographic reasons, maintaining constructive relations with Russia is one of

[3] See: *Rossia i Zakavkazie: realii nezavisimosti i novoe partnerstvo*, Moscow, 2000, p. 64.

[4] See: *Rossia i Zakavkazie v sovremennom mire*, Moscow, 2002, p. 99.

Turkey's main security interests. What is more, the confrontational trends in their bilateral relations are being greatly alleviated by economic partnership and their understanding of the need for peaceful coexistence at the political level.

At the end of 1990s and during the first years of the current century, Russia's perception of Turkish policy in the Central Caucasus underwent a major overhaul. Moscow began to see Ankara more as a propitious partner than a dangerous threat. This was largely promoted by two factors, and the main one being gas. Turkey, along with Europe, is Russia's main sales market for blue fuel. Moscow has made its largest energy transactions with Ankara. In so doing, completion of the Blue Stream pipeline (which stretches along the bottom of the Black Sea) raised Turkey's dependence on Russian gas from 66% to 80%.[5] What is more, Russia is beginning to view Turkey more as a transit country for its energy resources, rather than simply an export market.

The second factor, which is promoted by positive changes in bilateral relations, is Moscow's reassessment of Ankara's strategic potential, due to which by 2001 it was already used to perceiving the latter not as a geopolitical threat, but as a potential competitor, dealing with its own difficult domestic political and economic problems. After radically reassessing the hierarchy of threats facing the country, the Russian Federation Security Council no longer considers Ankara's penetration into the Caucasus a high-ranking danger, and the acute political and economic crisis in Turkey in February-March 2001 seemed to confirm this conclusion.

A certain amount of progress in bilateral relations was made in the rivalry between the two countries over the export routes of Caspian oil. For example, in mid-2001, Moscow withdrew its objections to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route, and even called on Russian companies to participate in its laying and operation. But it still took energetic steps toward completing construction of the Tengiz-Novorossiisk main pipeline.

On the whole though, Russia prefers to view the problem of oil transportation in the geo-economic rather than the geopolitical context, placing the question of profitability higher than the idea of a balance of power in the region, that is, giving preference to economic competition, rather than to fighting for spheres of influence. Although Moscow still feels rather nervous about Washington and Ankara's plans in the Caucasian-Caspian region, the desire to avoid confrontation over this territory still prevails in Russian foreign policy.

After 9/11, the Caucasus as a whole began to play an important role in the war on international terrorism, and the U.S. and Turkey greatly toned down their critical evaluation of the Kremlin's actions in Chechnia. What is more, Russia did not put up too much resistance to America's plans to build military bases in Georgia intended for fighting international terrorism. There can be no doubt that this is having a positive effect on Turkish-Russian relations.

As for the ethnic conflicts in the Central Caucasus, Ankara and Moscow are currently in favor of a direct dialog between the opposing sides. Although there are certain disagreements over the solution to the situation, both states are showing a clear interest in implementing the Stability Pact for the Caucasus, while, of course, keeping their sights on their geopolitical goals in this region. At the same time, Turkey is concerned about the Russian military bases in Armenia and Georgia, seeing them as quite a serious threat. It would like the so-called CIS peacekeeping forces (essentially Russian) in the Central Caucasian conflict zones to be replaced with international contingents under the auspices of the U.N. or OSCE. Russia, on the other hand, is not happy about the cooperation between Turkey's military and special services and the corresponding departments of Azerbaijan and Georgia, in particular about the fact that in January 2002, Ankara, Baku and Tbilisi entered a trilateral agreement on regional security, which aroused Moscow's poorly disguised irritation.

It should be noted that Turkey has to take into account not only Russia's interests in the region, but also its rival Iran's. The rise in Ankara's and Tehran's role in the Central Caucasus is accompanied by their struggle for leadership and spheres of influence in the region, primarily for possession of its natural resources and the most important communication, fuel and energy, and strategic centers. But these two countries recognize the limits of their possibilities and are trying to coordinate their actions, the first with the U.S. and NATO, and the second with Russia. On the whole, Ankara's and Tehran's policy in this area largely depends on the

[5] See: O. Kojaman, *Postsovetskoe Zakavkazie v rossiisko-turetskikh otnosheniiakh: ot konfrontatsii k sotrudnichestvu* [http://www.avsam.org/rusca].

results of their cooperation with Moscow, which despite the current weakening of its position in the Central Caucasus, is still a sufficiently influential military and political force there. What is more, since there is no longer a standoff between the Western and Eastern blocs, American-Russian geopolitical rivalry for influence in this region is taking on major significance for the Caucasus.

Aspects of Cooperation with Georgia

One of the important areas of Ankara's Central Caucasian policy is its relations with Tbilisi. This is primarily related to Georgia's geographic location, which joins Turkey with Azerbaijan. What is more, transportation routes linking Russia with Armenia, Moscow's main ally in the region, pass through Georgia. In this way, Georgia is becoming a main opposition zone between the two geopolitical configurations of the U.S.-Turkey-Azerbaijan and Russia-Armenia-Iran. In principle, it is this opposition that is giving rise to the rather difficult political situation Georgia currently finds itself in. In so doing, it is obvious today that Georgia's inclination toward Turkey is stronger than it is toward other regional nations. But the Moscow factor is forcing official Tbilisi to act with extreme caution and take into account the interests of its northern neighbor.

Although during the first years of its independence, Georgia had a rather watchful attitude toward Turkey, relations between them soon entered a phase of mutually advantageous cooperation. At the present, three main areas can be identified in this sphere: transportation-communication projects (TRACECA); the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) pipelines; and contacts in the military sphere (in the NATO format and on a bilateral basis).

Under the TRACECA project, Ankara and Tbilisi entered an agreement (1993) on creating the shortest rail route, Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi-Baku, which, if it is successfully carried out, will significantly expand Georgia's international transportation routes and will give Turkey additional opportunities to carry out its economic projects in the region. Economic trade and other contacts between Turkey and Adjaria, which is primarily populated by Muslims, are developing in leaps and bounds.

Turkish-Georgian relations are becoming particularly close due to the fact that Georgia is currently viewed as an important transit country for Caspian hydrocarbons. Tbilisi is party to all the agreements entered by Ankara, Baku, and the oil companies. An important event in the strengthening of Turkish-Georgian relations was the opening of the Baku-Supsa oil pipeline on 9 April, 1998, which ultimately determined the pro-Western and pro-Turkish slant in Georgia's foreign policy. Along with the agreements signed on oil and gas projects at the OSCE Istanbul summit, important decisions were also made about withdrawing Russian bases from Georgian territory, which gave Ankara an additional stimulus for expanding military cooperation with Tbilisi with a prospective increase in its military and political presence in the region.[6]

It should be noted that the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum projects are important to Georgia for several reasons, the purely economic interests of a state which does not have its own supplies of energy resources being among them. What is more, along with convenient access to Azerbaijaini oil and gas, Georgia will obtain large amounts of transit fees since the pipelines will pass through its territory. Nevertheless, western capital is interested in the safety of the pipelines, which also means in the security of the countries through which they pass. For Tbilisi, though, guarantees in this sphere are currently playing a priority role in the country's sustainable development.

Since the first days of its independence, Georgia has been intent on removing Russian military bases from its territory, which Moscow responded to by increasing its pressure on Tbilisi. An example is 1993, when Abkhazian armed formations supported by Russia attacked Georgian government troops. At the same time, in the west of Georgia, an uprising of Z. Gamsakhurdia's supporters began, as a result of

[6] See: *Rossia i Zakavkazie v sovremennom mire*, p. 103.

which Eduard Shevardnadze was forced to make concessions to Russia, with the help of which the advance of Z. Gamsakhurdia's contingents on Tbilisi was halted. At that time, Eduard Shevardnadze agreed to Georgia's membership in the CIS and to sign a treaty defining the status of the Russian troops in the country. But this did not mean any changes in Georgia's strategic policy, that is, cooperation with Turkey and NATO.

It should also be noted that relations between Ankara and Tbilisi are expanding in the military sphere. For example, on 15 April, 1998, the Headquarters of the Turkish Armed Forces signed a Memorandum on Mutual Understanding with the Georgian Defense Ministry, which envisaged Turkish assistance in forming a corresponding material and technical base for Georgia and in training soldiers for its armed forces. What is more, joint Turkish-Georgian military-naval exercises have been held repeatedly in the Georgian sector of the Black Sea, during which operations were elaborated for ensuring the safety of future oil pipelines from the Caspian along the southern route.[7] An important step in intensifying military cooperation was the treaty On Modernization and Use of the Air Force Base in Marneuli, signed on 17 October, 2000. It stipulated that Ankara would modernize this base and allot 1,125 million dollars for this purpose. And Tbilisi was to assume responsibility for servicing Turkish airplanes free of charge and on a priority basis for five years. Speaking about this in parliament, Georgian Deputy Defense Minister G. Bechuashvili noted that this document did not call for turning the airport into a Turkish base and was not directed against any third party.

Activation of cooperation between Georgia, on the one hand, and Turkey and NATO, on the other, as well as the ongoing attempts to eliminate Russian military bases in the country, forced Moscow to find new way of putting pressure on Tbilisi. They included enforcing a visa system (5 December, 2000) and accusing the Georgian leadership of sheltering Chechen militants.

An agreement on security in the Caucasus (the Caucasian Pact) signed by Turkey and Georgia noted that not only Russia has the right to a presence in the region. This led to an extensive cooling off in relations between Moscow and Tbilisi.[8] What is more, Russia accused Turkey of sending guerillas and arms through Georgia to Chechnia, as well as of financing the training of terrorists in Karachaevo-Cherkessia and of supposedly sending money through Azerbaijan.[9] Moscow is particularly irritated by the military contacts between Ankara and Tbilisi, including the above-mentioned help from Turkey in modernizing the air force base in Marneuli. What is more, in October 2002, a Turkish military delegation arrived in Tbilisi to participate in the ceremony of the official opening of the Joint Military Academy, founded with assistance from Ankara and partially staffed by its professors.

Relations with Armenia

Here it should be noted that since Armenia acquired its independence, its relations with Turkey have been strained. Diplomatic ties between them have still not been established, and economic and cultural relations are essentially non-existent. Erevan continues to demand that Ankara recognize the so-called "Armenian genocide" in the Ottoman Empire in 1915, and is also making territorial claims against it. What is more, when he came to power in 1988, Armenian President Robert Kocharian promised that the question of "Armenian genocide" would be brought to the international level and become one of the state's foreign policy priorities.[10] (The practice of recent years shows that these were not empty words.) Ankara, in turn, is accusing Erevan of supporting the Kurdish militants. Between 1 May and 30 October, 1995, Turkey created a "security zone" in Kars, motivating this by the fact that Armenia was helping the Kurds, who were ousted from northern Iraq to Iran. What is more, Ankara blocked the air corridor linking the country to Erevan.

[7] Ibid., p. 356.
[8] See: *Izvestia*, 18 February, 2000.
[9] See: *Izvestia*, 12 September, 2000; *TDN*, 23 September, 2000.
[10] See: *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 14 September, 1999.

Another bone of contention in bilateral relations is the intensive and growing Armenian-Russian cooperation in the military sphere, which was manifested in particular in deliveries of Russian MiG-29 airplanes and S-300 surface-to-air missile complexes; the increase in the number of Russian military bases; the organization of joint exercises close to the Armenian-Turkish border, and so on. Turkey sees these actions as a threat to its interests in the region. Conflict relations with Ankara and Baku are pushing Erevan toward establishing closer cooperation with Russia, which is interested in "tethering" Armenia to itself.

As we have already noted, diplomatic relations have still not been established between Turkey and Armenia. Bilateral negotiations on opening a Turkish consulate in Erevan have not yielded the desired results due to the burgeoning of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. What is more, after Armenian armed formations seized the Kelbajar region of Azerbaijan, Turkey even closed its border with Armenia.

After Baku and Erevan signed a truce (May 1994), Turkish business circles tried to establish economic relations with Armenia, but each time official Ankara broke off these efforts. Its stance on this question remained staunch, regardless of the changes in leadership in the states in question. An example is the protocol signed in 1999 by representatives of the parties who were members of the Turkish coalition government. The part of the protocol devoted to Armenia notes that the normalization of bilateral relations is contingent on Erevan's renunciation of its hostile policy toward Turkey and liberation of the territory seized from Azerbaijan.

In 2000, the tension between them was hiked again during the discussion of "the Armenian genocide" in the Ottoman Empire in the legislative bodies of several western countries. This was preceded by intensified action by the Armenian lobby in 1999, when this problem was considered by U.S. Congress. And although Congress did not recognize the "Armenian genocide," the Armenian lobby in other countries continued to fight for this cause.

It would not be right to entirely blame the Armenian lobby for the hysteria raised around this issue. To some extent certain circles both in Russia and the West were interested in inflating it, which some researchers explain by Turkey's latest attempts to join the EU. The possibility of a change in the "balance of power" in the European Union after Turkey, which has immense human and economic potential, joins it is causing some members of this international organization to withhold a positive resolution of this question. The problem of the "Armenian genocide," on the other hand, is being used as another lever of pressure on Ankara and to delay its integration into the EU.

At approximately the same time as the "Armenian genocide" campaign unfolded in the West, the next stage in negotiations on the Karabakh problem began. The western countries, particularly the U.S., which all took a noticeably active position, mainly proceeded from their own interests, as motivated by their need to ensure security in the Caucasus. For it could become a corridor for transporting the oil and gas resources of the Caspian to the world markets. In order to implement the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline project and begin developing the Caspian's main oil fields, maximum efforts must be exerted to ensure the safety of these plans. Under these conditions, the OSCE Minsk Group (MG) hiked up the pressure on both parties to the conflict in order to bring them closer together on this issue. But although the MG representatives made statements about the need for a compromise on both sides, in reality they were putting the main pressure on Azerbaijan, which was particularly obvious from the three drafts the MG cochairmen presented to the conflicting parties. This was not in keeping with Azerbaijan's interests and cast aspersions on its sovereignty over Karabakh, which naturally aroused Baku's justified displeasure and prompted it to reject the document and take an even tougher stand on the issue. Turkey's position in this context was unequivocal, immediate liberation of all the Azerbaijani territory occupied by Armenian armed forces, followed by removal of the blockade and establishment of bilateral relations in the political and economic spheres. Erevan, on the other hand, which would like to normalize relations with Ankara, is still insisting that this process not hinge on the Karabakh problem.

On the whole, Ankara's position on this question was most clearly formulated in an interview V. Vural, international policy advisor to the Turkish prime minister, had with Reuters on 28 June, 1994: "There is no alternative to peace. Both countries, that is, Azerbaijan and Armenia, are exhausted, and the

parameters of a solution are in the offing: Karabakh remains Azerbaijani territory, but with cultural autonomy and relations with Armenia, and with a special status which must still be agreed upon."[11]

Proximity of Strategic Goals with Azerbaijan

Baku holds a priority position in Ankara's Caucasian policy. Along with their ethnic kinship, this is also promoted by the fact that, as noted above, Turkey is very interested in Azerbaijan's geographically advantageous location and its oil and gas resources.

Azerbaijan, in turn, has many reasons to strengthen cooperation with Turkey. Among them are Ankara's political clout in the Near East, that is, its political, military, and economic potential in this region, its close ties with the U.S., its membership in NATO, and so on. During our republic's transition to a market economy, Turkey's business experience, investments in the Azerbaijan economy, and the expansion of cooperation between business circles in both countries also played their role. Ankara is comprehensively and unequivocally supporting Baku in its conflict with Erevan. To some extent this support had a great impact on many international organizations changing their attitude toward the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

When the Soviet Union was in the process of collapse, Azerbaijan's struggle for independence did not go unnoticed by the Turkish leadership; in particular, even before the Soviet Union disintegrated, Turkish President T. Ozal made his first visit to Azerbaijan in March 1991. And on 9 November of the same year, Turkey was the first country in the world community to recognize Azerbaijan's independence. On 14 January, 1992, diplomatic relations were established between the two states. Then several agreements were signed, which formed the international legal base for further expansion of bilateral relations. On the whole, this period was characterized by an upswing in Turkic self-awareness not only in Turkey, but also in the republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus. In order to coordinate Turkic integration, an Agency of Cooperation and Development (TIKA) was created in 1992 at the Turkish Foreign Ministry. In October-November of the same year, a summit of the leaders of the Turkic-speaking states was held in Ankara, after which such meetings became a regular phenomenon.

Rapid Azerbaijani-Turkish rapprochement could not help but concern other regional nations with interests in the Central Caucasus, primarily Russia. The policy of official Baku, aimed at eliminating the Russian bases in the country, as well as its desire to enlist western companies in the production and transportation of Azerbaijani hydrocarbons dealt a significant blow to Moscow's interests. After Heydar Aliev came to power in the summer of 1993, the government of our country began steering a course toward rapprochement and normalization of relations with Russia, while also strengthening comprehensive ties with Turkey at an accelerated rate under the new conditions. According to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, between 1991 and 1999, more than 100 Turkish-Azerbaijani agreements were signed on cooperation in the economic, cultural, and other spheres,[12] as a result of which Baku became Ankara's main ally in the region. As Heydar Aliev noted at one time, "Turkey is a fraternal country, we are two countries of the same people."[13]

Ankara is focusing great attention in its Central Caucasian policy on settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. By supporting Baku, it is essentially counterbalancing Moscow, which is giving preference to Erevan in this context. But it should be noted here that Turkey is still less involved in this conflict than Russia. Official Ankara has noted several times that it supports Baku in the conflict, but it has no military participation in the conflict. Its assistance was felt not only during the active hostilities, but also after the truce entered in May 1994, which made it possible to expand Azerbaijani-Turkish mil-

[11] See: K.S. Gajiev, op. cit., p. 353.
[12] See: W. Gareth, *Turkey and the Caucasus. Domestic Interests and Security Concerns*, London, 2001, p. 5.
[13] *Ekho*, 26 April, 2004.

itary cooperation, support Azerbaijan in international organizations, and put pressure on the Armenian side. (In particular, in 1995, the Turkish Foreign Ministry instituted the position of ambassador on settlement of the Karabakh conflict.)

In 1997, it became known that Russia had given Armenia a large number of weapons totaling 1 billion dollars, which again raised the tension in the Karabakh issue. For example, this fact forced Azerbaijan and Turkey to activate their military and political relations. For this purpose on 5-8 May, 1997, Heydar Aliev made an official visit to Turkey, during which nine documents were signed, the most important being the Declaration on Intensifying Strategic Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey.

After meeting resistance from the OSCE Minsk Group, Azerbaijan found an ally in Turkey. What is more, as we have already noted, at that time the question of the "Armenian genocide" was one of the top priorities on the agenda, and Ankara was interested in coordinating its activity with Baku. On 12-17 March, 2001, Heydar Aliev made another trip to Turkey, during which bilateral talks were held on the Karabakh problem and on the question of Turkish-Armenian relations. What is more, an agreement was reached on the sale of Azerbaijani energy resources to Turkey (on the very first day of the visit a total of nine agreements were signed). On 14 March, Heydar Aliev spoke in the Turkish parliament, where he expressed his dissatisfaction with Ankara's passivity as part of the MG and said that he hoped for closer relations between Ankara and Baku in opposing Erevan's claims. In turn, Turkish President A. Sezer confirmed his country's official position and said that diplomatic relations with Armenia would only be possible if it returned the territory it occupied to Azerbaijan.

In March of the same year, an agreement was signed on expanding cooperation between the defense departments of the two countries, which Erevan evaluated as diplomatic maneuvering before the upcoming negotiations in Key West. They were held on 3-10 April, 2001. At that time, the Turkish press frequently criticized its government, accusing it of passivity in this issue. Commenting on this criticism, the country's leadership stated that it was using all the potential available to it, although it admitted that this was not a lot. The Karabakh problem was one of the issues Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem discussed with U.S. State Secretary Colin Powell during his first visit to the United States. Ismail Cem again proposed holding trilateral Azerbaijani-Armenian-Turkish negotiations on the Karabakh problem, which he first voiced in February 2001, but which the Armenian side rejected. However, on the whole, the degree of Turkey's participation in resolving this conflict is still rather indeterminate. Several observers expect its role in this process to increase soon, but another viewpoint is also quite widespread: many nations do not want Ankara to become involved in this opposition and would prefer to see Iran or Russia as mediator, rather than Turkey.

