



**Diplomatische
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FAVORITA PAPERS 03/2002

**CENTRAL ASIA'S FIRST DECADE OF
INDEPENDENCE**

Promises and Problems

32nd IPA Vienna Seminar



International Peace Academy,
New York

Diplomatische
Akademie **WIEN**

Vienna School of International Studies

“FAVORITA PAPERS“ OF THE DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY OF VIENNA

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Central Asia's Decade of Independence: Promises and Problems (32nd IPA-Vienna-Seminar)

Diplomatic Academy of Vienna

Favorita Papers 03/2002

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32nd INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACADEMY VIENNA SEMINAR

Central Asia's First Decade of Independence. Promises and Problems

4-6 July 2002

Diplomatic Academy of Vienna

CONTENTS

Prefaces

Ernst SUCHARIPA	4
David MALONE	6
Raimund SCHITTENHELM	7

Seminar Program	9
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Seminar Report

Simon CHESTERMAN	13
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Ján KUBIŠ	
Problems and Achievements of Peacemaking in Central Asia	39

Martha Brill OLCOTT	
The Absence of a Regional Response to Shared Problems in Central Asia	50

Chinara JAKYPOVA	
The Challenge of Good Governance in Central Asian Countries: A Case Study of Kyrgyzstan	69

Saodat OLIMOVA	
Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building in Tajikistan: A case study of UN intervention	85

Reinhold BRENDER	
The Prospects of Regional Co-Operation in Central Asia	98

Views from Government Officials

Yerzhan KAZYKHANOV	106
Lidiya IMANALIEVA	109
Khamrokhon ZARIPOV	110
Schersad ABDUALLEJEN	113

Participants	116
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PREFACE

Ernst SUCHARIPA

Director of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna

For the last three years IPA's Vienna Seminars were devoted to the issue of cooperation among states and international organizations in helping to prevent and resolve regional conflicts. The "triad" of regions analysed at our seminars in the years 2000 - 2002 (South Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, Central Asia) proved to be most interesting subjects for very intensive and forwardlooking discussions.

The present report reflects the proceedings of the 2002 Vienna Seminar. For the 32nd time the New York based Peace Academy, the Austrian National Defense Academy and the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna joined forces to co-organize this event. I wish to thank all participating institutions for their enthusiasm and financial support which make these recurrent seminars both feasible and enjoyable.

This year's Seminar "Central Asia's First Decade of Independence - Promises and Problems" brought together participants from the region, from countries with special interest in the region and from various international organizations concerned. In the pluridisciplinary approach which is characteristic for most of the Diplomatic Academy's activities topics were discussed from the point of view of security issues, economics and politics. Underlying historic and other reasons for existing problems were analysed and ideas for prospects for future development were exchanged. Of course, the close connection to the developments in Afghanistan constituted an important subtext to the discussions. Most participants considered that regionalization will be a prerequisite for stability and that in this respect both donor countries and international organizations as well as interested major powers who could wield influence over the region had a specific responsibility to foster improved regional co-operation. At the same time emerging trends for the establishment of a civil society in the countries themselves needed to be supported to ensure responsible participation of citizens in the further economic, societal and political development.

In addition to the spirited conference report, written by Dr. Simon Chesterman, Senior Associate with IPA, this paper contains all the background papers commissioned for and submitted to the conference as well as the texts of individual national position papers that were introduced to the conference by high government representatives from countries of the region.

I wish to thank all contributors for their important work which made both the Seminar and this paper possible. Special thanks are also due to the staff of the Austrian National Defense Academy, the UN desk at the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Academy for their untiring efforts to make the seminar such a huge success. Finally, Wolfgang Lederhaas (Diplomatic Academy of Vienna) deserves special credit for his work in arranging the texts for this paper.

The production of the paper was financed by the Association of Friends and Supporters of the Academy to whom we are particularly thankful.



Ernst Sucharipa, *Director, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna*

PREFACE

David MALONE

President International Peace Academy

It is with great pleasure that the International Peace Academy joins with the Diplomatic Academy and the Austrian Defence Academy in Vienna in publishing this volume recording the gist of discussions at a fascinating policy seminar hosted by Ambassador Ernst Sucharipa and his colleagues at the Diplomatic Academy in July 2002. The subject of the meeting, regional security in Central Asia, while selected well before the events of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent upheavals in Afghanistan that also affected neighbouring countries could not have been more topical.

The International Peace Academy has long been interested in the partnership between the United Nations and European regional security organizations in promoting peace in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. With our partners in Vienna, we had, in July 2001, examined UN, US and European efforts to resolve the interlocking conflicts of the Caucasus. The year before considered European peacemaking efforts in the Balkans. The year 2002 has witnessed the deployment to Kabul of what represents, *de facto*, the first large operation of the Euroforce to come, with European countries providing the back-bone of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in that city, and, perhaps soon, throughout Afghanistan. The implications for NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the UN are significant.

We are extremely grateful to Ambassador Sucharipa and General Raimund Schittenhelm, Commandant of the Austrian Defence Academy, for joining us in this venture and to the Government of Austria for funding the conference. I would also like to thank my colleagues Col. Jussi Saressalo, Wambui Waweru, Neclâ Tschirgi, W.P.S. Sidhu and Simon Chesterman for the important role they played in shaping IPA's contribution to the meeting.

PREFACE

General Raimund SCHITTENHELM

Commandant, National Defence Academy Vienna

Following the event of September 11, 2001, as well as rising fundamental tendencies and the growing interests in Central Asia's oil reserves, the selected topic showed its great current significance.

Besides the successful initial lectures in the plenary assembly, the division into three working groups was well accepted. Detailed aspects from the following areas were analysed:

- Military: *"Case study of UNTOP/UNMOT"*
- Economy: *"Co-operation in Trade and Natural Resources Management"*
- International relations: *"Challenges of Governance in Central Asia"*

Also on informal level, important issues related to development aid and the fight against terrorism were discussed during the conference.

Similar to the past two years, the cooperation between the National Defence Academy, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the International Peace Academy NY has proved to be very efficient and contributed largely to the successful outcome of the conference.



At the opening of the Seminar
From left to right: *Dr. P. Sidhu, Dr. M. Kapila, David Malone, Ernst Sucharipa, General R. Schittenhelm, Jan Kubiš (Secretary General of OSCE)*

32nd INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACADEMY VIENNA SEMINAR

**CENTRAL ASIA'S FIRST DECADE OF INDEPENDENCE
PROMISES AND PROBLEMS**

**4 – 6 JULY 2002
DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY, VIENNA**

PROGRAM CHAIRS

DAVID M. MALONE

President, International Peace Academy, New York

AMBASSADOR ERNST SUCHARIPA

Director, Diplomatic Academy, Vienna

GENERAL RAIMUND SCHITTENHELM

Commandant, National Defense Academy Vienna

Rapporteur

DR. SIMON CHESTERMAN

Senior Associate, International Peace Academy

Keynote presentations

“Problems and Achievements of Peacemaking in Central Asia”

H.E. Ambassador Jan Kubiš, Secretary General, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

“Recent Developments in Afghanistan”

Dr. Mukesh Kapila, Special Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary General, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Discussion on the keynote presentations

Panel Presentation: “Peace and Security”

Panelists:

Dr. Pavel Baev, Senior Researcher, International Peace Research Institute (PRIO), Oslo

Ms. Nasra Hassan, Chief, Inter-Agency Relations and Fund-Raising Branch, UN Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), United Nations, Vienna

Discussant:

Ms. Heidemaria Gürrer, Ambassador, Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Panel Presentation: “Economic Challenges”

Panelist:

Dr. Mukesh Kapila, Special Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary General, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Discussant:

Dr. Ben Slay, Director, Regional Support Center, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bratislava

Panel Presentation: “Governance”

Panelists:

Ambassador Herbert Salber, Special Advisor of the Portuguese Chair in Office of the OSCE on Central Asia

Ms. Catherine Barnes, Accord Program Manager/Series Editor, Conciliation Resources (CR), London

Discussant:

Dr. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, Professor, Department of International Relations, Florida International University

Discussion

Working Group I: Case study of UNTOP/UNMOT

Presenter:

Ms. Saodat Alimova, Analytic Group Shark, The Central Asia and the Caucasus IAC, Tajikistan

Discussant:

Mr. Ivo Petrov, Representative of the Secretary General for Tajikistan, United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding, (UNTOP)

Working Group II: Cooperation in Trade and Natural Resource Management

Presenter:

Dr. Martha Brill Olcott, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Discussant:

Dr. Reinhold Brender, Policy Officer of the Caucasus/Central Asia Unit of the Commission's External Relations Directorate

Working Group III: Challenges of Governance in Central Asia

Presenter:

Ms. Chinara Jakypova, Project Director (Bishkek), Central Asian Project, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)

Discussant:

Dr. John Schoeberlein, Director, Program on Central Asia and the Caucasus, Harvard University

Views from government officials

Mr. Ershan Kazykhanov, Head of Department, Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kazakhstan

H.E. Ms. Lydia Imanalieva, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kyrgyzstan

Ambassador Zaripov Khamrokhon, Ambassador of Tajikistan to the OSCE and Austria, Delegation of Tajikistan to the OSCE

Dr. Schersad Abduallejw, Advisor of the Foreign Ministry on Central Asia, Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations



Baktier Erav (*Counsellor, Delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan to the OSCE*) and
Simon Chesterman (*Rapporteur*)

32nd IPA Vienna Seminar
4-6 July 2002
Seminar Report

**Does Central Asia exist?
Regional politics after a decade of independence**

Rapporteur:

*Simon Chesterman**

Senior Associate
International Peace Academy
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
tel: 212 687 4577
fax: 212 983 8246
email: chesterman@ipacademy.org

* SIMON CHESTERMAN is a Senior Associate at the International Peace Academy, where he directs the project on Transitional Administrations. He is the author of *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford University Press, 2001) and the editor of *Civilians in War* (Lynne Rienner, 2001).

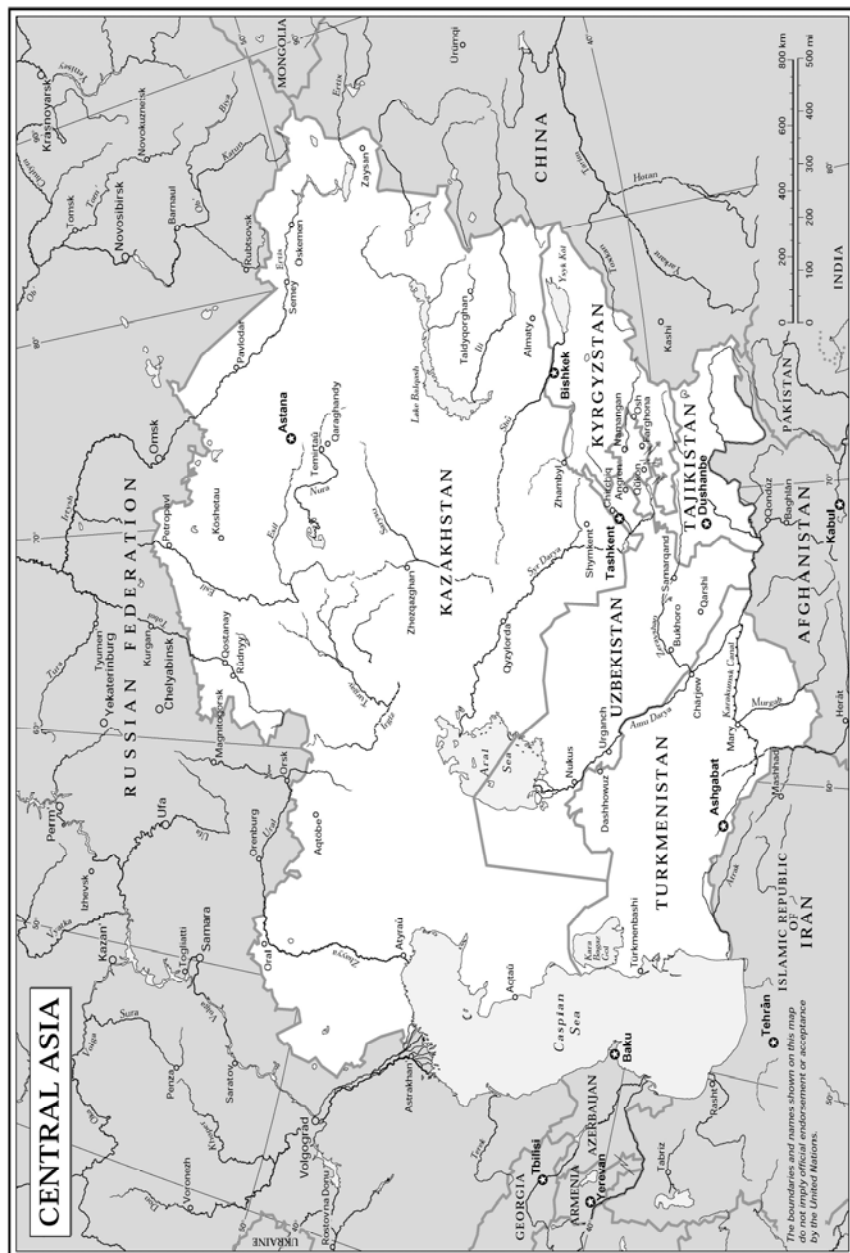
This report draws upon views shared at the 32nd International Peace Academy Vienna Seminar, convened on 4-6 July 2002 jointly by IPA, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna and the Austrian National Defence Academy. The author is indebted to all the participants for their comments. Except where otherwise indicated, these were made on a not-for-attribution basis. The author would also like to thank Catherine Barnes, Sebastian Einsiedel, David M. Malone, Jussi Saressalo, Ernst Sucharipa, Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu and Necla Tschirgi for their comments on an earlier draft of this text. Responsibility for the final version lies with the author alone.

Executive Summary	15
Introduction	15
1 Common problems, common future?	19
Table 1: Membership of Selected International Organizations	21
1.1 Governance	22
Table 2: Heads of State	23
1.1.1 Ethnic politics	23
Table 3: Populations	24
1.1.2 Corruption	24
1.1.3 Personal politics	25
1.2 Economic development	26
1.2.1 Partial reforms	27
1.2.2 Incentives for cooperation	27
Table 4: Selected Economic Indicators	29
1.3 Peace, but no security	29
2 The new great game	30
2.1 Great Powers	31
2.1.1 United States	32
2.1.2 Russia	33
2.1.3 China	34
2.1.4 Other states	34
2.2 Intergovernmental organizations	35
2.2.1 The United Nations	35
2.2.2 European Union	35
2.2.3 OSCE	36
2.2.4 Shanghai Cooperation Organization	37
3 Conclusion	37

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Does Central Asia exist? Thrust into the international spotlight by recent events in Afghanistan, the identity of the region has never been more important. The current interest in the region due to its proximity to Afghanistan presents an opportunity for greater engagement with the region, but also the danger that it will become seen as little more than a staging ground for events in its southern neighbour.
- The five former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan share common problems of governance, economic development and security. Many of these problems could be addressed on a regional basis, but attempts to construct a regional architecture have thus far been underwhelming. There has, however, been relative enthusiasm for joining Western-led institutions.
- In the area of governance, ethnic and religious politics, widespread corruption and dubious constitutional practices have combined to restrict growth in the region and sow instability. None of the five states has experienced a peaceful change of government and each of the current presidents has tilted in the direction of becoming president-for-life.
- Economic reforms have proceeded fitfully, delayed in part by the increased complications of advanced market reform and in part by the vested interests of those who have profited from the first round of changes. The legacy of Soviet-era infrastructure and the unequal distribution of oil and water should encourage greater regional cooperation, but recent years have seen instead a tightening of borders.
- Central Asia has experienced relative peace (with the exception of Tajikistan's civil war) but little security. The recent fortification of some borders has included the use of mines and occasional cross-border shootings. This has been accompanied by the increasing politicization of the militaries.
- Ultimate responsibility for dealing with these problems lies with the populations of the five states, but outsiders have long played a complicated role in Central Asia, staging ground of the nineteenth century Anglo-Russian 'Great Game'. In particular, the United States, Russia and, more recently, China continue to play significant roles in the region. Local powers, notably Iran and Turkey, are also active.

- Intergovernmental (including regional) organizations also have a role to play. The OSCE and EU have become important actors. The UN, through its long engagement in Tajikistan, has also been a constructive presence.
- Two issues are of primary interest to these external actors: oil and terrorism. Selective engagement in pursuit of these interests has encouraged actions that may undermine long-term stability. Kyrgyzstan, for example, will soon boast a US base, a Russian base and a centre for anti-terrorism under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It remains one of the most unstable of the five republics. (Drugs follows a close third, linked to terrorism, and there is much scope for actors such as the UN's Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).)
- Regional cooperation seems, to outsiders, a natural step for the states of Central Asia. But the driving force for such cooperation must come from the states themselves. Here, the emergence of civil society initiatives (including those who participated in the conference) gives reason to be hopeful about Central Asia's future.



Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

Map No. 3763 Rev.4 UNITED NATIONS
October 1998

INTRODUCTION

Does Central Asia exist? The question of whether the five former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan can sensibly be regarded as a 'region' frequently goes unasked in examinations of the topic. Despite their overlapping history as republics of the Soviet Union, each possesses a distinct culture and has dealt with independence in subtly different ways. A decade later, Central Asia now marks the eastern limit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as well as the western extreme of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Thrust into the global spotlight by the US-led actions in Afghanistan, Central Asia's identity has never been more important.

On 4-6 July 2002, representatives and experts from the five Central Asian states, their immediate neighbours, Europe and beyond gathered at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna to discuss the promises and the problems of Central Asia. Organized jointly by the International Peace Academy, the Diplomatic Academy and the Austrian National Defence Academy, the 32nd IPA Vienna Seminar provided a survey of the challenges faced by the five republics, ranging from governance and economic development to peace and security. Though the meeting had been planned before the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, DC, the attention given to the region in the aftermath of those attacks demonstrated its importance as a potential source of more than oil and gas. Afghanistan itself, though not normally considered part of Central Asia — or, indeed, any region as such — loomed large in discussion, both for the ongoing operations there under UN and coalition auspices and for the complicated relations it has with its northern neighbours.

What does the future hold for Central Asia, described by one Kyrgyz commentator as a region of 'tribes, bribes and immortal presidents'?¹ Certainly, the problems of ethnic and religious politics, widespread corruption and political instability are major barriers to sustainable peace and prosperity. Ultimate responsibility for dealing with these problems lies with the respective populations, but outsiders have long played a complicated role in Central Asia, venue for the nineteenth century 'Great Game' between Russia and Britain.²

This report will draw upon the many contributions made at the seminar, some of which appear in this volume, to examine the first decade of Central Asia's independence. The report does not represent a consensus view; rather, it builds upon the views that were presented in order to disseminate them to a wider audience. The focus will be on the question of whether and how regional or sub-regional approaches might be appropriate to addressing the problems that the countries jointly and severally face.

¹ Presentation at the 32nd International Peace Academy Vienna Seminar (4-6 July 2002).

² See, e.g., Karl Ernest Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1999).

The report will first consider these problems in the three areas of governance, economic development and peace and security. It will then examine the role of external actors.

The argument throughout is that use of the moniker 'Central Asia' is less important than adopting a broad view on issues of common concern. Regional approaches need not include all five republics, but depend upon viewing these issues as not terminating at the somewhat arbitrary (and in places uncertain) borders left after Soviet rule. Outside actors, both states and intergovernmental organizations also have an important role to play in encouraging the development of sustainable local solutions. The current crisis in Afghanistan presents an opportunity for deeper engagement with Central Asia, but it is vital that this be approached with a perspective that looks beyond a short-term military interest in its southern neighbour.

1. COMMON PROBLEMS, COMMON FUTURE?

Regional cooperation typically emerges from shared interests and shared values. The states of Central Asia share some problems, but have thus far been reluctant to embrace regional solutions. Indeed, their membership of international organizations suggests some ambivalence about their place in the world.

The five states are members of a variety of organizations that formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), formed in December 1991 as the vehicle of separation and divorce for the Soviet republics, recently announced that it aspired to become an internationally acknowledged, integrated union similar to the European Union (EU).³ On the basis of past experience, this appears highly improbable in the foreseeable future, though Uzbekistan recently withdrew from the main rival to the CIS, a loose US-sponsored alliance with Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova known, until June 2002, as 'GUUAM'.⁴ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are also members of the Eurasian Economic Community — until June 2001 a mere customs union between the three states plus Russia and Belarus. It, too, appears unlikely to live up to the much-hyped expectations. The same can be said of the CIS's Collective Security Organization, which incorporates the same group together with Armenia.⁵ The major exception to this trend is the significant role played by the Russian-dominated CIS Collective Peacekeeping Forces in Tajikistan from September 1993 to 2000, though this was more properly seen as a new name for Russia's continuing military presence in Dushanbe.⁶

³ See 'CIS Summit a "Watershed" - Kazakh Foreign Minister in TV Interview', BBC Monitoring, 4 March 2002.

⁴ See below note 35.

⁵ See Vladimir Socor, 'Putin's Power Game: Russia Expands Its Influence', Asian Wall Street Journal, 28 May 2002. Uzbekistan was an original signatory to the treaty but withdrew in 1999.

⁶ See below note 42.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established in 1996 as a forum to resolve old Soviet-Chinese border disputes. Seen as a diplomatic innovation for China, the 'Shanghai Five' originally included China, the three Central Asian states bordering it (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and Russia.⁷ Uzbekistan joined the grouping in June 2001, shifting the focus towards non-border issues — notably the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalism and fostered in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.⁸ Following the US-led action in Afghanistan, this grouping has received more attention as it has sought to define its role in response to the increasing US presence in the region.⁹

Within the region, the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have met regularly for consultations over the past twelve years, in 1993 announcing the creation of a Central Asia Union. Re-christened the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) and expanded since 1998 to include Tajikistan, it has created a small, permanent bureaucracy, and an inter-state bank to fund development projects. The impact of these institutions to date has been limited, however, and unlikely to be affected by another name change in February 2002 to become the Central Asian Cooperation Organization.¹⁰

By contrast, there appears to have been relative enthusiasm for joining Western-led institutions. All five states joined the OSCE on 30 January 1992 — over a month before they were formally admitted to the United Nations on 2 March 1992. All except Tajikistan joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Partnership for Peace (NATO PfP) programme in 1994, with Tajikistan following suit in February 2002. As they were building the CAEC, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were also signing Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) with the EU; in the same year that it joined the CAEC, Tajikistan also signed a PCA.

Each of the Central Asian states thus looks westward towards Europe and beyond, but they represent the very easternmost limit of the OSCE. None is (yet) a member of the Council of Europe, which presently extends east only to the Caucasus.¹¹ It is frequently observed that Russia would provide a natural locus for the region, but history is a barrier to its being embraced by Central Asia — at least for the time being. In any event, Russia also sees its own future as being in the direction of Europe. This

⁷ Pakistan and India at different points also expressed an interest in joining the SCO, in part to provide a forum for airing their own border disputes with China.

⁸ John Daly, "'Shanghai Five' Expands to Combat Islamic Radicals', *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*, 19 July 2001, available at http://www.janes.com/security/international_security/news/jtsm/jtsm010719_1_n.shtml.

⁹ See Sergei Blagov, 'Shanghai Cooperation Organization Prepares for New Role', *Eurasia Insight*, 29 April 2002, available at <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav042902.shtml>.

¹⁰ See Nikolas Gvosdev, 'Moscow Nights, Eurasian Dreams', *The National Interest* 68, 2002.

¹¹ Ukraine joined the Council of Europe in November 1995, followed swiftly by the Russian Federation in February 1996. Georgia became a member in April 1999, Armenia and Azerbaijan both joined in January 2001.

situation is comparable to the Balkans. Despite various attempts to encourage a sub-regional approach to economic development with a reconstructed Serbia at the heart, when the opportunity has arisen, relatively stable and wealthy states, such as Slovenia and Croatia, have turned their back on the region and moved towards the greener pastures of the EU and NATO.

It is neither desirable nor realistic to compel countries to form regional arrangements. But some of the problems faced by the Central Asian states suggest that regional or sub-regional approaches — perhaps not involving all five states, or expanding to include other states and intergovernmental organizations — may be useful. This section will consider three sets of problems confronting the Central Asian states: governance, economic development and security.

	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	1991—	1991—	1991—	1991—	1991—
OSCE	1992—	1992—	1992—	1992—	1992—
United Nations	1992—	1992—	1992—	1992—	1992—
Collective Security Organization (previously the Collective Security Treaty) (with Russia, Belarus and Armenia)	1992—	1992—	1992—	x	1992-1999
Central Asian Cooperation Organization (previously the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) and before that the Central Asian Union)	1993—	1993—	1998—	x	1993—
NATO PfP	1994—	1994—	2002—	1994—	1994—
EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreements	PCA signed 1995, entered into force 1999	PCA signed 1995, entered into force 1999	x	PCA signed 1998, not yet entered into force	PCA signed 1996, entered into force 1999
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (with Russia and China)	1996—	1996—	1996—	x	2001—
World Trade Organization (WTO)	observer	1998—	observer	x	observer
GUUAM (with Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova)	x	x	x	x	1999-2002
Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC/EEC) (with Russia and Belarus)	2001—	2001—	2001—	x	x

Table 1: Membership of Selected International Organizations

1.1 GOVERNANCE

It is in the area of governance that the charge of ‘tribes, bribes and immortal presidents’ is most relevant. Ethnic and religious politics, widespread corruption and questionable constitutional practices have combined to restrict growth in the region and sow instability.