Nevertheless, in recent years, Ankara has clearly been striving to take Moscow's place in Baku's military and defense sectors, which are priorities for our country under conditions of the continued occupation of a fifth of its territory by Armenia. What is more, because of the disputed oil fields in the Caspian, Azerbaijan still has strained relations with Iran. Along with this, expansion of military cooperation with Turkey is viewed in Azerbaijan as a way of coming closer to NATO in the hope that should a crisis situation arise in the Caspian or in the region of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines, the West will help protect these projects. Baku is clearly steering a course toward greater military cooperation with Ankara and has stated it is in favor of accelerating the transfer of the Azerbaijani army to NATO standards, which was confirmed during a visit by Turkish Defense Minister S. Cakmakoglu to Azerbaijan in September 2000.[14] At that time, the discussion focused on creating a NATO stronghold on the Apsheron Peninsula and on incorporating Baku into Ankara's defense system.[15] In the past ten years, hundreds of Azeri soldiers have studied (and continue to study) in Turkish military academies, and dozens of Turkish officers are participating in force development in Azerbaijan.[16]

[14] See: *Turkish Daily News*, 21 September, 2000.

[15] See: *Izvestia*, 27 January, 1999.

[16] See: D.B. Malysheva, "Turtsia i Iran v borbe sa vliianie v Zakavkazie," *Rossia i Zakavkazie: poiski novoi modeli obshchenia i razvitia v izmeniaiushchemsia mire*, Moscow, 1999, p. 47.

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In closing it should be noted that some observers evaluate the expansion of military cooperation among Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Georgia as the precursor of a military alliance among these three states. At the moment, their national interests largely coincide. But Russia and Armenia are also drawing closer to each other, which has already led to the creation of a military alliance between Moscow and Erevan. In this situation, military cooperation among Ankara, Baku, and Tbilisi does not exclude a transfer of their relations in this sphere to a qualitatively new level. The antiterrorist campaign carried out by the U.S. and its allies in Afghanistan, as well as the war on Iraq gave another boost to progress in this area.

In this way, the first years of the new century have been marked by increased activity in the Caucasian vector of Turkey's foreign policy. This has become a very important geopolitical factor, without which it would be impossible to achieve political stabilization, settle conflicts, and ensure the development of integration processes in this region.

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF KAZAKHSTAN-BELARUS RELATIONS IN POLITICS, ECONOMICS AND CULTURE

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The attainment of independence by Kazakhstan and Belarus, their political makeup, reference points and priorities attract ever greater interest, because the political course of these countries, considering their strategic position (Kazakhstan lies at the center of Asia, and Belarus at the center of Europe), is crucial to the future of the modern world, to its order and equilibrium.

Belarus and Kazakhstan almost simultaneously renounced the formidable nuclear heritage of the former U.S.S.R. and are working consistently for a secure peace in adjacent regions: Kazakhstan, by calling a Conference on Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CCCBMA), and Belarus, by proposing the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Eastern and Central Europe. This proposal of the Minsk authorities is one of the alternatives to NATO's military and nuclear expansion to the east and could become an instrument for preventing the deployment of nuclear weapons in the wide corridor between the nuclear arsenals of Russia and the North Atlantic alliance. Such policies are a natural choice for countries that have suffered from nuclear tests.

The two republics have a common economic past: in the days of the U.S.S.R., Kazakhstan for decades remained a raw materials appendage of the Center, while Belarus was the "assembly shop" of Soviet engineering. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, when production relations were disrupted and the new sovereign post-Soviet countries were plunged into an economic crisis, each of them began looking for a way out of that crisis all on its own. But in the early 1990s the two republics were already faced with the challenge of resuming economic relations, which could only be done on the basis of integration, but this time on principles that were fundamentally different from the basic principles of the U.S.S.R. Such were the key strategic tasks on which the authorities of Kazakhstan and Belarus focused their efforts. The

two countries were pioneers of post-Soviet integration, because their strategic interests are complementary and interdependent. In fact, the founding documents of the CIS were signed in their capitals.

The political aspect of Kazakhstan-Belarus cooperation is one of its most significant aspects. Diplomatic relations between the two states were established during an official visit to Almaty (at that time the capital of Kazakhstan) on 14-16 September, 1992, by a Belarus government delegation led by V. Kebich, the then prime minister of the country. The embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK) in Minsk was opened in December 1994, and the embassy of the Republic of Belarus (RB) in Almaty, during President Alexander Lukashenko's visit to Kazakhstan in 1997.

Bilateral summit meetings are held on a regular basis. The most significant of these are as follows: first official visit by RK President Nursultan Nazarbaev to Belarus on 16 January, 1996; first official visit by RB President Alexander Lukashenko to Kazakhstan on 22 September, 1997; official visit by RB President Lukashenko to Kazakhstan on 3-4 November, 1999; official visit by RK President Nazarbaev to Belarus on 22-23 May, 2000; official visit by RK Prime Minister N. Balgimbaev to Belarus on 3 June, 1999; official visit by RB Prime Minister V. Yermoshin to Kazakhstan on 4-5 October, 2000.

The basis for political cooperation between the two countries was mainly laid in January 1996, during N. Nazarbaev's official visit to Minsk, when the areas and prospects of interstate cooperation were markedly expanded. The basic document in this sphere was the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed by the two heads of state.[1] Both sides pledged to develop relations based on the principles of international law, state sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders, and agreed to cooperate in order to strengthen peace and stability in situations affecting their interests. Another issue high on the agenda was the establishment of a Customs Union between Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia and the transition from the first stage of its creation to the second stage. The two sides also reached an understanding on the establishment of a joint commission on trade and economic cooperation, which was to prepare a package of proposals on increasing mutual supplies of goods and to exercise control over the implementation of the adopted documents. It was deemed advisable to strengthen and develop direct links between economic agents in Kazakhstan and Belarus.

In a joint communiqué on the results of the visit, the two presidents noted the existence of significant untapped reserves in the field of economic cooperation and declared the readiness of the two sides to upgrade and look for new forms of relations involving the use of financial resources and of the industrial, scientific and technological potentials of both states.

Consequently, the aforesaid comprehensive treaty not only gave a new impetus to wider political cooperation, but was also a major part of the contractual framework for bilateral relations. A regular exchange of opinion, both on a wide range of international policy issues and on the development of bilateral contacts, has become an established practice. The contractual framework for cooperation now consists of about 50 intergovernmental and interstate treaties and agreements. The most important of these are: Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation; Treaty on the Legal Status of Kazakhstan Citizens Permanently Resident in RB Territory and Belarus Citizens Permanently Resident in RK Territory; Agreement on Simplified Rules for Acquisition of Citizenship by Belarus Citizens Arriving for Permanent Residence in the RK and by Kazakhstan Citizens Arriving for Permanent Residence in the RB; Agreement on Measures to Ensure the Convertibility and Stabilize the Exchange Rates of the Kazakhstan Tenge and the Belarus Ruble; Agreement on Cooperation in Culture, Science and Education; Consular Convention,[2] and Treaty of Long-Term Economic Cooperation for 1999-2008. Most of these documents were signed during N. Nazarbaev's visit to Minsk in 1996, except the Treaty of Long-Term Economic Cooperation, which was signed during A. Lukashenko's visit to Astana in 1999. All these documents have been ratified by the parliaments of both countries, providing a solid legal basis for active and intensive development of the bilateral negotiation process in the political, economic and cultural fields.

Presidents Alexander Lukashenko and Nursultan Nazarbaev stand out among the initiators of integration within the CIS framework. Their political will has made it possible not only to get these processes underway, but also to make significant progress. The political aspect of relations between Belarus and

[1] See: V. Alesin, "K voprosu kazakhstansko-belorusskikh otnoshenii," *Diplomaticheskii kurier*, No. 1, 1999, p. 90.
[2] See: K.K. Tokaev, *Pod stiagom nezavisimosti. Ocherki o vneshnei politike Kazakhstana*, Almaty, 1997, p. 167.

Kazakhstan is measured by the results of integration within the CIS with the participation of Russia and Kyrgyzstan. There is no alternative to this integration (whatever its shortcomings), because this process is irreversible. All the political and economic achievements in this field—from the creation of the Customs Union to the signing of the Treaty on the Establishment of the EurAsEC and the idea of a Union of Four—are the result of political decisions at the highest level. Here again N. Nazarbaev and A. Lukashenko have played a major role.

As regards military-political and military-technical relations, work in this area (modernization of Kazakhstan's arms and military equipment at enterprises of the Belarus military-industrial complex, mutual supplies of military and logistic equipment, development of new models of arms and military equipment) has started under the Program of Long-Term Economic Cooperation for 1999-2008. In 2002, progress was made in the training of Kazakhstan personnel, primarily air defense specialists, at higher military educational institutions in Belarus. That same year the military attaché of the RK Defense Ministry at the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Russian Federation was also accredited at the RB Defense Ministry. However, relations in the military-political sphere have not yet reached a proper level: actual cooperation began only in the late 1990s in view of a number of problems in bilateral economic integration, of which military-political contacts are a component part.

Interparliamentary cooperation between the two states in matters of internal political construction has been stepped up in recent years. For example, representative delegations of Kazakhstan's Central Election Commission and two chambers of parliament (Senate and Majilis) took part as observers in the parliamentary and presidential elections in Belarus (in 2000 and 2001, respectively). In addition, a member of the Senate, P. Atrushkevich, led the team of CIS observers at the 2001 presidential election in Belarus. In the first half of 2001, members of the Belarus National Assembly paid a visit to Astana. In June 2002, Zh. Tuyakbai, chairman of the Majilis, paid an official visit to Belarus, during which the parties reached a number of agreements on coordinating the activities of the two states on a wide range of issues relating to state organization, intensification of interparliamentary contacts, and measures to enhance the efficiency of bilateral trade and economic relations.

As part of the efforts to establish direct contacts between the presidential administrations of the two countries, a highly productive working visit was paid to Minsk by a Kazakhstan delegation led by Ye. Utembaev, deputy head of the RK presidential administration. The range of issues discussed included matters of economic and social policy, selection and training of personnel, and interaction between different branches of power and trade union organizations.

In summing up the political aspect of cooperation, let us note its dynamic development, spurred by regular meetings between the leaders of the two countries within the framework of mutual visits and CIS summits. There is an active dialog at interparliamentary level, and direct contacts between the two presidential administrations have been developing.

The most complicated aspect of bilateral ties is trade and economic cooperation. Belarus and Kazakhstan are strategic partners. Their mutual economic interests derive, in the first place, from the high level of historically evolved economic, production and technological contacts in many sectors of the economy, from the objective need to maintain and develop them on an equal basis. Relations in this area are determined by the basic principles and conditions of the Treaty Between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on Deepening Integration in the Economic and Humanitarian Fields (signed on 29 March, 1996). In addition, Kazakhstan and Belarus have established a free trade regime without exception or limitation.

Belarus is interested in the products of Kazakhstan's ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy, in the supply of lead automobile batteries, hides, oil, grain, flour and cereals. And Kazakhstan has been buying Belarus wheel tractors, forage harvesters, trucks, household appliances, consumer goods and food products. In 1996-1997, mutual trade exceeded $200 million. At that time, Belarus was Kazakhstan's third largest trading partner (after Russia and Ukraine). These two years were marked by a surge in bilateral economic relations, including trade.[3] But in 1998 Belarus already ranked sixth among Kazakhstan's trading part-

[3] See: "Kazakhstan-Belarus: grani sotrudnichestva." Interview with L.V. Pakush, RB Ambassador to Kazakhstan, *Mysl'*, No. 12, 1998, p. 11.

ners within the CIS, and its share in Kazakhstan's total trade was only 0.9% (in trade with CIS countries, 1.9%). Compared with 1996, trade between the two countries had fallen sharply (to $83.1 million). Moreover, in its trade with Belarus Kazakhstan had a deficit of $38.9 million. Whereas in 1996 RK imports from Belarus increased 1.5 times, in 1998 they fell by almost 50%.[4] In 1999, trade was down to $37 million. At the same time, starting from 2000 Kazakhstan imports from Belarus have steadily increased (from $20 million to $40 million), while Belarus imports have decreased (from $45 million to $8-15 million). On the whole, compared with the 1991 figure of $250 million, mutual trade in recent years has decreased 4-5 times.[5]

So, an analysis of the two countries' trade and economic partnership over the past few years shows a lack of stability and of positive trends in mutual trade.

Even though the two states are interested in the establishment of joint ventures and financial-industrial groups, these problems have not been properly resolved in view of the geographical distance between the two countries and the resultant transportation costs. The difference in the economic models of the two countries has a noticeable effect as well. The centralized system of economic administration in Belarus differs radically from current practices in Kazakhstan.

The main reasons for the decline in trade include a lack of systemic efforts on both sides in implementing the agreements achieved and a lack of initiative among the business circles of the two countries (the main reason); inadequate use of traditional specialization patterns; significant differences in the legislative framework; and mutual nonpayments by economic agents. Other factors include low efficiency of joint ventures; high cost of transit of Kazakhstan and Belarus goods through the territory of Russia; insufficiently effective payment mechanism, under which payments can only be made in freely convertible currency; lack of a single quotation for the two national currencies; and the problem of collection of VAT and indirect taxes.

Measures designed to remedy these shortcomings are envisaged in the above-mentioned Program of Long-Term Economic Cooperation for 1999-2008. In the process of its fulfillment, it is necessary to address the following tasks:

- to bring closer together the legal frameworks of the two countries in the area of regulation of foreign economic activity and the tax system, and to carry out measures for the mutual protection of national commodity producers and for the development of interregional cooperation;
- to elaborate specific interstate projects and programs of economic cooperation and to set up joint ventures of different type and form of activity;
- to develop and make more effective use of transportation links;
- to work together to develop stock markets.

These transformations, which have to be carried out as part of a concerted structural policy, are connected with a profound structural adjustment of the production potential and affect the interests of both states. In this context, the parties are to consider proposals on the joint establishment and development of structure-forming lines of production, on the ways and forms of share participation in providing them with the necessary resources, and also on maintaining the production specialization of enterprises that are of key importance to the economic security of Kazakhstan and Belarus. This applies, in the first place, to the defense industry, instrument making, agricultural engineering, and light and food industry.

Let us note once again that special attention today is paid to the further implementation of Kazakhstan-Belarus agreements reached by the two presidents under the Program of Long-Term Economic Cooperation for 1999-2008. In 2001, deputy heads of government of the two states signed a specified Program of Long-Term Cooperation Measures for 2001-2008, which accentuates systemic efforts to unify

[4] See: L.V. Pakush, "Razvitie dvustoronnikh ekonomicheskikh otnoshenii—odno iz napravlenii integratsii Respubliki Kazakhstan v mirovuiu ekonomiku," in: *Integratsia Kazakhstana v mirovuiu ekonomiku: problemy i perspektivy*, ed. by M.B. Kenzheguzin, Almaty, 1999, p. 40.

[5] See: N. Sergeev, "V tsentre vnimania ekonomicheskogo sotrudnichestva." Interview with G. Aldamzharov, RK Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Belarus, *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 17 July, 2003.

the legal framework in such areas as taxation and foreign economic relations, mutual protection of national commodity producers, establishment of interstate business entities and joint ventures, creation of a securities market, and harmonization of approaches to WTO accession.

In the implementation of these agreements, the most significant progress has been made in matters relating to an exchange of investment projects and information on goods produced in both countries, steps to harmonize the regulatory framework in the field of tariff and nontariff regulation of foreign economic activity, establishment of branches of trading companies, and arrangement of annual participation by enterprises and trade organizations of the two countries in national exhibitions and fairs.

An analysis of these activities shows that there are no particular problems in the matter of creating a contractual basis for bilateral cooperation. The process of development of a regulatory framework is also running quite smoothly. However, the concluded agreements are mostly of a general character: they reflect the general principles of cooperation but, as a rule, do not specify the mechanisms for their implementation. Some sections of the Program, including those dealing with the development of commodity markets (organization of supplies of machinery, grain, oil and metals, leasing operations, establishment of trading companies and joint ventures, etc.), are being implemented on an irregular basis. Moreover, the 2002 and 2003 sessions of the intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation did not result in any serious progress in the matter of carrying out the ideas proclaimed in the Program.

At the same time, a considerable amount of work has been done to implement the provisions of the aforesaid Program relating to the agroindustrial complex. In particular, much attention is paid to long-term supplies of Kazakhstan grain to Belarus, notably in exchange for agricultural machinery. Over the past few years, the parties have arranged diplomatic monitoring of contracts, with the result that Kazakhstan has been receiving (on average) over 300 tractors per year.

Among the most promising projects one could mention the agreements on the establishment of shopping centers of the Minsk Tractor Plant (sale of tractors and spare parts, aftersales and leasing services) in different parts of Kazakhstan based on the former Kazselkhoztekhnika system. The Belarus side is prepared to take part in putting this idea into effect, provided it gets an official proposal from Kazakhstan on its share in the business and on the terms of use of buildings and engineering networks. Such an approach will simplify the system for purchasing tractors and spare parts, ensure price flexibility, and provide opportunities for leasing agricultural machinery.

In the short term, the understandings between Kazakhstan's agricultural producers and representatives of Lidselmash (producers of machinery for the full potato growing cycle) and Gomselmash (combine harvesters and forage production plant) are to be translated into concrete contracts.

Positive results in this area were achieved during a working visit to the Gomel Region in 2002 by V. Alesin, the then RK ambassador to Belarus. The parties agreed in principle on the establishment in Central Kazakhstan of technical maintenance centers for servicing agricultural machines fitted out with Belarus equipment (with the participation of Gomselmash and Bobruiskagromash); on the supply of equipment for transportation engineering on leasing terms (with the participation of Beltransmash); on the establishment of a joint venture for the manufacture of pneumatic seeding and mowing machines (on the basis of AstanaTechnopark with the participation of Lidselmash); on the possible implementation of a contract for the supply of Kazakhstan grain in exchange for forage harvesters; and on the supply of Kazakhstan rolled metal and small-displacement engines produced by the Petropavlovsk Plant for the needs of machine builders.

However, there are problems in this area as well. In Belarus, the annual shortage of grain for domestic needs is about 1-1.5 million tons, while the supply of Kazakhstan grain is irregular and fairly modest (up to 200 thousand tons per year). The reason is that Minsk is not prepared to pay for these supplies in hard currency, while Astana does not always agree to exchange grain for machinery. Hence the need to conclude a long-term intergovernmental agreement that would provide for annual deliveries of grain from state procurements in exchange for agricultural machinery. Similar arrangements are also possible for the supply of Kazakhstan tobacco, raw cotton and wool. So far such an agreement has not been signed, and this creates various problems.

Minsk and Astana depend on each other in freight transportation as well. Russia and Kazakhstan are transit countries for Western goods exported to China, India and other countries of Southeast Asia, with

which Belarus has well-established trade links (up to 4-5% of the republic's trade turnover). At the same time, trade routes to Europe, primarily transit routes for such goods of key importance to Russia and Kazakhstan as oil, run across Belarus. Of course, Minsk and Astana devote much attention to the development of their transportation systems in order to increase transit traffic through the territories of their countries. In view of this, it would make sense to develop mutually beneficial cooperation between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan in freight and passenger transportation by rail, road and air, and also in building pipelines.

Over the past two years, efforts have been made to develop Kazakhstan's transit potential, mainly in connection with the work being done by Belarus to put into operation the Northern Corridor of the Trans-Asian Railway, which runs through the territories of China, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland and Germany. In this context, one should note the fruitful efforts of the Kazakhstan embassy in arranging talks with the governor of the Brest Region, the RB minister of transport and communications, and representatives of the country's business community. The accent here was on an acquaintance with the region's transit potential and with the state and capacity of the rail and road freight terminals of the Baranovichi and Brest junctions. Thus, talks have been held to coordinate customs and transportation activities and to carry out a joint project for a demonstration run by a container train along the Suzhoubei-Astana-Brest-Berlin route. A significant contribution to cooperation in this area has been made by the representative office of the Kazakhstan Temir Zholy organization in Minsk. In June 2001, the state-owned Kazakhstan Airlines with the support of the Kazakhstan embassy opened a direct air link between Astana and Minsk.

But in the transportation field there are problems as well. Although the two states are EurAsEC members, many questions arise in connection with transit through Belarus territory of Kazakhstan citizens and cargoes. In many cases, currency held by Kazakhstan citizens is seized and cargoes confiscated. The RK embassy naturally tries to resolve such problems, but it is time to open a representative office of Kazakhstan's customs agency in Belarus.[6]

Minsk is interested in diversifying oil flows in terms of companies and supplier regions, which will help to stabilize oil imports and make more efficient use of the competitive advantages of the trading partners. An increase in oil supplies from Kazakhstan will undoubtedly promote bilateral cooperation in this area. As regards Kazakhstan, Belarus is of great importance to it as a transit partner in oil exports to Europe. Belarus tariffs for oil piped across its territory are lower than in other transit countries. And considering that Kazakhstan's oil refining industry is currently in a state of crisis, Astana could benefit from wider use of tolling arrangements to refine its oil at Belarus enterprises, with the possibility of subsequent sale of the resulting products in CIS and European markets.