Nevertheless, some argue that, given these problems and the ‘bad neighbourhood’ in which the five states find themselves, Central Asia has been remarkably stable over the past decade. One reason for the apparent stability may be that Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan continue to be ruled by the same men who held power during Soviet times as leaders of their nations’ communist parties. Tajikistan is the only state in which a change of government has taken place since independence — in the context of a five year civil war. Kyrgyzstan is the only republic ruled by a non-communist, having elected a respected physicist to office soon after declaring independence, though recent events have raised questions about his democratic credentials.

In Kazakhstan, the former first secretary of the Communist Party, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was elected president in December 1991, just two weeks before Kazakhstan declared independence from the Soviet Union. Saparmurat Niyazov, the former head of the Turkmenistan Communist Party, ran unopposed in elections to the newly created post of president in October 1990. Islam Karimov, former Communist Party leader, was elected president of Uzbekistan by the then Supreme Soviet in March 1990, endorsed in a vote when the country’s independence was approved in a popular referendum in December 1991. Tajikistan’s civil conflict will be discussed below;¹² since 1994 it has been ruled by leading Communist Party member and ethnic-Kulyabi Emomali Rakhmonov.

Askar Akayev, a respected physicist, was elected president of Kyrgyzstan in the country’s first direct presidential vote two months after declaring independence in 1991. Three years later, US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott referred to Akayev as the Central Asian Thomas Jefferson. Kyrgyzstan itself was endorsed as a showcase for Central Asian democracy, in the hope of prodding neighbouring dictators into mending their autocratic ways. This ‘silk revolution’ was soon tarnished, however, by

¹² Following its independence in September 1991, former Communist Party leader Rakhman Nabiyeu was elected president of Tajikistan. Following months of protest from an informal coalition of Islamic and other groups, clashes in Dushanbe in May 1992 soon spread beyond the capital, marking the beginning of the civil war. Nabiyeu was replaced in November 1992 by another leading Communist Party member, Emomali Rakhmonov. In December, Rakhmonov swiftly commenced operations against the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), driving tens of thousands into Afghanistan. Civil war as such ended at the start of 1993, with a variety of peacebuilding initiatives subsequently undertaken by Russia, the CIS and the United Nations. On the role of the United Nations in helping resolve the conflict, see below notes 48-50.

persecution of political opponents, a crackdown on independent mass media, the flourishing of corruption, and President Akayev's decision to run for a constitutionally dubious third term in office.¹³

None of the five states now has presidential elections scheduled until 2005. In December 1999, Turkmenistan's parliament voted unanimously to install President Niyazov as president-for-life, making it the first of the Central Asian republics to abandon even the formalities of democratic process. In February 2001, however, President Niyazov announced that he would leave office no later than 2010, when he will turn 70. He stated that elections should then be held in which younger candidates could contest the presidency.

Many such problems faced in the governance area are specific to each country. Nevertheless, issues of ethnic politics and corruption run across the borders of the former Soviet republics. Greater respect for the rule of law and democratic processes are less obviously regional in nature, but involvement of the OSCE in election monitoring in all of the Central Asian countries except Turkmenistan suggests the possible application of regional approaches.¹⁴

	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Head of State	Nursultan Nazarbayev	Askar Akayev	Emomali Rakhmonov	Saparmurat Niyazov	Islam Karimov
Former position	first secretary of the Communist Party	physicist	leading Communist Party member	head of the Turkmenistan Communist Party	Communist Party leader
Date elected/appointed	1991	1991	1994	1990	1990
Next presidential elections	2006	November or December 2005	2006	2010?	January 2005

Table 2: Heads of State

1.1.1 Ethnic politics

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, each of the Central Asian states was confronted with the question of how to forge a national identity and the character of the state. Falling back on the Leninist concept of nationhood, each state gravitated towards the principle of ethnicity and gave primacy to the titular ethnic group (the Kazakhs in Kazakhstan and so on). Though this trend is relatively consistent, the

¹³ See further Chinara Jakypova, 'The Challenge of Good Governance in Central Asian Countries: A Case Study of Kyrgyzstan' (paper presented at IPA Vienna Seminar, 4-6 July 2002).

¹⁴ See below note 51.

response to it has varied from country to country. Each has grappled with the question of how to address the rights of minorities — particularly in the areas of language, education and cultural affairs — and their participation in the political and economic life of the state. Debate continues on the appropriate balance, with some governments fearful that accommodating the demands of minorities will encourage the possibility of secession.

The OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities — which is explicitly concerned with conflict prevention — has been a constructive figure in this area, engaging in informal consultations in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. His quiet diplomacy contributed in part to the establishment of Kazakhstan's People's Assembly in 1995. A related question is the status of Islam within the state. This question is now frequently viewed through the lens of security, making compromises across ethnic and religious divides on education and other social issues more difficult.

	Uzbekistan	Kazakhstan	Tajikistan	Kyrgyzstan	Turkmenistan
Population	25m	17m	6.5m	4.7m	4.6m
Ethnic groups	Uzbek 80%, Russian 5.5%, Tajik 5%, Kazakh 3%, Karakalpak 2.5%, Tatar 1.5%, other 2.5% (1996 est.)	Kazakh (Qazaq) 53%, Russian 30%, Ukrainian 3.7%, Uzbek 2.5%, German 2.4%, Uighur 1.4%, other 6.6% (1999 census)	Tajik 65%, Uzbek 25%, Russian 3.5% (declining because of emigration), other 6.6%	Kirghiz 52%, Russian 18%, Uzbek 13%, Ukrainian 2.5%, German 2.4%, other 12%	Turkmen 77%, Uzbek 9.2%, Russian 6.7%, Kazakh 2%, other 5.1% (1995)
Religions	Muslim 88% (mostly Sunnis), Eastern Orthodox 9%, other 3%	Muslim 47%, Russian Orthodox 44%, Protestant 2%, other 7%	Sunni Muslim 80%, Shi'a Muslim 5%	Muslim 75%, Russian Orthodox 20%, other 5%	Muslim 89%, Eastern Orthodox 9%, unknown 2%
Languages	Uzbek 74.3%, Russian 14.2%, Tajik 4.4%, other 7.1%	Kazakh (Qazaq, state language) 40%, Russian (official, used in everyday business) 66%	Tajik (official), Russian widely used in government and business	Kirghiz (Kyrgyz) - official language, Russian - official language	Turkmen 72%, Russian 12%, Uzbek 9%, other 7%

Table 3: Populations¹⁵

1.1.2 Corruption

A decade of post-communist transition has brought corrupt privatization and weak governments to Central Asia, according to Transparency International, a non-

¹⁵ Source: CIA Factbook (www.cia.gov).

governmental organization. Economies in transition provide many opportunities for corruption, particularly when the state is unable to provide checks and balances, or to enforce property rights and other legal contracts. Kyrgyzstan, which has engaged in partial reforms, is seen as one of the worst offenders in the region.¹⁶ Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, by contrast, are seen as less affected by elite corruption, largely because their transition from communism is the least advanced; corruption thus remains relatively petty and administrative in form.¹⁷ Kazakhstan's oil resources present both an opportunity to finance economic development and a source of potential corruption; allegations in mid-2000 that US oil companies had channelled millions of dollars to top Kazakh officials have not led to any charges being filed, but may undermine prospects for investment.¹⁸

This pessimistic picture is supported by many commentators, though there is debate on the prevalence of corruption and its origins. When considering the roots of corruption, internal and external factors are cited. Internally, Soviet rule had long established a political culture of authoritarianism and nepotism; its collapse removed the few constraints and vastly increased the opportunities for local corruption. Moreover, unlike some Third World countries, the absence of a 'liberation' struggle prior to the USSR's collapse left the newly independent states largely without an alternative political philosophy. Although there was a history of struggle against Russian colonialism, none of the current elite draw their legitimacy from that struggle.¹⁹ The death of ideology has, in some cases, been replaced by increasingly naked kleptocracy.

This situation has not been helped by the actions of Western states seeking access to the region's natural resources. Indeed, Western states have assisted in perpetuating the elites, preaching the sometimes contradictory gospels of market economy and democracy, on the one hand, and security and access to energy, on the other. This trend has only strengthened with the new strategic importance of the region as Afghanistan's northern neighbour, with security trumping democracy and, at times, human rights.

1.1.3 Personal politics

A third source of instability in the area of governance is the largely personal — rather than institutional — basis for the exercise of state power. This goes beyond the

¹⁶ Transparency International, Global Corruption Report 2001 (2001), available at <<http://www.transparency.org>>, p. 113.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁸ Ibid. ; Newsweek (US), 10 and 24 July 2000.

¹⁹ The President of Tajikistan, however, has drawn much of his popular legitimacy from his role in the peace process.

fact that each of the five presidents has tilted in the direction of becoming president-for-life.

Most Central Asian societies are structured around the extended family, with broader networks of alliances organized around patron-client relationships (often referred to as 'clans'). These patronage networks survived under Soviet rule, providing a mechanism for conflict resolution. In the newly independent states, these traditions have been used by political leaders to secure their political base and maintain stability. At the same time, however, this has fostered an environment in which state power is commonly exercised on a personal or informal basis, rather than through institutions or according to the rule of law. Important debates are conducted and decisions made behind closed doors, rather than by building a public constituency through open debate. At its most egregious, this has led to 'state capture', an advanced form of corruption where individuals, groups or firms are so powerful that they can influence the formation of laws, rules and decrees, purchase legislation, or gain control of the media or other key institutions.²⁰ This results in state agencies regulating business in accordance with private rather than public interests, distorting business activity and deterring investment.

In addition to cultivating corruption, these patronage networks are typically rooted in families from a particular region. By grounding domestic politics on a regional affiliation, this may in turn foment tensions between regions, or between the centre and the periphery.

As indicated earlier, none of the Central Asian states has experienced a peaceful change of government. With no presidential elections scheduled until 2005, it remains to be seen whether the present incumbents will attempt to establish the basis for a peaceful and democratic succession. In the meantime, political repression, corruption and uncertainty will continue to limit the economic and political development of the five states at considerable human cost.

1.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is easier to start economic reforms than to bring them to their conclusion. This appears to be one lesson from the past decade of transition in the Central Asian region. A second is that the potential for regional cooperation between the former Soviet republics is most obvious in the area of economic development, but that economics is seen as driven by security and politics. This is a common enough view, but Central Asia

²⁰ Joel S. Hellman, Geraint Jones, and Daniel Kaufmann, *Seize the State, Seize the Day: State Capture, Corruption and Influence in Transition Economies* (World Bank, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 2444, September 2000), available at <<http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance>>.

is notable for the prevailing view that economics, security and politics are all zero-sum games.

1.2.1 Partial reforms

As some EU-applicant states have discovered, it is easier to begin the transition to a market economy than to complete it. This is partly because the challenges become more complex, but also because those who profit from the first rounds of reform may have a significant vested interest in preventing further change. On this basis, one might argue that it is better not to pursue market reform at all. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have undergone the least change and yet enjoy relative stability and, as seen earlier, comparatively benign levels of corruption. But the cost is high — in terms of the loss of foreign investment, the consequences of a less liberalized society and the impact on the country's long-term economic prospects. At present, only Kyrgyzstan is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the only state to subscribe to WTO standards for uniform tariffs and an open, predictable trade regime.

Each Central Asian state suffers from an increasing gap between its richest and its poorest citizens. The social welfare deficit to which this has given rise is sometimes made up for by traditional mechanisms, such as the role of mahallas (local communities) in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.²¹ Nevertheless, the combination of poverty and increasing inequality sows the seeds of social instability.

1.2.2 Incentives for cooperation

One of the major incentives for regional cooperation in economic development is the legacy of Soviet-era infrastructure. Under Soviet rule, borders between the republics were of greater administrative than practical significance. Transportation and energy links paid little or no attention to borders; routes between two cities in one republic might require following a highway that transits another.

A decade after independence, the borders between the five states are hardening. From 1997, Turkmenistan began requiring visas for entry from its neighbours' citizens. Uzbekistan also introduced a visa regime after terrorist attacks in the capital in 1999, reinforcing its borders in some places with mines. Demarcation commissions are working to finalize the Uzbek-Kazakh and Kazakh-Kyrgyz borders. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are redesigning their highway systems to take account of the new regard for

²¹ See, e.g., 'Uzbekistan Country Assessment', in UNDP, *Overcoming Human Poverty: UNDP Poverty Report 2000* (UNDP, 2000), available at <<http://www.undp.org/povertyreport>>.

borders; Kazakhstan has begun a similar but more complicated process of extricating its highway and rail systems from a long and winding border with Russia.²²

The energy sector is being similarly redeveloped along national lines, despite the obvious need for continued trade in oil and gas between hydrocarbon-rich Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and net importers Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. As prices have risen, so have debts. This has contributed to the efforts to shore up national-based markets. It has also led to heightened tensions when failure to pay results in the cutting off of service. In February 2002, for example, Kazakhstan's state-owned electricity company (KEGOC) cut its connections with both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Uzbekistan eventually reached an agreement for repayment, but the Kyrgyz Prime Minister responded by threatening to cut off water supplies from Southern Kazakhstan.²³

In the wake of 11 September, some governments have expressed renewed interest in regional cooperation on security,²⁴ but closer economic relations are complicated by the zero-sum nature of Central Asian political economy and historic tensions and rivalries between the republics. There are, however, no good national responses to the energy, water, trade, transport and environmental issues that each country faces. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are importers of energy and the weakest countries in the region economically, but they are also upstream from their three neighbours, each of which consumes large amounts of water for their growing agricultural sectors and populations.²⁵

As we have seen, the five states appear to be angling more towards Europe than one another. It is reportedly easier for a Kyrgyz to get an Austrian visa than one to visit neighbouring Uzbekistan. Some wonder, therefore, whether external actors might be able to encourage the enlightened interests of the five states, much as the EU has done in relation to countries aspiring to membership. It is dangerous to draw simplistic comparisons between, say, Central Asia and Central Europe. But at least in areas such as best practices (for example, the perils of multiple exchange rates) there is the possibility of a constructive exchange of views.

²² See generally International Crisis Group, Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential (ICG Asia Report No. 33, Osh/Brussels, 4 April 2002), available at <<http://www.crisisweb.org>>.

²³ See Martha Brill Olcott, 'The Absence of a Regional Response to Shared Problems in Central Asia' (paper presented at IPA Vienna Seminar, 4-6 July 2002).

²⁴ Notably, the United States has sought to encourage greater cooperation in tightening control of the Fergana Valley. See 'Tension in Central Asia: Inside the Valley of Fear', *Economist*, 8 November 2001.

²⁵ See International Crisis Group, Central Asia: Water and Conflict (ICG Asia Report No. 34, Osh/Brussels, 30 May 2002), available at <<http://www.crisisweb.org>>.

	Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	Turkmenistan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan
GDP	\$18.8bn	\$7.7bn	\$4.4bn	\$1.3bn	\$991m
Debt (external)	\$6.7bn	\$4.2bn	\$2.5bn	\$1.4bn	\$940m
GNI per capita	\$1,260	\$360	\$750	\$270	\$180
Population living in poverty (ADB)	32% (2000)	22% (1996)	48% (1993-94)	55% (1999)	83% (1999)
Aid per capita	\$12.7	\$7.5	\$6.1	\$43.8	\$23.1
Life expectancy	63	64	61	63	64
Adult literacy (male/female) (ADB)	96%/99% (1990)	99%/99% (1999)	100%/100% (1995)	98%/99% (1999)	99%/99% (1999)
Natural resources	major deposits of petroleum, natural gas, coal, iron ore, manganese, chrome ore, nickel, cobalt, copper, molybdenum, lead, zinc, bauxite, gold, uranium	natural gas, petroleum, coal, gold, uranium, silver, copper, lead and zinc, tungsten, molybdenum	petroleum, natural gas, coal, sulfur, salt	abundant hydropower; significant deposits of gold and rare earth metals; locally exploitable coal, oil and natural gas; other deposits of nepheline, mercury, bismuth, lead and zinc	hydropower, some petroleum, uranium, mercury, brown coal, lead, zinc, antimony, tungsten, silver, gold

Table 4: Selected Economic Indicators²⁶

1.3 PEACE, BUT NO SECURITY

With the exception of the civil war in Tajikistan, Central Asia has been relatively peaceful over the past decade. The absence of war, however, should not be confused with security. There has been an increased fortification of borders in recent years, including the use of mines and occasional cross-border shootings. The potential for greater instability remains, particularly given the respective energy and water needs of the various countries.²⁷ Other concerns include the rise of Islamic fundamentalism through the region, criminal networks and cross-border minority issues. Strengthening regional security arrangements would help reduce the likelihood of an international conflict, but a greater source of instability in the short term is likely to be internal.

²⁶ Sources CIA Factbook (www.cia.gov), World Bank (www.worldbank.org), Asian Development Bank (www.adb.org).

²⁷ International Crisis Group, Water and Conflict .

Of particular concern is what has been described as the 'Latin Americanization' of the military. Soviet rule established a long tradition of the military being subordinate to the political leadership, but there are signs now that the region's militaries are beginning to require 'independence', solicit foreign support and carve out their own role in the political system. This has been exacerbated by the increasing tendency to see internal stability as a military problem, the linkage sometimes being made between perceived internal weaknesses within a society and potential vulnerability to external threats. Governments have been unwilling or unable to deal with the internal divisions underlying this instability.

Kyrgyzstan is a key example of this, with the potential for great instability if current trends continue. The past decade has seen growing expectations of greater democracy and freedom even as living standards, especially in the south of the country, have been declining. More recently, a controversial agreement to cede disputed territory to China has led to significant opposition to the government, at a time when President Akayev's authority was already in question following his constitutionally dubious third term in office.²⁸ Protests in March 2002 against the jailing of a popular local deputy who had criticised the land deal were violently suppressed, leaving six protesters dead. A recent law granted an amnesty to the police officers accused of the deaths, spurring further protests.²⁹

In security, as in other areas, the Central Asian states have been wary of embracing regional solutions. The most active regional security arrangement, the Collective Security Organization, is a largely Russian creature, leading some inside the region and elsewhere to draw comparisons with the Warsaw Pact arrangements of the Cold War.³⁰ Recent moves to establish a military base under its auspices in Kyrgyzstan were seen in large part as a response to the increased US presence in the region.³¹ This aspect of the regional dynamics in Central Asia will be examined in the next section, which turns to the interests and positions of external actors.

2. THE NEW GREAT GAME

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, commentators frequently likened the emerging US-Russian competition in Central Asia to the 'Great Game' of nineteenth

²⁸ See International Crisis Group, *Border Disputes*, pp. 17-18.

²⁹ Sultan Jumagulov, 'Kyrgyzstan: Anti-Government Anger Grows', IWPR's Reporting Central Asia, No. 132, 26 July 2002; Sultan Jumagulov and Kubat Otorbaev, 'Kyrgyzstan: Dialogue Breakthrough', IWPR's Reporting Central Asia, No. 130, Part II, 19 July 2002.

³⁰ See Socor, 'Putin's Power Game'.

³¹ Kubat Otorbaev, 'Kyrgyzstan: Concerns over New CIS Base', IWPR's Reporting Central Asia, No. 129, Part I, 12 July 2002.

century Anglo-Russian rivalry. This suggested a coherence of US and Russian interests in the region that was not supported by their actions, however, and often ignored the importance of China as a regional 'player'. Events since September 2001 have greatly increased the importance of the region to these and other states, but it is no clearer what long-term objectives might be realistically pursued in the region. This section will consider, first, the role of 'Great Powers' in the region; it will then turn to the role of intergovernmental (including regional) organizations.

2.1 GREAT POWERS

While the Great Game analogy with the current interests of the United States, Russia and China is misleading, there are indeed two 'games' in Central Asia: oil and terrorism. The selective engagement of external actors in pursuit of their respective interests has, at times, encouraged actions that may undermine the long-term stability of the individual countries and the region more generally. Kyrgyzstan, for example, will soon boast a US base, a Russian base and a centre for anti-terrorism under the SCO. It remains fundamentally unstable.³²

Understandably, the vast majority of international attention given to the region since September 2001 has been in terms of its relation to Afghanistan. But this ignores the fact that many problems facing Afghanistan also face the Central Asian states — specifically, the troika of drugs, terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. Though not identical in manifestation, these problems share a common heritage: at least part of their emergence may be traced to acts carried out or tolerated according to Cold War conceptions of security, defined at the geo-strategic level. Regimes that produced or fostered Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism and tolerated or engaged in narco-trafficking were supported in the interests of the broader aims of the US-Soviet confrontation.³³ The end of the Cold War made it possible to expand this conception of security to embrace domestic sources of insecurity, but the past decade suggests that this opportunity has not been embraced. Now, the 11 September attacks have forced a retreat back into a narrower definition of security, with the danger that the international community will, once again, look to regime stability as the way to deal with threats to security. Some analysts warn that this might be comparable to the Western engagement in the Middle East in the 1940s and 1950s, propping up regimes such as those in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran that favour stability (and access to oil) over the long-term interests of the populations.

³² See above notes 28-29.

³³ See, e.g., Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. Carol Volk (London: I.B. Taurus, 1994), pp. 130-31.

2.1.1 United States

The commonly voiced theory that current US interests in anti-terrorism directly support its longer-term oil interests probably overstates the overlap between the issues. In particular, some argue, US anti-terrorism activities are played out mainly in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, where the US has bases, while the greatest oil and gas resources are found in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. Within Afghanistan, the US is most frequently criticized for having *no* political strategy, only a military one.³⁴ There is a danger, then, that Central Asia more generally will be seen only as a staging ground for events in Afghanistan, with the countries whose support is needed being bought off as quickly and as cheaply as possible.

During the Clinton administration, the United States sought to achieve stability in the region by relying on multilateral institutions such as NATO's PfP and the Central Asian Economic Community. Money was channelled to members of the 'GUAM' (later 'GUUAM') group, which was seen by many as a US-backed attempt to reduce Russian power in the region, especially as exercised through the CIS. Within Central Asia, however, only Uzbekistan was a member, providing the extra 'U' from 1999 until it withdrew in June 2002.³⁵

In any event, these policies were not pursued vigorously. At the time, some critics argued instead for a *realpolitik* approach that would promote Uzbekistan as a regional hegemon. It is arguable that this vision has now become reality, largely due to the US need for Uzbek bases and transit links to conduct its operations in Afghanistan. Closer relations with Uzbekistan have been criticised by human rights groups,³⁶ but also on the grounds that support for its wartime ally may ultimately worsen the underlying problems that the war on terror is supposed to address.³⁷

Subsequent events suggest a more complicated agenda. On 10 July 2002, the United States and Kazakhstan signed a memorandum of understanding that allows US aircraft engaged in anti-terrorist activities to make 'emergency landings' in Almaty. The US had secured more extensive agreements with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from the beginning of its operations, and an agreement on the use of Kazakh airspace from December 2001. The deal sparked fears within Kazakhstan of a more substantial military presence, but its timing in particular led to speculation that the United States

³⁴ See Simon Chesterman, 'Walking Softly in Afghanistan: The Future of UN State-Building', *Survival* 44: 3, 2002.

³⁵ Sergei Blagov, 'Uzbekistan Abandons Regional Bloc', *Inter Press Service*, 18 June 2002.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch Press Release, 'Uzbekistan: US Cautioned on New Ally' (4 October 2001), available at <<http://www.hrw.org/press/2001/10/uzbek1004.htm>>.

³⁷ Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, 'New Friends, New Fears in Central Asia', *Foreign Affairs* 82: 2, 2002.

was motivated by interests other than the operations then slowing down in Afghanistan.³⁸

2.1.2 *Russia*

Russia's relations with Central Asia have a paradox at their heart. On the one hand, the weakness of the various Central Asian regimes has made them susceptible to Russia's continuing (albeit diminished) influence in the 1990s. On the other, that weakness has prevented these states from acting as an effective barrier between Russia and the Islamic fundamentalism emanating from southwest Asia. As a result, any significant financial or security assistance extended by the United States to Central Asia undermines Russia's Eurasian sphere of influence — even though it may enhance Russia's own security.³⁹

Some argue that Russia's interests in the region are more sentimental than vital, and that these are diminishing as the remaining ethnically Russian population within Central Asia emigrates 'home'. There are economic interests, focused on the natural resources of the region — Russia remains the dominant trade partner of all five countries for the time being⁴⁰ — but these are peripheral when compared to Russia's new western focus.

This view presumes, however, that fairly recent trends in Russian foreign policy mark a paradigm shift in its interests towards European and trans-Atlantic institutions. When President Putin came to power, his first international visit was to Uzbekistan; his second to Turkmenistan. There is also some evidence of a continuing interest in maintaining a military presence in the region — if only to offset the growing US one. This is seen as the driving force behind the choice of Kyrgyzstan as the location for a new military airbase for the coalition of CIS armed forces that have signed onto the Collective Security Organization.⁴¹ In Tajikistan, the Russian Army's 201st Motorized Rifle Division remained after independence and was regarded by the United States as only nominally operating under the CIS peacekeeping mandate it assumed from 1993-2000 to deal with the Tajik civil war.⁴² It remains in Dushanbe.⁴³

³⁸ Gaukhar Beketova and Cholpan Ibysheva, 'Kazakstan: US Military Deal', IWPR's Reporting Central Asia, No. 130, Part I, 19 July 2002.

³⁹ Gvosdev, 'Moscow Nights, Eurasian Dreams'.

⁴⁰ See Olcott, 'Regional Response'. The economies of Russia and the former Soviet republics are, however, steadily drifting apart. See Boris Rumer, 'The Powers in Central Asia', *Survival* 44: 3, 2002, p. 60.

⁴¹ See Otorbaev, 'Concerns over New CIS Base'.

⁴² See, e.g., US Department of State, *Tajikistan: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* (2000), available at <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/eur/840.htm>>. These forces had the following mandate: (a) to assist in the normalization of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border with a view to stabilizing the overall situation in Tajikistan and creating conditions conducive to progress in the dialogue between all interested parties on ways of achieving a political settlement of the conflict; and

The importance of the region to Russia is likely to grow, especially when the Baltic states finally join NATO.

2.1.3 China

Central Asian states increasingly need to balance Russian and Chinese interests. In Kyrgyzstan, attempts to settle outstanding border disputes with China have themselves been a source of internal instability.⁴⁴ China is likely to become a major trading partner of the future, but lacks the infrastructure — roads, railways and pipelines — connecting it to Central Asia for it to compete with Russia. Much of this is now under construction as part of China's Western Development Programme. Until recently, these competing interests were mediated through the SCO. The growing US presence in the region has upset this balance, evidenced in part by Uzbekistan's apparent turn towards the United States and away from the SCO.⁴⁵

2.1.4 Other states

Numerous other states have significant economic, political and cultural interests in the region. Turkey, which in June 2002 assumed command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul,⁴⁶ has strong economic and cultural ties to the region, particularly Turkmenistan. Iran also has interests in the energy sector — not least because an opening up of Afghanistan may hurt its influence and provide an alternative route for the extraction of oil and gas from Turkmenistan. India (and, to a lesser extent, Pakistan), somewhat like China, represents a possible future trading partner but presently lacks the infrastructure to capitalize on this.

(b) to assist in the delivery, protection and distribution of emergency and other humanitarian aid, create conditions for the safe return of refugees to their places of permanent residence and guard the infrastructure and other vitally important facilities required for the foregoing purpose.

⁴³ Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that Russia played an important role in the conclusion of the Tajik civil war, hosting several of the most important rounds of negotiations, including the first one and the final two. See further the special edition of *Accord* in March 2001, Kamoludin Abdullaev and Catherine Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise: The Tajikistan Peace Process, Accord 10* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2001).

⁴⁴ See above notes 28-29.

⁴⁵ Rumer, 'Central Asia', p. 64.

⁴⁶ See, e.g., Bulent Ecevit, 'Reconstruction and Nation-Building', *International Herald Tribune*, 31 July 2002.

2.2 INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

As seen earlier, there is no shortage of international (including regional) organizations in Central Asia. The proliferation of bodies — even without including the regular name-changes of some of the post-Cold War ones — has not, however, led to greater integration.⁴⁷ Given the success of the United Nations' engagement in helping resolve Tajikistan's civil war, and the obvious aspirations of most of the Central Asian states towards the Western-led institutions, it is possible that these organizations may suggest a more constructive and sustainable mode of international engagement than the interests of the Great Powers.

2.2.1 *The United Nations*

The United Nations' involvement in Tajikistan has been a case study in virtually all the forms of UN engagement in a conflict and post-conflict situation. In the period from 1992 to 2000, this comprised a fact-finding mission, a goodwill mission, a political presence, peacemaking activities both within and beyond the region, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building.⁴⁸

The various UN initiatives, culminating in the UN Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) are now regarded as having been broadly successful, despite the limited resources available. This success is attributed to three key factors that contrast interestingly with the ongoing operation in Afghanistan. First, the parties involved soon recognized that no military solution was available to their problems and involved the UN at an early stage in the conflict. Secondly, there was only one interlocutor for the peace process — crucially, Russia and Iran removed the danger of 'forum-shopping' by agreeing that they would not interfere with the UN's role.⁴⁹ Thirdly, neighbouring states played a constructive role in the various forms of engagement. It is unclear that any of these factors are present to secure a durable peace in Afghanistan.⁵⁰

2.2.2 *European Union*

The EU has emphasized its awareness of the growing importance of Central Asia and of the need to strengthen its relations with the region. It continues to face

⁴⁷ See above notes 3-11.

⁴⁸ See further Saodat Alimova, 'Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building in Tajikistan: A Case Study of UN Intervention' (paper presented at IPA Vienna Seminar, 4-6 July 2002).

⁴⁹ See Vladimir Goryayev, 'Architecture of International Involvement in the Tajik Peace Process', in Kamoludin Abdullaev and Catherine Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise: The Tajikistan Peace Process, Accord 10* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2001).

⁵⁰ See further Chesterman, 'Walking Softly in Afghanistan'.

difficulties in realizing this commitment, though it has increased technical assistance to the region and continues to engage in political dialogue. Interest on the part of the Central Asian states is reflected in the conclusion of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) with the EU.

2.2.3 OSCE

All five Central Asian states joined the OSCE on 30 January 1992, over a month before they entered the United Nations. The first OSCE presence in the region was in the context of Tajikistan's civil war. An OSCE Mission to Tajikistan was established in December 1993 and began work in February 1994. Since the peace agreement in 1997, it has assisted in implementation of the protocols dealing with political issues, return of refugees and military issues. Following the parliamentary elections in February 2000, its mandate has shifted to post-conflict rehabilitation.

Soon after the Mission to Tajikistan was established, the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia was created in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in 1995. In 1998, the OSCE also established Centres in Almaty (Kazakhstan), Ashgabad (Turkmenistan) and Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan). In December 2000, the Liaison Office was renamed the OSCE Centre in Tashkent.

In addition to its political presence in the region, the OSCE has engaged in more operational tasks. In addition to informal consultations conducted by the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE has monitored elections in four of the five Central Asian states — usually with less than glowing results. It has now monitored elections in Kazakhstan (1999 Presidential, 1999 Parliamentary); Kyrgyzstan (2000 Parliamentary, 2000 Presidential); Tajikistan (2000 Parliamentary); and Uzbekistan (1999 Parliamentary).⁵¹ The OSCE has also coordinated summits on drug-trafficking and facilitated confidence-building initiatives.

It has been suggested that, given the large EU responsibilities in the Balkans, the OSCE might play a larger role in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Given the preoccupation of Europe with the raft of states on the fast (and slow) track to accession, it appears likely that the OSCE will have ample opportunity to expand its role in Central Asia.

⁵¹ See <http://www.osce.org/odihr/documents/reports/election_reports>. The OSCE has, on occasion, come in for criticism itself for its occasional willingness to overlook election irregularities — notably in Tajikistan's 2000 election.

2.2.4 Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Even as the Central Asian states have been looking west, they have not abandoned Eastern-led initiatives. Most interestingly, the SCO may present a counterweight to the role played by the EU and OSCE. Uzbekistan joined the organization only in June 2001 as it expanded its mandate from resolving old border disputes with China to considering issues such as the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalism. The establishment of a centre for anti-terrorism in Bishkek under its auspices may represent an attempt to offset the increased US presence in the region, but the SCO itself may offer the four Central Asian states that are members an opportunity to engage (and, perhaps, manage) China and Russia.

3. CONCLUSION

One of the many legacies of the Soviet-era transportation network through Central Asia was the road linking Uzbekistan's two principle cities of Tashkent and Samarkand. Until recent efforts to rebuild highways along national lines, this road wound through a section of Kazakhstan — where the only petrol station was located. Does Central Asia exist? Outsiders, at least, have always assumed that it must.

But while regional cooperation seems, to outsiders, a natural step for the states of Central Asia, the states themselves are, understandably, reluctant to give up the sovereign powers they have only recently acquired. Compounded by some genuine security concerns about threats coming from the territory of their neighbours, this reluctance has extended to spats over the sale of energy and water, and the closure and mining of borders. Nevertheless, many of the political, economic and security concerns that the five states face require an approach that goes beyond the nation-state.

The EU has also raised the bar for regional cooperation, seen both in the angling of the Central Asian states towards Europe and the recent suggestions that the CIS would like to be seen as comparable to it. The OSCE's role, in particular, may become increasingly important. Through continued quiet diplomacy on the merits of democracy and an open society, it may encourage the five presidents to contemplate the possibility that their countries may need the institution of the president more than they need them as individuals. Other weak or nonexistent institutions of stable and open political life might also be fostered, including an independent mass media. Better leadership at the political level might translate to better economic stewardship — or at least a limit on official corruption.

The driving force for such changes will, of course, have to come from within the countries themselves. Sharing of information and resources on their common political, economic and security concerns may help the respective leaders to adopt a

broad, regional perspective that would be more efficient and effective than strengthening their Soviet-era borders.

The same might be said of the international community. The greatest concern today is not the emergence of a new 'Great Game', but a return to the precisely the same old game of propping up inherently unstable regimes to pursue ends that have little or nothing to do with the countries themselves. This is an ongoing concern about the US military presence in the region and the Russian and Chinese responses to it.

Kyrgyzstan, identified here as one of the more unstable of the Central Asian states, is thought to have about two thousand mosques, two thousand schools and two thousand civil society groups. This should be seen not as a threat but an opportunity. The international community now has the opportunity to engage with Central Asia in a manner that it failed to in Afghanistan through the 1990s, with spectacular results. It is an opportunity that should be embraced.



Director Ernst Sucharipa addresses participants at dinner on the invitation of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs

PROBLEMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PEACEMAKING IN CENTRAL ASIA

Ambassador Ján KUBIŠ
Secretary General, OSCE

Today's Conference is a timely event, especially if looking at the first decade of independence for the Central Asian States from the perspective of their future. A lot has happened over the past ten years and I shall try to briefly outline the events, more from my personal perspective, and refer to achievements but also some problems of the five Central Asian States in the OSCE context.

With the new role of the CSCE after the end of the East-West confrontation of systems, values and attitudes, new challenges emerged and rapidly changed the face of our organization. These developments are of particular relevance also if we look at how the interaction between the CSCE/OSCE and the Central Asian States evolved during the 1990s. In a laudable and flexible attempt to deal with its emerging tasks in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation and requests to contribute to stability and security in the new geo-political conditions, the CSCE developed operational capacity in the field (establishment of field missions) and a number of other mechanisms and instruments, e.g. the Institution of High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), a security early warning instrument par excellence.

There was also another shift in the priorities and work of the CSCE. To its conferences, meetings and negotiations, commitments- and principles-setting and implementation monitoring and review, covering all the OSCE dimensions, to its direct early warning, conflict-prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation work the OSCE added an enhanced focus on primarily democratization, institution- and capacity-building and reform-oriented agenda, thus helping notably countries in Central and Eastern Europe in their democratic reforms. With this re-orientation and re-focusing of its work the OSCE has increasingly engaged also in establishing its political and operational contacts and co-operation with its international partners.

Our organization has become naturally the first one which, also at its own initiative, showed a genuine strong interest in the Central Asian countries after they became independent due to the break-up of the former Soviet Union. With the emergence of the new states a discussion started within the CSCE about their future within this pan-European security and co-operation framework. Eventually an inclusive approach was chosen. It was based on the firm view that security and stability in Europe (defined not geographically, but by shared values, principles and commitments) can best be achieved together as well as on the clear "European" vocation of the Central Asian countries. Perhaps the immediate response and full co-operation of the Central Asian States with the global anti-terrorism coalition after 11 September 2001 showed that this

choice of fully inclusive approach was the right one.

After a hectic period of political consultations, including meetings with representatives of newly independent CA states in Moscow (which I also attended on behalf of the incoming CSCE Czechoslovak Chairmanship together with Ambassador Hoeynck of then the CSCE German Chairmanship), the second OSCE Ministerial Council in Prague at the end of January 1992 welcomed ten countries of the former USSR as CSCE participating States, following receipt of letters from each of them, accepting the entirety of all CSCE commitments and responsibilities.

The countries of Central Asia *inter alia* explicitly agreed to apply also all the provisions of the Vienna Document on CSBMs, and to an understanding that the geographic scope of its application should be revised as soon as possible in order to ensure full effect of the rules of transparency, predictability and conflict prevention on their territories. They recognized the requirement for prompt entry into force on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and underlined the need for States with territory in the CFE area of application to undertake to move forward promptly with the ratification of the CFE Treaty and to assume, in co-operation with other relevant newly independent States, all CFE obligations of the former Soviet Union.

I consider this accession to the OSCE particularly important. The Central Asian States made a determined pro-democratic and pro-reform, “European” choice, based on shared vision and *acquis* with the most developed and democratic states of the world and pledged to act in their politics and practices accordingly. And, the OSCE States pledged their support towards this end. Thus, without trying to diminish the significance of joining the UN – the prime international organization with its global role and responsibilities, I consider their joining the OSCE a much stronger, much more political statement concerning their orientation and future.

In return, they wanted from the OSCE support for their nation building, reform and transformation processes, including mobilization of funds for assistance and specifically additional guarantees for their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and stability. They were prepared to listen to the advice of their OSCE counterparts, provided they were treated as real partners. That, however, required real attention to their situation and respective attitude and engagement from the side of the OSCE partners – and that was not always forthcoming, at least not fully and from the very beginning. Also on the side of the CA countries time has been needed to see change in attitudes of their ruling elites, acting often under the influence of not only Soviet, but clearly traditional pre-Soviet cultural and societal, rather authoritarian and hierarchical attitudes and approaches. A mutual educational process through interaction and joint work has been needed. Even now one can in some cases register that formal steps (like regular elections on a nominally pluralistic basis) rather than in-depth consistent measures are considered to be sufficient proof of progress of democratization,

at least for the time being.

After Prague's accession of the Central Asian states to the OSCE, special Rapporteur Missions were carried out to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in March 1992 (and I had the honour to lead them) and to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in April of the same year (led by Ambassador Hoeynck of Germany) in order to check the preparedness of the five countries to implement the CSCE commitments in the three baskets and to report on their progress towards their full implementation. All five countries re-confirmed their determination to share the values, to sign up to the commitments and responsibilities of our common organization and to act in accordance with their provisions. The CSCE on its part declared its preparedness to provide assistance to these newly independent States towards that objective. At the OSCE Summit in Helsinki in July 1992, the participating States adopted to that end a Programme of Co-ordinated Support for the recently admitted States, offering their diplomatic, academic, legal and administrative expertise on OSCE matters in order to enable them first of all to participate fully in the structures and work of the OSCE.

All the five States thus expressed their political will to fulfill their obligations related to their joining the then Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. However, the understanding of the CSCE and its commitments was hardly developed.

In a report of the Swedish Chairperson-in-Office, Minister Margaretha af Ugglas, about her visit to the participating States of Central Asia in April 1993 it was underlined that the CSCE community had understanding for the extremely complicated process of political and economic transition. However, it was equally stressed that there were a number of contradictions and ambiguities of what the Central Asian States proclaimed (commitment to CSCE, inter alia strong adherence to democracy, rule of law and human rights) and their understanding with regard to CSCE commitments.

And, significantly, even back then, in 1993, the Central Asian leaders without exception stressed the need for stability and the danger of external and internal threats to security and they made reference to Islamic fundamentalism as an enormous threat to their countries. Regretfully, at that time nobody listened attentively enough to their concerns and appeals.

Unfortunately very soon after gaining independence Tajikistan plunged into a civil war, which became one of the most tragic chapters in the history of this country. As I have mentioned, in spring 1992 I had the honour to lead the first CSCE rapporteur mission to Tajikistan and this mission returned back with concerns about the developments in the country. The OSCE looked for ways of how to assist Tajikistan in this difficult period, and an OSCE mission, permanently stationed in Dushanbe, has been established at the OSCE Rome Council Meeting in 1993. This OSCE Mission to Tajikistan has played and keeps playing an important role until today. It took an active part in the various endeavours to bring peace to the country and is today focusing

mainly on assistance in the institution building process and in all areas of democratic reform and the transition to a functioning market economy.

Also in the other four Central Asian countries, the first tentative steps were made to get acquainted with OSCE mechanisms and to start the first attempts of co-operation. Their top representatives attended Ministerial and Summit meetings, received a number of OSCE delegations and visitors. In the mid-nineties a series of workshops based on the Helsinki Document 1992 (and conducted together with the Conflict Prevention Centre of the Secretariat in Vienna) started to bring also this OSCE acquis directly to the Central Asian participating States. These seminars aimed at addressing present and future security challenges and priorities as well as regional co-operation and politico-military aspects of security including the implementation and development of Confidence and Security Building Measures. This pillar remains an important area of co-operation with our Central Asian partners until today. Other joint activities took place as well. In the mid-nineties, it was decided to establish an OSCE Central Asia Liaison Office in Uzbekistan as a structure of the OSCE Secretariat, with a sub-regional mandate to promote objectives and tasks of the OSCE in the Central Asia region. In spring 1995 the so-called OSCE RAPS fund was established – this is a fund for the Recently Admitted Participating States – which should provide, among others, the Central Asian States with the possibility to send representatives from their capitals to various events within the OSCE family.

After joining the OSCE it took several years until the five States established their permanent representations in Austria. So in the early days of their membership there was only limited active participation of the Central Asian States in the OSCE work in Vienna. Yet, Vienna is among a very small number of capitals where the Central Asian States opened their embassies, as a matter of priority. This is another strong sign of importance the CA countries give to the OSCE.

So, in the first half of the nineties, the Central Asian participating States were still more on the receiving side with regard to the OSCE's work. However, they saw the Organization in a positive light, perhaps with certain over-expectations and misperceptions about the organization's role. They did not very actively engage in the discussions at the Ministerial Council meetings and they were hardly involved in drafting or negotiating documents, but they showed an increasing interest, primarily political. Slowly the process of co-operation became more reciprocal, a two-way street. The CA countries started to make clear they are equal and real partners and that they request more attention to their concerns and problems. Also the OSCE participating States started to care more for this region; for example, at the 1997 Copenhagen Ministerial Council in the Chairman's summary, a direct reference was made to the strengthening of support to the Central Asian participating States.

Even more attention was given to Central Asia starting in 1998 with the Polish

Chairmanship – the then Chairman-in-Office, Minister Bronislaw Geremek, traveled to all five countries in April 1998 and promoted the OSCE, notably human rights, democratic and common values in all five states. He prepared the ground for the opening of OSCE Centers also in Almaty, Ashgabad and in Bishkek, as well as for signing of Memoranda of Understanding between the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Central Asian participating States which were signed in the same year, with the exception of Turkmenistan which does not have a Memorandum until this day. All this was reflected in the Oslo Ministerial Declaration of 1998.

Also at the Permanent Council, Central Asian permanent delegations were becoming more active and they engaged in the decision making process. In 1999, under the very strong leadership of the Norwegian OSCE Chairmanship, the three additional Centres were finally opened and the Office in Tashkent was turned into a Centre (thus the OSCE has established its presence in all OSCE Central Asian participating States). The then Norwegian Chairman, Minister Knut Vollebæk, nominated Ambassador Wilhelm Hoeynck, former Secretary General of the OSCE, as his Personal Representative on Central Asia, thereby underlining the importance the region has gained in the OSCE context.

The major break-through with regard to putting emphasis on the Central Asian region was eventually achieved at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in November 1999. The Central Asian participating States urgently drew the attention to the developments in Afghanistan and they outspokenly referred to the threats that they saw coming from the south of their borders. As a result of this, two extensive paragraphs on Central Asia were included in the Istanbul Summit Declaration. They *inter alia* welcomed the increased co-operation and confirmed that the concerns that were expressed by the Central Asia participating States regarding terrorism, violent extremism, organized crime, drug and arms trafficking are shared by all 55 participating states. Even a reference to threats stemming from areas neighbouring the OSCE area – implying of course Afghanistan - was made, and all participating States acknowledged that strengthening of regional co-operation, as well as addressing economic and environmental risks is of high importance.

The bombings in Tashkent of 16 February 1999, and the military incursions by Islamic extremists in the South of Kyrgyzstan and in Uzbekistan during the years 1999/2000 dramatically highlighted the grave reality and acuteness of the new security threats, notably of terrorism, to this specific region of the OSCE. At the same time, however, it was also observed that, against this background, some of the States concerned increased their control over religious and general political activities, in particular targeting certain activities of some Islamic groups and sometimes political, notably opposition movements in a broad sense.

Even after the incursions, the OSCE continued to have difficulties in

developing a concrete response. In the year 2000, the then Austrian OSCE Chairmanship launched a very timely initiative, together with the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) to organize in Tashkent an international conference on “countering drugs, organized crime and terrorism”. A number of OSCE participating States did not allow a formal OSCE consensus, claiming that the issues to be dealt with are not a part of the direct operative mandate of the OSCE. In October 2000, the conference took place as an OSCE Chairmanship conference only, organized together with ODCCP.

During the year 2000, I was the Personal Representative of the then Chairperson in Office, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. In this role I travelled to Central Asia several times and could again witness first hand the change and the increasingly assertive, pro-active way these countries approach our Organization. The institution of Personal Representative respectively Special Advisor was also carried on by the Romanian 2001 (Amb. Wilhelm Hoeynck) and by the incumbent Portuguese 2002 Chairmanship (Amb. Herbert Salber).

As I mentioned, in the second half of the nineties and notably in 1999/2000 Central Asia established itself rather prominently on the OSCE's agenda and the organization itself had to shift to a more pragmatic approach and is now listening more closely to the needs of the states in the region. The approach of the Central Asian countries has also changed considerably. Originally rather passive and entirely on the receiving side of our organization, now they take a much more proactive and also critical approach, voice their concerns and constantly ask about and request added value of the OSCE. Several Presidents and Foreign Ministers came to Vienna to address the PC and brought the needs and concerns to the attention of other partner countries. Co-ordination on the ground with other international organizations, as well as at the Headquarters level became very important. One large information sharing and co-ordination meeting with other international organizations, financial institutions and development agencies took place in Vienna in the summer of 2000. In addition to this, our biannual regional Heads of Mission meetings in Central Asia also include a segment on co-operation and co-ordination with the International Organizations represented on the ground. All that with the aim to use synergies and complementarity when addressing needs and problems of the region.

After the events of 11 September the attention put on Central Asia has increased tremendously and the world community, including the OSCE, is now much more aware of and interested in the developments in the five States.

In December 2001, the OSCE jointly with the UN ODCCP organized a major international conference in Bishkek dealing with comprehensive efforts against terrorism; this time as an OSCE conference, endorsed by all 55 participating States. It was very well noted that at the "Bishkek Conference" the five Central Asian States

showed a positive attitude towards co-operation within the OSCE on the basis of a comprehensive security concept. This contributes to building international confidence in the approaches taken by Central Asian States in countering terrorism. Consequently, increased confidence will contribute to generating more international support.

It is also to be noted that the OSCE has clearly stated, in Bishkek and during the preceding OSCE Bucharest 2001 Ministerial Council, that the fight against terrorism and achievements of increased stability and security should not be at the expense of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In making this statement a good number of the OSCE countries had in mind also some Central Asian countries.

An additional point: the global struggle against terrorism and other new threats to security continues, also in Afghanistan, in the Central Asia region. During my recent visit to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, my interlocutors strongly urged that the OSCE pay particular attention to Afghanistan and engage in co-operation with this country, now after the Transitional Administration has been established.

I would like to go back a bit to Tajikistan, the country where I had an honour to work as Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of UNMOT in 1998-1999. Recently I also participated in an International Conference on Commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Tajik General Agreement, held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 17-19 June 2002. At that conference I provided a personal assessment of the Tajik Peace Process, which I reproduce below.

“On 27 June 1997 a historic step of highest political courage and responsibility was taken by H.E. President Emomali Rakhmonov and the Leader of the United Tajik Opposition, Said Abdullo Nuri, when they signed the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord. Peace and national reconciliation were put highest up on the agenda in line with the wishes of the people of Tajikistan. Forgiveness, amnesty, demobilisation of fighters and return of refugees to their homes as well as power sharing and political pluralism were in the centre of the strategy of reaching a lasting peace in the country. Respect for human rights and strengthening of the rule of law, democratic reforms and the holding of free elections, as well as the restoration of the country's economy were confirmed as the paramount future objectives. The willingness first to reach such bold political agreement and then to gradually implement it in often adverse internal and external conditions, to share responsibility in governing the country and pursuing the course of reforms positively single out Tajikistan as an example of a successful peace process.