In 2000, transit of Kazakhstan oil via Belarus totaled 2 million tonnes. In 2001, about 1 million tonnes of oil was refined under tolling arrangements.[7]

Bilateral cooperation in the oil business is based on mutually beneficial use of Kazakhstan crude oil and Belarus pipelines and refineries. By now virtually all questions have been resolved: patterns of sale and joint refining of oil (with subsequent sale of products) have been agreed. In the event, contract prices for crude oil are set at world level and in hard currency. Belarus is prepared to reduce tariffs for the transit of Kazakhstan oil to Poland and Germany. The thing to do now is to sign the intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in developing the two countries' fuel and energy complexes whose draft was initialed back in 2001. The optimal solution here is to set up a joint venture that would enjoy the same fiscal benefits as similar foreign companies. In addition, privatization in the Belarus petrochemical complex is getting underway, and this creates fairly good opportunities for Kazakhstan businesses. Over the past three years, RK diplomats have been working on the question of arranging Kazakhstan-Belarus cooperation in the oil sector. This initiative has been supported by the leaders of both countries, and their heads of government have repeatedly emphasized the need for mutually beneficial use of Kazakhstan crude oil in combination with Belarus oil pipelines and refineries.

[6] See: N. Sergeev, "V tsentre vnimania ekonomicheskogo sotrudnichestva." Interview with G. Aldamzharov, RK Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Belarus, *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 17 July, 2003.

[7] See: L. Pakush, "Nekotorye aspekty stimulirovania ekonomicheskikh vzaimootnoshenii Belarusi i Kazakhstana," *Al'Pari*, No. 1, 2002, p. 33.

With this aim in view, working meetings were held in Minsk in July 2002 between top executives of the KazMunaiGas company, high-ranking Belarus officials and the president of the Belneftekhim concern (with subsequent visits to refineries in Mozyr and Polotsk). These meetings have resulted in practical understandings in this area. Today Astana is making an allround cost-benefit assessment of possible cooperation.

In order to create an attractive image of long-term economic cooperation under the above-mentioned Program for 1999-2008 among the business community in both republics, it would make sense (in developing regional trade policy) to accentuate the fact that the final stage in the production (i.e., assembly) of Belarus products of interest to Kazakhstan will be transferred to the region of its consumption (sale). For this purpose, it is necessary to set up joint ventures and subsidiaries in Kazakhstan that would operate on production sharing principles.

Another promising area of cooperation in this context is share participation by Belarus economic agents in the development of modern high-technology lines of production in Kazakhstan (for example, transfer of technology, trademarks, know-how, etc.). In particular, Belarus has unique experience and research and production facilities in developing hard alloys (Belarus Powder Metallurgy Concern).

As we saw above, there are various reasons holding back the development of bilateral trade and economic relations. Here are some examples of measures taken to overcome these obstacles. In February 1999, the two countries signed an intergovernmental agreement on the principles of collecting indirect taxes on exports and imports, whose main purpose is payment of VAT at the place of consumption of goods. Mutual trade is to be based on international rules for levying indirect taxes in accordance with the most widely recognized "country of destination" principle. Its main advantage is that the state is fully in control of its revenue regardless of the impact of taxation rules applied in other countries. All taxes payable on imports remain in the importing state. In the event, the prices of export goods tend to go down, the competitiveness of goods increases, and productivity in both countries is enhanced.[8]

In order to normalize mutual financial settlements and to provide funding for Kazakhstan production projects in Belarus, the first bank with 100% Kazakhstan capital, AstanaEximbank, was opened in Minsk in September 2002. It was founded by the RK Grain Union and the firm Alibi with the organizational support of the Kazakhstan embassy. Much could also be done in this respect by Priorbank, whose financial resources have largely been formed with the participation of Austrian capital.

Yet another major area is more active cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian fields. During President Nazarbaev's visit to Minsk in January 1996, the two sides signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of culture, science and education. The main attention in this document is focused on culture and art, health care and medical science, and on the functioning of the Kazakhstan President's personal representative office at the Presidium of the Belarus Academy of Sciences. The work of this office helps to intensify contacts in the field of science. This includes mutual proposals by researchers for implementing their achievements in the national economic complexes of both countries, for joint research in basic science and joint development projects.

As part of this process, the rectors of two academies—under the presidents of Kazakhstan and Belarus—signed a Protocol on Cooperation in June 2002, which provides, among other things, for assistance in advanced training of research and education personnel, in organizing mutual practical training, and in joint research into the problems of government service and state administration.

Over 110 thousand ethnic Belarusians now live in Kazakhstan, mostly in the Akmolinsk, Western Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Kostanay and Pavlodar regions. The Belarus embassy in Kazakhstan pays special attention to this diaspora. Eight regional ethnic cultural centers have been set up in the country. So-called Renaissance schools established under the Minor Assemblies of the Peoples of Kazakhstan have opened classes for the study of the Belarusian language, the republic's history and cultural traditions. Since 1992, the cultural center Belarus has been working in Almaty. In the Western Kazakhstan Region there is a class where Belarusian is studied as a native language and a Belarusian Sunday school. Belarusian lessons have also been arranged on the Kokshetau radio. All these measures are designed to reduce Belarusian emigration from Kazakhstan. It was significant in the early 1990s, but has now decreased to four

[8] See: *Panorama*, 5 February, 1999.

or five thousand people per year.[9] One should note the considerable contribution of this diaspora to Kazakhstan's economy, politics and culture. For example, P. Atrushkevich, a Belarusian, for a long time headed the elite Architectural-Building Academy in Almaty, and was then elected senator and head of the Kazakhstan People's Assembly.

As regards Belarus, there are about 300 Kazakhs living in that country.[10] The Kazakhstan-Belarus Friendship Society set up in Minsk is working actively. To mark the centenary of the birth of the great Kazakh writer M. Auezov in 1997, one of the streets in the Belarus capital was named after him by decision of the Minsk city authorities.

In order to enhance the positive public image of Kazakhstan as the most politically stable and dynamically developing country in Central Asia, RK embassy officials in Belarus hold regular meetings with journalists, members of the public and the Kazakh diaspora in Belarus, and issue press releases on the democratic reforms in this country and its domestic and foreign policy strategy.

Efforts to propagate Kazakhstan's cultural heritage include such actions as the issue of an almanac (Great Steppe) in the Belarus journal *Vsemirnaia literatura*, which includes works by Kazakhstan poets and writers and articles on culture, a retrospective of Kazakhstan films, and many publications in the Belarus press on the centenary of S. Mukanov, writer and member of the Kazakhstan Academy of Sciences, on the 1500th anniversary of Turkestan, etc. As part of the activities to mark the 10th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence organized jointly with the Belarus Society of Friendship with Foreign Countries (2002), a number of newspapers held a quiz in order to propagate Kazakhstan's history, natural diversity, culture and current economic development, and also Belarus-Kazakhstan relations. A major segment of joint activities was the production by the Khabar Agency (Kazakhstan) of a documentary film, "Ten Years Older," with the participation of Belarus politicians. Materials showing Kazakhstan's approaches to CIS strategy and priority tasks, to the problems of bilateral cooperation and the mechanisms for resolving them were widely circulated in the host country.

In 2002, a notable event of public life in Belarus was the presentation of President Nazarbaev's book, *In the Stream of History*, published in Belarusian. A literary soiree held at the Belarus Society of Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was attended by public figures, scholars and artists. They spoke about the wide public response that the book was bound to have and about its importance in the bilateral exchange of cultural and sociopolitical experience.

So, Kazakhstan-Belarus relations can be tentatively divided into three stages. Stage one (1992-1995) is associated with the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations. Stage two (1996-1999) was much more dynamic. In particular, the contractual framework elaborated as the result of a series of mutual visits by the two heads of state provided a legal basis for the further development of mutually beneficial contacts. Relations in the field of culture began to gather momentum. At the same time, that stage is associated with the emergence of serious factors (subjective and objective) holding back the development of cooperation, primarily in the economy. During stage three (1999-2004), steps have been taken to remedy these shortcomings. Special note here should be taken of the signing of the Agreement of Long-Term Economic Cooperation for 1999-2008. At this stage, the two countries have also established military-political contacts.

On the whole, Kazakhstan-Belarus cooperation is characterized by an active political and economic dialog (in the latter case with some reservations), by equality and partnership within the framework of bilateral and multilateral relations. In this article we have focused on economic issues, and this is only natural. First, the economy is an area where Kazakhstan-Belarus relations have reached their fullest scope. Second, the complex and contradictory nature of mutual relations in this area points to its indisputable priority in bilateral ties. At the same time, successes in economic cooperation are impossible without intensive political contracts. Interaction between the two states, whatever its complexities, goes beyond the framework of interstate contacts and, in my opinion, is one of the cementing foundations of the EurAsEC and the CIS as a whole.

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[9] See: Yu. Kirinitsianov, "Kazakhstan i Belarus—razgovor bez lakirovki," Business Review *Respublika*, 15 February, 2001.
[10] See: N. Aidarov, *Stepnaia diplomatia odevaetsia vo frak*, Minsk, 1998, p. 137.

CENTRAL ASIA DEALS WITH ITS WATER PROBLEMS: A VIEW FROM KYRGYZSTAN

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The region has a conflict-rich history, including on ethnic grounds. Such conflicts have also been appearing during the post-Soviet period, although in very different forms. The newly independent states of Central Asia have not found it easy to establish their sovereignty. Age-long relations among its ethnic groups were often destroyed during the process, dealing a serious blow to the interests of its nationalities and states. Whereby the initial stages of these conflicts are often not apparent to the casual observer. Until shots are fired, houses burned down, and blood spilled, politicians frequently fail to believe that such conflicts exist in their states, and society only catches on after they escalate into open warfare.

At first glance, many conflicts in Central Asia can be classified as ethnic, that is, they look like clashes of diverging interests among members of different nationalities. But ethnic diversity as such is often far from the deep-rooted cause of these conflicts. In most situations, they are caused by a struggle for resources. In the past, these resources were necessary for physical survival, with wars and natural disasters being considered everyday occurrences. In today's world, the struggle for these riches is most frequently related not so much to survival, as to the desire for a more comfortable existence. The beginning of globalization provided much greater opportunities to compare the lifestyle of different nationalities and states, especially of those living side by side. For the political elites however, the struggle for resources was always conditioned by the desire to take control over and keep a hold of political power. And in Central Asia, it was also conditioned by the political elites' struggle for property, that is, for economic gain.

Water—A Source of Life and ... Conflicts

Many aspects of Central Asia's present-day development are related to the struggle for resources, for example, the situation with regional security and cooperation. The problem of water supply is one of the most striking examples of how the struggle for resources is hindering integration and aggravating interstate contradictions and ethnic discrepancies. Water has always been a vital and objectively necessary resource in Central Asia, not only for human survival, but also for the development of their civilizations. Documents bring us information about how conflicts relating to water use also occurred many centuries ago. For example, Turkmen legends mention the old riverbed of the Amudarya and perfidious Khiva clans, whose actions led to the drying up of the Sarakamysh Lake and forced migration of the local tribes.

These events come to the surface in relation to a project being carried out today by Turkmenistan involving the building of gigantic artificial lakes in Karakumy. One of them, the Zeid artificial lake, will be joined to the Amudarya by a 25-kilometer canal. Water from this river will feed the new reservoir. Work is going on at the site around the clock. The planned width of the canal is 100 m, with a depth of 15 m. Specialists are flabbergasted by these indices, since they are really enormous for structures of this kind. Other parameters of the artificial lake are also impressive: it is more than 100 km in radius, and the water surface will occupy an area of approximately 40,000 hectares. Zeid will be able to take 3 billion cubic meters of water.

And this is far from Turkmenistan's only project. In May 2000, the country's president, Saparmurad Niyazov, announced the beginning of work on a reservoir in Karakumy, to which drainage water from all the velaiats of the country will be channeled via collectors. This project, which earned the name of Turkmen Lake, became the republic's largest construction site. Ashghabad's plans are truly grandiose. But they are obviously related to the problem of regional security, integration, and the region's sustainable development on the whole. For Turkmenistan will tale the water for its new reservoirs from the Amudarya. Its insufficient runoff has already largely provoked the crisis of the Aral Sea. It used to be the fourth largest closed water area in the world, but today it has lost more than 60% of its volume. Its water level has dropped by more than 16 m. The Aral's exposed seabed, which constitutes 40-50,000 sq km, is dispersing hundreds of thousands of tons of sand and toxic salts. More than 150,000 people have already left Karakalpakia, which in some places is essentially unfit for habitat.

The water resources of the Amudarya basin have long been exhausted. This is the largest river in Central Asia, and, particularly in its middle and lower reaches, it is literally dissected by a system of canals. What is more, the extent to which the new large-scale Turkmen projects are taking into account the interests of other countries in the region is a very serious question, to which there is still no answer. Whatever the case, this example shows that water and everything associated with it is a source of potential conflicts.

These conflicts may not only be interstate. A case in point is the situation at the beginning of 1992 in Dushanbe: the alternative meetings in the capital of Tajikistan, on Shakhidon and Ozodi squares. And the main demands of the power instigating these meetings, which was later called the demo-Islamic opposition, was the removal of specific figures (S. Kenjaev and R. Nabiev). But the speeches of the opposition leaders also criticized the authorities, saying that the republic was "criminally," in their words, resolving some of the problems related to water. The poorly planned building of powerful hydropower plants in some cases led to ethnic groups being forced to resettle elsewhere. This aroused discontent, which was skillfully used during aggravation of the political struggle between the regional clans. As a result, a civil war began which lasted for several years. Water, as we see, was among the reasons—albeit not the main, but still related—for the development of the internecine strife.

Kyrgyzstan in the Epicenter of a Conflict of Interests

Here we will look at only one side of the water problem, whereby we will try to view the situation from the standpoint of Kyrgyzstan, which is not the most developed state in the region.

The Central Asian countries can provisionally be divided into two groups. The first consists of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and the second of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. The first group of states does not have large supplies of hydrocarbons, which constitute quite a large share of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan's export. But on the other hand, the region's rivers originate in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and these republics are trying to develop their hydropower industry. However, the second group of states, particularly Uzbekistan, needs large amounts of water to meet its agrarian needs, since more than 90% of Central Asia's gross crop growing product is produced on irrigated land. In Kazakhstan, almost 75% of water drawoff goes to meet the needs of agriculture.

And this is the gist of many contradictions among the region's states. The thing is that to ensure continuous operation of its hydropower plants, Kyrgyzstan must create special conditions for using the available hydro resources. These conditions, strictly speaking, consist of saving water and accumulating it in reservoirs during the summer, and expending it mainly in the winter. But the second group of countries in the region needs most of its water for irrigation, that is, in the summer, when the crops ripen, for which it should be accumulated in the winter.

Kyrgyzstan's natural and geographical features largely precondition the standpoint upheld by the republic's leadership with respect to its regional neighbors. The local relief makes it impossible to fully develop most of those agricultural industries which Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are intensively developing. And apart from the mining sphere and transportation infrastructure in the high mountain area, Kyrgyzstan's natural conditions are primarily a hindrance and not a help in building up industry. At the same

time, the republic's mountains act as a kind of natural barrier to the movement of moist air masses and promote their accumulation. The country's water supplies are characterized by the following indices: full river runoff amounts to 51.2 cubic km, potential volumes of subterranean water to 13 cubic km, lake volumes to 1,745 cubic km, glacier supplies to 650 cubic km, precipitation to 104 cubic km, gross moisture content of the territory to 73.1 cubic km, and evaporation to 52.8 cubic km.

Admittedly, according to scientists, the glacierization area is steadily receding. According to their forecasts, by 2025, the glacierization area in Kyrgyzstan will shrink on average by 30-40%, which will lead to a decrease in water content of 25-35%. This circumstance will aggravate the problem of supplying the region with water even more. For example, whereas in Asia as a whole, surplus resources constitute 77.2% of the total runoff, in Central Asia, this index is already 0%! And this is even taking into account that the increase in water consumption in Central Asia was significantly less than in other regions of the mainland: between 1980 and 2000, it amounted to 1.29-fold in Central Asia, to 1.75-fold in South Asia, and to 1.64-fold in Asia as a whole. In other words, water, as a vital resource for the population's livelihood and industrial and agricultural development in Central Asia, is clearly in short supply. This, without a doubt, is one of the main factors limiting the progressive development of any given state.

For example, Kazakhstan, which is located in the zone of insufficient water content, constantly experiences a shortage of drinking water. In terms of its supply, the republic occupies last place among the CIS countries: it has 37,000 cubic m of water a year per sq km of its territory, and only 6,000 cubic m per person. The intensity of water intake in Kazakhstan has long exceeded natural water replenishment. The shortage of water is creating a serious threat to the state's sustainable development. This is also due to the fact that only 56% of surface water resources are formed on average in the republic (different years are characterized by different water content indices), and the other 44% comes from neighboring countries.

Kyrgyzstan is still a state with the highest supply of water resources. On average, there are 258,000 cubic m of water a year per sq km of the republic (in the CIS states this index is 212,000 cubic m). As scientists emphasize, Kyrgyzstan is the only Central Asian country whose water resources are fully formed on its own territory. There are more than 35,000 watercourses on its mountain summits, which form the annual supply of drinking water, approximately 51 billion cubic m, that is, almost half of the region's entire watercourse.

The republic's water resources are inseparably related to one of the leading branches of its economy, power engineering. At this juncture, we should take a small excursion into history. In 1914, there were only five small power plants in Kirghizia with a total capacity of 265 kW. It was the industrialization policy alone that led to a gigantic upswing in this sphere. The Bolsheviks were correct in their assumption that power engineering could become the backbone of the republic's economic development. Essentially all capacities were built in the Soviet era, and prospective facilities for construction were also defined, which the government of independent Kyrgyzstan has been trying to complete for many years. In 2000, 17 power stations with a total capacity of 3.6 million kW were functioning in the republic.

The main place in power engineering is occupied by hydropower plants, which produce the cheapest electricity. Of the fifteen hydropower plants, the most well-known complex is on the Naryn River, which includes five hydropower plants. The most important elements of this cascade are the Toktogul reservoir and the Toktogul hydropower plant. The latter went into operation in 1976, its capacity is equal to 1,200,000 kW. Other hydropower plants of this cascade are not as grandiose: the capacity of the Kiurp-Saiskaia is 800,000 kW, and of the Uch-Kurganskaia, 180,000 kW. There are also several unfinished hydropower plants in the republic which do not meet the projected indices. They include the Tash-Kemiurskaia hydropower plant, with a capacity of 450,000 kW, and the Shamaldy-Saiskaia hydropower plant of 240,000 kW. What is more, several small hydropower plants are in operation, with a capacity of up to 42 MW, which annually produce up to 125 million kW/h of electricity. It is considered that the country's gross hydropower potential amounts to 142 billion kW/h, technical potential to 73 billion kW/h, and economic potential to 48 billion kW/h. In terms of the last two indices for the CIS countries, Kyrgyzstan yields only to Russia and Tajikistan.

Of Central Asia's total hydropower potential, Tajikistan accounts for about 70% (this republic's hydropower potential is estimated at 31,385,000 kW), and Kyrgyzstan for 21%, where, in addi-

tion to hydropower plants, there are also two thermal power plants (in Bishkek and Osh), with a capacity of 609,000 kW and 22 MW, respectively. On the whole, power engineering provides approximately 20% of the country's GDP. What is more, according to specialists, only 8-9% of its hydropower potential is currently being used.

Nevertheless, such impressive indices are a source of certain problems in Kyrgyzstan's relations with its regional neighbors. As we already noted, in Central Asia there are two groups of states. Along with the obvious difference in the range of export commodities compared with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and partially Uzbekistan, in Kyrgyzstan there are no major industrial branches requiring significant resources of water. The gross water consumption of the republic's entire industrial sector amounts to 525 million cubic m (approximately 5.7% of its total consumption). But for the states in the second group, particularly for Uzbekistan, the shortage of water is catastrophic in the direct sense of the word. The water deficit in several areas of the country, in particular in Karakalpakia, makes it possible to talk about a social and environmental crisis. There is not only insufficient water for agrarian, but also for the population's everyday needs. As a result, the problem of its supply has long reached the level of interstate relations and become a topic of acute disagreements.

It should be noted that in Soviet times, a solution was always found to the problem of water supply for the needs of the national economy. But conflicts arose after the Soviet Union collapsed and the integrated management mechanism was destroyed. Whereby, as early as 18 February, 1992, the newly independent countries of the region signed an agreement in Alma-Ata on the joint use of Central Asia's water supplies, including on the need to retain the existing management system of the resources of the Amudarya and Syrdarya basins. They later confirmed this decision in Nukus (on 20 September, 1995) and in Kzyl-Orda (on 19 April, 1996). But in practice, they were all trying to achieve their own ends, so the agreement mechanism did not work as efficiently as it should have, although attempts were repeatedly made to establish it on a market basis. In general terms, the system was supposed to look as follows: Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, sacrificing their interests, agreed to supply water in large amounts in the summer, receiving natural gas, coal and oil in the winter in return. Dozens of meetings of the leaders of the Central Asian states at various levels were devoted to discussing the aspects of this system, which mainly concerned delivery volumes and prices.

Conflict of Arguments: A No-Win Contest

From the viewpoint of official Tashkent, Bishkek, by holding onto water in the summer, uses it for producing electricity which is not consumed in the republic, but exported. On the other hand, Uzbekistan needs water in the summer for feeding its population, that is, its need looks more justified. But this stance is not without its flaws. Tashkent uses a large amount of water for industrial needs and growing cotton, which, by the way, like electricity, is exported. On the other hand, Uzbek experts note that whereas in the 1980s, the republic grew cotton on approximately 2 million ha, this area has currently shrunk to 1.5 million ha, and cotton production has been cut back from 5.7 million tons to 3 million tons (the 2000 harvest). In so doing, in their opinion, the reduction in this index partially (by 1 million t) occurred precisely due to transfer of the Naryn River to the "energy" regime, whereby the winter runoff doubled and the summer runoff decreased by half. Consequently, the land irrigated with water from Kyrgyzstan became less productive in the summer, and Bishkek was able to increase its electricity production by 80% in the winter. Finally, Tashkent claims that due to the winter drainage of water in Kyrgyzstan, more than 130,000 ha of land have been submerged in Uzbekistan over the past ten years.

Continuing this practice threatens Uzbekistan not only with a significant decrease in its ability to provide the population with water in such large cities as Namangan, Andizhan, Kokand, and Ferghana, but could also lead to a deterioration in the epidemiological situation in these densely populated regions, or have disastrous consequences in general.

It is difficult for Bishkek to take into account Tashkent's demands, that is, give it larger amounts of water in the summer, for several other reasons. Kyrgyzstan is one of the poorest republics in the region as it is. It cannot resolve this problem without modernizing many facilities of its national economy, which requires investments. The republic also requires enormous funds for power engineering, which needs constant renewal of its basic stock. Suffice it to say that the auxiliary equipment of the Toktogul hydropower plant has already exhausted its mechanical resource. Reconstruction with complete replacement of equipment must be carried out at the Uch-Kurganskaia hydropower plant. And on the whole, more than 70% of the network and structures of the country's water supply and irrigation system is in need of urgent reconstruction and refurbishing. Therefore, in response to the complaints of its neighbors, Bishkek often asks them to pay for reconstructing and maintaining its hydropower complexes.

What is more, Kyrgyzstan does not have a large surplus of water, on the contrary, it is even feeling its shortage. For example, whereas in 1999, the highest index of the water volume in the Toktogul reservoir reached 16.3 billion cubic m (with a projected potential of 19.5 billion), in 2002, it dropped to 8.8 billion cubic m. The Toktogul hydropower plant was designed to operate under particular conditions: it stops working in the winter, and during this time its neighbors supply the republic with energy resources. Other technical problems are also becoming obvious. In particular, the water flowage in the Toktogul reservoir is dropping, and the prime cost of electricity production is increasing. The latter is directly related to the drop in water level in this reservoir: at a water volume of 16 billion cubic m, 2.3 cubic m are required to produce one kW/h, while at a volume of 10 billion cubic m, this index rises to 3.03 cubic m, and at 6 billion cubic m to as much as 4.5 cubic m. This means that at essentially the same passage of water through the hydropower plant turbines, the amount of electricity produced decreases by half.

Kyrgyz experts claim that the volume of water the republic "transfers" to its regional neighbors amounts to 17.572 cubic km, including 6.591 cubic km to Kazakhstan, 9.559 cubic km to Uzbekistan, and 1.442 cubic km to Tajikistan. In turn, Kyrgyzstan is receiving 402 million cubic m of water from its neighbors, including 325 million cubic m from Uzbekistan, and 77 million cubic m from Tajikistan (the Kairakkum reservoir).

From time to time, disputes flare up in Bishkek about the water use conditions in the Central Asian states. They are becoming a topic of discussion in the country's parliament, filling the pages of the main newspapers, and are constantly raised on television and radio programs. In so doing, a very attractive thesis is frequently put forward: "water is a commodity, and a commodity must be paid for." This means that the neighboring republics should pay for the water Kyrgyzstan "delivers" to them.

Attempts to enforce this argument in the norms of national legislation were made during the discussion and approval of the Law on Interstate Use of Water Facilities and Water Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic. The same thing can be seen in the actions of parliamentary deputies who refused to ratify several interstate agreements, for example, On the Use of Water Facilities of Interstate Water Use on the Chu and Talas Rivers. These actions even aroused an international response. For example, during an official visit to Kyrgyzstan in 2001, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev stated that this law does not have a legal basis, money should not be charged for irrigation water, this contradicts international law and is totally unacceptable to Kazakhstan. The parliamentary deputies of Kyrgyzstan essentially presumed that a fee would not be charged for all the water of the rivers that flow from the republic to neighboring states, but only for part of it, but that part is quite significant—21 billion cubic m.

These same parliamentary deputies published open letters to the president and first vice premier of Kazakhstan explaining their position and, in particular, presented very interesting data. In Soviet times, more than 2 billion Soviet rubles were spent to build Kirghizia's irrigation facilities. Between 1986 and 1991 alone, more than 68.3 billion cubic m of water were delivered from the Toktogul reservoir to the fields of neighboring Union republics. For this amount of water and the electricity it consequently did not produce, Kirghizia obtained 11,155,000 tons of coal, 3,598,000 tons of heating oil, and 76.5 million cubic m of natural gas from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. But after the collapse of the Soviet Union, these deliveries stopped and Kirghizia's neighbors demanded high prices for their payment. Only the Toktogul hydropower plant provided Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan with the possibility of increasing the area of irrigated land by 400,000 ha, as well as raise the supply of irrigation water from 70% to 90% for another

918,000 ha. The Uch-Kurganskaia hydropower plant made it possible to additionally irrigate more than 45,000 ha of land in Uzbekistan, and the Andizhan reservoir (with a volume of 1.7 billion cubic m), 340,000 ha. At present, Kyrgyzstan uses only 260 million cubic m from the Papan hydropower plant, with a capacity of 700 million cubic m of water, for its own needs. On the whole, with the help of these reservoirs, Uzbekistan could supposedly double the area of its cotton fields. But this data is somewhat dubious, since clear elements of subjectivism and political engagement were included in the method for calculating them. What is more, discrepancies can frequently be found in the indices presented. But discrepancies in details should not eclipse the main point—does a state have the right to charge for water or not.

Kyrgyz experts scrupulously estimated the detriment to the republic from the exploitation of hydropower facilities, which they call interstate, although in this case this term is very disputable. Building these facilities led to the submersion of 47,000 ha of fertile land in Kyrgyzstan, which in cost terms amounts to 129.5 million soms (in 2001 prices) in annual losses. The annual loss from not producing electricity during the fall and winter, on the other hand, is equal to 61.5 million dollars. Between 1992 and 2000, the debt of neighboring countries which consume Kyrgyzstan's water resources amounted, according to the same estimates, to 140.8 million dollars. In the indicated period, neighboring states were supplied with more than 78 billion cubic m of water free of charge from the Toktogul reservoir alone, whereas Bishkek had to pay more than 669.3 million dollars for natural gas, oil, and coal. Kyrgyz experts claim that the annual economic gain from the use of their country's water resources and facilities amounts to 360 million dollars for Uzbekistan, 240 million dollars for Kazakhstan, and 60 million dollars for Tajikistan. And due to non-regulation of the drainage from the Toktogul reservoir, Uzbekistan alone could be deprived of about 35% of the profit it should receive from exporting the cotton it will no longer be able to grow. But the parliamentary deputies of Kyrgyzstan presumed the republic would be receiving very little by charging for water—around 2% of the above-mentioned economic gain. More than 25 million dollars are allotted from its budget for the maintenance and operation of the republic's irrigation facilities. And the amount of compensation its neighbors pay comes to 14.8 million dollars a year, that is, less than 0.1 cent per cubic m of water. This is tens of times lower than similar rates in other countries, which the Kyrgyz experts used as their reference point.

On the other hand, Bishkek does not like the situation where it is forced to deliver water to its neighbors free of charge, but buy fuel from them at high prices. So the disputes and conflicts are frequently over the price of this fuel, which the republic is simply unable to pay for on time and in full.

In response to its non-payment, Uzbekistan usually stopped deliveries of natural gas, whereby frequently in mid-winter at the peak of the cold season. As a result, escalation of the conflict was observed in Kyrgyzstan, since in the absence of blue fuel in the winter electricity consumption dramatically rises (by 10 million kW a day). It is impossible to prevent its overconsumption since the cold prompts the freezing people to make an active social protest. As a result, the republic's leadership had to adopt measures aimed at increasing the production of electricity, which, in turn, leads to an increase in water drainage by several hundreds of million cubic m. This flow bears down on Uzbekistan, destroys dams, submerges farm land and even some population settlements in its part of the Ferghana Valley, arousing justified protests from the local residents. And since this part of the Ferghana Valley is more populated and has fewer jobs, any aggravation in social tension here is fraught with dangerous consequences. So we end up with a vicious circle of mutual complaints.

Not Every Commodity Has Its Buyer

In principle, international law permits the possibility of treating water not only as a state's personal property, but also as a commodity which can be sold to interested entities, including other countries. In several international documents, water is viewed not only as a natural resource, but also as an economic commodity. And in world practice, there have been cases when payments for water, for submerged areas, for spending on reservoir exploitation, and so on have been made between different countries. But nev-

ertheless, the details are always important in jurisprudence. Professionals working in this sphere precisely delineate the problem, depending on which water they are talking about. There are natural and man-made waterways, internal (within the limits of one state) and those on the territory of several states. The legal conditions for using the water in them cannot be identical, and are not.

As far as Kyrgyzstan goes, the matter concerns the possibility of selling the water of transborder rivers: the Chu, Talas, Naryn, Karadarya, Aksai, Saryjas, and Chatkal. But with respect to these rivers, international law does not recognize the unlimited possibilities of any state located on the banks of this river to carry out any actions with its water at its own discretion (arbitrarily) which may be of detriment to other countries also located on the banks of the river in question. This approach was stipulated for example in the international convention On the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, adopted in Helsinki on 17 March, 1992. In keeping with this document, certain states (in the terminology of the convention—"coastal states") should refrain from measures which could lead to a negative transborder effect. (Kyrgyzstan is not a party to this convention.) The prosperity of the states which use the water of these rivers is based precisely on the legal recognition of the need for mutually advantageous use of the benefits the water of these natural waterways entail. In other words, general prosperity is only possible on the basis of natural and inevitable limitations of the rights of each individual state regarding the use of the water.

From this it follows that based on international law, attempts by one state to unilaterally impose conditions on its neighbors whereby the water of transborder rivers is treated as a commodity are unlikely to be successful. And not because Bishkek simply has nothing with which to ensure compulsory implementation of these conditions, but mainly due to the fact that by applying such measures it will largely be contradicting the generally accepted norms of international law. And the fact that the republic itself consumes only about 7% of the water annually accumulated in its reservoirs is still not sufficient and indisputable legal reason for it to insist on a unilateral solution to the problem.

However, in so doing, Kyrgyzstan cannot be accused of trying to achieve its own ends, without taking into account the interests of its neighbors. The situation with water use in the region really is extremely complicated. There is a conflict of interests among the sides and no doubt a solution must be found to this situation. The declarative approach, expressed in the formula "let's leave everything as is," is unacceptable here, since it does not suit all the republics concerned. But the Central Asian countries have adopted such declarations twice: an agreement signed in 1992 by Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizia, and Tajikistan enforces the formula of equal rights of the states to the use of water resources, and it is also set forth in the Nukus declaration of 1995, where the matter concerns the adherence of the regional states to implementing documents adopted earlier on water use.

A compromise is necessary, but it cannot be reached. For example, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have repeatedly rejected Kyrgyzstan's arguments. It should be recognized that there are egoistic elements in the stances of all the parties to the conflict. For the situation itself largely arose because the system of compromise created during Soviet times was destroyed, and nothing new was created in its place. During the Soviet era, the development of irrigation agriculture in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan was largely related precisely to the fact that the Union republics of the region were supplied with water and energy and could introduce hundreds of thousands of hectares of new land into agricultural turnover with the help of the reservoirs and hydropower plants built in Kirghizia.

The irrigation resources of Kirghizia's reservoirs were originally oriented toward supplying water to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan: Kirghizia itself was allotted a limit of 11.9 cubic km of water (25% of its total resources), and the neighboring republics received 35.3 cubic km (75%). In so doing, a compromise of interests was reached on the basis of the mechanisms of the centralized planning system of revenue redistribution. Some of the profit from the sale of the agricultural products grown went to the budget of the Kirghiz SSR. Kyrgyz sources claim, for example, that during the 22 years of operation of the Toktogul hydropower plant alone, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan received more than 6.9-7 billion dollars in clear profit, during the twenty years of operation of the Orto-Tokoisk reservoir, Kazakhstan received more than 550-600 million dollars in clear profit, and from the Kirov reservoir, 150 million dollars. As a result of the use of Kirghizia's water resources, neighboring republics supposedly obtained a total of 7.6-8 billion

dollars in clear profit. But only 500 million rubles was annually allotted to the budget of the latter. In other words, from the viewpoint of the Kyrgyz side, the operating cost of Kirghizia's irrigation facilities was included in the price of the end product of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan's agrarian sector, which means we can say it has the right to count on a certain percentage of the profit obtained from the sale of this product.

From time to time, official Bishkek demands compensation from its neighbors. In particular, it insists on a payment of 109.78 million dollars for the operation of the Nizhne-Naryn cascade of hydropower plants under irrigation conditions, that is, not counting the production of electricity. And it also thinks that this sum is 7-fold lower than the revenue obtained by Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan when using water for irrigation. It must be noted that there is a certain logic in these arguments. But this is not enough to incorporate it into the tedious language of interstate agreements, since the other sides, for entirely understandable reasons, prefer not to pay attention to such arguments. What is more, in our opinion, Kyrgyz experts are right who suggest looking for a solution to the conflict not on the basis of "selling water as a commodity," but by creating a mechanism for Bishkek's participation in the profit of the agriculture of neighboring states. But this alternative has its difficulties too, since the situation with cooperation and integration in Central Asia leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, from our viewpoint, the search for mutually acceptable solutions to the problem of joint water use has its prospects. This requires stepping up the work of the Interstate Coordination Water Management Commission created as early as the beginning of 1992. The convention mentioned above about the use of transborder waterways just happens to be aimed at organizing cooperation among the riverside parties "on the basis of equality and reciprocity" (Art. 3.6 and Art. 9.1).

It should be kept in mind that the region's water resources are currently being used essentially to the max. Kyrgyzstan, as we have noted, has potential advantages in this respect compared with some of its neighbors, but these advantages have to be realized, which is quite difficult. On the whole, in terms of per capita water supply, the region does not look very attractive. (This index amounts to approximately 3,000 cubic m a year in Central Asia, which, according to the U.N. classification, places the region in the category of those which are insufficiently provided for.) Nevertheless, as U.N. experts believe, 500 cubic m of water resources per person a year is the limit below which sustainable development is impossible, that is, the situation in Central Asia is still not threatening. But it must be improved, which is only possible on the basis of interstate cooperation. Otherwise, the shortage of water could bring about a mass of negative consequences for the region's entire sustenance system.

Water Cannot Wait for Diplomats

The situation took an abrupt turn for the worse again at the beginning of 2004. Due to abundant rainfall, the level of water in the Toktogul (Kyrgyzstan), Kairakkum (Uzbekistan), and Shardarin (Kazakhstan) reservoirs significantly rose, which are connected by one of the largest (but not navigable) rivers in Central Asia, the Syrdarya. In so doing, the low-lying regions of the Kzyl-Orda Region (Kazakhstan) suffered the most. In earlier times, such problems were resolved by draining the surplus from the Shardarin reservoir into the Arnasai low-lying area (Uzbekistan). But in 2003, Uzbekistan built dams, as a result of which the outflow of water drastically decreased and the Shardarin reservoir began to fill to the critical point. Kazakhstan had two alternatives in this situation: either to drain all the surplus water into the Syrdarya, which would have inevitably led to flooding of the city of Kzyl-Orda, or fill this reservoir to the limit. But in the latter case, the danger arose of destroying the dam of the Shardarin state regional power plant, which was holding back this entire mass of water.

The situation again aroused interstate disputes. According to statements from the Kyrgyz side, in keeping with annually signed intergovernmental agreements, in recent years the republic supplied Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan with between 1.5 and 2.2 billion kW/h of electricity, whereby the water outflow amounted to between 5 and 6.5 billion cubic m. By the end of 2003, approximately 17 billion cubic m of

water had accumulated in the Toktogul reservoir. The winter outflow of water in recent years has been fluctuating; in 1999 it amounted to an average of 535 cubic m a month, in 2000, to 550, in 2001 to 522, in 2002 to 492, and in 2003 to 589 cubic m.

In 2003, Uzbekistan refused to sign a new agreement on purchasing electricity in Kyrgyzstan, the representatives of which suggested during the negotiations that the question of deliveries of heating oil and coal for the operation of the Bishkek thermal power plant should be resolved, which would make it possible to reduce the outflow of water. But an efficient solution to this problem was not found.

The dam broke at the end of February, and to combat the flooding in several regions, Kazakhstan had to introduce a state of emergency. This showed once again that the policy being conducted in the region has significant drawbacks. After all, not long before this, in December 2003, Bishkek and Astana signed a Treaty on Alliance Relations, assuming obligations to carry out "coordinated actions in the sphere of rational and mutually beneficial use of water facilities and water-energy resources in compliance with international agreements."

The mass media and parliaments of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan began discussing the water topic in tones which clearly accused their neighbors, whereby they showed no qualms about their choice of expressions and evaluations. At times the viewpoints expressed directly fomented ethnic strife.

In the region's states which have only recently begun building truly democratic societies such conflicts frequently rapidly escalate into ethnic confrontations. For it is easiest of all to accuse one's neighbor of all one's misfortunes, particularly if he is the member of a different ethnic group to boot. This only adds fuel to the fire. And it is often impossible to prevent it from getting out of hand on time precisely because the domestic policy of the region's states is not truly democratic.

All the same, the passions gradually died down. Possibly with the arrival of Russian and Kazakhstani business in Kyrgyzstan, which has become much stronger during recent years, the republic's power engineering industry will also see better times. Then it will be possible to finish building the Shamaldy-Saiskaia and Kambar-Atinskaia hydropower plants, as well as implement joint projects, including to restore, reconstruct, and modernize current facilities, engage in joint construction and use of the Kambaratin cascade of hydropower plants, and export electricity to third countries.

So the best way to resolve the mentioned conflicts is to develop specific—and not too declarative—multilateral cooperation among the states of the region. And the unilateral actions some countries are carrying out today, no matter how much they are justified by concern for the well-being of a specific nationality, are only aggravating the situation and delaying resolution of the problem of regional security and integration of the republics of Central Asia.

INTERREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION: AN ANALYSIS OF ITS SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT (*On the Outcome of the Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government. Bishkek, September 2004*)

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The meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states held on 23 September, 2004 in the Kyrgyzstan capital declared that the formation stage of this structure has essentially reached its conclusion. In so doing, it was noted that many of the Organization's mechanisms were launched in a relatively short space of time. We will remind you that the heads of the six member states (Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) signed a declaration on the creation of this structure at their meeting in Shanghai on 15 June, 2001. It took just over three years to set it up and define the operating procedure for its standing bodies—the Secretariat and Executive Committee of the Regional Antiterrorist Center. What is more, the activity of these bodies has been furnished with a legal, financial, and organizational base, they have been staffed, and relations have been established with the states in which they will be located—China and Uzbekistan, respectively.

Meetings of the heads of state and government, meetings at the ministerial level, and meetings of the expert and working groups are held regularly.

New steps were taken in Bishkek toward developing economic ties, primarily, a Plan of Action was adopted for implementing the multilateral trade and economic cooperation program approved at the CHG meeting in 2003 in Beijing. The prime ministers discussed the problems of cooperation in the tax, hydropower, oil and gas, humanitarian, and other spheres.