In my opinion the success of the negotiations and the peace process in Tajikistan can be attributed to several interlinked and mutually supportive factors:

- the overwhelming majority of the people and political forces in the country, including a number of field commanders, rejected the continuation of armed confrontation, civil war and lawlessness; Tajikistan was tired of the war and

decided to put a stop to it and the leadership of the country upheld this call for peace;

- the top political opposing forces recognised that continuation of the war would lead to too high costs, that it might even endanger the integrity of the country and that the war would not bring the results they wanted to reach, including total political and military victory of one side; they therefore decided to give peace and national reconciliation its chance and entered into a political dialogue;
- the guarantor countries including notably all interested states and key international organisations decided to work together in support of the process under the co-ordinating umbrella of the UN. This determination and international consensus lasted through the whole peace process;
- regardless of their sometimes differing national interests and positions, the guarantor states in basic co-ordination and unity were using their influence over different Tajik parties to reinvigorate their commitment and to foster their political will to implement the peace accord;
- the peace accord provided for the most important constitutional, political, legal and power-sharing arrangements; at the same time it addressed some major concerns of common people, such as the return of refugees, amnesty and strengthened law and order;
- the implementation of the peace accord was in the hands of the Tajik parties themselves; it was mostly for them to negotiate and agree on the detailed concrete arrangements how to fulfil the basic requirements of the peace accord and also to agree on the evaluation of the fulfilment of the peace accord objectives;
- the guarantor states and international organisations supported the process and provided oversight, mediation and good offices (including through the determined, crucially important work of the Contact Group), but did not impose their will concerning concrete details and parameters of negotiations conducted in and by the Commission on National Reconciliation; the results based on this internal consensus and on the inter-Tajik agreements thus provided a relatively sound basis for lasting determination to implement the accord;
- occasional severe challenges and threats to the peace process, be it internal or external (e.g. Mahmud Khudoiberdiev's 1998 adventure, actions of some warlords opposing the accords and trying to disrupt the process or Afghanistan under the Taliban regime) were thus not able to derail it; on the contrary, the peace process came out strengthened from them, i.a. because these challenges eventually brought the two sides together, pushed them towards improved co-

operation and even joint action to safeguard the peace accord;

- and finally another sad paradox which eventually strengthened the peace process – except for political attention, Tajikistan was unfortunately only marginally in the focus of attention of the international community including major donors; their material and technical support for the peace process and its aftermath (except for the humanitarian assistance) was just trickling in with the paradoxical excuse that the situation is too unstable for more assistance; thus the Tajik sides recognised that they can by and large rely only on themselves, on their efforts, on their ability to reach agreements and implement them.

And I would like to add also some more considerations:

- it is necessary to honour the basic spirit of the peace accord: constructive joint search for commonly acceptable solutions, real pluralism and power-sharing and inclusiveness in practical political life now based on regular democratic mechanisms, including free elections, vigorous promotion of democratic reforms and freedoms, including pluralism and freedom of the media, completion of the process of national reconciliation;
- continuous strengthening of the rule of law, real economic and social reforms, good governance, including the fight against rampant corruption should be the top priorities of Tajikistan, opening thus doors for improved international support and co-operation with Tajikistan;
- the international community should finally recognise that Tajikistan is to be supported much more than up until now – including by direct investment – in its efforts for economic reconstruction and in its struggle with its numerous challenges, such as drug trafficking;
- regional co-operation should be a strong common objective of all States in the Central Asian region and the whole international community; they should show more understanding and support for this land-locked country.

The example of the Tajik peace process could also serve as a source of inspiration for others. The situation in Afghanistan is naturally proposing itself. The circumstances in Tajikistan and Afghanistan are by far not identical. However, in my opinion, there are some approaches the two processes might have in common: the peace process must include all parties, the different parties involved must come to concessions and compromises, extremists and peace spoilers have to be gradually sidelined, peace must be primarily the work of the hands of the Afghans and there is a need for a strong international consensus involving notably all neighbours, and sustainable international assistance and support, when and where really needed. The success of the Loya Jirga up until now has created a solid ground for the joint way of all Afghans for lasting peace

and political, economic and social recovery in the country.”

If we look forward into the future interaction of the Central Asian States in the OSCE, I think the Organization should continue its successful activities, enhancing them to cover all dimensions, adding some new areas of activity where needed and definitely enhancing, upgrading our co-operation both with the Central Asian states and their civil societies, but also with international and regional organizations and institutions. This should not mean a reduction of the OSCE's attention and activities in the human dimension, but rather reinforcement of our work in the security, political and economic and environmental areas. In this context, I would like to mention the following illustrative examples how to expand our joint work in some more security-related areas:

Policing: The OSCE has a considerable amount of expertise on police-related issues in particular in its missions in the Balkans. The newly appointed Senior Police Advisor in the OSCE Secretariat, Mr. Richard Monk, has just recently visited three CA countries and is planning to pay a visit to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in the near future. He will identify together with the authorities concerned what are the needs of the country in the area of policing and where our organisation can offer practical assistance, including in police training, technical assistance and in border policing.

Small Arms/Light Weapons (SALW): The uncontrolled spread, accumulation and trafficking of SALW is another concern in the context of new security challenges. Fruitful co-operation with the Central Asian States has already started in a rather practical way: At the end of 2001, the OSCE organised in all five Central Asian States national workshops on SALW-issues and a regional follow-up seminar was held in Almaty at the end of May 2002, in which also delegations from several Central Asian States participated. The timely fulfillment by the Central Asian States of the information commitments according to the OSCE SALW Document (including information on export/imports, number of weapons deemed surplus or seized and destroyed, stockpile management and security procedures) would be another form of co-operation and confidence building.

Border control issues: The OSCE is currently looking into ways how it could provide its assistance for more effective border control, an area which the Central Asian States themselves identified of particular concern.

Terrorism financing/Money laundering: Until now, none of the five Central Asian states has a comprehensive anti-money laundering legislation in place. Together with the ODCCP Global Programme against Money Laundering, the OSCE has developed a proposal for national workshops to address these issues. In the first stage the focus would be on legislative and administrative aspects.

These concrete areas clearly show that there are opportunities for concrete co-operation going beyond our more traditional human dimension-oriented work. The

OSCE with its field presence in all countries of the region is well placed for a pragmatic approach in joint work comprising all three dimensions of security.

The Portuguese Chairmanship, and its Special Advisor on Central Asia, Amb. Herbert Salber, have outlined these new directions with regard to Central Asia at the beginning of the year and now we concentrate mainly on developing pragmatic, comprehensive co-operation with the five countries, encouraging also regional co-operation.

The OSCE continues to focus also on its traditional human dimension work and assistance in the fields of democratization, the rule of law, separation of powers, human rights, the freedom of the media, modernization of legislation, good governance as well as reforms towards market economy to mention but few. This is very much needed: without additional democratic and market-oriented reforms and their implementation and without the development of a strong, sound, democratic and well-governed state and civil society guided by the rule of law it will be difficult, for example, to attract investment, increased co-operation and assistance. And without that, with instances of sliding towards authoritarian and often corrupt policies in the conditions of increasingly serious social and economic problems, there can be no stability, security, development and prosperity.

Our Organization is also available to assist the countries in the region to address a number of issues - bilaterally and through promotion of regional co-operation - which are of concern to them and which have no national answer, such diverse as water and energy, environmental protection, drug trafficking, freedom of movement and transport.

So, to conclude, the OSCE–Central Asian track record of co-operation in the first decade of independence of the Central Asian states is encouraging, but a lot more is needed. And for that, continuous commitment to democracy and reforms and engagement of all involved is needed. That is also the surest way to sustainable stability, security and progress.

THE ABSENCE OF A REGIONAL RESPONSE TO SHARED PROBLEMS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Dr. Martha Brill OLCOTT

Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Increased international attention to Central Asia has done little to help the states of the region address many of their common problems. Many of these, like shared highway and energy grids, are legacies of their Soviet past, while others, like the shared water system, are more a product of nature and geography. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan long have had difficulty cooperating, and the international spotlight has done little to change this. Various multilateral efforts have been made to address these issues, all with limited success.

The terrorist attacks on the US of September 11, 2001 and the US military action in Afghanistan which followed it brought Central Asia back into the news, reminding people of the potential strategic importance of the region, and what can happen if the international community turns its back on its problems. The ouster of the Taliban has dramatically changed the security environment in the region, and creates a new opportunity for the states of the region to “get it right,” to redress the mistakes of the first decade of independence.

Central Asia’s New Security Environment

US troops, and some of US allies have been stationed in the region, in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and may go to other states in the region. Moreover, the US seems unlikely to leave Central Asia any time soon. It has signed a long-term security partnership with the Uzbeks, which seems at minimum to insure continued US investment to the reform of that country’s military. Moreover the US is likely to gradually extend similar offers to the other Central Asian states. There has also been a commitment to increase US spending for upgrading border security throughout the region, and for improved narcotics interdiction. Slowly but surely the US, as a lone superpower, is enveloping this region under its security umbrella, in ways that are certain to have clear impact on the region’s former and aspiring hegemon.

However, while the opening of US military bases in the region seem to mark a formal marking of the end of the Russian and Soviet empires, the US seems unlikely to play a role anywhere nearly as ambitious as Russia did.

Russia remains a very active actor in the region. Three major summit meetings were convened by the Russian government in the weeks leading up to the May 2002 Bush-Putin summit, as if to show the continued vitality of Russian participation in this part of the world. Russia continues to be an important international ally for all of these

states, and an important trade partner as well, accounting for a far greater share of each Central Asian's trade turnover than does any other state. (see charts below)

Russian Exports to Central Asia, 2000	
Kazakhstan	\$2,246 million
Kyrgyzstan	\$103 million
Tajikistan	\$56 million
Turkmenistan	\$130 million
Uzbekistan	\$274 million

Russian Imports from Central Asia, 2000	
Kazakhstan	\$2,197 million
Kyrgyzstan	\$88 million
Tajikistan	\$237 million
Turkmenistan	\$473 million
Uzbekistan	\$662 million

IMF Direction of Trade Statistics Quarterly, March 2002

Yet Russia has had a difficult time using the framework of multilateral institutions, like its Collective Security arrangement with several CIS states or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), made up of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, together with Russia and China, to structure these relationships, and that has not gotten easier with the greatly enhanced US presence in the region.

So although there is no shortage of multilateral institutions in which all or some of the Central Asian states participate in, none of these has had much success in regulating trade and commerce (including the critical energy sector) or in creating a safe security environment.

The Eurasian Economic Community (referred to alternately as EEC, or EURASEC) which includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, as well as Russia and Belarus, is one such multilateral organization through which Russia has endeavored to increase its cooperation with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The EEC is the contemporary incarnation of an organization that began life as a customs union between these five countries, before being re-christened in June 2001. The EEC has sought to expand its membership and at its summit in Moscow on May 13, 2002, Moldova joined the organization with the status of observer-nation. There, too, Ukraine announced its intention to accede to the organization.

It was rumored that Vladimir Putin had hoped to take over leadership of the organization from Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev who initiated the group, but Nazarbayev was elected to another term, almost guaranteeing that this organization would be of little more than secondary importance to Russia for the foreseeable future. Officially, of course, since there could be no external sign of any

crack in CIS solidarity, Putin recommended reelecting Nazarbayev the chairman of EEC. Yet for all its existence this organization has failed to serve as an effective arbiter dealing with the shared trade and energy concerns of the states of the region. The Collective Security Organization (the new name for the previous membership of the Collective Security Treaty) which includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russia, Belarus and Armenia, met recently, in Moscow on May 14, 2002, to celebrate its tenth anniversary, but membership in it has never made any of the Central Asian states feel more secure.

The same is true of the CIS (the Commonwealth of Independent States), which was formed in December 1991 as the vehicle of separation and divorce for the Soviet republics. All the Central Asian leaders were present at the most recent meeting summit of CIS leaders, convened with the express intention of seeming to reinvigorate that organization. The informal summit of CIS leaders was held at a skiing resort of Chimbulak in Kazakhstan on March 1, 2002. There the presidents pledged to begin active integration processes. Vladimir Putin was asked to work out a new concept of the commonwealth by the next summit. It was announced that the CIS aspired to become an "internationally acknowledged integrated union" similar to the European Union. Yet for now this remains a much repeated goal that few believe is realizable.

Attempting Collaboration

The Central Asian leaders have done little better with organizations of their own creation - those that exclude Russia. The leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have met for regular consultations over the last dozen years, and since the mid-1990s have repeatedly announced regional initiatives for economic and security cooperation. The leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan first joined together in 1993 to form a regional organization. Initially, the organization was called the Central Asian Union, and it has had its membership and purpose redefined several times. Now, it is called the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) and has been expanded since 1998 to include Tajikistan. Turkmenistan has steadfastly refused to participate in any of these formal agreements, citing its strategic doctrine of "positive neutrality". But the organization is still much more of an excuse for "photo-ops" for the region's leaders than it is a functioning inter-state institution. The CAEC has created a small, permanent bureaucracy, and an inter-state bank has been established to fund development projects, but the impact of these institutions remains relatively limited.

In late December 2001, four Central Asian presidents gathered in Tashkent for a two-day, informal summit to discuss a variety of regional economic and security-related issues. The leaders congratulated their independent nations for maintaining stability in the face of many destabilizing forces for the first ten years after the Soviet collapse, and for their maturity in dealing with divisive and complex issues, such as

water rights and interstate infrastructure. However, the atmosphere of self-congratulations seems to have been rather premature.

CROSS-BORDER CONCERNS

Trade and Transport

After explosions in February 1999 rocked several locations in Uzbekistan's capital, including just outside the seat of government, leaving several dead, the Uzbek government was determined that militants from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) should never be able to enter their country at will, and they recognized that the training that they were receiving in Afghanistan was transforming the nature of the Islamic threat which the regime confronted.

The Tashkent bombings further hardened the Uzbek government's determination to both delineate and defend its national boundaries (which were mined in some areas inhabited by Tajiks and Kyrgyz).

Uzbekistan introduced a visa system, which was applied to those of neighboring states, much like the Turkmen had applied to the entire outside world in 1997. This had the effect of further impeding inter-state commerce, which was further impacted by the process of border delineation and the structures put in place to defend national boundaries. Initially, when the Soviet republics were granted their independence all the states of the region agreed to abide by their existing administrative boundaries---which in some cases severed villages in half. After Uzbekistan began the process unilaterally, the other states of the region also moved toward delineating their borders, further hampering the process of developing regional trade of investment.

Eventually national demarcation commissions for determining the Kazakh-Kyrgyz as well as the Kazakh-Uzbek borders were organized., but conditions in some of the border areas remain tense, up to the present day. In fact, in the first half of 2002 there were several deaths caused by mines on various sections of the Uzbek border, and in April 2002 the governor of Batken Oblast, the newly (2000) created oblast in southern Kyrgyzstan, asked the country's minister of defense for tanks to protect the welfare of his population, citing frequent cases of Uzbek border guards opening fire on Kyrgyz citizens who are found in still disputed territory, sometimes leading to fatalities. The work of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz commission has proceeded relatively smoothly.

However, trade across both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan remain quite difficult. This said, the various Central Asian states remained relatively important partners for one another (see attached table), although the volume of trade within the region is quite low, reflecting the rather pallid nature of the economies involved.

Major Trade Partnerships of the Central Asian Countries, 2000 (Millions of U.S. Dollars)

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Tajikistan		Turkmenistan		Uzbekistan	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Export	Import
Kazakhstan			33.4	57.5	5.7	82.4	5.3	19.7	66.5	153.1
Kyrgyzstan	58.5	31.6			2.7	7.5	23.2	4.6	68.4	98.3
Tajikistan	52.3	5.5	7.4	1.3			29.1	6.7	168.7	107.6
Turkmenistan	7.4	44.1	2.7	18.8	4.7	29.3			32.1	6.6
Uzbekistan	139.2	73.2	89.4	75.2	97.8	185.6	6	35.3		
Russia	1783.9	2459.8	65.1	132.5	258.8	105.1	1029.3	254.5	602	301.9
Ukraine	268.5	79.8	1.1	7	1.9	..	164.9	214.3	161.8	125.4
China	670.3	154	44.1	36.9	3.4	11.9	7.6	16.4	0.1	1.2
Iran	203.8	13.2	6.7	8.8	12.5	7.6	242	90.9	na	na
Korea	34	82.5	0.4	6.9	10.9	2.1	..	0.1	94.5	253.5
Turkey	64.3	142.6	7.2	26.7	58.4	4	186	253.3	78	90.9
United Arab Emirates	11	22	1.4	7.1	0.4	2.8	7.3	146.6	na	na
Belgium	7.7	33.4	0.7	10.7	5.1	0.7	..	1.6	34.7	14.2
France	15.7	75.4	3.4	5.7	1.9	0.1	0.2	75.7	48.1	73.4
Germany	566.6	333.7	144.6	25.1	0.4	6.7	404.8	52.6	67.6	233.3
Italy	891.8	155	1	3.8	21.4	17.3	..	7.4	172.8	52.5
Netherlands	240	64.7	1.8	4.8	178.2	0.5	0.2	7.1	26.9	18.3
Switzerland	497.6	54.5	34	3.2	72.2	86.9	91.9	5.9	1.9	14.7
United Kingdom	231	219.4	18.7	5.6	6	86.9	54.1	12.1	20	26.8
Japan	9.7	105.5	0.7	10.2	..	0.3	..	144.4	71.4	27.2
United States	211	276.9	2.9	53.8	0.6	1.3	7.3	146.6	33.6	182.7

consolidated data derived
solely from partner records

Source: Direction of Trade Statistics Quarterly, (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund), March 2002, pp. 152, 158, 246, 258, 270.

This despite the fact that Soviet-era transportation and energy links paid no attention to republic boundaries, and to go from one major city in a country to another often required crossing into a neighboring republic. Probably the most vivid example was found in Uzbekistan, where the road between the country's two principal cities (Tashkent and Samarkand) went through Kazakhstan, where the only petrol station was located.

In the years since independence, the government of Uzbekistan (in part through international assistance) has recut many of its principal highways to allow travelers to avoid entering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on their journeys between two points within the country. The process has been costly, but this in turn has made it easier for the Uzbeks to introduce full passport control and customs regimes on all of its borders. These actions also prompted the Kyrgyz republic to seek assistance money for recutting some of their highways in the southern part of the country, to facilitate travel within Osh and Dzhellalabad provinces. Kazakhstan, too, has begun refashioning its highway and rail systems, here too with international assistance. In the Kazakh case though, it will take several billion dollars to fully untwine Kazakhstan's transit system with that of Russia, and will require laying hundreds, and possibly even thousands of kilometers of new road and rail-bed.

Whereas Uzbekistan has been systematically redoing its highway system, and Kyrgyzstan has as well, for Kazakhstan the process will take decades. Moreover, recutting national highways does little to change the interdependence of these states when it comes to engaging in long-haul interstate commerce.

Despite the fact that the Central Asian states often proclaim themselves part of a single economic community, cross-border trade restrictions within the region have made it very difficult for entrepreneurs in one Central Asian state to sell their goods in neighboring states. Only Kyrgyzstan is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the only one to subscribe to WTO standards for uniform tariffs and an open, predictable trade regime. Transit trade across Kazakhstan is also difficult, since goods are subject to high tariffs at the national border as well as to separate fees as they are shipped across the borders of each of the country's provinces.

Oil and Gas

Transportation linkages, though, are far easier to unravel than the hydro-electric grid and oil and gas pipeline system set up by Soviet planners to link resources with refineries or power stations in what they must have considered the best, most cost-effective way. Little, if any, thought was given to making the various Soviet republics self-sufficient in terms of energy production, so even a well-endowed oil and gas producer like Kazakhstan was forced to import oil and gas for use by domestic industry from both neighbouring Russia and Uzbekistan (*see table below*).

Energy Products Trade in Central Asia (Exports-Imports)

	Exports (In millions of U.S. dollars)				Imports (In millions of U.S. dollars)			
Kazakhstan	1996	1997	1998	1999	1996	1997	1998	1999
Electric Energy	0	0	0	0	241.2	119.9	81.6	63.2
Oil and Gas industry	1288	1691.6	1673.1	2068.1	235.4	258.4	259.5	121.9
Kyrgyzstan								
Electric Energy	73.6	83.2	25.6	52	26.7	23.8	7.9	2.8
<i>of which is CIS</i>	73.5	83.2	25.6	52	26.7	23.8	7.9	2.8
Oil and Gas industry	2.8	2.4	2.9	1.4	187.6	175.9	181.5	99.1
<i>of which is CIS</i>	1.6	1.5	2.2	0.9	183.1	172.7	176.1	96.8
Tajikistan								
Electric Energy	175	155	103	175	133	180	117	179
Oil and Gas industry					98	99	112	104
Turkmenistan								
Electric Energy	57.5	39.3	31.7	QI/5.7				
Oil and Gas industry	1230.4	558.4	335.6	QI/274.5				
Uzbekistan								
Electric Energy	232	482.6	...	...	20.5	12.6	4.6	QII/1.4
Oil and Gas industry	...	...	87.3	1.8	...	...	4.7	QII/0.2

Source: compiled from IMF Staff Country Reports for: Republic of Kazakhstan (No. 00/29 March 06, 2000), pp. 68-69, Kyrgyz Republic (No. 00/131 October 2000), pp. 106-109, Republic of Turkmenistan (No. 99/140 December 10, 1999), pp. 118-120, Republic of Tajikistan (No. 01/69 May 08, 2001) pp. 44-45, Republic of Uzbekistan (No. 00/36 March 29, 2000), p.72.

Uzbekistan is a regional provider of gas, serving part of the needs of all of its neighbors save gas-giant Turkmenistan, selling gas to Russia and to Ukraine. Even some Turkmen gas must transit a small part of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan is the principal supplier of gas to southern Kazakhstan and to Kyrgyzstan, and the latter transits across Tajikistan, and for this the Tajiks receive part of their gas as payment in kind for transit fees.

Uzbekistan has increased natural gas production without increasing investment, although its decaying Soviet-era infrastructure makes it impossible for Tashkent to continue doing so indefinitely without a major restructuring of their energy industry. In 2001 the Ministry of Power was reorganized as Uzbekenergo State Joint Stock company, a conglomeration of the various state-owned energy producers.

As prices crept up—a positive development, for all the region’s producers, who would like to receive world price for their commodities—debts piled up as well. This is one reason that most are making the economically illogical choice of developing energy self-sufficiency rather than regional cooperation. Most of the interstate debt owed by the Central Asian states to their former Soviet neighbors is for energy, and the settling and restructuring of these debts has been a slow and oftentimes acrimonious process.

Cutting off service for non-payment is a relatively frequent occurrence, and given the layers of linkages between the states, many such actions encourage hostile reactions. For example, in February 2002, Kazakhstan’s electricity operating company KEGOC cut its connections with both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The former, said to owe KEGOC \$1.5 million, then reached an agreement with the Kazakhs and service was restored to Uzbekistan, but the Kyrgyz Prime Minister responded by threatening to cut off the water supply to Southern Kazakhstan.

National, bilateral and multilateral efforts to better manage Central Asia’s energy complicated and interdependent energy system, all hold some promise for the future, and provide a potentially fruitful focus for increased international assistance.

Some states have more options than others, but the interconnectedness of the Central Asian transport and communication links give each of the five states some form of clout to exert over the others.

Tajikistan, is probably in the weakest position. It provides water (along with Kyrgyzstan) to Uzbekistan, and Uzbekistan’s gas must still transit across northern Tajikistan, but it is almost completely dependent on Uzbekistan for gas supplies, and more importantly for providing the country with its basic transport linkages to the outside world. The alternative, through Khorog in the Pamirs and on through Kyrgyzstan, requires moving goods over several high mountain passes on a road which has yet to be fully winterized. So, although Iran has offered Tajikistan LNG (liquified gas) at lower prices than the Uzbeks supply the Tajiks, Dushanbe has had to pass up the offer because it would need to transit across Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan is also dependent

upon the hydroelectric grid in northern Tajikistan (the Khujand region), and part of Tajikistan's gas is paid for by bartering electricity.

In December 2001 the Tajiks and Uzbeks took steps to improve and regularize their strained economic relations during a summit of the heads of state, when Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov promised to write off \$10 million of Tajik debt and to restructure the rest. However, shortly after the meeting the Tajik side learned that the planned restructuring would not take place until 2004.⁵²

Kyrgyzstan would like to expand its hydroelectric generating capacity, and has the water necessary for a nine-fold increase, as well as develop its oil and gas reserves. Right now, gas accounts for one third of all Kyrgyzstan's energy needs, and virtually all of this comes from Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan currently pays for half of its gas in foreign currency, and the other half in kind (largely through supplying construction materials), but the Uzbeks. Slow payment by the Kyrgyz led to the gas being turned off in December 2000 and October 2001. Kyrgyzstan would like to reduce their dependency upon the Uzbek, who they have long believed use Kyrgyzstan's payment problems to seek political advantage, especially in the southern part of the country where there is a large Uzbek population. The Kyrgyz are exploring completing two Soviet-era gas pipelines, one, involving some 90 kilometers of new pipe, from Kazakhstan, and the other, from Turkmenistan, which would transit across Uzbekistan.