However, in 2003, academic polemics and several publications, including *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, expressed the opinion that the SCO was unable to react effectively to the incursions by extremists in its member states. This prompted the Central Asian member states of this organization to place their stakes on cooperation with countries outside the region, allowing them to create strongholds on their territory. Someone was of the opinion that this would undermine the SCO's prospects as a whole.

We believe that this kind of pessimism was largely due to the controversial fervor and somewhat limited perception of the cause-and-effect relationship of the complicated way the situation has been developing in the region. Of course, there were reasons for this particular slant on the Organization's nature and destiny. Analysts based their arguments on the fact that its exclusive purpose was to cooperate in counteracting terrorism, extremism, and separatism.

And indeed, according to the Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, one of the SCO's key tasks is joint opposition by its member states to the "three evils" in all of their manifestations: the fight against illicit drug circulation, arms trafficking, and other types of transnational crime, as well as against illegal migration. At the SCO founding summit mentioned above, a Convention on the Fight Against Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism was also signed. In compliance with this document, a standing Regional Antiterrorist Structure (RATS) was created for coordinating and strengthening interaction among the competent bodies of the member states. The agreement on RATS, which regulates the principles of its structure and activity, was signed at the same time as the SCO Charter in June 2002.

But it would be an exaggeration to believe that this structure proved ineffective and so the Central Asian SCO member states decided to cooperate with the U.S. to counteract the threat of extremism coming from Afghanistan. First of all, the Organization's member states quite consciously and comprehensively supported (and continue to support) the coordinated efforts of the international community to overcome the threat posed by the Taliban regime in power at that time in Afghanistan. As for the Central Asian countries, their position came as no surprise and did not require a reconsideration of the fundamental interests and precepts of national policy in the security sphere. Unable to resolve the acute domestic contradictions in Afghan society and stimulate the economy, which was essentially in a state of collapse, the Taliban, as frequently happens with tyrannical regimes relying purely on force and incapable of constructive political and economic maneuvering, went for external aggression to justify the need for its further despotic rule. As a result, with the connivance (if not to say the protection) of the Taliban, regular and insolent armed incursions were made into the territory of its northern neighbors, which led to serious losses. Under these conditions, there was absolutely no need for the Central Asian countries to feel vexed about the SCO or be "beguiled" by Washington in order to assist the actions legitimately and indubitably supported by the entire international community to eliminate a regime that was posing a direct threat to peace and stability in an already unsettled region.

If we consider disappointment the leitmotif, then instead of trying to figure out why the situation in and around Afghanistan developed as it did, we should have been talking about how the U.S.'s refusal to directly supervise the anti-Taliban operation and its transferal of these authorities to NATO stimulated a "revival" of Central Asia's interest in RATS. And how this, supposedly, was why the agreement on it came into force in November 2003, and its executive structure began working in January 2004. It would also be easy to bolster this argument with references to the events in Uzbekistan in the spring and summer of 2004, the active forces of which, judging from the information being spread, again came from its southern neighbor.

But no matter how the course of events in Afghanistan and the effectiveness of international anti-extremists in this country are assessed, we cannot deny that the Agreement on RATS was ratified and its

headquarters began working within the normal amount of time required for such processes by interstate procedures. In short, we can say that the launching of the SCO's antiterrorist structure proceeded very naturally and according to schedule, being neither disrupted nor artificially accelerated by extra-regional factors.

But this is not the crux of the matter. We are convinced that the original viewpoint on the essence and tasks of the SCO has been narrowed. It is entirely insufficient to reduce this regional association exclusively to the topic of security. Of course, we are in no way denying the obvious interest of all the Organization's participants in establishing cooperation to counteract the "three evils." Terrorism, extremism, and separatism were creating serious problems fraught with acute aggravation for all of the future members of the association. But the logic of the situation simply could not allow the members of the SCO to limit themselves exclusively to this sphere.

To prove our point, we will give the example of another regional organization which has existed for more than 30 years now, been repeatedly subjected to difficult tests, and been criticized for its inefficiency and doomed to imminent disintegration. This regional organization is ASEAN. Of course, analogies are always provisional, and comparisons are not proof, but they nevertheless give food for thought—*mutatis mutandis.*

To put it simply, by creating this association after many years of isolation and even confrontation, five (at that time) Southeast Asian countries were striving primarily for stability. But it soon became clear to the ASEAN community that the matter did not concern police or even general military partnership. Political stability requires social stability, and the latter very much depends on economic (in the broad sense of the word) progress, which these states subsequently became engaged in. And quite successfully, despite the blow they were dealt at the end of 1990s by the so-called "Asian financial crisis."

Let us now take a look at the above-mentioned CHG meeting of the SCO in Bishkek. The Council of Heads of Government, resolutely condemning the recent terrorist acts committed on the territory of the Organization's states, emphasized the importance of strengthening interaction in the fight against international terrorism, as well as other new menaces and threats to security. It also expressed the conviction that expanding and intensifying cooperation within the framework of the SCO would promote more effective counteraction of terrorism, separatism, and extremism. In other words, the healthier our economies, the more stable our countries and societies.

In this way, the logic of action of the two regional organizations, one, almost the oldest, and the other, almost the youngest, is entirely similar. And we must agree, entirely understandable. But a significant starting difference must be noted between them. In the event of an interbloc standoff, ASEAN could count from the beginning on obtaining (and it did) quite large amounts of financial and other foreign aid on an individual and group basis. (We hope our colleagues and dear readers will not consider the statement of this fact advancement of the primitive slogan: ASEAN—birth of the Cold War. This approach is not only biasedly ideologized and primitive, but also very erroneous.)

The SCO was formed in a different climate, its participants proceeded precisely from the need to form a close partnership among themselves. For example, at the Organization's forums, the Central Asian countries persistently raise the question of creating favorable conditions for the free movement of goods, capital, technology, and services on the territory of the member states. (The fact that these Central Asian countries are constantly returning to the idea of forming a common regional market beyond this association indicates the attractiveness of this topic for them.) Calls to create joint production units with Russia and China are just as persistent, as well as claims about the need to obtain investments, the latest technology, know-how, and so on, from them.

The following circumstance must also be taken into account when analyzing the economic factor of the SCO's activity. The Organization itself invariably declares its openness to the outside world, and its Central Asian member states are inviting investors and economic partners from every country on the planet. But these republics often hear in response that their proposals and the conditions they offer are not attractive enough and the domestic markets, infrastructure, and so on are underdeveloped, as well as complaints about the rates of democratic development, etc.

However, as was noted at the Bishkek summit, Kazakhstan's goods turnover with its Organization partners over the past year increased by 70%, and Tajikistan's by 62.5%. On the one hand, this shows that

interaction within the SCO is being very graphically manifested in real figures. But on the other, despite all their willingness to engage in open partnership with any country, the business circles of the same Central Asian states cannot help but draw conclusions about who in particular is willing to actually develop relations. It appears that this economic-psychological factor cannot be written off when analyzing the prospects for the SCO's economic basis.

There are many opportunities for economic cooperation within the SCO format on a very broad range of issues. Without going into detail, we will draw your attention to the topic of energy resources. For very understandable reasons, the fuel and energy sphere is of special interest to the Organization's member countries. After all, its participants either have extremely rich supplies of hydrocarbon and hydropower resources, or are among their main world consumers. There are possibilities for making energy deliveries to other countries of the Asia Pacific Region too. So it is no accident that the heads of government of the SCO states noted in Bishkek that cooperation must be strengthened in assimilating oil and gas fields, building oil and gas pipelines, enhancing the petrochemical industry and hydropower engineering, and developing minerals. Considerations were also expressed about the expediency of jointly creating an energy resource consumer and producer club of sorts within the SCO, as well as drawing up a conception for an integrated gas, oil, and energy transportation system.

We think it worth taking into account that the SCO region has its place in the world "division of labor," which the Organization member states are unable to assimilate individually, but in partnership could achieve a great deal in terms of "self-incorporation" into increasingly attractive transcontinental schemes. It is no accident, for example, that the same Bishkek meeting emphasized the importance of cooperation in transportation, coordination of policy in transit shipments, and the creation of corresponding international corridors. And it is not just a matter of setting the task, but also of beginning to implement it: as of today, several meetings of SCO experts have been held regarding cooperation with ESCATO and searching for solutions to tasks within the framework of efforts accented by the Organization participants for harmonious entry into the Asian-European communication system and transportation shipment structure currently being formed. (Specifically, the heads of the SCO governments adopted a resolution on an assembly of ministers of transportation and communication of its member states, which is to be held in Dushanbe, as well as on the fact that during the first half of 2005 work on the draft of an intergovernmental agreement to create favorable conditions for international automobile shipments will be completed.)

In our opinion, the same polyscopy is required when discussing the prospects for SCO cooperation in the antiterrorist campaign (in the broad sense of this concept). And when reviewing plans for the future and practical measures for carrying them out, the political and psychological factor must be taken into account as well: members of the Organization are acting circumspectly with regard to retaining their sovereignty, not wishing to enter anything vaguely reminiscent of a military bloc format. Nevertheless, it is hardly worth dramatizing this factor as supposedly undermining the opportunities for interaction. We will turn to the experience of ASEAN again: even when its countries entered separately into military-political structures with nations outside the region, they still declared and carried out an independent foreign policy when they came together at their meetings, promoting the conception of "zone of peace, freedom and neutrality." The extreme caution of the ASEAN members, who wanted to avoid any hints that their association was turning into something akin to a bloc, did not stop them from developing bilateral, multilateral, and extra-ASEAN relations to fight terrorism and extremism.

We can see the benefit of the ASEAN model in yet another parameter of the analysis of the SCO's future development. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the regional forum it created (ARF) for discussing questions of stability and security in the APR started as a political dialog. (By the way, it proved to be long-term, quite productive, and attracted an increasing number of participants.) But practical requirements, for example, developing confidence measures, raised the question of the need to bring the defense departments into the dialog. The military component of this dialog structure is gradually growing, which however does not change its extra-bloc nature. We think that the development of SCO cooperation in the fight against the "three evils" will inevitably bring the Organization's participants up against the need for a military component (although retaining their above-mentioned principal views).

With a consistent course aimed at open economic partnership, fighting various manifestations of extremism, and showing a willingness to hold a dialog with the outside world, the SCO can be expected to become increasingly interesting and attractive to its near and far neighbors. And there is no need for particular perspicacity here: several countries have already announced their willingness to establish contacts with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. We are convinced that this is not a momentary mania or the latest political fad. It is just that an association of countries, the population of which comprises almost one third of mankind, and the markets and economic potential of which are so significant, cannot help but be of interest to the world around it.

For the moment though, the Organization is acting quite cautiously as far as foreign relations go. In the multilateral respect, the greatest progress is being made in a dialog with ASEAN. (This is why we took the Association as an example for comparison.) But the SCO's openness is placing certain obligations on it. There is enough reason to believe that the Organization will have to enlarge its circle of foreign partners.

Summing up, we will note that the above-mentioned factors should be taken into account when analyzing the state and prospects of the SCO. This will make it possible to obtain an objectively substantiated answer to the following questions: in what direction and in what way will the Organization, which currently has a solid foundation and rather extensive prospects for growth, advance, what can the international community expect of it, and how can interaction be carried out with it?

REGIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL STRUCTURES AT THE TRANSITIONAL STAGE OF SOCIOECONOMIC MODERNIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA-CASPIAN STATES (*Conference overview. The international conference "Problems and Prospects for Cooperation between the Southeast European Countries within the BSEC and GUUAM," Donetsk, September 2004*)[1]

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Prerequisites for Regional Integration in the Post-Socialist Space

The new challenges that emerged in the early 1990s brought forth the idea of an expanding, internally complex, multi-tier, and closely interconnected "new European architecture." It envisions the creation of subsystemic regional structures to fit the parameters of Western Europe's eastern borders.

[1] The author would like to thank staff members of the Donetsk National University School of Economics International Economy Department, headed by Prof. Yu.V. Makogon, D.Sc. (Econ.), who kindly made available the material for the present review.

Originally, the formation of these structures was directly linked to the EU, proceeding under its supervision and with its assistance, thus ensuring the synchronization, symmetry, and effectiveness of economic and political reforms, as well as a deepening of relations between them and the EU institutions already in place.

There are two main trends affecting the formation of such structures (groups) in Eastern Europe. On the one hand, systemic transformations in these countries triggered the evolution of liberal-democratic values as the raison d'être of civil society and free market economics. This process resulted in the relative isolation of these countries and the disintegration of certain multinational state formations. But at the same time, such factors as national security, the need to protect their internal markets, and the old contradictions between these states, which re-emerged during the transition period, necessitated their movement toward regional integration. On the other hand, there is a pronounced trend toward deepening cooperation with neighboring countries, close and distant. Thus, when the Warsaw Pact Organization and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) had already been dissolved, while accession to NATO and the EU was still a remote prospect, the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe made a crucial decision to strengthen their national security by advancing foreign economic relations and addressing their ethnic minority problems.

In the 1990s, several regional structures were created in Middle Europe. One of them, the Vysegrad Group, comprises only Central European countries with Middle and Western European states integrating into other groups. These include the Central European Initiative, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) zone, the Council of Baltic States, the Carpathian region, and the Barents-Euro-Arctic region.

By 1992, following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the collective security concept, which had been a major factor in the creation of the Vysegrad Group, outlived its usefulness. That became the main reason that the association process degenerated into a crisis, aggravated by disintegration processes in Czechoslovakia, the Slovak-Hungarian confrontation over the status of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and a local conflict over the building of a dam on the Danube. One indication of the crisis that had evolved was the fact that in the 1990-1992 period, the Vysegrad Group's share of trade in its total foreign trade volume declined considerably. Thus, Vaclav Klaus, the Czechoslovak prime minister at the time, said in an interview that cooperation within the framework of the Vysegrad Group was ineffectual and therefore dubious from the point of its viability and sheer expediency. On 21 December, 1992, members of the Vysegrad Group signed, in Krakow, the Central European Free Trade Agreement, which went into force on 1 March, 1993. The signatories undertook, within a period of eight years (by 1 January, 2001), to completely unify their customs tariffs and other trade regulators, to which end it was necessary to streamline their energy, monetary, financial, foreign economic, and privatization policy.

The first regional group integrating East and West European countries was Pentagonal, created on 1 August, 1990, on Italy's initiative. It was also joined by Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Following Poland's admission (in July 1991), the structure was renamed the Hexagonal Initiative. The 13 cooperation projects had the following priority areas: transport, telecommunications, energy, the environment, and culture. Then the Hexagonal Initiative was also renamed Central European Initiative. Today it comprises Austria, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia as full-fledged members as well as Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, and Ukraine in observer capacity.

The Declaration on the Creation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) zone was signed in Istanbul, in the summer of 1992, by Bulgaria, Romania, Moldavia, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey. The BSEC Foreign Ministers Council set up eight working groups, by areas of cooperation, each headed by one of the member countries.

The BSEC's principal task is to work out an interaction plan designed to strengthen political stability, facilitate economic development, and expedite the transition of post-Communist countries to a free market economy. The format of their cooperation is seen as complementary to the European integration process, providing for cooperation in such spheres as transport, communication, information technology,

the mining industry, processing of mineral resources, energy, tourism, agriculture, trade and economic information sharing, and so. The Organization's specifics arise from its orientation toward nongovernmental cooperation.

Ukraine and Belarus found themselves in by far the most complicated situation. On the one hand, Hungary and Poland pledged to facilitate Ukraine's admission to the EU, while Poland assumed such obligations also with regard to Belarus. On the other hand, this patronage proved to be rather a burdensome liability for the "conduit" states on their way to full-fledged modernization, which fell far short of West European standards, including their political, legal, and socioeconomic institutions, visibly impeding (at the time) these countries' own accession to the EU.

It seems that this was the reason that Vysegrad Group member countries were not interested to admit Ukraine. In that situation, Kiev and Minsk naturally gravitated toward an economic and political union within the post-Soviet space. In this connection Ukraine was confronted with an alternative task, i.e., to position itself on Europe's political map as an independent state and a full-fledged entity of international relations. Unfortunately, the West was rather unforthcoming with regard to Ukraine's intention to join its international organizations, while the EU and NATO confined themselves to vague promises to help meet its aspirations.

In April 1993, Kiev drafted a plan to create a Central-East European stability and security area under the slogan "Security for One through Security for All" that would perform liaison functions in promoting the Transatlantic security system in the CSCE (OSCE) from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Incidentally, the Ukrainian authorities regarded the Central-East European stability and security area not as a new military-political structure or as a new Warsaw Pact, but as a mechanism of bilateral and multilateral consultations aimed to address outstanding disputes and to prevent new ones.

Ukraine appealed to Hungary and Poland to support the idea, which, however, had a low-key, unenthusiastic response. Thus, an official communiqué adopted at the end of Ukrainian-Hungarian negotiations (30 April, 1993, in the city of Uzhgorod) noted among other things that "the Hungarian side expressed readiness to cooperate with the Ukrainian side in advancing and further elaborating the Ukrainian president's initiative to create a zone of stability and security in Central and Eastern Europe. With this end in view, expert consultations will begin in short order."

Ukraine had high hopes for Poland's approving the plan because Kiev's initiative was apparently close to Lech Walesa's idea about creating an alternate NATO and EEC. Yet by that time Walesa's proposals had come under harsh criticism within Poland itself. That must have been the reason that a communiqué adopted at the end of L. Walesa's visit to Kiev (24 through 26 May, 1993) read in part: "The sides will hold consultations at the level of the relevant structural subdivisions of their respective foreign ministries for a more detailed study and discussion of the Ukrainian president's initiative to create a zone of stability and security in Central and Eastern Europe."

Ukraine's plan of creating a Central-East European stability and security area was supported only by Zb. Brzezinski who had consistently favored the idea of turning Ukraine from an East European into a Central East European country.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a New Regional Integration Model

As a result of an emerging international division of labor and scientific-technological progress, new economic zones are being formed, integrating the production and trade relations of the maritime (littoral) states, which helps to resolve common economic problems in the region. In this respect, the BSEC is a unique organization whose participants are also members of other interstate structures. The BSEC's prospects are predicated on its relations with the EU, as well as on its advantageous transport and communication position between the macroeconomic regions of Europe and Eurasia.

During the 12 years since the signing of the Istanbul Declaration, the Organization has proved its viability and value for each of its member countries. Even without the Russian Federation, the largest BSEC member country by territory and population, the other BSEC states account for a total of 2.1 million square kilometers of territory and a population of 177 million, which is only 1.5 times and 2.1 times less than in the EU before 2004, respectively (after the EU enlargement they are 3.2 million square kilometers and 372 million, respectively).

In addition to parallel specialization (almost 50 percent of participants specialize in the tourism business and the majority of member states in food production) there are also some differences in their export profile, which helps actuate the synergy effect from the complementarity of the national economies.

The BSEC is the only international organization for economic cooperation in the Black Sea region. It put in place a diversified structure, working groups, and committees with corresponding issue-specific institutions and bodies. These include the Parliamentary Assembly, the Business Council, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (based in Greece), and the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the former Soviet republics that joined the BSEC have for the first time integrated without Russia's obvious domination.

One priority of the integration process in the Black Sea region is to create free ports and export industry zones around these ports. In the past few years, under the supervision of the secretary general of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat, the Organization has deployed a lot of effort to assert its positions in the general system of international relations, focusing its strategic priorities on choosing, developing, and implementing specific projects enabling businesses to improve their commercial operations abroad, as well as on creating new types of relations and a new political climate in the region.

BSEC Transportation and Communication Infrastructure as a Factor in Regional Integration

It is important to take into account the fact that the general condition of the BSEC transportation infrastructure does not as yet meet the EU standards. One priority area for both the EU and the BSEC is a qualitative improvement in transport communication lines between Western Europe and the Black Sea region. In this respect, the following transport corridors could be of interest to Ukraine: Helsinki-St. Petersburg-Moscow-Kiev-Chisinau-Bucharest-Alexandroúpolis; TRACECA (Europe-Caucasus-Asia), and Corridor No. 7: the Danube.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation region is Eastern Europe's most dynamic economic growth area in maritime transport, shipbuilding, and the spa industry. BSEC countries have built large ports and industrials complexes and nodes. Nonetheless, as participants in a recent conference in Donetsk stressed, the transport problem remains one of the bottlenecks not only for Ukraine but also for other BSEC countries. According to Ukrainian experts, Kiev inherited a rather irrational international cargo transport structure, designed for large-scale import and export shipments (primarily of non-Ukrainian origin). The abolition of foreign trade monopoly and the growing number of foreign trade operators resulted in increased volumes of small-scale cargo shipments and a decline in large-scale shipments. Meanwhile, seaports, railways, and border crossing points, however, proved ill equipped to ensure an expeditious transshipment of these cargo flows.