Kazakhstan is determined to increase its own gas production, and is using oil revenues as well as international funding to fund the development of its own gas fields, especially in southern Kazakhstan, as well as the creation of a new gas pipeline system to link Kazakhstan's gas up to its principal users. Despite the giant gas field in Karachaganak, most of Kazakhstan's gas production is for export, and the country imports about forty percent of the natural gas that it uses, from Turkmenistan and from Uzbekistan, as well as small amounts from Russia.

Although Kazakhstan would like foreign investment in all sectors of its energy generating sector, and has even privatized all of the country's power plants, the difficulty some foreign investors have had means that the country faces an up-hill battle.

In 1997 Belgium's Tractobel pledged a 1-1.5 billion investment in Kazakhstan's southern gas distribution network (the Alaugaz system), only to leave the country in 2001, with a small cash settlement for earlier investment. After Tractobel's departure Kazakhstan's gas lines were given over to joint management by KazakhstanTransGaz (which was later placed under the direction of the newly reorganized Kazakh oil and gas company).

⁵² Mashad Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, FBIS-SOV-2002-0115, 14 January 2002

Water and Hyrdroelectric Power

Kazakhstan also has two separate electrical networks, one linked with Russia (and the Russian provider RAOUES) and covering the northern part of the country, and the other in the south, that is part of the Central Asian the unified Central Asian power grid. Kazakhstan's national power grid is controlled by the state-organized KEGOC (Kazakhstan Electricity Grid Operating Company, formed in July 1997, although the US firm AES controls the energy-grid in East-Kazakhstan Oblast where it bought two large hydroelectric stations and four combined heat and power stations. The Kazakh government originally hoped AES would be a source of capital investment in Kazakhstan's power industry, but it too has found doing business in Kazakhstan difficult, and is under considerable pressure to leave the country. As elsewhere in the region, efficiency is an enormous problem in Kazakhstan, and KEGOC has been the beneficiary of World Bank and EBRD loans to support the modernization of the network (about \$200 million through 1999), and pilot projects are now slated to make way for more systemic reforms.

Kazakhstan's electricity consumption nearly halved between 1992 and 1999 (from 86.2 billion kw hours to 44.1 billion kw hours) in large part reflecting the collapse of the Soviet-era industrial facilities in northern Kazakhstan (but also in Jambyl and Taras in the southern part of the country). Kazakhstan's electricity generation also dropped (from 78.6 billion kw hours to 44.1 kw hours). The result is that Kazakhstan imports far less electricity than before, but the split nature of the grid still makes Kazakhstan partly dependent upon Russian providers in the north, and Kyrgyz and Uzbek providers in the south.

The Kazakhs also provides electricity for parts of Kyrgyzstan. For example, in February 2002, Kazakhstan's electricity operating company KEGOC cut its connections with both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The former, said to owe KEGOC \$1.5 million then reached agreement with the Kazakhs and service was restored, but the Kyrgyz Prime Minister responded by threatening to cut off water supplies from Southern Kazakhstan.⁵³

Initially Kazakhstan was crippled by its energy debts to Russia, and continues to have periodic payment problems with all three countries, and as recently as December 2001 it turned over \$17 million of Soviet-era aircraft to Kyrgyzstan as payment against debt.⁵⁴ Kazakshtan's debt to Kyrgyzstan has created periodically strained relations between the two states, but it is not an economic burden that is

⁵³ Alec Applebaum "Central Asian Power Companies Squabble In Russia's Shadow," EurasiaNet Business and Economics, posted March 1, 2002

⁵⁴ Interfax, 19 December 2001, as reported by FBIS, Daily Report FBIS-SOV-2001-1220

difficult for the larger Kazakh economy to manage. The same has not been true of the debt between Kazakhstan and Russia.

Kazakhstan's own power sector requires considerable investment, nearly all of the country's gas turbines, more than half its steam turbines and a third of its steam boilers are over twenty years old, and the age of the equipment and its state of repair leads to frequent power shortages and outages.⁵⁵ Like AES the US's Access Industries was also viewed a source of potential foreign investment. Partners with Alfa Industries (which owns Russia's TNK oil company), Access Industries collaboration with Kazakhstan's energy industry has been rather more satisfying for all concerned, largely because of the firm's Russian connection. Access operates the Petropavlovsk power plant in Northern Kazakhstan, and the Bogatyr coal mine---the latter an important source for RAOUES's power generation). RAOUES has a majority state in Kazakhstan's Ekibastuz 2, which it received in return for \$249 of debt forgiveness.

National, bilateral and multilateral efforts to better manage Central Asia's energy complicated and interlinked energy system, all hold some promise for the future, and provide a potentially fruitful focus for increased international assistance.

Water management though, presents an enormously complicated "problem of the commons," or a situation where market incentives for each country to exploit its access water wealth and a lack of defined property rights ultimately results in the worst-case scenario for all parties involved. Water management is considered by most observers to be potentially the most divisive issue in the region, and the Central Asian states have explicitly told the international community not to intervene. Central Asia's downstream users---Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan---are dependent on upstream water sources, found mainly in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, but also in Afghanistan and China.

All five Central Asian states still rely on the infrastructure of the Soviet-era reservoir system, which had most of its water storage facilities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Now the latter two states are paying for the upkeep of the old system but resent having to do so. They would like to use their water resources to support new hydroelectric stations (assuming adequate financial capital can be found to build them), which could leave downstream users in serious straits.

But international efforts to sponsor the creation of a new regional water system have been rebuffed by the states of the region, who have announced their intention of managing this problem themselves. In fact, in recent years, the Uzbek government has been devoting many of its scarce resources to create and enlarge reservoirs, in order to make them less dependent upon the Kyrgyz reservoir system, and this in turn creates new risks for the Turkmen, who are in turn planning to develop their own new reservoir.

⁵⁵ U. S. Department of Energy, "An Energy Overview of the Republic of Kazakhstan" <http://www.fe.doe.gov/international/kazakover.html>

Hopefully, if international efforts succeed to help manage other aspects of the regional energy system, the leaders of the Central Asian states will reconsider their current position.

The Central Asian states have been making slow headway in the regional management of water issues. Although in February 1992 an Interstate Water Coordinating Commission was established to facilitate the implementation of quotas, and two subdivisions, one for the Syr Darya and the other for the Amu Darya were established, each with headquarters in Uzbekistan. Various international organizations have been working with these. They include GEF (the Global Energy Facility) with World Bank funding, SPECA (the Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia) in cooperation with the UN Economic Commission for Europe and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, as well as US AID. The latter in particular played a critical role on the establishment of new quotas and an improved water management system for the Syr Darya in 1998.



Working-Group II
Convened by IPA-President David Malone

	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Amu Darya River					
% of basin area	0	0.8	10.3	37.1	31
% of country area	0	5	89	93	85
Syr Darya River					
% of basin area	68.6	18.3	2.1	0	11
% of country area	15	58	9	0	15
Aral Sea Basin					
% of basin area	22	6	7	28	24
% of country area	15	61	98	93	100
Tarim River					
% of basin area	0	2.5	0.2	0	0
% of country area	0	13	1.3	0	0
Ili River					
% of basin area	60	0	0	0	0
% of country area	3.5	0	0	0	0
Ob River					
% of basin area	20	0	0	0	0
% of country area	21	0	0	0	0
Ural Basin					
% of basin area	55	0	0	0	0
% of country area	5	0	0	0	0
Volga Basin					
% of basin area	1.5	0	0	0	0
% of country area	0.8	0	0	0	0

Source: adapted from *Boundary Issues in Central Asia* by Necati Polat, Transnational Publishers, 2002

Transboundary Water Resources in Central Asia

In 2001, for the first time, Kyrgyzstan began using its water resources as a political tool, passing a piece of legislation which called for, which was signed by the President on the eve of a summit with Kazakhstan's president Nursultan Nazarbayev. While the Kyrgyz president says that he was forced into doing this by a fractious parliament that was already incensed over the Kyrgyz decision to cede land to China, the threat of charging for water was enough to get the Kazakh president to agree to the joint maintenance of at least some of Kyrgyzstan's water supplies, and to help fund the construction of the Kambaratinskaya hydroelectric station, whose reservoir would also serve as a source of irrigation for some of southern Kazakhstan. This project, begun in the Soviet era, would take just over \$200 million to complete. At the same time the Kazakh leader promised to ease transit difficulties for Kyrgyz vehicles passing through Kazakhstan.⁵⁶ However, there has yet to be significant follow-through on either of these promises.

The problem for the Kyrgyz is that they have to pay for the upkeep of the Soviet-era reservoir system, and they simply don't have the money for it. So much of the current water management system is based on trust, and since independence trust has been in much shorter supply. The Kyrgyz, in fact, are building cross-border water monitoring stations, ten in all are planned.

The way that rivers flow, and how national boundaries are cut, also gives Uzbekistan considerable power, over how much water gets to Turkmenistan, but also to a lesser extent to Kazakhstan, as the Uzbeks are able to divert water from the Syr Darya (with headwaters in Kyrgyzstan) river before it flows into Kazakhstan. In 2001 the Kazakhs asked the Tajiks to divert more water from the Amu Darya to Uzbekistan, so that the Uzbeks would not channel off so much of the Syr Darya flow into irrigation canals. And the Kazakhs briefly cut off Uzbekistan's telephone links to Europe in summer 2001 to protest this, as the relay system for Uzbekistan still crosses Kazakhstan and is dependent upon Kazakh switching stations.

Both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan would like to produce more hydroelectric power. In addition to finishing the Kambaratinsk Hydroelectric Station (planned to have a capacity of about 360 megawatts), the Kyrgyz would also like to build a much larger hydroelectric station (known as Kambaratinsk No. 1), which would have a capacity of 1.9 megawatts, and is estimated to cost \$1.7 billion, which would require the construction of an 800 foot high dam, that would be designed to solve many of the region's electrical and irrigation needs simultaneously. For now, though, the focus of international assistance is on helping the Kyrgyz complete the construction of some smaller hydroelectric projects.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Yury Razgulyayev, "Paying for Water Could Cause Serious Disputes Among Central Asian Countries, *Vremya MN*, August 24, 2001, p. 5.

⁵⁷ An Energy Overview of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, US Department of Energy, May 2002.

The Tajiks are seeking international assistance to build the Sangtuda power station, which would allow Tajikistan to cover its annual deficit of electric power. Although Tajikistan is the leading per capita producer of hydroelectric power in the world (and has the greatest capacity to produce hydroelectric power than any state in the region, it is forced to purchase electricity at competitive prices (\$0.025-\$0.05 per KW/h) from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.⁵⁸ Tajikistan hopes to create a single electrical grid, which would end the need for northern Tajikistan to import electricity.

Right now the Kyrgyz face a difficult choice of using their water in winter to generate electricity for peak usage in the winter, or allowing their reservoirs to fill for spring and summer irrigation.

The Turkmen produce more than enough electricity for their own domestic needs, although the physical plant of the power generating facilities is deteriorating from lack of investment. Turkmenistan exports some electricity to southwestern Kazakhstan and to northeastern Afghanistan as well, and would like to take advantage of an expanding Afghan market in particular. The government in Ashkabad has declined to participate.

Crime and Drugs

Yet another problem of failed regional cooperation eats away at the core of stability that is so much desired by the states of the region. The Central Asian states have also made relatively little headway in meeting the challenges posed by the opium and heroin trade from Afghanistan, which impacts all five states of the region as well as on Russia, and distorts the internal economic market of each. Tajikistan in particular has become an important transit state, in part because of the cross-border ethnic ties with the peoples of northern Afghanistan.

Some of the transit income is undoubtedly fueling the reestablishment of commercial trade within Tajikistan and is a source for at least some of its reviving construction industry. The transit income has had a highly corrupting influence on Tajikistan's already-weakened law enforcement institutions and those of Kyrgyzstan as well. Well-designed UN-organized and funded programs in Kyrgyzstan do offer some reason for optimism that law enforcement agencies can be successfully bolstered, but the funding for them is at risk, and their task is becoming more difficult each year, in part because of the spread of narcotics addiction (and its related HIV/Aids problem) throughout the region.

Turkmenistan's government is said to be even more corrupted by the drug trade than Tajikistan's. If the allegations of former government officials who have broken

⁵⁸ The Times of Central Asia, July 19, 2001

with government are to be believed, then profits from the drug trade have corrupted even the highest echelons of the country's government, filtering all the way up to the presidential palace. According to a report by *Deutsche Welle*, Turkmenistan's regime has engaged in systematic narcotics trafficking, and has forged ties with poppy producers in Afghanistan.

A former Turkmen political prisoner said that country's top officials were involved in smuggling operations at the Ashgabat airport. It was also reported that the consulates of Turkmenistan in the Afghan cities of Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif, which opened during the Taliban-era, were utilized to facilitate drug trafficking. Former Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Avdy Kuliev has long asserted that the Turkmen leadership was engaged in trafficking and estimated that officials have helped to smuggle approximately 80 tons of drugs annually, primarily heroin.

According to Kuliev, the basement of the building that formerly housed the Central Committee of the Communist Party is a primary storage facility for narcotics. Originally used to store narcotics confiscated by the authorities, it is now used to warehouse narcotics the government is trafficking. Boris Shikhmuradov, another top-level Turkmen official exiled after falling into disfavor with President Niyazov, recently contended that Turkmenistan's narco-traffic is under the control of the state's security apparatus, the KNB, with the tacit approval of Niyazov.

The US government has repeatedly stated its goal of eliminating Afghanistan's drug trade, but efforts designed to curtail the cultivation of poppies only scratch the surface of the problem. According to various sources, the US and Europeans are said to be considering allocating certain funds to buy up and destroy this past season's crop of poppies, from which heroin is later manufactured. But this sum that Western governments would pay to amounts to Afghanistan's farmers is a small fraction of the profit they could reap by selling it to the country's drug-dealers.

All this is good news for Central Asian organized crime groups who thrive on the drug trade. Accounts suggest that they are openly operating not only in Central Asia, but on Russian soil as well, and that they are becoming a formidable presence in Russia's far eastern port city of Vladivostok. According to reports, gangs from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan have flocked to the Russian Far East, a lucrative black market where they easily can sell heroin. The start of the flow of drugs from Central Asia to cities like Vladivostok, Nakhodka, and Khabarovsk dates back to 1998, when Iran closed its border with Afghanistan, and Western law-enforcement agencies started cracking down harder on heroin trafficking to Europe and the United States. Rampant organized crime in Russia's Far East makes it harder for regular businesses to operate on the same territory and has led to the harassment of many law-abiding citizens of those places due who are visibly of Central Asian or Caucasian ethnic origin.

Afghanistan, in its current state of upheaval and reconstruction, remains an arms bazaar, and serves as a source for the sale of cheap, lethal weapons into Central Asia, a region which had an adequately excessive supply of small and large weapons left behind in Soviet military armories with the breakup of the USSR. Nearly 17 tons of explosive devices were seized on the Tajik-Afghan border in the first half of 2002. Russian border guards continue to see the destabilizing power of illegally-armed militias as a reason for their continued presence in states beyond its proper borders.

What is Left to be Done?

There will be no shortage of challenges facing the Central Asian states over the next several years. The US-led military operation in Afghanistan has certainly provided the stability needed to give them more breathing room to begin to address many of them. But neither the ouster of the Taliban regime nor the increased US security presence in the region provides a “quick-fix” for mistakes that have been made over the past decade. It will also not compensate for reforms which were still-born through a lack of positive, progressive leadership from the region’s heads of state.

The Central Asian states have yet to figure out how to maximize their national interests in an environment which also encourages regional cooperation. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the governments of all these countries have pursued politics of isolationist character, trying to attain self-sufficiency and to redesign their previously interlinked infrastructure so that it is encompassed within their national borders.

There has been a seemingly contradictory, impulse toward integration, which because it is contradictory has also been ineffectual. The Central Asian states have organized various interstate organizations of political and economic character. But although this makes clear that they recognize the need to cooperate in order to solve many problems facing the region as a whole, shared challenges like managing the damaged ecology of the Aral Sea basin or combatting the growing drug traffic through the area.

But few of these efforts have served to create anything complex and enduring, and are little more than forums for the meetings by heads of state or senior officials. This is largely because of the atmosphere of regional competition. Both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan want to be the preeminent force in the region, while Turkmenistan, has tried to opt out of cooperative arrangements in Central Asia as contrary to its policy of “positive neutrality”. The Kyrgyz economy is too fragile to allow its president a leading role in the region, and Tajikistan too is consigned to the role of follower, due to the lasting effects of its devastating civil war.

This situation was further complicated by Russia's geopolitical ambitions in the area. Russia, due to its geographic and historical importance in the region, is undoubtedly a center of gravitation. With its military presence in Tajikistan and long border with Kazakhstan, Russia was easily able to exert its influence in Central Asia, but was unwilling or unable to use this influence to help the Central Asian states solve any of these problems. Instead over time Russia became an increasingly less competent and more disinterested actor in the region, although it felt compelled to stay because of the growing US presence.

Ironically this changed in the aftermath of September 11, in part because the greatly increased US presence now finally contributed in part to meeting the security needs of Russia. The US presence also helped meet the nationally-specific security needs of the Central Asian states, but did little to foster an atmosphere of cooperation. Instead, it served to further stimulate the atmosphere of competition between these states.

However, the relative easing of tensions that has occurred in Central Asia in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, does provide the broader international community with new opportunities of engagement with these states. This could occur if the international community, with its various agencies and institutions of bilateral and multilateral assistance were to move forward with a strong sense of shared goals. There are a number of projects that seem particularly worthy of support, as they will break some of the logjams in the reform process in a number of countries and in the region more generally. These include work towards the elimination of trade barriers within the region. International support for introducing new transit corridors through the region should be directly linked to the staged introduction of a standardized tariff system and open-trade regime.

At the same time the international community should work to eradicate terrorism at its source, through increased professionalization of security (including narcotics) that is accomplished in part through linking security issues with a broader effort at legal reform. There should be a region-wide effort to increase the professional competence of law enforcement officials, and particular attention to helping these states figure out ways to improve the salary scales of law enforcement and judicial systems. This is a critical feature of any narcotics trafficking control program (and it is no less important than the kinds of technical assistance that is being offered to border officials). Few regions get the kind of second look by the international community that the Central Asians are being afforded. The international community should be more reflective in examining the problems of the region, more forthcoming with ideas and with the financial assistance to see them through. For their part the leadership of the Central Asian states must demonstrate a new flexibility to move away from old ways of thinking, and the competitive patterns that have dominated in this region thus far.

THE CHALLENGE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES: A CASE STUDY OF KYRGYZSTAN

Chinara JAKYPOVA

Kyrgyzstan Country Director for the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)

For much of the 1990s, the post-Soviet Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were generally known only for their natural resources, Silk Road cultural monuments, drug-trafficking and authoritarian regimes. Today, with three out of the five Central Asian countries sharing a border with Afghanistan, the region has suddenly come into the world's spotlight.

The increased attention has reminded us of the region's great paradox: despite well-educated citizens and huge reserves of oil and gas, local populations here live under pitiable conditions. Many experts point to authoritarianism, endemic corruption, the cruelty of regimes, the impossibility of political opposition and extreme poverty as a favourable environment for extremists, and the resulting radicalization of the society.

In the early 1990s the world placed large hopes on Central Asia assuming that the assistance provided to it by the West would create favorable conditions for good governance and the establishment of democracy in the region. The highest hopes were placed on Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akaev set a hard and fast course towards democracy. A serious academic and highbrow leader, he set about creating a civilized state with the genuine sincerity of an inexperienced politician. Freedom of speech was one of the first and undoubted achievements of the young Kyrgyz democracy. For people starved for truth during the Soviet era, it was a breath of fresh air, sweeping away the cobwebs of the past.

In 1994, US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott referred to Askar Akaev as the Central Asian Thomas Jefferson, saying Akaev had adopted much from Benjamin Franklin as well. And Kyrgyzstan itself was a "promising" beacon of democracy. Kyrgyzstan was chosen by the West as a showcase for Central Asian democracy in the hope of prodding neighboring dictators into mending their autocratic ways.

Kyrgyzstan, however, needed time to implement successfully its political and economic reforms, to grow a new class of entrepreneurs, and to prepare for democratic elections. The West did not spare money for these grandiose plans. Kyrgyzstan received sizable credits extended on the promise and expectation of democracy.

Unfortunately, this "silk revolution" was over in a rather short period of time. Akaev's desire to remain President for a third term, in violation of the Constitution, persecution by the authorities of political opponents, crackdown on independent mass media, and the flourishing of corruption in the country all resulted in a "retreat from

democracy.”⁵⁹ Numerous American congressmen and US State Department officials now agree that Kyrgyzstan milked democracy like a healthy cow, then turned its back on it, without so much as a ‘thank you’ to its Western advocates. Many believe that Kyrgyzstan has proved unworthy of the great trust extended to it by the West.

Neither Kazakhstan, nor Uzbekistan, nor Tajikistan, and certainly not Turkmenistan, were able to live up to even a fraction of the hopes on good governance and building of a full-fledged democracy expected from them by the West.

What kept Central Asia from building a democracy and good governance ?

Unfair Elections

It says much that presidential power in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan has remained in one and the same hands since 1991 till present. The presidents of each have taken great efforts to hold onto these powers forever.

As of June 22, 2000, the Parliament of Kazakhstan approved a draft law granting life authority and privileges to President Nursultan Nazarbaev, which will allow him to influence the country’s legislative and judicial branches of power for the remainder of his life.

In Uzbekistan, amendments made to the Constitution as a result of a 2002 referendum allow Karimov to be a candidate in the 2005 elections, when the new presidential office term of seven years will come into effect. Thus he will have an opportunity to head the state for until 2012—making for a total of 23 years in control of the country.

This would speak a great deal for his strength as a leader if the elections that have brought him to power up to this point had been free, fair, and contested. But this has not been the case. In the presidential elections of 2000, the only alternative candidate Karimov allowed to run against him did not conceal his support for Karimov’s policy. During the election campaign, this challenger even announced his intention to vote for Karimov, ostensibly his opponent.

To the east, in Tajikistan, very few believe that President Emomali Rakhmonov intends to leave his office of his own free will. As of November 6, 1999, Rakhmonov was reelected to the post of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan for an office term of seven years according to the amendments made to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan based on the results of the referendum of September 26, 1999.

In Turkmenistan, where Saparmurad Niazov has maintained the most authoritarian choke-hold on his country of all the Central Asian presidents, three years

⁵⁹ Term used by the OSCE mission to Kyrgyzstan in 2000.

ago the Parliament of Turkmenistan adopted a law granting him, popularly known as *Turkmenbashi*, or father of the Turkmen, “an exclusive right to retain the authority of the head of the state without any limitations of the term in office”, that is, as long as he lives. There are few people today who take the regime of Turkmenbashi seriously, as he combines superficial neutrality abroad with a rigid dictatorship at home.

Meanwhile only Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev stated that he intends to leave his post in 2005, which, in contrast to other presidents of the region. But Akaev, in the opinion of analysts, made a vital error two years ago, when he decided to stand for the elections a third time though the country’s constitution prohibited that.

The Constitution of Kyrgyzstan limits any president to two terms in office. Despite this, Akaev was elected President in national elections in 1991, 1995 and 2000. In 1998, the Constitutional Court made a decision allowing Akaev to participate in the elections of 2000, as the 1993 Constitution was not in effect when he was first elected in 1991. But according to the post-Soviet Constitution, the Kyrgyz government was a lawful continuation of the last Soviet Kyrgyz government which adopted two declarations: one on sovereignty in December 1990, and another on the republic’s independence, in August 1991. These declarations meant that Akaev’s election in 1991 should legitimately count as his first term. Members of the opposition to Akaev’s government believe that he did not have right to participate in the 2000 presidential elections. The elections of 2000 significantly undermined the image of the most democratic leader of Central Asia.

According to observers, the 2000 presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan were conducted with serious violations. A report by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said the poll failed to meet international standards. There were widespread complaints of undue pressure on voters and stuffing of ballot boxes. High-level US officials called these elections a “digression from democratic principles,” which were “neither free nor fair.” A group of observers from the National Democratic Institute in Washington DC, noted “serious violations” and “instances of government interference in the electoral process, as well as cases of political persecution.”

For the 2000 elections, Akaev’s government introduced candidacy requirements for all those running for office based on language aptitude. A new method of manipulating victory was born: all candidates for high posts were to pass a closed-door exam testing knowledge of the Kyrgyz language, and on this basis, several candidates were barred even though their native language was Kyrgyz. One was asked to answer the electoral commission’s questions about funeral rite songs of the ancient Kyrgyz, another one, to recite a poem by an obscure eighteenth-century poet. Akaev, curiously, had the highest mark on this exam.