The projected BSEC transportation and communication infrastructure complex will comprise the following principal elements: an international sea port, including an oil storage facility; an oil refinery; an airport; a ship-breaking yard; a network of cargo processing and pre-sales preparation enterprises; and external transport communication lines (a railway and a highway).

The BSEC "cultural routes" multinational project is aimed to create an effective mechanism to ensure the integration of regional cultural value systems, consolidated by tourism and transportation infrastructures, as an important factor in regional development; it is also designed to identify potential resources for preserving the region's historical uniqueness, advancing tourism in this sphere on all levels, and, ultimately, building open democratic societies in the BSEC member countries.

Yet another positive aspect of this cooperation is the increasing trade turnover, development of joint venture practices, investment activity, and so on. Thus, in the 1995-2003 period, Russia's direct investment in the Ukrainian economy has grown from $19.1 million to $322.6 million and Turkey's from $2.3 million to 38.1 million. Even so, it should be noted that international Black Sea economic integration—that is to say, a real internationalization of production on the regional level—has yet to be finalized. In other words, it has yet to go through the necessary stages of development: a free trade zone, a customs union, a common market, and economic and political unions. The present author believes that the main reason for this is the aspiration of Ukraine and other littoral states to join the EU as soon as possible, precipitating if not skipping the stage of regional integration that is critical for adaptation of the national economies.

After 1 May, 2004, the situation has turned around. The EU enlarged considerably, but none of the Black Sea commonwealth countries joined it. Only Bulgaria and Romania have a prospect of being admitted to this structure (but not before 2007). So all of them are today faced with a different task—specifically, to deepen the integration of regional economies into the world economy and use the international division of labor in the Black Sea region.

Invigoration of the integration processes between these countries today is extremely important for all of the BSEC states since the admission of Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, and Cyprus to the EU drastically reoriented the traditional sales markets in these countries. As of now these markets are adopting EU quality standards, which sharply reduces the competitiveness of goods from the BSEC countries, decreasing their foreign trade earnings (in excess of $300 million a year for Ukraine alone). In this context, invigoration of integration with the BSEC countries as well as with members of the UES (Unified Economic Space, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan) and GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) became the most viable option for Ukraine.

Kiev's priorities here are as follows:

— provision of favorable conditions to enable BSEC member countries to enter world markets and support for domestic exporters, developers and manufacturers of import-substituting products, and competitive producers;

— creation of an effective banking and credit systems, guaranteeing the rights of hard currency holders, including the right to use hard currency resources freely (within the bounds of the law);

— formation of foreign trade infrastructure and a new system for its information support; flexible import policy (tariff regulation, import limitation mechanisms, volumes and itemized commodity lists of critical import products, and a list of import-substituting products);

— accelerated development of the country's export capacity based on domestic raw materials and the use of modern production and packaging technology, making such products competitive on international markets;

— promotion of small-sized enterprises producing goods from local raw materials and helping them to enter foreign markets;

— stimulation of "internal export" programs (selling domestically manufactured goods to tourists and other categories of foreigners and facilitating the customs border crossing procedure for these goods);

— elaboration of an effective mechanism to control the export of services, especially the export of work force, to neighboring countries;

— streamlining the foreign trade regulation system (bringing the legal and regulatory base in harmony with international rules and standards, and limiting protectionist practices);

— intensification of efforts and implementation of measures to ensure the acquisition by Ukraine and other BSEC member countries of the status as a GATT/WTO member (gaining access to international markets of goods, works, and services, and guaranteed protection of their interests on these markets), also facilitating the inflow of foreign investment;

— implementation of free trade regimes with CIS and BSEC countries;

— further expansion of trade and economic relations with Baltic and Northern Alliance countries (creation of a free economic zone, from the Baltic to the Black Sea);

— facilitation of trade with the EU (expanding access of Ukrainian goods to European markets, in particular nuclear materials, textiles, mineral fertilizer, and metallurgical and agricultural products); and

— implementation of measures to attract modern technologies and investment capital from G-7 states.

Yet another important area of activity is the implementation of transborder economic integration programs. This integration will be effective, first, in the interaction between the Euro-regions, the BSEC, and the CIS. In so doing, it is necessary to take into account that one-third of the export of services is formed in border regions that, in addition, are given priority by foreign capital investors. Second, its effectiveness is contingent on the form of organization adopted by the BSEC, the CIS, and Euroregions. The existence of a common economic area in this expanded territory will make it more attractive to investors, facilitating information sharing, comprehensive development, coordination of plans, and environmental security programs. Third, its effectiveness is predicated on the prioritization of transborder cooperation areas, specifically cooperation in organizing and coordinating activities in the economic, scientific, environmental, cultural, and educational sphere, as well as in promoting contacts with international organizations and institutions.

Integration of the Black Sea-Caspian Countries in the Context of Economic Globalization

The BSEC's future hinges on an optimal coordination of its activities with the European integration process, which, on the practical level, is predicated on its ability to establish effective dialog with the EU and its institutions. As a Black Sea power and initiator of the BSEC, Ukraine intends to strengthen and augment the Organization's consolidating capability.

Bulgaria promotes business contacts in all of its border regions. The first Transborder Cooperation Region (TCR) with Bulgarian participation was Mesta Nestos, created within the framework of FAR-TCR and Interreg programs on the Greek-Bulgarian border. In 2000, a corresponding agreement was signed by the Association of Rodopi Communities (Bulgaria) and the Association of the Delta-Rodopi Border Region (Greece). Bulgaria created a number of TCRs with Romania, including Danubius (between Gurgevo and Ruse), Dunai-Istok (the Dobrich and Silistra region on the Bulgarian side and the districts of Călăraşi, Constanţa, and Ialomiţa on the Romanian side of the border), and others. The process is financed principally through EU pre-accession funds. The latter are off limits for countries that are not candidates for first- or second-wave accession to the EU. Therefore, the local authorities in such BSEC countries have to look for funds to implement such joint projects at the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank as well as other financial institutions and programs.

Still, despite all of these difficulties, first results of transborder cooperation are quite encouraging. They show that state borders in the region are increasingly regarded as zones of mutually beneficial relations rather than symbols of division. The principal lines of BSEC activity are as follows:

— facilitation of regional trade and investment;

— cooperation in the sphere of transport, energy, tourism, and environmental protection;

— establishment and advancement of contacts with other international organizations and regional institutions; and

— strengthening stability and security in the region.

According to Bulgarian, Serb, and Greek experts who took part in the Donetsk Conference, one promising line of regional cooperation is closer interaction between the Black Sea and Mediterranean countries that eventually spanning the continent's entire southern periphery, further promoting the idea of a united Europe. The Organization's strategic medium- and long-term objectives are:

I. Interlocking the development of regional cooperation with all-European integration processes, which should proceed along several lines: establishment of political dialog with the EU; institutionalization of relations by granting EU member countries (possibly also European Commission members) BSEC observer status; and cooperation with the European Commission in developing and implementing specific projects, primarily in the sphere of transport, energy, environmental protection, and fighting organized crime.

II. Increasing the role of the BSEC in facilitating economic reforms in transitional economies. To this end, it is expedient to establish contacts with international financial institutions, above all with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, enhancing their impact on economic development and structural reforms in the Organization's member states.

At the same time, it should be noted that, along with this vector of integration, it is necessary to closely study prospects for Ukraine's participation in integration associations to which it is already a party, in particular GUUAM. Ukrainian experts believe that there is a good outlook within the framework of this structure for a project to optimize a transport-communication corridor linking the Caspian oil and gas bearing shelf with European hydrocarbon raw markets.

Yet another priority for BSEC regional cooperation is to expand export capacity oriented toward neighboring markets and promoting co-production and scientific-technical relations with these states. Furthermore, Ukraine's effective participation in regional cooperation programs requires the creation of an appropriate economic and regulatory infrastructure. Unfortunately, development of economic relations between countries in the Caspian-Black Sea region was affected not only by changes in the business environment in the post-Soviet area but also by the not always favorable market situation in other BSEC countries where regional trade has not as yet acquired the due importance that it deserves. This, among other things, accounts for the fact that Ukraine's trade (in goods, services, etc.) with other the BSEC countries is gradually declining.

Despite the differences in the organization of foreign economic activity in various BSEC countries, harmonization of their export and import policy could ensure a certain balance of interests within their overlapping priorities. (In the future, this is also possible for the GUUAM states.) Yet doing this within the format of just one group of states (in this particular case, BSEC member states) is rather problematic in so far as they ensure foreign trade regulation on different levels—national (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine) or supranational (Greece, as an EU member state). In addition, the BSEC countries have different levels, terms and scope of participation in the WTO. A broad array of capital investment and technology transfer instruments and vehicles has been accumulated in the world. Tapping this experience could help create a new market in the Caspian-Black Sea region whose development would enable its states to enter Asian, European, and other international markets.

There is also an obvious need to develop trade relations not only between the EU and the BSEC but also within the Caspian-Black Sea region, which will expedite the integration of its national economies into the global system. In the future, it is expedient to create free trade and industry zones that would help

to expand trade relations within the region. Furthermore, trade development will be facilitated by stabilization of national economies, growth in corporate competitiveness, and increase in household incomes, which is a key to financial and economic growth.

Today a plan is being developed to create a BSEC free trade zone, calculated for a period until 2010. Its implementation will help to invigorate economic cooperation and trade both within the region and with other countries in the world. This line of activity will envision consultations with the European Commission and the utilization of experience, knowledge, and recommendations of its representatives. This zone, however, can only be created through interaction with the EU, also taking into account bilateral agreements between the member states that are already in place. For example, Greece is an EU member and is therefore obligated to adhere to its unified foreign policy, while the Central European BSEC countries (Romania and Bulgaria) are EU associated members. As far as the CIS countries are concerned, they have standing partnership and cooperation agreements with the EU.

As Bulgarian participants in the conference noted, the privatization period in their country saw structural reform of the stock market, as a result of which some privatization funds were eliminated, others were merged, while still others transferred large-scale privatization capital to new investors. Today this market is about to witness the emergence of the first public society not linked to mass privatization. Distrust of the stock market does not stimulate businessmen to look for financial resources by mobilizing small investors. Such funds are rather difficult to funnel through stock exchange mechanisms. A new impetus to the development of the stock market is expected in the foreseeable future as the present government in Bulgaria (since it came into office) has declared its intention to continue the privatization (and restructuring) of major state controlled monopoly enterprises.

Development of stock markets will enable the Bulgarian economy to integrate into Europe quite naturally as successful operation of such markets is a good indicator of an effective economy, responding to the challenges posed by the highly developed market environment in a united Europe. According to Serb experts, similar processes are underway also in the countries of former Yugoslavia.

Transitional economies and emerging markets in Southeast Europe and the Caspian-Black Sea region (the BSEC and GUUAM) are characterized by participation in projects funded by international organizations and programs in priority areas, including information and communication technologies. They create an electronic (IT) environment enabling national information and analysis groups to work on joint projects that are of critical political, legal, economic, social, environmental, educational, cultural and scientific value for the region.

Capital investment in the Caspian-Black Sea region is coming from many countries interested in trade and economic cooperation. It is, however, investors from West European states, in particular from the EU, who account for the bulk of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the region. Thus, EU countries account for two-thirds of foreign direct investment in Bulgaria, 50 percent in Romania, 60 percent in Turkey, and 42.7 percent in the Russian Federation. Commerce, transport, and tourism are financially the most viable investment sectors. For example, the tourism industry accounts for 25 percent of foreign direct investment in Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Romania.

Intra-regional investors are also raising their profile. For example, Turkish companies invest in Romania, ranking third among BSEC investors in Russia, Ukraine, and Bulgaria. RF companies are among the largest investors in Moldova and Ukraine. Bulgarian firms place third among investors in Romania and fourth in Russia and Moldova.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation is above all about concrete projects implemented by countries in this region. The list of sectors covered by such projects shows the viability of these relations, also highlighting the need to look for new forms of cooperation by BSEC member countries, primarily in such spheres as energy, transport, communication, and the environment.

The aspiration to open up national economies for regional cooperation does not in any way conflict with these states' intention to strengthen the protection of their economic interests, as shown by the experience not only of the United States, Japan, and Germany but also of other developed countries that continue to strengthen and consolidate their trade and economic relations. This should also be taken into

account by the Southeast European states integrating within the BSEC format as well as by the GUUAM members.

Analysis of Ukraine's export policy in its relations with other BSEC countries helps to identify a large number of outstanding problems in this sphere. Thus, despite an array of measures implemented by the Ukrainian government, there is a discernible trend toward a decline in cooperation with certain states in the region. To eliminate the aforementioned shortfalls, all BSEC partners should critically analyze the current status of their interrelations and begin a search for new, more effective methods of influencing the development of foreign economic relations and integration processes on the regional level. This will enable them to straighten out their national and intra-regional strategic problems characteristic of each particular country and to find a niche in the world economy.

Russia's participation in the BSEC points to its aspiration to develop active trade and economic contacts with its southern neighbors with which it also has relations along traditional lines. It is not, however, only the Russian Federation that regards states in the region as its important partners, but the latter also see it as a very important country that accounts for a substantial share of their foreign economic cooperation. For example, Russia has a positive balance of trade with these countries (in 2002, it was 11.6 percent in export and 10.3 percent in import), but mainly thanks to energy shipments. It is equally important that a number of European and Mediterranean countries are also showing interest in cooperation with the BSEC. Thus, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, France, Tunisia, and the Conference of the European Energy Charter have observer status within this structure.

The BSEC's capacity enables the Organization to participate in looking for effective solutions to outstanding problems on the pan-European and worldwide scale, effectively facilitating integration processes in the economic sphere.

As noted earlier, cooperation in the transportation sphere, including the development of new transportation routes, is of great importance for the BSEC. Priority projects here include the Europe-Caucasus-Asia corridor (TRACECA), the creation of a ferry line in the Black Sea, the construction of Novorossiisk-Burgas-Alexandroúpolis oil and gas pipelines, Baku-Batumi and Baku-Supsa sections, and the implementation of other transportation and communication projects between Asia and Europe.

Preliminary Results

All conference participants agree in that the BSEC model and the system of specialized agencies associated with this organization offer a viable mechanism for striking a balance between common interests in the region, harmoniously blending into the contemporary system of pan-European cooperation and the integration processes on the continent. Effective tapping of the structure's capacity requires further advancement of contacts with the U.N. and its specialized institutions, in particular the World Bank, and with the EU. At the same time, it is expedient to deepen and promote contacts with other regional structures, including the Central Asian Economic Cooperation Organization (CAECO), two BSEC countries (Azerbaijan and Turkey) being members of this organization, while two CAECO countries (Iran and Uzbekistan) have asked the BSEC to be granted the status as its full-fledged members.

For Russia, more active participation in the BSEC could help to expand its cooperation with all of the Black Sea countries. In this context, the Russian Federation's firm position as a Black Sea power is naturally based on its aspiration for good neighborly relations and stability in the region as well as the creation of favorable conditions for trade and economic cooperation here.

Working Conclusions

In summing up the presentations by conference participants, it should be noted that the principal objective of interregional corporate projects is to secure a durable peace, stability, and economic cooper-

ation based on intergovernmental contacts and interaction with international and regional systems. The Black Sea-Caspian zone of economic cooperation is the largest in Eastern Europe by the scale of internationally oriented economic activity. In this context, the main task of the BSEC and GUUAM is to advance economic and integration processes and to improve trade relations between the member countries of these regional communities. The BSEC and GUUAM's priorities also include the creation of integrated (unified or complementary) transportation, communication, and energy systems which, for their part, will facilitate cooperation in industry, commerce, tourism, and ecology, expediting integration processes in the region.

Key to the future of the BSEC and GUUAM will be the extent to which their activity is synchronized with European integration processes, which on the practical plane hinges on their ability to initiate bilateral dialog with the European Union and its institutions. As a Black Sea power and one of the initiators of the creation of the BSEC and GUUAM, Ukraine is determined to strengthen and augment the consolidating capability of these structures.

The experience gained in this sphere leads to the following conclusions. First, it is necessary to identity and systematize the lines and dimensions where information technology can effectively facilitate regional cooperation. Second, it is important to identify strategies, platforms, and modern IT solutions that stimulate economic cooperation and enhance its effectiveness. Third, it is expedient to map out new areas for IT and regional cooperation in education and science.

As mentioned earlier, BSEC and GUUAM member countries represent a region with a population of more than 300 million people as well as a vast, geographically diverse territory with substantial mineral resources. Some states of the Black Sea and Caspian region, in addition, have unique agro-industrial capability, advanced technology, and highly qualified manpower. In recent years, the Black and the Caspian Sea have been acquiring a special status reflecting their growing transportation and communication value, their rich natural resources, and their spa and tourism resource capability.

ETHNIC RELATIONS AND POPULATION MIGRATION

THE CRIMEAN TATARS IN THE CRIMEA: SOURCE OF CONFLICT OR STABILITY BETWEEN CRIMEAN RUSSIANS AND UKRAINS[1]?

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In this article, with specific reference to the Crimean Tatars, I will discuss how the strategic significance of a region shapes the fate of the groups living there through entailing important human rights violations and causing in some cases their total displacement. The role that minorities can play in ethnic relations will be another point of focus. I will also analyze the impact of global political pressure and international organizations on the restitutions to the victims of the human rights violations.

Throughout history the Crimea has been a place where numerous representatives of different cultures lived side by side, including the Crimean Tatars. The Crimean Tatars can be defined as an ethnically heterogeneous group that emerged as a result of the amalgamation of the Tatar tribes of the Golden Horde and the various ethnics living in the peninsula. The Crimean Tatars are a Hanafi, Sunni Muslim Turkic-speaking community whose ethnic identity formation as a distinct group goes back to 14th and 15th centuries.[2]

The Crimean Tatars used to live in the Crimea until their deportation to Central Asia and Siberia by Stalin in 1944. It is only after 45 years of exile that the Crimean Tatars obtained the right to return to their homeland. After the decision of the Supreme Soviet in 1989, they began to return to the Crimea *en masse* despite the discouraging attitude of the local authorities. The return process was followed by ethnic, economic and geopolitical crises. The

[2] See: B.G. Williams, "The Crimean Tatar Exile in Central Asia: A Case Study in Group Destruction and Survival," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1998, p. 287; "The Formation of Diaspora: The Crimean Tatars of Turkey, The Balkans and Central Asia," *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2001; V.E. Vozgrin, *Istoricheskiye sud'by Krymskikh Tatar*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1992, p. 134.

[1] This term refers to ethnically Ukrainians and not to all citizens of Ukraine.

mass return of the Crimean Tatars to their homeland entailed numerous problems including housing and unemployment. The dissolution of the Soviet Union did not facilitate but on the contrary aggravated the rehabilitation process due to changes in the political and legal systems and the changing status of the Russian Federation. Despite these difficulties, the Crimean Tatars' struggle for constructing a new life in their homeland continues and they expect the financial and political support of international organizations for the proper realization of their rehabilitation.

According to the 1991 Law, those who were living in Ukraine before 1 November, 1991 could automatically obtain citizenship. However, those who came after that date had to wait for five years to become eligible for citizenship. Due to this law, an important number of the Crimean Tatars lack all citizenship rights. This striking fact indicates how the Crimean Tatar population lacks certain basic human rights, including also political, economic or cultural rights, that any individual has to possess. The continuation of the lack of those basic rights will constitute a source for tensions in the peninsula.

The Changing Status and Ethnic Structure of the Crimea

Given its geographical location the Crimean peninsula always had an important political, strategic, military and economic significance. Situated at the heart of the Black Sea and considered as a way of capturing the Straits, the peninsula was claimed by imperial forces which ruled over these lands and the populations that inhabited these lands throughout history. Focusing briefly on the political history of the Crimea may allow us to better understand the reasons for the present problems about the status of and claims over the peninsula.

The Crimea's pre-Soviet period includes the periods of an Independent Crimean Tatar state, Turkish protectorship and Russian annexation. Tatar tribes of the Golden Horde settled in the Crimea starting with 14th century and together with the local populations of the peninsula they established the Crimean Khanate in the mid-15th century. From 1475 to 1774 the Peninsula was ruled by the Ottoman Empire and its vassal, the Crimean Khanate providing the Ottoman Empire both political and economic power, and security. Following the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, which was signed at the end of the Ottoman-Russian War (1768-1774), the Crimean Khanate was considered as independent despite the de facto Ottoman protection and the Crimean Tatars constituted more than 80% of the peninsula's population.