Analysts believe that unfair elections in recent years have prompted Central Asia's retreat from democracy.

Strengthening Presidents and Weakening of Parliaments

Central Asia's presidents have, in the past decade, worked to strengthen their own power relative to parliament, thereby distorting the democratic balance that checks the power of would-be autocrats.

President Nursultan Nazarbaev dissolved the Parliament of Kazakhstan in 1993 and again in 1995, when it cancelled scheduled presidential elections, and extended the term of his presidential powers until 2000 with the help of a referendum conducted with serious flaws and procedural violations. The parliamentary elections held in Kazakhstan in October of 1999 were not in compliance with OSCE norms, due to mass interference in the election process, a point emphasized by the OSCE's Bureau on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The OSCE refused to send its observers to the parliamentary elections of 1999 in Uzbekistan, deciding the elections could be neither free nor fair and choosing to remove the stamp of legitimacy their presence would suggest. Five pro-governmental parties participated in the election campaign, all of which fully supported the official line; even President Islam Karimov admitted that he was not able to tell the difference among their policy platforms.

A year later, after the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan in February 2000, the OSCE came to the conclusion that, although the elections symbolized a significant achievement in implementation of a the plan of peaceful regulation, their processes had not complied with even the minimum standards and could not be called democratic.

The Turkmen parliament exists to rubberstamp all actions of Turkmenbashi and cannot be regarded as a serious branch of power.

The Kyrgyz Parliament no longer has veto power against Akaev, and its functions are restricted to drafting legislation. Opposition deputies have complained that they no longer wield any real power; that they have become mere tools of Kyrgyz leadership. "We are invited to the White House and are given instructions on what to vote for and what not to vote for," claimed one of pro-governmental deputies. The speakers of the two houses of Parliament have little influence on the public life of the country.

The first post-Soviet constitution, adopted by Kyrgyzstan on May 5, 1993, established the basis for a parliamentary-presidential republic. The separation of judicial, legislative and executive powers was enshrined in this constitution, and the

one-chamber parliament, called the *Zhogorku Kenesh*, balanced the powers of the presidency.

In September 1994, a political crisis crippled the Kyrgyz Parliament. Pro-government deputies boycotted sessions in order to prevent independent members from raising questions about recent, unofficial transfers of gold bullion to Switzerland. Akaev dissolved the parliament.

A referendum in October 1994 amended the constitution, creating a two-chamber legislative body, the Assembly of People's Representatives and the Legislative Assembly, and extending presidential power. The president began to appoint representatives to the judiciary, the government body tasked with overseeing the president's actions. (Parliament had the power to appoint such judges under the original 1993 constitution.)

All the constitutional changes in recent years have combined to create a virtually authoritarian regime in Kyrgyzstan. The executive has secured control of parliament, particularly of the upper chamber, the Assembly of People's Representatives. This chamber is not in permanent session, and most of its members combine their role as deputies with their jobs as senior government officials or businessmen, making them often dependent on local executive bodies.

The Plague of Corruption

Corruption in Central Asia have reached such a grand scale that today it threatens the existence of national economies and promotes a rapid degradation of the region.

A corrupt official in Central Asia is afraid of nothing and has nothing to lose, as he is a part of collective guarantee. The only threat he faces is that he could be "hooked" by the special services and be forced to do the will of someone higher-ranking. But if he were to decide all of a sudden to pursue an independent policy and remove himself from the established network of favoritism, loyalty, and bribes, he would experience all the punitive power of the state.

For the 10 years of independence, the secret services of Central Asia have created a system of files on all those susceptible to corruption (corrupted 'white collar workers', including ministers). It is no secret that the region's elite has incriminating evidence against each other, which sometimes rises to the surface.

The most outstanding example of it is the "KazakGate", which resulted into disclosure of secret accounts of Nazarbaev in foreign banks, although it was claimed that those funds were used to support the country's economy. According to preliminary data, about \$100 million were frozen in the accounts of those companies by a Geneva

court decision, while the total scale of the “KazahGate” was assessed by Swiss investigators in the amount of \$ 800 million.

According to the annual Corruption Index prepared by the international anti-corruption organization Transparency International in 2001, Kazakhstan went down by 5 points as compared to 2000 improving relative to Honduras, India and Uzbekistan with its 2.7 rating. Evidently, it shall be considered as a result of disappointment of foreign businessmen and experts, whose opinions serve as a basis for the study for calculation of the corruption index by the anti-corruption company and its outcome.

According to experts, a major breeding ground for corruption in Tajikistan is drug trafficking and involvement of state officials in it. There, 83 % of the population earns less than the national poverty level and an average monthly income is less than 7 US dollars.

Corruption in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is existing in a “soviet” form. Presidents are unaccountable to their people when exploiting public property for their own benefit, and the whole political system functions for them only.

According to Anders Åslund, economic advisor to Kyrgyz president Askar Akaev and a leading expert on transition economies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington DC, the major problem of reforms is the perseverance of the huge, unmanageable government apparatus penetrating everywhere and living on corruption. Corruption has weakened Kyrgyzstan, increased migration, and forced a majority of the country’s inhabitants into endless poverty. According to unofficial statistics, almost 11 per cent of the population, about 500,000 people, now live in Russia, while tens of thousands of Kyrgyz are residents of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

More than 80 per cent of the population is estimated to be living below the poverty line. The average monthly income is \$20, while minimal monthly consumer needs are estimated at \$25. Doctors earn slightly less than the monthly average and teachers have a little more. Advisers in the President's Administration receive \$60/month on average, while deputies and ministers are paid \$120.

In the early years of independence, foreign investment provided fertile ground for corruption. At present, the external debt of Kyrgyzstan totals \$1.4 billion. Some repayment deadlines have long since passed, others are soon to arrive. Ordinary people have associated the decline in the standard of living with the World Bank anti-crisis program, which has involved closing industrial facilities, tightening the budget for social needs, and raising the qualifying age for pensions. People know exactly where the foreign credits have gone, seeing luxurious villas of government officials whose children, as a rule, study at the best, most expensive western universities.

An intimidating example for the elite was the case of deputy Jalgap Kazakbaev, who was director general of the Mining Complex in Kara-Balta, near

Bishkek, and was prepared to report on corruption in the government at the Parliamentary session on June 22, 1999. However, the night before, he was arrested, and in September 2000, he was sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment for huge-scale embezzlement. His brother Oomat Kazakbaev, who owned several firms working jointly with the Kara-Balta Complex, was also sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. In June 2002, the Kazakbaevs were released thanks to demonstrations conducted by their supporters against a background of an escalating political crisis in the country.

Today, corruption is a mean of consolidating all branches of power in the country, primarily the bodies of executive power, the judicial system, the prosecutors' offices, and law-enforcement bodies. Deputy Marat Sultanov claims that there is a system for buying government posts in Kyrgyzstan. (Even the late Prime Minister Jumabek Ibraimov once complained that some people had tried to bribe him for a comfortable government posts with huge amount of money.) According to data published by independent mass media, government posts are routinely bought and sold, most notably in the customs and tax inspections. In several cases, top jobs have been given to men with criminal records and bogus credentials.

Corruption began to seep through the Kyrgyz political scene when the privatization of state property began. Most of the population had no funds to buy any state property leaving a small elite to secure ownership at knockdown prices. Volga cars, for example, were sold off for as little as five or ten dollars. At a stroke, a rich and powerful minority was created, which has sought to protect and expand its interests ever since.

Corruption is high within state companies as well. Shalkhar Jaisanbaev, the former director of oil and gas company Kyrgyzgazmunaizat, went into hiding after the security services accused him of using ancillary companies to launder and steal \$18 million.

According to international experts, the entire public management in Kyrgyzstan is corrupt. When the South Korean Corporation Daewoo announced its intention to open its office in Central Asia, it considered three countries: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. But Kyrgyz officials asked for a bribe, so they opened an automobile factory in Uzbekistan.⁶⁰

According to the experts, it was not the president's usurpation of power, which lead the country to corruption, instead corruption gave birth to authoritarianism in the form of the president's republic, as a self-protection from democracy, which could jeopardize the lucrative payoffs from corruption. Any fight against corruption is a struggle against entrenched interests. There is no corruption without power, and there is no power without corruption.

⁶⁰ Interview by the official advisor on the industrial policy of Kyrgyzstan. Takara, K. "Bribes and corruption are the main enemies of Kyrgyz economy", AKI-Press", №5-6, (March, 2002), p.9.

All the above mentioned is typical of all countries of Central Asia, as under the existing regimes corruption became the purpose of existence of all levels and institutions of the public “machine”, from its highest to the lowest echelons.

Human Rights and Dependant (Not Independent) Courts

One of the largest problems of Central Asia is observance of human rights and independent courts. Courts’ dependence on the executive branch of power was demonstrated many times during many recent political proceedings against the opponents and critics of Central Asian presidents.

In Kazakhstan, these are recent examples with Kajegeldin, Zhaqiyarov and Ablyazov. Akejan Kajegeldin, a major opponent of Nazarbaev, had to leave Kazakhstan as a result of legal proceedings. A senior Kazakh opposition leader, Mukhtar Ablyazov, was sentenced recently to six years in jail for abuse of office while he was energy minister. Another opposition leader, Galymzhan Zhaqiyarov, has been sentenced to seven years of imprisonment in a colony. The former head of the Pavlodar oblast is also charged with embezzlements while working in public service. Ablyazov and Zhaqiyarov have consistently maintained that the case against him is fabricated and politically motivated.

According to human right organizations there are more political prisoners in Uzbekistan at present than in the entire Soviet Union under Leonid Brezhnev’s tenure.⁶¹ In Uzbekistan a judicial system dealing with descendents under the guise of fighting with Islamic fundamentalism.

The UN Human Rights Committee, noted that it was “gravely concerned about consistent allegations of widespread torture, inhuman treatment, and abuse of power by law enforcement officials.”

Human right defending organizations in Tajikistan inform about frequent cases of tortures, unjustified arrests and detentions, about a refusal to conduct fair court proceedings. The OSCE informed the mission that since 1994 there is a significant increase in the number of death sentences. It was emphasized that this tendency and lack of official statistics on capital punishment are serious reasons of concern.

What is happening in Turkmenistan is beyond any logic. It is not by chance that even high-level officials started opposing the head of the state.

Three cases — the Kulovs case, Beknazarov’s case, and the case against the independent newspaper *Moya Stolitsa-Novosti* — demonstrated to the world the true nature of Kyrgyzstan’s judicial system and the situation with human rights.

⁶¹ Financial Times, 5 August 2002.

Former vice president and former Bishkek mayor General Felix Kulov has been in jail since January 2001. A military court, having acquitted him once in August 2000, reconsidered the case and sentenced Kulov on January 22, 2001, to seven years of imprisonment, on charges of abuse of power while serving as minister of national security from 1997 to 1998. Yet another trial against Kulov began on December 25, in which he is accused of embezzlement while a provincial governor from 1993 to 1997. Prosecutors had demanded a new eleven-year prison term for him in April. The Pervomai district court of Bishkek sentenced him on May 8, 2002, to ten years of imprisonment and confiscation of property. Opposition groups say the persecution of Kulov is politically motivated because he was the Akaev's main political rival.

Parliamentary deputy Azimbek Beknazarov was detained on January 5 on charges of abusing the office as a criminal investigator in 1995. The arrest came shortly after Beknazarov called to impeach President Akaev over Kyrgyzstan's signing of a controversial border agreements with China. His supporters held hunger strikes and protest demonstrations around the country for three months, until his release on March 19. One person died during the hunger strike in February, and police killed six demonstrators in Aksy, in the Jalal-Abad region, on March 17 and 18. Under a powerful pressure of demonstration participants Azimbek Beknazarov was fully acquitted (June 28, 2002) and the authorities actually admitted their fault.

Critics complain that Kyrgyz judges are governed by secret instructions from the Kyrgyz White House, frequently refuse objections made against the public prosecutor, often dictate pleas and interrupt both the accused and his lawyer with inappropriate remarks. Points of order put forward by defense lawyers are rarely accepted.

But if there might be some cases in Kyrgyzstan when political opponents can be acquitted or pardoned, it is practically impossible in other countries of Central Asia, this makes political regimes very vulnerable .

The Persecution of Independent Media

It is not a secret that all major mass media in Central Asia, including television, radio and newspapers, are controlled by the governments.

Kazakhstan got a failing grade in Freedom House's just released survey of press freedom for 2002. The country's media were rated "not free," and placed on a par with Iran, Haiti, Kenya and Algeria. The regime ignores constitutional provisions for freedom of the press by dominating most newspapers as well as printing, distribution and broadcast facilities, and controlling Internet access, the group reported. Several of

the most important print and broadcast outlets are directly controlled by the president's eldest daughter.

Almost all leading news agencies of the world disseminated a picture of decapitated dog, which was placed surreptitiously for the chief editor of the Kazak opposition newspaper "Respublika" Irina Petrushova, and when it did not have any effect, the editors' office was completely destroyed by fire set with petrol bombs. Other opposition publications of Kazakhstan had a similar destiny.

According to the research conducted by Human Rights Watch since 1996, independent Uzbek journalists criticizing high-level governmental officials, as well as the policy of the government, as a rule, cannot publish their stories in Uzbek press. The authors of critical publications are often persecuted.

In Uzbekistan, censorship was officially outlawed in May of 2002. But, in reality even today criticism of the government cannot appear. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the authorities warned the editors of all mass media that they would be fully liable for undesired consequences which might arise as a result of "impermissible" information having been published in press or on the air. In the opinion of many journalists, this resulted in mass self-censorship in media.

Independent journalists who dared to express their stories an alternative viewpoint, are constantly persecuted, are subjected to criminal responsibility for "slander or offense", "bribe taking", "storage of firearms", "storage of drugs".

In Dushanbe, where there is approximately one sixth of the population of Tajikistan is concentrated, daily publications are not published for more than 10 years. There are about 12 newspapers in Russian and Tajik published each week, of which, only two or three are more or less informative; the rest republish stories from Russian yellow press, Internet, fill in their pages with horoscopes and anecdotes.

Journalists observe strict self-censorship, in order not to "frame" the editor: and not to draw the anger of authorities on the publication. The situation with electronic media is even worse. There is not a single private television or radio company in the capital. The major source of news, both political and cultural in Dushanbe and its suburbs is still the Russian television channel RTR. The state television of Tajikistan is slow to cover the events. They put on the air mainly folklore music, old Soviet movies and illegally pirated Hollywood films.

A special concern is raised by the fact that the State Committee on Television and Radio Broadcasting (SCTR) of Tajikistan still keeps a monopoly on all electronic media, while at the same time acting as a licensing body.

Turkmen journalists were forced to publish mere nonsense in order to survive. Internet is under control of the state. For this purpose a monster of modern technologies has been established – the Scientific Technical Center of the State Company of Electric Communication "Turkmentelecom", the only provider in the country. Since the first

days of its existence the STC “Turkmentelecom” keeps a close contact with counter-intelligence bodies, providing them with phone numbers used for the attempts to get connected.

Criticism of officials was allowed provided that it is aimed only at those who fell into the President’s disgrace.

The courts of Central Asian countries are swamped with suits against journalists from officials and parliamentary deputies wishing to defend their honor, especially during parliamentary and presidential elections.

In this setting Kyrgyzstan looks to be much better. But in Kyrgyzstan, opposition newspapers are also controlled by access to the state printing monopoly Uchkun. A large part of mass media is already under the open or hidden control of the Kyrgyz White House. Akaev appoints newspaper chief editors by his decrees.

The problems of mass media have their roots in 1994, when a number of newspapers were closed down. Among them were the parliamentary newspaper *Svobodnye Gory*, the independent newspaper *Politika*, as well as *Asaba*, *Ordo*, and others. Journalists Zamira Sydykova and Yrysbek Omurzakov served terms in prison for criticizing the president.

In 2002, Governmental Decree 20 was adopted in January for the purpose of taking an inventory of publishing houses and equipment. In reality, it restricts press freedom in the country and makes obstacles for establishing an independent publishing house in Kyrgyzstan. Under pressure from international organizations Decree 20 has been cancelled.

The state-owned Uchkun printing house stopped printing the paper *Moya Stolitsa-Novosti*, which had published several critical articles about the Akaev's inner circle, on January 29, 2002. The Bishkek City arbitration court ruled that Uchkun must print the *Moya Stolitsa-Novosti* until the investigation was completed and a special court decision taken. However, the court reversed its own decision in February, granting an appeal by Uchkun. *Moya Stolitsa-Novosti* resumed publication only on May 22, 2002 thanks to the support of international organizations.

The New York based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in May named its annual list of the world's worst places to be a journalist. Kyrgyzstan was the ninth, after such countries as Colombia, Afghanistan, and Belarus, and ranked a little bit better than tenth-place Cuba. The report states: "Kyrgyzstan is rapidly losing its reputation as an 'island of democracy' in Central Asia”.

Recent years were characterized by narrowing of the informational space and a significant limitation of the freedom of speech in all Central Asian republics.

Obstacles for the Opposition

The impossibility for the legal powerful opposition to exist is one of the major reasons for the lack of good governance in Central Asia.

As of June 26, 2002 the Parliament of Kazakhstan adopted the Law on Political Parties, and on July 15, after it was signed by President Nazarbaev, the law came in force. According to the new law all political parties shall be reregistered till January 17, 2003.

The new law on political parties increases the minimum number of party members from 3,000 to 50,000. The measure, which virtually makes Kazakhstan a one-party system, limits the political pluralism.

And even before this the political opposition in Kazakhstan operated with difficulty. In the 1999 Parliamentary Elections the influential opposition party Azamat failed to reach the required 7% threshold of suffrages though it was credited to have more by independent sources.

The former Prime Minister Kazhegeldin was barred from parliamentary elections on the grounds of a conviction pending against him and today he is in self-imposed exile.

Most recently influential business leaders formed a public movement called the “Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan”. But within a short period of time, several of its members including founder Ghalymzhan Zhaqiyarov, former governor of the Pavlodar Oblast, were arrested and convicted.

All peaceful democratic parties of Uzbekistan were prohibited in 1992, afterwards mass persecutions of political opponents unwanted by the Uzbek authorities. They were accused of “anti-state activities”, put into prisons, where they vanished or died because of torture and inhuman treatment.

Uzbek opposition is forced to exist in exile. The leader of the “Erk” party Muhammad Salih was a competitor to incumbent president Islam Karimov during presidential elections of 1991. In 1993, under pressure on the part of authorities he had to leave the country. Later, Muhammad Salih was charged with organization of explosions in Tashkent in February of 1999, and in autumn of 2000 he was sentenced by the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan in his absence to 15 years of imprisonment being accused of terrorist activities. Leaders of the “Birlik” movement too, have been forced abroad.

According to analysts, after 1997 the level of political violence in Tajikistan significantly decreased. Nonetheless, the government continues taking actions against former members of the UTO, only in 2001 there were several attempts on the life of high-level governmental officials. One can observe a clear tendency of establishing the

power of only one party. In 2001 the party Adolat (Justice) was prohibited and the Socialist-and-Democratic party still is unable to get registered.

Dodojon Atovulloev, a prominent Tajik oppositioner, lives outside of its native country and is an example of Rahmonov's fighting with nonconformism.

Activities of political parties and independent non-governmental organizations are still prohibited in Turkmenistan.

Turkmen opposition recently made rather loud statements having described the political situation in the country as unbearable. Ex-minister of foreign affairs Boris Shihmuradov became a serious critic of Turkmenbashi formed a political party – People's Democratic Movement of Turkmenistan. It started its activities beyond Turkmenistan.

Notwithstanding the fact that 32 have been officially registered in Kyrgyzstan, there is actually no powerful legal opposition here.

A majority of the parties consist of only small groups of people. There is no strong political party in a position to present itself as a legitimate opposition force to Akaev.

In January 2000, a new opposition coalition was formed by the Kyrgyzstan Democratic Movement Party and the Ar-Namys (Dignity) party, created by General Felix Kulov before he was sent to jail. In response, three pro-presidential parties—the Social Democratic Party, Adilet (Justice) Party, and Birimdik (Unity) Party, established their own coalition before the February 2000 parliamentary elections. With Kulov's arrest, the chance to unite an opposition forces to compete with Akaev in those elections was lost.

In the spring of 2001, on the initiative of Akezhan Kazhegeldin, the exiled Kazak opposition leader, an attempt was made in London to establish a new association of Central Asian opposition parties struggling against the region's authoritarian regimes. A regional body, the Forum of Democratic Forces of Central Asia (FDFCA) was created to coordinate grass-roots activities in support of democratic values and human rights. FDFCA furthermore was assigned to conduct a campaign to rally legal and material assistance for political prisoners, independent journalists and human rights campaigners.

Cleavage among Elites

The largest problem of Central Asian political elites is lack of coordination in their actions and prostrating fighting with each other. Elites compete and confront each other in such a way rendering weakness to their country. And Kyrgyzstan can be regarded as a proof to it.

Kyrgyzstan has long been divided along north-south lines by the Ala-Too Mountains, and over the years, this geographic split has been reinforced by political and cultural factors. Northerners have traditionally held a stranglehold on political power. During the Soviet era industry, academic institutions and scientific and cultural centers were often located there. The south, meanwhile, became increasingly agricultural, providing raw materials for the more industrialized north. Northerners came to dominate politics, though they are far outnumbered by southerners.

When Askar Akaev was elected president in 1990, many progressive politicians hoped this would change the face of Kyrgyz politics. Though a northerner, he had lived and studied in St. Petersburg for years, and had not demonstrated any particular commitment to promoting clan or regional interests.

But in the past ten years, Akaev was accused by opposition politicians that he was inviting people to key positions based on a clan principle and their personal dedication. According to his opponents, the ambience of the President consists exclusively of relatives and his own former postgraduate students. (Akaev is a physicist by profession.).

The major failure of the leadership is that there is today an almost open confrontation between the northern and southern elite. The southerners express openly their discontent that only one post is held by southerner: Abdygany Erkebaev is the speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament (a position that carries no real power). Kurmanbek Bakiev (a southerner) was a recent prime minister, but that position, too, is rather limited in power. He was chosen to suggest the unity of the southern and northern elite in the face of sharpening conflict between the administration and the opposition. Opposition leader and parliament member Adakhan Madumarov says that President Akaev intentionally appoints unsuccessful cadres from the south, giving them nominal posts in the highest power hierarchy. "It is evident that Akaev and his boys in the back-room pursue only their clan interests and set a bad example for the way the modern political elite shall not be formed," Madumarov said.

Nor are northern politicians happy with Akaev's policy, arguing that during his tenure, Akaev has weakened the northern elite, neutralizing all potential competitors, like Kulov. Thus Akaev, having weakened the northern elite, unknowingly strengthened the southern elite.

Recent political developments in Kyrgyzstan revealed Four Political Forces which are playing already as active role in the political arena of the country. These very forces will determine future development of Kyrgyzstan.

1. The Parliamentary Opposition.

Composed mostly of southern deputies of the Legislative Assembly, this group includes Azimbek Beknazarov, the chairman of the Committee on Justice and Judicial

Reform. This group includes such deputies as Ismail Isakov, Omurbek Tekebaev, Bektur Asanov and other. The most influential member of this group is the young and strong deputy Adakhan Madumarov, from a troubled region in south of Kyrgyzstan, who has presidential aspirations.

II. The Centrists.

Made up of representatives of the party My Country, as well as deputies and some members of Akaev's administration. It includes, notably, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Muratbek Imanaliev and the members of the Parliament, Zainiddin Kurmanov, Oksana Malevanaya. Most are cosmopolitan, with little familiarity with rural regions, and have strong pro-Western loyalties. This group's criticism of Akaev is always restrained, though it campaigns wholeheartedly for an end to the influence of the old party nomenclature. This group's most influential member is Joomart Otorbaev, a physicist who spent years working abroad and has a good reputation as a Western-style manager. In June of 2002 he was appointed vice prime-minister. Like Madumarov, Otorbaev is well-situated to run for president in the next elections, though his poor command of the Kyrgyz language will hurt him.

III. The Soviet-era Nomenklatura.

This group includes Amanbek Karypkulov, the former head of the President's Administration, who left this post in May, 2002 after resignation of the government and recently he was appointed the ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Turkey, deputy Turdakun Usubaliev, who headed the Soviet Kyrgyz Republic for a quarter of a century and other. Mass media tend to blame them for everything that is wrong with the country, but the group is strong due to its clan ties and the residual strength of the Soviet party structure.

IV. Close Associates of Akaev.

This group includes many of the people who wield Kyrgyzstan's real power, such as Misir Ashirkulov, secretary of the Security Council, Kubanychbek Jumaliev, vice-prime-minister, Bolot Abildaev, minister of finance, and influential regional governors, Naken Kasiev and Toichubek Kasymov. According to local analysts Kubanychbek Jumaliev is considered as a possible successor of Akaev.

As far as Kyrgyzstan is the first to take the path of renewal of the political elite in the nearest future, its experience will play an invaluable role for the whole Central Asia.

Looking to the Future

Ruling elites of Central Asia are gradually recognizing that a critical limit of the people's expectations is being approached, who become actively and rather dangerously involved in developments taking place. The cornered political opposition more often appeals to the people, and is rather successful doing it.

Governance failures in Central Asia created conditions for reserving the situation and creating a threat to national security of practically all countries.

Unwillingness to share the powers, incapability to curb corruption and lack of institutions assigned to ensure a peaceful transfer of powers make the ruling elite vulnerable.

As the experience of the recent ten years in Central Asia demonstrated the mechanisms, with a help of which the ruling elite is trying to preserve the power, do not work. This region is very complicated, and one cannot experiment with it any more without any consequences.

The ruling elite committed a strategic mistake assuming that as far as it is an Asian region the governance methods can be borrowed from the countries which are still far from democracy. However recent developments demonstrate that the people of Central Asia are as devoted to the ideas of democracy as they were ten years ago and civil society will not give away the gains of democracy silently. Therefore, it is easier to build democracy today than ten years ago, as the foundation for it is now surprisingly strong.



Dr. W. Pal S. Sidhu (*IPA*) talking with Karl Deuretzbacher (*Ministry of Defence*)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE-BUILDING IN TAJIKISTAN: A CASE STUDY OF UN INTERVENTION

Dr. Saodat OLIMOVA

*Political Scientist and Head of Sociology Department,
Research Center "SHARQ", Dushanbe*

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, a cruel civil war raged for two years in Tajikistan followed by a lengthy period of instability and confrontation between the government of Tajikistan and forces of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO).⁶² The path to peace in Tajikistan was complex and contradictory but ultimately successful. The United Nations (UN) played a vital role in establishing peace. Negotiations among various Tajik groups on settling military and political confrontations were held under the auspices of the UN outside Tajikistan. Over the course of the negotiations, the government and opposition forces eventually renounced the armed struggle and accepted political cooperation.

The peace talks in Tajikistan not only restored stability in the country but also made a significant contribution to the global tool-kit of peacemaking. The purpose of this paper is to study the experience of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and analyze its transformation into the United Nations Tajikistan Office for Peace-building (UNTOP). Our primary focus shall be the study of these groups' diplomatic, intermediary and humanitarian efforts in establishing peace in Tajikistan.

1. Assessing the Conflict Situation: September 1992 to January 1993

On March 2, 1992, the plenary meeting of the 46th session of the UN General Assembly accepted the Republic of Tajikistan as a full member of the UN, even as the civil war destabilized the country.

The UN closely monitored events in Tajikistan throughout the armed conflict and tried to terminate the armed confrontation and find a political solution to it. In response to appeals from Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov and the government of Tajikistan⁶³, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali sent a goodwill mission to the country headed by Raymond Sommereyns, the director of the West Asia division for

⁶² In the course of the war, more than 50,000 were killed, 850,000 left their homes — one in every seven citizens, 55,000 children lost their parents, and 25,000 women were widowed (World Bank: Human Development Report 1995, p.46).

⁶³ Akbarsho Iskandarov, acting head of state of Tajikistan, appealed twice to the UN—on September 29 and October 15, 1992—with a request that the UN participate in finding a solution to Tajikistan's crisis.

the Secretariat's Department of Political Affairs. The mission spent September 18-23, 1992, in Tajikistan and was mandated to assist regional peacekeeping efforts.

Sommereyns' team visited Tajikistan's conflict zones, met with prominent political and military leaders on both sides as well as with representatives of ethnic communities, refugees and diplomats. The mission's report was submitted to Boutros-Ghali, who forwarded it to the Security Council on October 2, 1992.⁶⁴ The Chairman of the Security Council expressed deep concern about the continuing deterioration of the situation in Tajikistan and urged all parties of the conflict to terminate military actions and begin a political dialogue.⁶⁵

The second mission, which included experts on military and political issues, refugees and migrants, and economic affairs and food programs, visited Tajikistan on November 1-14, 1992. Following their visit, major humanitarian agencies - the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO)- began their work in the country.

The mission also met with many diplomats from CIS countries, including Felix Kulov, then the vice president of Kyrgyzstan, deputy ministers of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and the Russian ambassador in Dushanbe in November 1992. Their cooperation strengthened both the UN's and the CIS countries' missions by demonstrating the potential for a positive intervention. The UN was assigned the role of a neutral third party given its established authority and vast experience in multilateral negotiations.⁶⁶ This first positive experience was a catalyst partnership that opened fully in negotiations and implementation of the General Agreement of 1997.

Many felt that during the first two UN missions the Secretary-General lacked the means for developing an effective strategy. With the purpose of eliminating this gap, in late December 1992, the Secretary-General with the consent of Tajikistan's government⁶⁷ decided to establish a small political mission in Dushanbe. Romania's Liviu Bota was appointed head of the observer mission (UNMOT), which began its work on January 21, 1993.

⁶⁴ R. Alimov, M. Lebedev, E. Kasimov. Tajikistan – UN: History of inter-relations. Noviy Vzgl'yad, 1995, p.29

⁶⁵ Statement of October 30, 1992 (S/24742); see also The UN and Situation in Tajikistan. Reference document. New York: March 1995. p. 17

⁶⁶ Abdullaev, Kamoludin and Catherine Barnes, eds. Politics of Compromise: The Tajikistan Peace Process. Conciliation Resources, London 2001. p.41

⁶⁷ On December 20, 1992, Rakhmonov requested that the Secretary General send UN observers for the term of three months, with possibility of extension. For more information, see R. Alimov, M. Lebedev, E. Kasimov. Tajikistan-UN: History of inter-relations. Noviy Vzgl'yad, 1995, p.32

The mission was assigned the following objectives:

1. Monitor the situation and provide the Secretary-General with information on the conflict situation;
2. Define the position of each of the conflicting parties on various aspects of the conflict and assist with regional efforts for establishing peace; in the absence of such efforts, urge parties to undertake efforts for achieving peace;
3. Assess the military situation in Tajikistan and determine ways to assist regional efforts for establishing peace;
4. Provide communications and coordination to help with the provision of emergency humanitarian assistance by the international community.⁶⁸

As Liviu Bota told a Tajik newspaper “Our priority task is monitoring. The mission must observe the evolving positions of the various political parties, movements and groups that take part in the conflict. Based on our comprehensive observations, we will prepare a report on the events and situation. We should find every way and make every effort to restore peace in this land”.⁶⁹

In such a manner, the mission was created, facts gathered, and progress assessed. The successful beginning of the UN's peace building activities in Tajikistan was facilitated by neighboring countries taking an interest in its result, consent of the conflicting parties, the impartiality of peacemakers, and the non-participation of the peacekeeping forces in the armed confrontation.

2. Dialogue and Negotiations: January 1993 to April 1994

In his April 26, 1993 letter Boutros-Ghali informed the members of the Security Council of his decision to appoint an Iraqi diplomat Ismat T. Kittani as his Special Envoy to Tajikistan and assign him the following tasks:

- Achieve a cease-fire agreement and make recommendations on appropriate international control mechanisms;
- Clarify positions of all concerned parties and begin negotiations to find a political settlement;
- Ensure that neighboring countries and other interested parties will support the above-mentioned goals.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Sadoi Mardum, February 12, 1993.

⁷⁰ Report of the UN Secretary General August 16, 1993 (UN document S/26311). New York, 1993.

Soon after his arrival in Dushanbe on May 14, 1993 Kittani held meetings with top government officials. He visited Khorog to hold negotiations with various groups, including field commanders. In the same period, the Special Envoy visited capitals of Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, and had meetings with the leaders of each.⁷¹

Kittani was replaced in January 1994 by Uruguayan Ambassador Ramiro Piriz-Ballon who promoted significantly to begin the dialogue between the two sides. Under the UN leadership, the foundations were laid for negotiations. An agreement reached that Russia and other neighboring countries would monitor the negotiations between the government and opposition on national reconciliation issues.

3. Building Peace: April 1994 to June 1997

The UN played an instrumental role in establishing cooperation between the conflicting sides by providing a framework that would enable parties to have a dialogue. The conversation began with negotiations in Moscow on April 5, 1994, continued in Tehran, Islamabad and Almaty, and only three years later, on June 27, 1997, the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan was signed by Rakhmonov and Nuri, back in Moscow.

The initial Moscow talks initiated by the UN began during the period of the strongest military confrontation in Tajikistan. Three clusters of issues created the agenda for future talks: political settlement, return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the strengthening of Tajikistan's political institutions. The parties disagreed over how to prioritize issues. The government stressed an end to fighting and refugee return, while the opposition wanted an all-party council to govern Tajikistan as well as legalization of opposition parties. Among sound outcomes of the first round was establishment of a joint commission on refugees and IDPs that would work closely with UNHCR to promote voluntary repatriation.

The next round of negotiations was held two months later in Tehran and though characterized as exceptionally difficult, produced a cease-fire agreement. The Special Envoy Piriz-Ballon arranged a meeting with representatives of both sides for a consultative meeting on September 12-17, 1994, where the parties signed a temporary cease-fire and agreed to termination of hostilities at the Tajik-Afghan border and within the country for the period of negotiations. The parties focused on establishing a cease-fire and mechanism for monitoring its implementation. The sides reached a consensus on the principles and terms. However, disputes over timing of the cease-fire impeded

⁷¹ Ibid.

achievement of an agreement, which subsequently resulted in intensification of fighting. The UN was asked to deploy military observers.

The third round of negotiations was held in Islamabad, Pakistan in late October 1994. The cease-fire came into effect at that time, and negotiators agreed to extend it until February 1995. Around the time of the Islamabad meeting Boutros-Ghali sent 15 military observers funded through peacekeeping operations that arrived to Tajikistan in October.

Following the implementation of the cease-fire, the UN Security Council established the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) consisting of unarmed military observers, officers for political and legal issues, experts on elections and public information, administrative and technical-sector staff, and civilian police and military consultants on December 16, 1994.⁷² UNMOT had several field offices throughout Tajikistan staffed with military observers and political advisers. The mandate of UNMOT consisted of:

- Assisting the Tajik Joint Commission,
- Investigating allegations of violations,
- Supporting the UN Special Envoy, and
- Coordinating the delivery of humanitarian aid.

However, despite the presence of UNMOT, military actions escalated dangerously in 1995-1996 with the government sending troops to Badakhshan and allegations of Russian troops shelling northern Afghanistan in violation of the cease-fire. Angered by the Russian military intervention, the UTO renounced its previous agreement to hold the next round of negotiations in Moscow, and the talks were postponed indefinitely. The Special Envoy held additional consultations hoping to reduce tensions but with little success. In late February 1995, local and parliamentary elections were held in Tajikistan amid great controversy. The UTO parties were excluded, and in early April, in violation of the cease-fire, UTO forces began their spring offensive from Afghanistan, where the ruling Taliban had begun to consolidate control over the country.

The fourth round of talks in Almaty, Kazakhstan held in late May 1995, did not result in softening the difference in positions. Despite the meeting of Rakhmonov and Nuri that they had had earlier that month in Kabul, where they agreed to renew the cease-fire for another three months, no substantive breakthrough was reached this time. In Almaty, talks focused on Tajik political institutions. While the UTO proposed a transitional government and indicated that it would recognize Rakhmonov as President if the government accepted their proposal, the government rejected the offer providing

⁷² UN Resolution 968 under Chapter VI of the Charter

only its willingness to allow opposition parties the right to participate in the political process and amnesty for their supporters. Both agreed to accelerate the voluntary return of refugees from Afghanistan, however.

Later that summer, in August 1995, Special Envoy Piriz-Ballon made a number of shuttle trips between Rakhmonov in Dushanbe and Nuri in Kabul. Thanks to his efforts, the Protocol on the Fundamental Principles for Establishing Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan was signed, on August 17, the first substantive agreement on political and institutional issues since the negotiations began and the precursor to the General Agreement to be signed in 1997. The parties furthermore agreed to change the format of the negotiations to a continuous round of talk, despite disagreements over venues. The UN Security Council supported the plan and urged the sides to begin its implementation immediately.

The fifth round of inter-Tajik negotiations began on November 30, 1995, and continued for seven months until July 1996, though with frequent interruptions due to the parties signaling their frustration with events on the ground or lack of progress in the talks.

In accordance with its mandate for the peacekeeping operation in Tajikistan, the UN made significant progress in economic and social spheres. Over several years the UN's Department for Humanitarian Affairs sent several missions to assess the country's need in humanitarian assistance. The UNHCR provided assistance repatriating and resettling more than 700,000 IDPs and more than 60,000 refugees. These humanitarian and emergency assistance programs cost an estimated \$64 million. UNMOT provided consultative assistance and helped developing the country's socioeconomic infrastructure, and coordinated the humanitarian activities of the international community.⁷³

In May 1996, the situation deteriorated as large-scale military clashes in the central Tavildara district resulted in huge losses of lives and driving countless people from their homes. The UN Security Council condemned violations of the cease-fire agreement and demanded the two sides ensure free movement of UNMOT personnel on May 21, 1996. Against this backdrop, a political settlement to the inter-Tajik conflict became an even greater priority. The negotiations process needed external intervention to move forward, which ultimately came from the UN peacemakers who closely collaborated with regional intermediaries.

Beginning in December 1996, an important breakthrough took place in the inter-Tajik dialogue. Both sides overcame their mutual mistrust and, with the active assistance of UN and other intermediaries, had commenced a detailed and concrete

⁷³ M. Guljanov. "The Role of the UN in Stabilizing the Situation in Tajikistan." Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Tajikistan's Place in the New International Order. (Dushanbe: 1997) p. 211.

consideration of political issues that were the core of the conflict. The preparatory summit was held December 10-11 in Khosdeh, Afghanistan, which marked a watershed in negotiations. There, Nuri and Rakhmonov signed a joint statement, which laid the foundation for the main peace treaty, and an additional protocol, which set out the framework for a Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR). They came to agreement through a compromise variant, proposed by German diplomat and UN Special Envoy Gerd Merrem.

The sixth round of the talks was held in Tehran in January 1997 to coordinate implementation of the protocol on refugees. To accelerate the dialogue, Rakhmonov and Nuri met again, in Meshkhed, Iran, in February 1997. During the meeting, they adopted an agreement on the statute and membership of the CNR, which would have no designated seats for outside groups.

In May 1997, Rakhmonov and Nuri met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to settle the residual obstacles to the political protocol. The result was the Bishkek Memorandum and the Protocol on Political Questions based on a power-sharing quota system linked to a sequencing agreement. The government would lift the restrictions on UTO opposition parties, movements, and media as soon as the military protocol was successfully implemented on the condition that they operate within the Tajik legal framework.

All this facilitated the eighth round of negotiations in Tehran in May of 1997. At the request of the negotiating parties, the governments of Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan agreed to serve as the political and moral guarantors of the General Agreement. For this purpose, the external actors created the Contact Group that included ambassadors of the guarantor states accredited in Dushanbe, the UN Special Envoy in Tajikistan, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Head of Mission, and a representative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (QIC). With the consent of the guarantor states, the OSCE, and QIC, the Special Envoy was tasked with the function of coordinating the Contact Group.

On June 27, 1997, the government delegation headed by President Rakhmonov and the UTO delegation headed by Nuri signed the General Agreement on Peace and National Reconciliation in Tajikistan. Following signing of the agreement, UNMOT carried out the important work on coordination of issues that were resolved in theory at the talks but did not have a mechanism for implementation in practice.

4. The Role of the UN in the Tajik Conflict and its Resolution

UNMOT

The success of negotiations was connected to the active peacekeeping role of the UN Secretariat and UNMOT representatives who managed to win the trust of both sides and made it possible to conduct negotiations in an orderly manner. In a number of cases, the sides asked the UN representatives to propose the compromise form for the document in discussion, showing their high degree of trust. Timely reaction to the changes in the military-political situation, with a constant emphasis on peaceful resolution of the conflict was one of the main factors for UNMOT's success in resolving the conflict situation in Tajikistan. The UN also served as a liaison with all parties and observers as guarantor of the General Agreement.

Special Envoys

Throughout the conflict, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy played a vital role in bringing the warring sides together to work toward a peaceful settlement.

- Ismat Kittani: April 1993 - January 1994
- Ramiro Piriz-Ballon: January 1994 - May 1996
- Gerd Merrem: May 1996 - April 1998
- Jan Kubis: July 1998 - August 1999
- Ivo Petrov: Sept 1999 - present.

These men were responsible for preparing negotiations, maintaining contacts with all sides of the conflict and coordinating the efforts of outside countries and organizations. They collaborated with Tajik sides in organizing negotiations and consultations at high levels between the rounds, and together with the Tajik parties, they drafted protocols later included in the General Agreement.

The Special Envoys also prepared regular reports to be sent by the Secretary General to the Security Council, which helped to stimulate an active interest and involvement in the Tajik peace process. The Secretary General's reports did much to achieve political approval of powerful countries.

In developing a strategy, Kittani and Piriz-Ballon paid special attention to ensuring the constructive involvement of Tajikistan's neighbors in the UN peacemaking operations. After consultations in the capitals of Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, these countries, with government and opposition consent, became observers to the inter-Tajik negotiations. In September of 1995, Turkmenistan joined the group of observer countries.

UNMOT created important working groups, coordinated work with Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS/PKF) and specifically with the Russian Border Force. Additionally, UNMOT provided information to Tajikistan's government in the conditions of information vacuum and paralysis of the state information services.

Tasks Performed by the UN:

- monitored the entire process of inter-Tajik negotiations;
- provided intermediary assistance in organizing and conducting negotiations;
- prepared bilateral agreements and selected venues for negotiations;
- took part in the work of Joint Commission monitoring the cease-fire of September 17, 1994;
- maintained permanent contact with Collective Peacekeeping Force of the CIS in Tajikistan as well as with Russian border guards;
- identified detained civilians and prisoners-of-war and assisted in obtaining their release;
- maintained close contact with observer nations and
- mobilized international governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide financial and humanitarian assistance to the population of conflict areas of Tajikistan.

UN Accomplishments:

- Restoration of peace, preservation of statehood and administration in Tajikistan;
- Return of refugees to places of their permanent residence;
- Resolution of disputes related to reintegration of armed formations;
- Resolution of political issues: additions and amendments to Constitution, which allowed the opposition to take part in the legal political process;
- Legalization of opposition parties, their transition from military-political formations to parties of parliament type;
- Conducting multi-party elections, with participation of opposition parties.

Despite these accomplishments, there were some shortcomings. One of them was inadequate implementation of agreements, since they did not foresee a mechanism for their execution. The peace process lagged behind schedule laid out in the General Agreement, mostly due to the fact that the terms were not realistic. The process of implementing the agreements was more difficult and time-intensive than expected.

5. Post-conflict: June 2000 to Present

The period of post-conflict reconstruction is the most important period in reinforcing the results of a peace process. Time and large efforts are required to allow strengthening of stability. To build peace requires that there be general elections in the country, establishment of governmental structures, a national armed force and police, democratic reforms, and wide economic and technical assistance.

In connection with this, the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-building (UNTOP) was established. The office was formed in late summer 2000, at the end of UNMOT's mandate. Though small-staffed, UNTOP is the key link for direct contact between the Secretary General and Tajikistan. The country faced the need for democratization of political and public life, rehabilitation of the economy and implementation of market reforms, socio-economic alleviation of poverty, and improvement of living conditions. All this was to be implemented along with strengthening of peace. Accomplishing all these tasks became the 'essence of UNTOP's work in Tajikistan. As Tajikistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Talbak Nazarov noted: "In the period of its work in Tajikistan UNMOT, in cooperation with the government of the Republic, carried out enormous work providing assistance, not only in the political settlement of the conflict but in assessing the humanitarian situation, repatriating refugees, and at the final stage - in developing projects for the post-conflict rehabilitation and sustainable development of the country".⁷⁴

6. UNTOP's contribution

UNTOP has been established on June 1, 2000. In accordance with its mandate, UNTOP concentrated its work on strengthening peace and national reconciliation, support of rule of law, strengthening of democratic institutions and assistance to national structures in the sphere of human rights. Among the top priorities of UNTOP are political support for mobilizing international resources and assistance to national revival and reconstruction.⁷⁵

Initially, UNTOP encountered certain difficulties in search of its identity. Unlike UNMOT, which had clearly defined objectives at each stage of its activity and could serve as an example of a classic peacemaking mission, UNTOP needed to determine directions for its activity independently, based on its mandate and the

⁷⁴ T. N. Nazarov. Tajikistan: Economy, Politics International Cooperation. Dushanbe: DI MFA RT, 2001, p.153

⁷⁵ See letter of April 26, 2002 of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to President of Security Council: UN Bureau for assistance to peace building in Tajikistan. Relief Web. - Source: UN Security Council. Date: 1 May 2002.

situation in the country. Given that objectives of peace building are of rather creative nature, they required extensive and complex work with people. It was necessary to determine priorities in the work, select instruments for achieving the defined goals, and find the means to accomplish the objectives set.

The status of the missions had significant differences. UNMOT was established by the Security Council and worked under its aegis. Decisions of the Security Council were mandatory for the Republic of Tajikistan, which was acknowledged by both the government and by the UTO. It ensured wide possibilities for influencing the sides of the conflict and facilitated the success of UNMOT in promoting peace talks as well as implementing the peace agreements reached.

UNTOP, established by the Secretary General with support of the Security Council and implementing its political presence in the country could also be viewed as the political agent of the UN. Nevertheless, UNTOP had fewer opportunities than UNMOT to influence directly the position of the government of Tajikistan. This forced the Special Representative of UN Secretary, General Mr. Ivo Petrov (June 2000 – May 2002) and the staff of the Mission to be flexible and creative in choosing instruments and means for preserving consistency regarding the objectives. Overall, while UNMOT set out to facilitate democratization, rule of law, and protection of human rights, UNTOP has collaborated with government structures responsible for the issues it considers priorities to strengthen national consolidation and public accord.

One of the key priorities of UNTOP was re-training of ex-combatants, their re-integration in peaceful life and creation of possibilities for their employment. In order to address this need UNTOP provided financing for integration and economic mobilization of the society in 2001. These projects, supported by Japan and Germany, allowed for economic participation of the former combatants in the southern areas of the country, in the Rasht valley and the Mountainous Badakhshan region. The total amount of the financial assistance was \$6,000,000, which provided 80% of the required funds for projects of the UN Bureau for Peace Building in Tajikistan.⁷⁶

Some of these projects provided support to NGOs and facilitated cooperation with state structures. Furthermore, a consultative group of donor countries (USA, Japan, Switzerland, Great Britain, Sweden, the European Union and others) met in Tokyo on May 16, 2001, where the donors pledged assistance to Tajikistan worth \$430 million over the period 2001 to 2003. This was the first breakthrough in investment support for the economic development of Tajikistan.

By this period, the most important aspects of UNTOP's peace building program have been developed, such as programs of local development, reintegration, rehabilitation of infrastructure, water systems, restoration of schools and other objects destroyed during the war. In fact, there has been established a close link between the

⁷⁶ Ibid.

UNTOP and the UNDP, the former creating political conditions for successful implementation of projects by the latter.

In the summer of 2000, UNTOP initiated a project aimed at identifying problems and solutions for peace building. A political discussion club was organized on issues of post-conflict rehabilitation to provide a direct informal dialogue between the two sides and with participation of international organizations. The sessions of this discussion club resulted in recommendations concerning:

- Democratization of the society and provision of rule of law in Tajikistan;
- Military and political situation and possible sources of threat to security;
- Assistance to improvement of effectiveness of management and reduction of poverty.⁷⁷

The sessions of the club in 57 cities and districts of the country brought together bureaucrats from central power structures, local administration, representatives of political parties, the civil society (local NGOs), and mass media who jointly discussed key approaches to national reconciliation, security and economic restructuring. Some of the produced recommendations became furthermore implemented, while others are still planned to be executed.

Also, restoring peace in the country is connected with restoring rule of law and strict adherence to human rights. UNTOP, in coordination with local partners, has implemented a program of activities in the sphere of human rights, aimed at improvement of people's education in this field and establishment of national human rights institutions. In April 2001, a human rights officer was appointed to UNTOP to develop national educational programs on human rights and promote observance of basic UN documents on human rights ratified by Tajikistan. Within this, two specific project received financial support: one on preserving peace through human rights education, and one on strengthening Tajikistan's ability to implement basic human rights documents. The officer was also sent to monitor human rights and consider claims by citizens regarding human rights violations.

In addition, improving situation in the sphere of human rights requires strengthening the rule of law. In this regard, the Bureau is planning to implement a number of technical projects for teaching local politics.

The positive role of UNTOP in the peace building in Tajikistan was highly estimated. Taking it into account, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan decided to extend activity of UNTOP until June 1, 2003.