Significant demographic and political changes began to take place with the Russian invasion in 1783.[3] The Russian rule over these lands caused important demographic changes due to slavicization policies. Discriminatory policies against the Crimean Tatars and increasing poverty caused significant waves of migration, mostly to the Ottoman Empire, especially after the Crimean War (1853-1856).[4] The Crimean Tatar population in the Crimea began to decrease due to these migrations and fell from 83% in 1783 to 34% in 1897; to 25% in 1939 and since the entire population was displaced in 1944, there were no Crimean Tatars left in the Crimea at that date. In the same period the percentage of the Russian population increased from 5.7% to 50% and reached 67% in 1989.[5] In 1993, the Crimea's population was composed of 57.3% Russians; 25.8% Ukrains and 11.7% Crimean Tatars. However, as correctly pointed out by Dawson,[6] figures have changed so dramatically over time that the recent balance does not reflect the complexity of the Crimea's ethnic situation.

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[3] See: H. Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler 1905-1916*, Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, Ankara, 1996; *Turko-Ukrainian Relations and the Crimean Tatars* [http://www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/tuarel-hakan.html], 2003.

[4] See: Open Society Institute Report, *Crimean Tatars: Repatriation and Conflict Prevention*, New York, 1996, pp. 17-20; A. Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri 1856-1876*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1997, pp. 81-93.

[5] See: Open Society Institute Report, p. 21; [http://www.iccrimea.org/population.html].

[6] See: J. Dawson, "Ethnicity, Ideology and Geopolitics in the Crimea," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 1997, p. 429.

Following the Russian revolution, in May 1917, the Crimean Tatar nationalists proclaimed the short-lived Crimean Tatar Democratic Republic which was abolished by the Bolsheviks in February 1918.[7] Later in 1921, communist leaders authorized the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, with Akmescit (Simferopol) as its capital, which aimed to make a gesture to the Crimean Tatars which suffered under Tsarist regime. However, under the pretext of low percentage of the Crimean Tatar population in the Crimea, the term Tatar was not used within the name of the republic. Although the Crimean Tatar language obtained an official status and the Crimean Tatars had the opportunity to have access to high status administrative positions, this relative period of liberty did not last long. The end of 1920s was the beginning of a more totalitarian period all over the Soviet Union. Thus, this period of liberty ended up with the purge of the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia in 1930s and with the deportation of the whole population in 1944. In 1945, the Soviet Union abolished the Crimean Autonomous Republic. Later, the Crimea became an *oblast* in 1946 and was transferred to the Ukrainian Republic in 1954 as a "gift" to Ukraine in honor of the 300th anniversary of Ukraine's reunification with Russia.[8]

From 1783 until the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Crimea was under the control of Russians despite its transfer to Ukraine. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Crimea found itself as part of an independent Ukraine. Being part of Ukraine entailed a feeling of uncertainty among the Russians who dominated the region for a long time. The return process of the Crimean Tatars aggravated this feeling. Many Russians both those living in the Crimea and Russia still think that the Crimea is a part of Russia and they do not accept its transfer to Ukraine in 1954 as permanent and believe that it will be again part of Russia when the proper time arrives. In 1992, in a visit to the Crimea, one of the Russian deputies N. Pavlov openly declared to the newspaper *Literaturnaia Rossia*: "The Crimea was never Ukrainian and never will be. It was and remains Russian."[9] However, the argument of the Crimean Tatars challenges the Russian one. The Crimean Tatars argue that the annexation of the Crimea by Russia in 1783 was an illegal act. Thus, according to them, any claim of Russia over the Crimea is insubstantial.

The autonomy of the Crimea, which was abolished following the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, was restored in January 1991 after a referendum, as a result of tactical interaction between the Ukrainian government and the Crimean Communist Party.[10] This was before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian Parliament declared its independence on 24 August, 1991. Soon afterwards, the Crimean Tatar National Congress (Mejlis) was founded. The Mejlis was composed of 33 members from all over the Crimea and Mustafa Cemiloğlu became the chairman of the Mejlis.

Following Ukraine's independence, the opposition of the Crimean Russians to Ukraine can be seen more concretely in their low support of the Ukrainian independence referendum of December 1991. While the Ukrainian independence was supported over 80 or 90 percent in different regions and cities of Ukraine; the support was only 54.19% in the Crimean A.S.S.R. and 57.07% in Sevastopol.[11]

Although the Crimea's Supreme Council declared the peninsula's independence in May 1992 and adopted a constitution with an important concession made to Kiev through including an article on the Crimea belonging to Ukraine, Ukraine's reaction was to declare this independence as unconstitutional and ask for its cancellation. A solution was found to this crisis through granting the Crimea greater autonomy and bringing the Crimea's constitution and laws in line with those of Ukraine.[12] The autonomous status of the Crimea neither ended the emotional attachment to the Crimea of Russians, who identify the Crimea with Russian history, language and culture; nor the political claims of Russia over the Crimea and especially over Sevastopol. Territorial claims were voiced by various Russian groups. In 1992, President

[7] See: D.R. Marples & D.F. Duke, "Ukraine, Russia, and the Question of Crimea," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1995, p. 264.

[8] See: T. Kuzio, "Russia-Crimea-Ukraine: Triangle of Conflict," *Conflict Studies*, No. 267, 1994, p. 20.

[9] Quoted from: D.R. Marples & D.F. Duke, op. cit., p. 277.

[10] See: Open Society Institute Report, p. 41; S. Stewart, "Autonomy as a Mechanism for Conflict Regulation? The Case of Crimea," *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 2001, pp. 118-119.

[11] See: R. Solchanyk, "The Politics of State Building: Center-Periphery Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 1994, p. 48.

[12] See: O. Deychakiwsky, "OSCE Roundtable in Yalta Focuses on Crimean Tatars," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, Vol. LXIII, No. 44, 1995, p. xxviii.

Yeltsin himself declared that border problems and the Crimea are the most important problems between Russia and Ukraine.[13] The same year, some Russian deputies raised the Crimean issue at the parliament and asked for the revision of the status of Sevastopol, harking back to a decree adopted by the Supreme Soviet in 1948, which defined Sevastopol as a separate administrative and economic entity. According to them, this meant the removal of Sevastopol from the jurisdiction of the Crimea and consequently of Ukraine since the decree dated prior to the transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine. This was followed by Sergei Baburin's (a leading Russian nationalist deputy) emphasis on reopening the Crimean issue in the Russian Parliament's decision in 1993 claiming the constitutional sovereignty over the city of Sevastopol constituted a good example to the continuing claims of Russia over the Crimean territory.[14] This crisis over Sevastopol was stabilized by the intervention of the United Nations. The United Nations Security Council criticized those claims and defined them as violations of international agreements.

On the other hand, especially between 1991 and 1995, the Russian separatist tendency gained popularity in the Crimea under the leadership of Yuri Meshkov who failed in a short period of time. During these years, ethnic relations were tense. This was both due to the tension inrelations between Russians and Ukrains and, the unready state of mind of the local Russian and Ukrain population to accept the return of the Crimean Tatars.

In other words, the separatist tendency led by the Crimea's political bloc "Russia" was taken into consideration by the Ukrainian government and this ended up with the repeal of the Crimea's constitution and the abolition of the office of president.[15] The most significant event that took place in 1996 was the Ukrainian Constitution which strengthened the power and control of the Ukrainian President over the Crimea. According to this new constitution any Crimean executive or legislative act had to be in accordance with the Ukrainian Constitution and the Ukrainian President could prevent any act from entering into force.[16]

Human Rights Violation: The 1944 Deportation[17]

The main reason for the deportation of the Crimean Tatars in 1944 was their so called collaboration with the Germans during World War II. The entire nation was declared as a collaborator and this constituted a pretext for the cleansing of the Crimea from Muslim Crimean Tatars who challenged the power of Russians in the region throughout history and who had close ties with the Ottoman Empire and later with Turkey. Following their deportation, the Soviet government encouraged Russians to settle in the Crimea. Although a Soviet Decree of 1967 cleared the Crimean Tatars of all charges of collaboration, it did not make the return possible until the decision of the Supreme Soviet in 1989.

When asked about their views on deportation, most Russians and Ukrains interviewed in the Crimea argued that the deportation of the Crimean Tatars was an unjust decision. While this decision was mostly defined as *unfair* some of the interviewees have stressed that an entire community had suffered and was punished because of few guilty people. Two Russians who experienced the deportation period said:

"Of course I do not approve the deportation of the Crimean Tatars to Central Asia. This was unfair. But some of them deserved it… but of course what was done to all Crimean Tatars was unfair and oppressive".

"I do not know whether the decision of deportation was right or wrong. I was too young. At the time, it was maybe necessary but not for the entire community".

[13] See: T. Kuzio, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

[14] See: R. Solchanyk, op. cit., pp. 57-58; T. Kuzio, op. cit.; J. Lester, "Russian Political Attitude to Ukrainian Independence," *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 219.

[15] See: L.R. Budzhurova, "The Current Sociopolitical Situation of the Crimean Tatars," *The Harriman Review*, Vol. 11, No. 1-2, 1998, p. 25.

[16] S. Stewart, op. cit., p. 23.

[17] This section is based on the data gathered during the fieldwork carried out in the Crimea in December 2001 and April 2002. In-depth interviews were carried out and the views of Russians and Ukrains together with the Crimean Tatars were considered.

A young Russian girl said:

"I think they should not have deported the Crimean Tatars. Because the Crimea is their homeland. Their deportation was unjust. Everyone has to live in his homeland".

Another Russian said:

"When I came to the Crimea in 1976, people used to define the Crimean Tatars as traitors. For example at the moment there are debates about the forgiveness of Ukrains who collaborated with German SS's. It is said that they worked for their own country and for the ideal of Ukraine. Maybe the Crimean Tatars were on the side of the Germans for the same reason. But this constituted a reason for their deportation to Central Asia. I wish such an event hadn't happened because a lot of innocent people suffered. Any deportation is unjust and cannot be right. In the end, it caused all the trouble that we are going through today".

An Ukrain interviewee pointed out a striking fact by saying:

"We do not much like to talk about but in some regions of Ukraine Germans were welcomed with bread and salt.[18] *In Western Ukraine, most people were against the Soviets... So they had to deport the entire Western Ukrainians"*.

These quotations clearly show that deportation in general and Stalin's deportations in particular are defined by the interviewees as inhuman political decisions. The increasing information about the long and tragic deportation and history of the Crimean Tatars in exile renders their rehabilitation demands legitimate in the eyes of most Russians and Ukrains who are also conscious that this rehabilitation is a necessary step that Ukraine should take in the process of the integration into Europe as a democratic and independent country.

One important point stressed by Russian and Ukrain interviewees is that during World War II Ukrains too were said to have collaborated with Germans, however, only the Crimean Tatars were deported. Thus, one should take into consideration other factors than collaboration to explain the real reasons for the deportation of the Crimean Tatars. One of the main reasons is, of course, the strategic position of the Crimean peninsula. It is due to this strategic position that Russia aimed to slavicize the whole peninsula since the peninsula has been a very important place in terms of military, political and economic dimensions. Throughout history, most empires looking for controlling the Straits wanted to control the Crimean peninsula which is situated at the heart of Black Sea. During the Soviet period, the region continued to preserve its strategic meaning for the regime mainly due to the existence of the Black Sea Fleet. Thus, the existence of a community that was defined as untrustworthy in such a strategic region was not welcomed. Furthermore, it is also possible to argue that the Soviet regime always aimed to weaken the close ties of the Crimea with Turkey, which was considered as a potential enemy. The geographical and cultural proximity of the Crimean Tatars to Turkey can be said to constitute another reason for the deportation of the entire Crimean Tatar community.

The Importance of the Crimea: Nowadays More Symbolic Than Strategic?

The Crimea's strategic importance during the Soviet period was basically military and related to the Black Sea Fleet (BSF). The Fleet represented on the one hand the military power of the Soviet regime over the Black Sea and on the other hand the Great Russian and Soviet naval tradition. However, the Crimea had another importance for the Tsarist and Soviet Russia as a resort. In other words, it was the symbol of Russian expansion power and wealth.[19] Due to this both strategic and symbolic significance, Russians always perceived the Crimea as an integral part of Russia and this explains why the Crimea is still a major problem between Ukraine and Russia.

[18] According to the old Slav tradition, it signifies respect for the guest. For more detail, see: N. Hablemitoğlu, *Kırım'da Türk Soykırımı,* IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2002, p. 75.

[19] See: J. Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine and its Future Security," in: *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed. by M. Drohobycky, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., USA, 1995, p. 136.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union entailed Russia's loss of sovereignty over a large portion of its Black Sea Coast which was a strategic loss—the loss of access to warm water ports and also the loss of the BSF. These losses among others including harbors and naval bases, caused a significant decrease in the regional and global power and influence of Russia. The BSF which was for a long time the powerful southern security point, is nowadays in a poor condition, has lost its strategic value and has become a weapon for Russians to control Ukraine and its maritime trade following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It would be logical to assume that given the limited capabilities of the BSF, Russia and Ukraine would agree on the fate of these aged ships and those serving in the ranks of the BSF. However, both sides were far from finding a pragmatic solution to this issue and BSF continues to be a matter of tension between Ukraine and Russia.[20] Focused more on its symbolic significance, many Russians think that the Crimea and BSF is a part of their country, they do not accept the current status as part of Ukraine and believe that it will one day be part of Russia. The Crimea and the BSF still represent for most Russians the Tsarist power of the old days. Ukrains, although not attached to the Crimea in the same manner as Russians, perceive the Russian presence in the peninsula and especially the military presence in Sevastopol as a threat to the integrity of Ukraine.

Although Russia's attachment to the BSF seems symbolic at first sight nowadays, its insistence on keeping its military presence in the Crimea needs a careful interpretation. Nowadays, Ukrains fear that Russia wants to be present in the Crimea in order to dominate the Ukrainian coast and the Black Sea. The continuation of the Russian presence in the Crimea offers Russia the opportunity of intervention in case of any tension with Ukraine or to intervene as a peacekeeper in case of any ethnic tension that may take place in Ukraine. Thus, there are new strategic issues for Russia such as the necessity of controlling the Crimean coast to secure Ukraine's dependence on Russia's fossil fuels. It should also be noted that Ukrainian independence left Moscow with only two major ports, Novorossiisk and Tuapse on the distant North-East of the Black Sea.[21]

New strategic issues that emerged following the dissolution of the Soviet Union explain to a large extent the pressure of Russia over Ukraine. For example, the January 1992 agreement on the BSF, which gave 30 percent of the BSF to Ukraine excluding nuclear-capable warships, was not realized. The tension between Russia and Ukraine is in a way stabilized through the intervention of international actors. The role of international organizations and agreements is quite significant in eliminating certain conflicts as it has been in the case of Ukraine's accession to the trilateral agreement of 14 January, 1994 with the United States and Russia. This agreement was a solution to the nuclear-weapons issue which was an important source of tension between Russia and Ukraine.[22] In that case, U.S. involvement contributed to nuclear disarmament and to the stability of negotiations.[23] A similar role is played by the U.S. in the case of the tension over the Black Sea Fleet.

At this point, one should pay attention to the reappearance of another actor, which has been absent in the peninsula since 1944. The Crimean Tatars reentered the scene in 1989. Thus, the Crimea is not only claimed by Ukraine and Russia but also by the Crimean Tatars who want to have their homeland back.

The Crimea: Homeland of the Crimean Tatars

The Supreme Soviet legalized the rehabilitation of the Crimean Tatars in 1989. The Soviet government planned a three-stage rehabilitation for the Crimean Tatars and a commission was founded for this purpose. The commission was supposed to organize the infrastructure and housing as the first stage; as

[20] Ibid., pp. 135-136.
[21] See: R. Wolczuk, *Ukraine's Foreign and Security Policy 1991-2000*, London and New York, 2003, p. 132.
[22] Ibid., pp. 29, 30; D. Bazoğlu Sezer, "Balance of Power in the Black Sea in the Post-Cold War Era: Russia, Turkey and Ukraine," in: *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, p. 162.
[23] See: S.W. Garnett, "U.S. National-Security Interests in Crimea," in: *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, pp. 198-199.

the second stage, the return of the Crimean Tatars on an individual basis was supposed to be planned; as the final stage, a mass return and foundation of new villages and towns were to be organized.[24]

The rehabilitation program of the Soviet regime failed for two reasons. First, local authorities in the Crimea and the Ukrainian government did not welcome the decisions taken by the central government. Second, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 entailed a confusion about the validity of the decisions taken before 1991 and the commission was abolished. The financial support promised to the Crimean Tatars by Uzbek, Tadjik, Ukrainian SSRs and the Russian Federation was not provided as planned.[25]

One of the major problems that emerged following the return of the Crimean Tatars was the problem of settlement. The Crimean Tatars, who began to return *en masse*, built tents in the empty lands they found since they faced important difficulties when they wanted to buy houses or apartments in cities. Local authorities did not allow them to settle and buy property in city centers. Consequently, The Crimean Tatars were pushed to settle in the hinterlands of cities in a segregated way and no municipal services were provided to those areas. The Crimean Tatars, thus, had to struggle with problems of infrastructure and public transportation. The wish of those who wanted to live in cities and especially in cities or towns where their families used to live before the deportation did not come true.

The limitation of their settlement in big cities and obstacles to buying apartments in cities bring important housing problems. Most Crimean Tatars are building their own houses. Since these houses are located in rural areas, lack of running water, telephone, electricity, roads, public transport, central heating, food stores, school and health service still are important problems that the Crimean Tatars face. Most of the Crimean Tatars are currently settled in Bahçesaray, Akmescit (Simferopol), and Karasubazar (Belogorsk).

One should point out that a new process has taken place as a result of the return of the Crimean Tatars to their homeland. This is the deurbanization of an urban people.[26] Although urbanized after the end of the special settlement regime, most Crimean Tatars who returned to the Crimea in the post-1989 period had been oriented by the authorities toward the rural areas and only less than 30 percent live in cities. One of the major results of this deurbanization is high rate of unemployment since most of the qualified Crimean Tatars remain unemployed in rural areas or have jobs which do not correspond to their qualifications.

The fieldwork data showed an extremely high rate of unemployment among the Crimean Tatars and indicated that they mostly have irregular jobs and almost none of them work in their field of specialization. Many educated Crimean Tatars are forced to work in the markets, to adapt to rural conditions and grow their own food.

A young Crimean Tatar woman told the story of her own family:

"My mother is not working now. She could not find a job in the Crimea. My father could not find a job in his own profession. When we first came to the Crimea, he could not find any job. Then, someone helped him and he became a tractor driver. He has been working in the same place for 13 years. He is an engineer but what he is doing now is to rent land from the state and cultivate potatoes and tomatoes".

Another woman, who could not find a job after moving to the Crimea, explained her situation in the following words:

"I came to the Crimea in 1994. Until 2000 I could not find a job. Then I started to work in the market. My husband was unemployed too. He is an agricultural engineer but he is working as a driver since he could not find any job in which he can practice his own profession."

Until 1998, there was legislation prohibiting the Crimean Tatars from living on the southern shore and limiting the number of residence permits (*propiska*) in big cities.[27] This legislation which was repealed only few years ago had an impact on the current social, economic and political situation of the Crimean

[24] See: K. Özcan, *Vatana Dönüş: Kırım Türklerinin Sürgünü ve Milli Mücadele Hareketi 1944-1991*, Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı, İstanbul, 2002, p. 212.

[25] See: B.G. Williams, op. cit., p. 451.

[26] See: B.G. Williams, op. cit., pp. 450-451; E. Payin, "Population Transfer: The Crimean Tatars Return Home," *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1992, p. 33.

[27] See: L.R. Budzhurova, op. cit., p. 21; S. Burney, "Identity, Ethnicity, and Ethnogenesis: The Reintegration of Formerly Deported Crimean Tatars," *The Harriman Review*, Vol. 13, No. 4, 2002, p. 10.

Tatars. The fact that local authorities denied them land in the southern part constituted a barrier to the Crimean Tatars finding jobs and starting small businesses in tourist resorts where they can make a living more easily.

Due to the 1991 citizenship law, many Criman Tatars, who have returned to their homeland after November 1991, lack Ukrainian citizenship and all citizenship rights, including the right to participate in elections and to privatization. Lacking access to privatization means of course that they will be excluded from the process of small or medium-sized businesses. Almost 100,000 Crimean Tatars are still not Ukrainian citizens.[28] According to official statistics, in November 1997, 164,638 Crimean Tatars of voting age were living in the Crimea and only 91,910 possessed Ukrainian citizenship.[29] It is estimated that half of the Crimean Tatars living in Crimea do not have Ukrainian citizenship, being either citizens of other republics or without any citizenship. Crimean laws discriminated against the Crimean Tatars and prevented them reaching more than 20 percent in any region.[30]

Although the mass return of the Crimean Tatars was not welcomed by both local people and authorities, the ethnic tension which was expected by certain analysts to increase contrary to those expectations diminished mostly due to the non-violent and tolerant methods of struggle adopted by the Crimean Tatar leaders. Fieldwork data indicate that increasing interaction between the Crimean Tatars, Russians and Ukrains contribute to the decrease of potential ethnic tensions.

When we asked about views on changes in ethnic relations from 1989 to today, the Russians, Ukrains, and Crimean Tatars all gave similar answers.[31] Most interviewees stressed that the increasing interaction among these three nations had had a positive impact on inter-communal relations. We found that this opinion is more widely held by young people. The following is the opinion of a young Russian interviewee:

"I used to live in Novotroitsky Rayon. There were no Tatars in our village. The elderly used to say bad things about them. Now I live in Alekseyevka. I have now changed my mind. They are normal people like us… The more I know them, the more I feel close to them. In the beginning, I used to say only hello to my Tatar neighbors. Now, when I call them for help, they never say no."

Another Russian said:

"Interaction changes everything. Relations are getting better. The coming generations will be closer. We remember the things that our parents told us. The young will forget and won't even think about who is who. The young people perceive everything differently because they all grew up here."

A Crimean Tatar, who emphasized the positive impact of interaction among different groups on ethnic relations, said:

"When we came to the Crimea Russians were not welcoming. The kids of our neighbors used to throw stones at our houses. One day my father wanted to go out to argue and my mother intervened. She cooked our national meal 'mantý' and invited all the neighbors. We ate and talked together. We explained the reason why we came here. Now relations are much better. We became friends and we help each other."

However, one should remember that the relations of the Crimean Tatars with the Crimean Russians is mostly based on a feeling of distrust since the return of the Crimean Tatars had an impact on the demographic structure of the Crimea challenging the dominance of the Russians. Furthermore, due to their pro-Ukrainian attitude the Crimean Tatars are perceived by the Russians as potential allies of the Ukrains, who had weak political and demographic power until the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

They defend the argument that they both constitute a threat to the integration of the Crimea, and to their peaceful existence in the Crimea by encouraging nationalist sentiments among the Crimean Tatars. One of them said:

"The Russians and Ukrains I know have a negative perception about the Crimean Tatars. The elderly Crimean Tatars think that this land is theirs, and they do not want to share it with anybody else".

[28] See: O. Deychakiwsky, op. cit., p. 2.
[29] See: L.R. Budzhurova, op. cit., p. 25.
[30] See: T. Kuzio, op. cit., p. 26.
[31] These quotations are from the fieldwork data mentioned above.

Another one said:

"The funny thing is the idea that the Crimean Tatars have about capturing Crimea. Will all the Russians and Ukrains leave Crimea? I don't think such a thing could ever happen".

The interviews show that although for a significant number of Russians and Ukrains, the Crimean Tatars as individuals are not associated with a negative feeling, the high birth rate of the Crimean Tatars and the continuing return of the Crimean Tatars still dispersed in different parts of the ex-Soviet territory are an important factors that particularly attract the attention of both Russians and Ukrains. Despite the cautious attitude of most of the Ukrains toward the Crimean Tatars, it will not be wrong to argue that most of them consider the Crimean Tatars as natural allies against the Russians and a population that they can count on to keep the Crimea as part of Ukraine. The attitude and declarations of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, the parliament composed of 33 members representing the Crimean Tatar community, can be said to respond to the expectations of Ukrains considering the integrity of Ukraine.

It is also necessary to point out that the Crimean Tatar national movement has been one of the most dissident and effective movements of the Soviet period and afterwards. The role played by the Crimean Tatar leader, Mustafa Cemiloğlu, has been doubtless very important. His strong personality has been very influential several times in either containing certain conflicts which could intensify very easily—as was the case of the two Crimean Tatar young boys killed in Feodosiya market in 1995,[32] or giving strong speeches when necessary, for example, just following the attacks directed toward the first returnees he declared, "we will not be the first to shoot. But if such attacks happen, we'll be forced to provide measures for the defence of our people."[33] The leaders of the Crimean Tatar movement struggle for the recognition of their political and cultural rights and expect the support of international organizations through bringing their problems into the international legal sphere.

Conclusion

Ukraine as a newly independent state continues to establish its identity and international profile. In that sense, all problems are caused by this search for identity both at national and international levels. While aiming at founding a nation-state Ukraine has to balance its relations with Russia and all the ethnic groups living within the borders of Ukraine, including the Crimean Tatars. This newly emerging nation-state needs also international recognition and respect for human rights constitutes an indispensible element for that recognition. In that sense, success in the rehabilitation of the Crimean Tatars is compulsory for Ukraine's relations with Europe and to be part of Europe. Ukraine should also consider the slow but sure recognition of the Crimean Tatars by European countries. For instance, the Crimean Tatar Mejlis became a full member of the Federal Union of European National Minorities in 1997.[34] Being conscious of the role that international organizations can play, the Crimean Tatar leaders place great importance on the definition of their people as "indigenous people" and not as a "minority" since the United Nations' draft Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples provides them with special rights and prerogatives. In brief, the Crimean Tatar leaders want the right of their people to be protected by international organizations.[35]

In fact, Ukraine has a program of repatriation and settlement for the Crimean Tatars. However, it is very difficult to argue that it is an effective one. The Ukrainian government and the Crimean authorities do little to ameliorate the socioeconomic conditions of the Crimean Tatars despite Ukraine's ratification of the Bishkek Accord in October 1992. According to the first article of this accord, the deportees who have voluntarily returned to their original homelands should be given equal rights as permanent residents. However, the Ukrainian government is far from securing the rights of the Crimean Tatars.[36]

[32] See: J. Dawson, op. cit., p. 442.
[33] Quoted from: T. Kuzio, op. cit.
[34] See: L.R. Budzhurova, op. cit., p. 24.
[35] Interview with Nadir Bekirov, December 2001, Akmescit; see also: B.G. Williams, op. cit., p. 445.
[36] See: L.R. Budzhurova, op. cit., p. 26.

Ukraine has repeatedly appealed for assistance from the international community since it is obvious that given its current economic situation, Ukraine is far from having the economic potential to realize Crimean Tatar rehabilitation. Ukraine as a democratizing state should however take into consideration in a more determined manner both the individual and communal rights of the Crimean Tatars. Ukraine should also continue to appeal for assistance from the international community.

The internationalization of Crimea's problems is important since international actors, either western countries or international organizations, may make their contributions to reaching peaceful solutions to the tensions which have the potential to increase. Furthermore, the intervention of these actors constitutes a power that can balance Russia's influence.

This study has indicated that the issue of the rehabilitation of the Crimean Tatars goes beyond the limits of the relations between the Crimean Tatars and the Crimean Authorities or Ukraine. The Crimean Tatar issue is very much related to the relations between Russia and Ukraine which are much more complicated, including problems such as Ukrainian territorial integrity, discussions about the status of Sevastopol, the issue of dual citizenship for the Russians living in Ukraine, disputes over the transit fee for the energy that is transferred from Ukrainian territory.[37] In such a context, both countries may attempt to manipulate the Crimean Tatar population. This possibility should be taken into consideration by both the international actors and the group itself.

[37] See: T. Kuzio, op. cit., p. 6.

CULTURE AND SOCIETY

TAJIKISTAN: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND THE IDENTITY ISSUE

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Cultural heritage has always been a controversial issue in Central Asia. And its newly acquired independence has only added heat to the already ongoing debates.

Each layer of Central Asian cultural heritage consists of many elements. Tajik culture, for example, comprises many peacefully coexisting cultural forms: they include elements of the Iranian, Turkic, Russian, Indian, and Chinese cultures. And the artificially constructed models of pure culture offered by certain intellectuals cannot stand up to the practical test.

Any discussion of the Sunni religious-cultural tradition of Tajikistan within the context of field research leaves the impression that a monistic idea of the dominating religious and cultural tradition of the Tajiks and the Turki peoples associated with the Sunni tradition is not totally correct. Indeed, not only the common Muslims, but also religious figures in Jilikul, Matcha, Hissar, Isfara, and Chorkukh do not strictly separate Sunnism from Shi'ism. For example, until quite recently the Arabic inscriptions (khufi graphics) found in the Khazrati-Shokh mosque (in the village of Chorkukh, one of the republic's most religious places) dated to the 9th-10th centuries remained undeciphered. Arabic specialists, who recently visited the mosque, read the inscriptions and explained that the tomb inside the mosque contained Hussein's son imam Zaynollobiddin (both were Shi'a imams). The Arabs wanted to know whether the young man who looked after the tomb discerned the contradiction between the Sunni and Shi'a traditions created by this fact. The young man shrugged his shoulders and said there were no contradictions since both were parts of the single Muslim tradition.

Francis Fukuyama has said in this connection that revived religious feelings will assume much softer and decentralized form in which faith is betrayed not so much as a dogma, but as a movement of social forms toward order.[1] I think that this re-

[1] See: F. Fukuyama, *Velikiy razryv,* AST Publishers, Moscow, 2003, p. 15.

lates to the present rather than future. Today, all of us can see opposite trends: the cultural and political elites are doing their best to draw dividing lines inside religion in order to win popular support for various political projects. It appears that the spatial dimension and interpretation of cultural legacy have not yet been clearly identified: monuments of culture, intellectuals, and men-in-the-street belong to different contexts.

The further a cultural symbol or a historic event is from our day and age, the more stable its interpretation; interpretations of events and symbols close to our times are subject to dynamic changes in interpretation. In fact, every attempt at interpreting cultural heritage depends on personal approaches to any particular period of time.

Students of ancient history have definite reference points at their disposal, while politicians do not need them at all. The latter focus on the interests, motives and driving forces behind people's actions, while the former cannot base their extrapolations on human activity alone. This simple fact creates the need for more stable targets of analysis and suggests a primordial approach; scholars, who use time as the main instrument and the central parameter of their analysis, have to look at the beginning of time. Indeed, if we treat time as eternal, it assumes a different dimension and stops being time at all. On the other hand, if time is not eternal, it certainly has a beginning and an end. Fukuyama's *The End of History* deals with this interpretation. If we, together with Kant, look at time as an *a priori* phenomenon of human consciousness, then history is nothing more than an artificial model, while any of its interpretations (including of cultural heritage for the matter) is another variant which depends on certain elite groups wishing to stress some points and exclude others.

Political sciences are not very concerned about the beginning of time: they look at time as a way to prove that human and social nature is changeable. Those who think so believe that historical time cannot determine human conduct (of social groups and individuals). It itself is dominated by what people do, therefore time can be slowed down or accelerated. This is social time, which looks into the future, not into the past.

Here I am referring to the social and political process going on in my country to demonstrate how cultural and political symbols related to the past are selected. To do this we have to answer the key questions raised in the article: To what extent does cultural heritage determine the behavior of sociopolitical and cultural groups (the primordial approach)? Do the sociopolitical and cultural elites select and construct cultural heritage in terms of a "virtual community" (B. Anderson) (the constructivist approach)?

The two approaches may coexist and be realized in different contexts.

The Influence Symbols Exert on a Sociopolitical Structure

Those who watched the parliamentary debates about the best possible symbol of Tajikistan's national flag could conclude that the same symbols allowed different interpretations. The deputies concentrated on two key elements: a crown and seven stars above it. The crown drew few objections (many of the deputies had learned that the crown expressed the Toj concept, meaning "the crown," or "crowned") for the simple reason that cultural figures associated it with the name of the nation (Tajiks).

The seven stars were unexpectedly interpreted in the Aryan and the religious (belonging to the Muslim tradition) contexts.[2] Certain cultural figures tried to associate the symbol with the seven areas of the Aryan peoples described in the holy book *Avesta.* Linguists and poets detected connections between these names and the Maverannahr territory. Speaking at an international seminar organized by the Iranian Cultural Center in Dushanbe in 2000, one of the political figures re-adjusted these interpretations by moving them

[2] It should be said in all justice that some of the leaders of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) offered their own, negative interpretation of the seven stars on the country's flag. In 2000, speaking at one of the cabinet sittings, they suggested that one more star should be added to make eight stars. Islam interprets seven stars as the seven gates to hell and eight stars as eight gates to heaven. The IRPT leaders failed to convince their colleagues.

from the culturological to the political context. He pointed out that the seven stars represented the seven sociocultural centers of contemporary Tajikistan.

This is how cultural symbols affect the state's sociopolitical and cultural structure and its strategy of seeking correspondence between cultural symbols and the current sociopolitical context.

How the Sociopolitical Structure Affects Cultural Symbols

This process is best illustrated by the replacement of old monuments with new ones. As soon as the Soviet Union fell apart its sacral symbol—the monument to Lenin—was replaced with a monument to Firdausi. (It should be said that the personal names from his epic poem *Shah-Name* are very much in vogue now.) The process of creating a new identity different from the Soviet one was headed by the linguistic elite. It was on its initiative that nearly all the streets in the Tajik capital received new names. In 2000, the monument to Firdausi was moved to the outskirts to be replaced with a monument to Ismoil Somoni, the founder of the Samanid dynasty.

This happened because by that time the country's sociopolitical climate had changed and a new elite consisting of political scientists and historians had moved to the forefront to take the place of the linguistic elite. The newcomers obviously preferred the symbols that reflected their political ideas.

According to M. Kabiri, one of the IRPT leaders, the people at the helm know that the nation cannot live without religion: the answer to the challenge is sought in the pre-Islamic past. This and similar designs are doomed—all attempts made between 1997 and 2000 failed. Today, we are witnessing new attempts at creating a national identity based on the civilizational (Aryan) rather than on the religious (Zoroastrian) foundation. M. Kabiri, however, doubts its success.[3]

How the Symbols are Selected

The selection of symbols to be placed on national currency (*somoni*) is another striking example of the quest for national identity. The national currency was named in 2000 after an outstanding political figure Ismoil Somoni. In fact, the Tajik identity is to a great extent associated with the Samanid state (9th-late 10th centuries). It was in this state that the Tajiks were consolidated into one people. It should be said that portraits of certain Soviet political figures of Tajikistan found their way onto banknotes together with the portraits of famous writers and scholars of old times: a portrait of Mirzo Tursun-zadeh appears on the 1 somoni banknote; Sadriddin Ayni, on the 5 somoni banknote; Hamadoni, on the 10 somoni bill; Ibn-Sina, on the 20 somoni, Bobojon Gafurov, on the 50 somoni, and Ismoil Somoni, on the 100 somoni bill.

Two prominent Soviet poets—Tursun-zadeh and Ayni—appeared on banknotes; Sufi Sheik Hamadoni (his mausoleum is in Kulob) occupies a higher step on the hierarchical ladder followed by scholars Ibn-Sina (an outstanding philosopher of the Samanid and Ghaznevid period) and Gafurov, a Soviet political figure and scholar, author of the definitive work *The Tajiks*, regarded as the cornerstone of Tajik identity and a central work by most of the local intellectuals. The pyramid is crowned by Ismoil Somoni, the founder of the Samanid state. Why them and not others? During a TV press conference[4] to discuss the new national currency, the deputy chairman of the National Bank answered the question about Rudaki in the following way: "Rudaki was excluded from the list because he was blind and we considered it improper to show him to the public." There were other interpretations too: sociopolitical and culturological.

[3] Interview with M. Kabiri, IRPT Deputy Chairman. Dushanbe, 21 September, 2003.

[4] TV press conference. Deputy chairman of the National Bank answered TV viewers' questions, Dushanbe, November 2000.

Sociopolitical Interpretation

The deputy chairman of the National Bank told the truth—Rudaki was blind. The question is: was he born blind or was he blinded? Public opinion lays the blame for Rudaki's blindness on Ismoil Somoni's grandson. In this case, his face on a banknote would have been a constant reminder of what the grandson of a prominent historical figure did. Under these circumstances, few would recall that this was done under pressure from the Turkic military leaders and clergy who accused Rudaki of plotting with the Karmat (radical Ismaelites) movement. Rudaki's portrait on a banknote would have crippled Somoni's political image.

There is another version: Rudaki was born blind, but many leading historians disagree with this. Academician N. Negmatov voiced his doubts in an interview. Indeed, the poet took part in numerous feasts, which he described in his poems in greater detail than any blind man could have guessed.[5] The majority favors the first version very much supported by the Soviet film *Smert' Poeta* (Death of a Poet), a favorite on Tajik TV.

I am convinced that Ismoil Somoni is one of the best symbols for the new Tajik state. First, it was under him that the Tajiks began consolidating into a nation within the Samanid state. Second, at that time, the secular and the religious world outlooks peacefully coexisted. Third, science and culture flourished, while various religions (Muslim, Christian, Zoroastrian, and Jewish) existed side by side. Finally, according to the latest sociological polls, 64.4 percent of Tajikistan's population support this symbol.[6] Somoni personifies both military might and lack of enmity toward foes and adversaries. At a time when symbols have acquired special importance, the image of a great man may help stabilize the situation in the republic. It should be added that Rudaki was blinded by Somoni's grandson, under whom the country was drawn into religious intolerance, while the militarized pro-Turkic elite acquired great influence.

Culturological Interpretation

There was another reason why Rudaki was left off the list: in 2000-2001, the country's political leaders and intellectual elite were striving to coordinate cultural and national identities, that is, to achieve a single cultural and political space.

This can best be illustrated by the linguistic policies. Rudaki, born in Penjikent (today the area is part of Tajikistan), was the founder of the Tajik-Persian language (the Farsi), with which Tajik culture is associated. His absence from the banknotes raised many questions.

To my mind, the "blame" for this should be placed on Ayni. Like Rudaki before him, he was the founder of the contemporary Tajik language based on the Cyrillic. Rudaki stands no chance of appearing on banknotes until the country abandons its orientation toward Iran. Even if the pro-Iranian bias is abandoned, identity will remain a controversial issue. Under the new Constitution, Tajik (Farsi) was re-instituted as the state language; the relations with Iran improved, while the cultural universalist (pro-Iranian) elite is gradually coming to the fore to influence the selection and conceptualization of the pro-Iranian form of identity. Despite this, Rudaki still remains on the axiological periphery of the political elite, because the Tajik (Farsi) language, which he founded, can be interpreted in the context of the pro-Iranian civilizational expanse closely associated with contemporary Tajikistan. And although a very limited number of coins were minted to mark the anniversary of his birth, many citizens of our republic did not even see them.

Today, a lot of criticism is being heaped on the contemporary Cyrillic-based Tajik language and on Sadriddin Ayni who founded it. It was he who enriched the language with local Tajik dialects. Academi-

[5] Interview with Academician N. Negmatov, Dushanbe, 30 September, 2003.

[6] The poll was conducted by the Zerkalo group in nine cities: Dushanbe, Kurgan-Tiube, Kulob, Tursun-zadeh, Vakhdat, Bokhtar, Khujand, Nau, and Isfara. Dushanbe, July 2003.

cian M. Shukurov, a prominent linguist and a respected expert in the Tajik language, has pointed out: "Our leaders believe the language to be a class phenomenon; they are opposing its classical variant and support all local dialects as a sign of our language's democratic nature. This explains why many Tajik intellectuals prefer to use the language of their regions or even their villages… Translation loans borrowed from the Russian have appeared; the language has lost its Tajik structure; many Tajiks think in Russian. If the classical Tajik language collapses, the nation collapses too. We have to improve the situation by referring to the classical (Farsi) Tajik tongue."[7]

According to sociological studies, Rudaki's rating is higher than Ayni's and Firdausi's (11.4, 8.3 and 2.6 percent, respectively). In fact, Rudaki (together with Gafurov) comes second after Somoni (even if the gap between them is wide—Somoni's rating is 64 percent).[8] These figures testify that most of the political elite and the common people prefer national symbols that express a balance between the national territory and the pro-Iranian cultural expanse.

The current process of nation-building demonstrates that there are several development strategies supported by different groups of the political and cultural elite, each of which appeals to the country's cultural heritage and relies on the most important periods in the nation's life. In other words, each social group has its own idea of a sociopolitical and cultural development model. In fact, the same equally applies to all other nations. The projects cannot coexist because each of them addresses the past as the only genuine cultural heritage.

I think that strict delimitation of the field of national symbols may lead to sociopolitical and cultural delimitation in the republic. This should not be taken to mean that chaos is preferable. Cultural heritage should be interpreted in full accord with the republic's contemporary existence; these interpretations should complement, rather than exclude, each other.

[7] M. Shukurii, *Insongaroii omuzish va zaboni milli*, Payvand Publishers, Dushanbe, 2002, pp. 140-141 (in Tajik).
[8] See the poll conducted by the Zerkalo group.