However, UNTOP has begun experiencing certain difficulties. After the armed conflict, which attracted the attention of the world community, it became more difficult

⁷⁷ United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-Building. Dushanbe: 1/2001,2/2001, 3/2001.

to hold donors' interest in providing assistance, despite the fact that financial support was especially vital at this stage. In addition, UNTOP struggled to prioritize its most difficult areas of work, to carry out effective strategic planning, and to form concrete programs. So too did it face the problem of reconciling its long-term objectives with the limited time frame of its mandate.

Nevertheless, despite the many difficulties, which accompanied the activities of UNMOT and UNTOP in Tajikistan, the UN operation in the inter-Tajik conflict is one of the few completed peacemaking missions in which the UN has had an indisputable success.



Catherine Barnes and Ertan Tezgor

THE PROSPECTS OF REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN CENTRAL ASIA

Reinhold BRENDER

*European Commission*⁷⁸

The topic of our working group is "Co-operation in Trade and Natural Resources Management". Ms. Brill Olcott has brought her contribution into the broader perspective of the "absence of a regional response to shared problems in Central Asia". I understand that my mission is critically to comment her views so as to kick off the debate. Since I should not speak more than 20 minutes, I will have to focus on key issues. Let me add that I do not speak here in an official, but rather in a private capacity, according to the informal nature of this brainstorming event. However, I will give my views from a European perspective, that is to say against the background of the experiences and policies of the European Union.

Our topic matters indeed. Trade and Natural Resources Management are key to promoting sustainable development in Central Asia. The success or the failure of regional co-operation will decide about the future of the region.

Let me first stress that by and large I agree with what has been said by Ms. Brill Olsen. She has given a clear picture of very important practical issues linked to transport connection, water management and hydroelectric power, to name just these. And she has broadened our perspective, by linking the lack of co-operation in trade and natural resources to the lack of political co-operation. This has led her to give a succinct, but very useful overview of the failure of the multilateral institutions of the region to carry out effective work.

Against the background of her presentation, let me now try to have a fresh look at the same issues in a different way. To kick off the debate I have formulated five key arguments.

Discussion Point 1:

Regional co-operation should be seen as co-operation among countries and other actors on key issues of common concern. Regional co-operation may be expected to promote the economic development, to enhance security and stability and to further open Central Asia to the process of globalisation.

⁷⁸ The views expressed here are personal and should not in any way be attributed to the European Commission.

It is surprising to note that the question of how to define “regional co-operation” all too often does not get the level of attention it deserves. And I am therefore glad to see that the title of Ms Brill Olcott's presentation indicates her understanding of regional co-operation. She speaks about the absence of a “regional response to a shared concern”. Countries may indeed be expected to gain individually as well as collectively if they *co-operate on issues of common concern*. I entirely share this view which as opposed to the picture that the friends of “go it alone” strategies draw.

True regional co-operation therefore does not see Central Asia as a coherent whole, with a single set of problems that could be addressed through a single coordinated programme. This view would indeed be simplistic and in particular not provide the necessary flexibility, which fully respects the individuality of each of the countries and their geographical, cultural and political diversity and their diverging national interests.

There are three potential benefits of regional co-operation, which matter in particular:

First regional co-operation may be expected to *promote the economic development* of the countries involved, by creating mechanisms of compensation whereby a country will make concessions in one domain in order to get concessions in another. For example, we are right to conclude from the presentation we have been given that the Central Asian water and energy problem is one of distribution, not of supply.

Second, economic and social development may be expected to *enhance security and stability* of the region. For this reason the European Commission in its contribution to the Bishkek Conference on the Fight against Terrorism in December last year underlined the importance of sustainable development for the fight against terrorism.

Third, regional co-operation in Central Asia - including co-operation in trade and resources management - will help to further *open Central Asia to the process of globalisation*. In other words: Intra-regional co-operation can help to promote extra-regional co-operation and vice versa. There is perhaps no better example than that of the energy flows where co-operation in Central Asia itself is needed to help to bring the natural resources outside the region.

Questions for the debate:

- Which areas of co-operation do the conference participants believe? to be priority areas?
- What does the concept of “integrated” resources management imply for regional co-operation?

- How do the participants assess the willingness and the potential of the individual countries in the region to engage in regional co-operation activities?

Discussion Point 2:

The actors of regional co-operation in Central Asia continue to be the States of the region mainly, which are rather reluctant to engage in such activities. Further progress in regional co-operation will in particular depend on further progress towards democracy and market economy in the region.

We have to give a closer look at the actors of regional co-operation, in particular to identify reasons for actors to behave in the way they do.

The primary and most important actors of regional co-operation in Central Asia, insofar this co-operation already exists, are the states, which means that this co-operation is by and large dominated and managed by official structures.

There is almost no co-operation among companies and/or forces of civil society, for the simple reason that these actors do not yet really exist. The countries have not yet made the progress in the transition to democracy and market economy that they committed themselves to achieve.

And here we come to speak about the very important link between the "constitution" of the countries of the region and the level of their co-operation.

On the basis of the experiences made in many other parts in the world, one may conclude that countries are willing to co-operate if and insofar they have reached a certain level in the transition towards market economy and democracy. To express the same idea in a different way: The unwillingness to co-operate on key issues of common concern in Central Asia reflects to a large extent the lack of progress towards democracy and market economy in the region.

Questions for debate:

- How do the participants assess the potential for further transition towards democracy and market economy in the post 11 September context?
- Which non-governmental forces of Central Asia (if any) may help to promote regional co-operation?

Discussion point 3:

Despite their common interest in fighting terrorism and in contrast to official statements, the countries of Central Asia are not inclined to co-operate among themselves any more than they did before 11 September. There are efforts in and outside the region to promote co-operation both with and within Central Asia, but it is too early to say if these efforts will succeed.

The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in December last year in Tashkent in an impressive declaration instructed their governments to "activate coordination on all levels with the aim of practical realisation of unused potential of economic co-operation". To this end they decided to transform the Central Asian Economic Association into the Central Asian Co-operation Organisation. However, this new body has not yet delivered tangible results.

Furthermore, the United States through their involvement have rather weakened the prospects of intra-regional cooperation. For various reasons they provided more political, military and economic support to Uzbekistan than to any other country in Central Asia. Thereby, they implicitly appeared to support Uzbekistan against Kazakhstan in their competition for the role of the leader in the region.

In reaction to the increased involvement of the United States, both Russia and China also tried to reassert their influence. Russia made significant efforts to revive the Community of Independent States and also proposed a gas alliance with countries of Central Asia. Both Russia and China try to reassert their influence in the region by a reorganisation of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation.

Questions for debate:

- Are there ways and means to ensure that the involvement of external actors such as the United States, Russia and China is conducive to intra regional co-operation in Central Asia?
- Which will be the impact both of the energy dialogue between Russia and the EU and the energy statement of the United States and Russia on regional co-operation in Central Asia?

Discussion Point 4:

Extra regional players may be expected to promote intra-regional co-operation if and insofar they develop a policy agenda, which meets the interests of all Central

Asian countries in a balanced way. In Central Asia the United States, Russia and China are perceived as struggling for their own interests rather than supporting the development of the region.

Against this background, external support must be directed at promoting key objectives of partners. The EU funded Traceca project aims at establishing a transport corridor that links Central Asia with Europe through the Caucasus. The work on particular projects is accompanied by the effort to establish a legal framework for transport co-operation in the region. A major step forward was in 1998 the conclusions of the Baku Multilateral Agreement on Transport and Trade. In this treaty countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, amongst others, committed themselves to facilitate transport co-operation. Current efforts aim at reaching agreement on a common Traceca visa in particular so as to accelerate the transport of people and goods along the Traceca route. Much remains to be done, but important steps in the right direction continue to be made.

Moving to another point and confirming what I said earlier, let me add: To stimulate co-operation on key issues of common concern, above all further progress towards democracy and market economy is needed. A recent World Bank analysis of the first ten years of transition highlights important lessons to be applied to economies that have so far made limited progress with reform. Typically, the reform agenda therefore consists of a "stick and carrot" approach, that is to say measures of both discipline and encouragement:

- *Discipline*: To impose hard budget constraints, governments have to eliminate tax exemptions and subsidies, control fiscal risks arising from liabilities linked to state owned enterprises, implement bankruptcy laws, reform the budget process and liberalise trade.
- *Encouragement*: Improving the investment climate for domestic and foreign investors is key to encouraging new enterprises, in addition to liberalising prices and trade. To this end governments have to establish secure property rights, provide basic infrastructure, reduce excessive tax rates, simplify procedures, develop an efficient banking system.

In this context, WTO Membership or preparing WTO accession should also be mentioned explicitly as a powerful incentive to economic change.

Among the countries of Central Asia, only Kyrgyzstan has become a WTO member, and from a European perspective, more efforts should be made to help the other Central Asian countries to join.

Questions for the debate:

- Is co-operation in trade and natural resources management the condition for or rather the consequence of progress in the economic transition?
- Are there ways and means for external donors to maximise the potential of their support to regional co-operation in trade and natural resources management?

Discussion Point 5:

There is the need to redefine Central Asia and take into consideration the wider geographical context in addition to the five countries with the Soviet past. In particular the links between these five countries and Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan cannot be ignored.

The five countries of Central Asia do not consider themselves to constitute a clearly defined region. Ten years after the break-up of the Soviet Union and in particular in the context of the current efforts aiming at the stabilisation of Afghanistan they should be considered in their broader geographical context, including Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran in particular. Promoting co-operation among the five countries will therefore be the immediate neighbours in particular.

Let me refer to just one important example given by Ms Brill Olsen, namely the problem of reaching agreement concerning the water supply. The Amu Dar'ya river, one of the two main rivers of Central Asia, originates in the mountains of Afghanistan and Tajikistan and then flows across Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Uzbekistan's Karakalpak Autonomous Republic before reaching its final destination. Any plan to rebuild Afghanistan must include agricultural development, which in turn will require increased water usage. Yet any plans to harness the upstream tributaries of the Amu Dar'ya river will threaten the viability of the current Central Asian water-management scheme. The Turkmen and Uzbek agricultural economies are dominated by water-intensive crops such as cotton and rice that rely mainly on the waters of the Amu Dar'ya. Hence, the five countries with the Soviet past will have to be seen in the wider geographical context, if progress in this important issue is to be made.

Let me give another example: The most acute environmental issues facing Central Asia are regional in nature. In the past, the use of natural resources focused on short-term economic development, contributing to serious environmental disasters. Central planners did not understand - or chose to ignore - the "cause and effect" of many of their decisions taken at national level. The most acute environmental issues facing

Central Asia are regional in nature. An oil spill in the Caspian Sea has the potential of harming five countries, among them Russia and Iran.

Concerning the term Central Asia, the “c” in the word “central” should therefore rather be a small letter and no longer a capital. This would indicate that we are willing to consider the five countries resulting from the break-up of the Soviet Union in the broader geographical and political space between Russia in the North, China in the East, India in the South and Turkey/the Middle East in the West.

Questions for the debate:

- Which is the potential of the reconstruction of Afghanistan for stimulating co-operation in the wider region?
- How do the participants assess the respective roles of Iran and Pakistan in energy co-operation with Central Asia?

Conclusion:

- The success or failure of the countries of Central Asia to co-operate in trade and natural resources management *will strongly effect their chances of sustainable development*. Whereas the costs of failure to co-operate are high, the rewards of success are great.
- Enhanced Co-operation in Central Asia on key issues of common concern will pave the way for and go in parallel with *increased openness to the outside world and, consequently, the forces of globalisation*. Intra and extra regional co-operation are therefore complementary.
- Outside actors may hope to stimulate meaningful intra-regional co-operation by engaging or re-engaging with actors in Central Asia, *if and insofar they offer balanced support*. However, up until now neither the United States nor Russia nor China has succeeded in significantly promoting co-operation on key issues of common concern in Central Asia, since these countries are perceived as being driven primarily by their own interests.
- Further efforts to *promote political and economic reform are crucial for changing the attitude towards regional co-operation* in Central Asia. Progress towards democracy and market economies may be expected to raise the chances for enhanced dialogue and exchanges across boundaries, inside and outside the region.

- Currently, *the chances for enhanced regional co-operation in Central Asia appear limited*, despite the efforts of major countries from the outside and international organisations to promote change. In the discussion we may wish to address the EU efforts to promote regional co-operation in particular.



Dinner at the Palais Pallavicini

VIEWS FROM GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Yerzhan KAZYKHANOV

*Director of the Department of Multilateral Cooperation of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan*

Last year Kazakhstan has celebrated the 10th anniversary of its independence. Historically speaking 10 years is not a very long period. However, we were able to accomplish the most important tasks – to create solid foundation of the country's statehood, to preserve and strengthen national unity, interethnic and confessional concordance, to ensure necessary conditions for the transformation of the mentality of people and to support ideas of freedom, democracy and decent life.

Kazakhstan situated at the crossroad of Europe and Asia, South and North, East and West, exerts all efforts to contribute to our common task – peace, progress and stability in the region. A new epoch requires adequate and efficient political approaches to combat emerging threats. In response to new challenges we should elaborate new and more effective forms of prediction and counteraction on the part of the world community.

In this regard the first summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) held 3-5 July, 2002 in Almaty bringing together 16 Asian leaders, in our view, marked a new stage in the development of international relations on the Asian subcontinent.

10 years ago the participants of the 47th UN General Assembly session reacted with understanding and approval to the proposal of President Nazarbayev on convening a regularly functioning conference of Heads of Asian States to discuss the vital issues of today, the elaboration of adequate measures to address the challenges of the 21st century. This understanding is based on the realia of the already emerging new world order in which prospects of sustainable development and prosperity of nations of the planet are defined not only by global but also in many aspects of regional security systems. This forum is extremely important not only in view of the discussions of vital political problems but also in terms of providing for necessary guaranties to ensure sustainable economic growth of our countries.

The idea of holding a summit was supported by states constituting 90% of the territory of whole Asia. Their population is about 3 billion people, almost half the population of the planet. The summit has become a unique event of great international significance. The high level of participants and global interest for this event proves this. Asian leaders have emphasized the need for the creation of a forum in Asia for multilateral dialogue and consultations.

We look for a foundation of future international relations in the idea of dialogue among civilizations. The CICA Declaration on Eliminating Terrorism and

Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations adopted at the summit has become the first step in this direction. The Almaty Act, the Final Document of the summit reflects the emerging spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding in the region. The Almaty Act is a future oriented document on strengthening cooperation among CICA member-states.

Establishment and further development of equal, mutually beneficial relations with CIS countries is one of the main priorities of the foreign policy of Kazakhstan. Being fully conscious of the importance of regional cooperation in safeguarding prosperity in the region, Kazakhstan since its independence, has been consistently pursuing a policy of deepening the integration process of the CIS member-states and practical realization of all agreements. We conduct our work by developing bilateral and multilateral relations with the CIS countries.

In our view the most effective multilateral mechanism in the CIS space is the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC). Within this regional economic structure five countries defined concrete tasks to be implemented in the fields of foreign trade and customs policy, interaction of financial and banking systems, regulation of legal aspects of relations, social and humanitarian sphere as well as development of priority sectors of economy.

Military and political component of the integration process is the CIS space formed by the Collective Security Treaty – the most important security mechanisms in the region. At the recent summit meeting in Moscow a decision on gradual transformation of the treaty into a regional international organization has been adopted. The potential of this treaty is far from being exhausted.

We deem it important to underline the significance of consolidating efforts of the participating states in the Central Asian Economic Cooperation – the forum that was established to define concrete forms and elaborate effective mechanisms of joint activity in the wide spectrum of the regional problems from security to economy. Integration efforts of the Central Asian states are the only way to develop conflict-free region.

The revival of the transcontinental route of the Silk Road, which in the past has not only served as trade and economic bridge, but also facilitated promotion of friendship and partnership between Asia and Europe has significant importance for Kazakhstan. We consider as a primary task the need to develop transport corridors, including “Europe-Caucasus-Asia” transportcommunication system. We believe that within the Central Asian Economic Cooperation process we can agree on a coordinated tariff policy along the TRACECA transport corridor. We believe that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization could become in the future an effective instrument of ensuring security and promoting mutual confidence in the region, helping the countries give adequate response to the new challenges and threats.

In this context we attach great importance to the coming Global Summit on Sustainable Development to be held under UN auspices. The global process of sustainable development gives an opportunity to create stable, highly educated and civilized society. From an economic stand point it would allow us to open new markets and create new jobs and to develop the social sector. Politically, this process would defuse tensions and prevent violent conflicts.

Peace and stability in Central Asia are closely connected with the situation in Afghanistan. The gruesome tragedy of September 11 galvanized a coalition of states that is engaged in the war on terrorism. We note with satisfaction successful anti-terrorist operations of the international coalition headed by the US. This made possible to bring to an end a long lasting war in Afghanistan, to create necessary conditions in order to establish much needed peace and stability in this country.

Kazakhstan supported a completely uncompromising struggle against international terrorism and is striving to continue to make its contribution to this common cause. But it would be politically naive to think, that the task of ensuring security in Afghanistan as well as in the Central-Asian region is completely fulfilled. Unfortunately here there are more questions than answers.

For example the problem of drug trafficking from Afghanistan has not been solved yet. The volume of drug trafficking after the well known events in this country has not been reduced but, on the contrary, has increased. This is a serious challenge to security on the whole Central Asian region. Special attention should be given to this problem. We should not disregard the evident fact that the scale of illicit arms flow in the Asian continent is steadily rising.

Another dangerous consequence of the unstable situation, particularly around Afghanistan, is illegal migration. Of serious concern is its rising scale, its merging with such negative notions as drug trafficking, extremism and illicit arms flow.

And finally terrorism has gained an international scale, and has become transnational, more organized, and therefore more dangerous for the free world. We must find the roots of this phenomena and then define the ways and means to prevent terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Special attention should be given to the problem of economic rehabilitation of Afghanistan. Kazakhstan believes that all the resources available within existing regional mechanism, such as: CICA, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Central Asian Economic Cooperation, SPECA should be streamlined to solve this problem. Kazakhstan for its part, is willing to increase its practical contribution to the efforts of the world community aimed at economic and humanitarian recovery of this country. We can provide food, fuel and other products through programs being drawn up by the donor community, establish on our territory forward depots of humanitarian aid and send civil experts to Afghanistan, etc.

Arms control, disarmament and elimination of weapons of mass destruction are issues of extreme importance for Kazakhstan. I will not go into details of my country's input in the disarmament sphere since all of you are well aware of it. Kazakhstan considers that the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty remain to be a solid basis for building a more secure world and play an important role in providing stability, security and confidence in Asia. To ensure peace and stability in Central Asia Kazakhstan supports the initiative on the creation of the nuclear-weapons-free zone in the region.

Termination of AMB Treaty requires new measures to be taken to maintain strategic stability. In this regard Kazakhstan welcomes the signing of the treaty between Russia and USA on further strategic arms reduction. The implementation of this fundamental treaty will undoubtedly allow to considerably improve a military and political situation on the Asian continent.

We think that the international society should join its effort on the adoption of the international code of conduct in relation to non-proliferation of ballistic missiles. Kazakhstan on its turn will facilitate the discussion of this problem and adoption of appropriate decisions in the framework of the CICA process, the Collective Security Treaty and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Lidiya IMANALIEVA⁷⁹

First Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

The First Vice-Minister said that the new independent states have experienced a difficult phase of political transformation and socio-economic reforms. Especially the example of Kyrgyzstan shows that there is no alternative to democracy. Not all has gone smoothly and many mistakes have been made. These were mostly concerned with societal transformation and economic aspects. Despite this, it has been possible to create the foundation for a democratic society and a market economy. The Kyrgyz Republic is on the way to creating a civil society and a multiparty system combined with local self-administration. The principle of the separation of powers and checks and balances functions well. In the republic there are around 3000 NGOs, 34 parties, the people's assembly and more than 700 media representatives. Many programmes have been running for several years to wage war on poverty, develop education as well as to reduce unemployment and further the position of women in society. A long term programme is under way to develop human rights and with assistance from international

⁷⁹ Original in Russian, summary provided by the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna.

organisations, especially the IWF, the World Bank, the EBRD and the UNO important energy and infrastructure initiatives are being developed.

These developments have occurred under adverse preconditions. Events this year especially in the Southern Caucasus have shown how fragile democracy is. The first stage of post-Soviet development in the Republic is over; this lasted eleven years. The next stage is before us. This should bring a qualitative consolidation of democracy. There is surely no other alternative for us.

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the USA declared war on terrorism and looked at Kyrgyzstan which supported the cause. Our territory and air space was made available for the antiterrorist operations in Afghanistan. The republic played a dynamic role in fighting the new evils of the century, in association with the United Kingdom, France and Germany. The Republic is pursuing further regional initiatives which will enhance co-operation and solidarity in the fight against international terrorism.

Unfortunately in recent years there have been a series of negative phenomena with transnational repercussions, which in fact reach all countries.

The Central Asia States are struggling to establish an effective security system to cope with these new problems and ensure stability and security in the region. Given the similarity of problems and the common historical, cultural and intellectual heritage, effective regional cooperation is essential for all Central Asian countries. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet empire economic, cultural and human relationships have been interrupted, thus contributing in an important fashion to the difficult security situation of the region. States of the region are aware of the importance of maintaining stability and security and thus in the mid 90-ies have begun to resolve open border issues and establish regimes for joint distribution and administration of water resources. There is already a solid bilateral or multilateral contractual basis between the states in this region on a number of vital issues. This ultimately will lead to a sound economic and political system for the peoples of Central Asia.

Ambassador Khamrokhon ZARIPOV

Permanent Mission of Tajikistan to the OSCE

Several kinds of statements during previous sessions, in particular the address by Secretary General of the OSCE Ambassador Jan Kubiš, comprehensive interventions by the Head of the UN Mission in Tajikistan, distinguished Ambassador Ivo Petrov, and Ms. Saodat Olimova described the situation in my country. Today I will not repeat them. Suffice to say that, the peace process in Tajikistan has got once and for ever

irreversible in nature. Of course I cannot agree with several remarks regarding the phenomena of corruption, lack of national liberation movements and the role and potential of Central Asia in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We respect such kind of opinions which might be useful in theoretical discussion, but in practice and real life we prefer a cautious and balanced approach to the assessment of reality in this field.

Today an atmosphere of fundamental peace and a creative process has formed in the country. All forces of society are now proceeding from the necessity of searching for ways to accelerate mobilization of internal resources and external investments in post-conflict rehabilitation of the economy, its effective reconstruction and sustainable development.

Last month, we celebrated the 5th year anniversary of the signing of the General Peace Agreement. On that occasion, on 16th of June the international conference "Lessons of the Tajik Peace Process for Afghanistan" was held in Dushanbe sponsored by the UN University of Peace. All political groups, government officials, diplomatic corps and representatives from various international organizations and NGOs participated in the conference and in a very informal and open way expressed their views on achievements and problems after 1997.

Transition to peace and national accord was not only difficult, from the point of view of the negotiating process, but also in terms of realization of the achieved agreements. Nevertheless each time when there was an impasse during negotiations the government and opposition showed their adherence to the peace agreement and resolved all the problems by dialogue. Finally they have overcome numerous obstacles and took the way towards achievement of compromise and mutual understanding. Ability to solve all political disputes through constructive dialogue on the basis of the law, in our opinion is the main achievement of peace process in Tajikistan.

However, during a certain period after National Peace Accord was signed several internal and external forces had been trying to break the peace and order in our country. As a result of decisive actions by the Government and first of all the overall support by the people these threats could be overcome.

Tajikistan is the only country in Central Asia where an Islamic Party is officially registered and represented in the Government and Parliament. We clearly recognize that no one has the right to prevent this world religion from occupying its traditional position in our society. However, it is extremely important in this regard that we do not allow the spiritual vacuum formed after the Soviet system and armed civil confrontation to be filled by a new variety of a totalitarian ideology, seeking to compensate for its spiritual poverty with new forms of extremism of a fundamentalist or other kind.

It is necessary to note that problems and challenges which Tajikistan faces now are not less important and less complex, than those in previous years. After the

implementation of General Agreement on Peace and the National Accord and establishing fundamental peace the main problems which come across now are restoration of destroyed economic, social and cultural infrastructures, revival and reforming of economy, strengthening of the state and civil institutes.

The dangerous trend towards poverty, economic and ecological instability, isolation from the main transport routes and communications causes many difficulties in building a self-efficient market economy and civil society with a strong middle class. Such a situation might create fertile soil for the occurrence of various radical and extremist elements in society. Resolving these issues only at the national level does not appear to be possible due to a number of reasons. In this connection Tajikistan as never before needs support from the international community in its efforts to restore the economy and closely integrate itself into the world market.

In spite of certain improvements, the painful process of transition, the aftermath of the civil war, the falling of global prices for basic export goods and other significant objective and subjective factors are limiting the Republic's potentials in the economic sphere. In addition, a number of natural disasters that have beset Tajikistan in recent months have disrupted the normal functioning of certain installations and are thus a cause of particular concern for the people and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. Therefore it is requested that the international community continue with its support for efforts in building a self-efficient economic and financial system and sustainable development in our country.

International help and support have played an important role in overcoming the crisis phase of development of the Tajik society. With support and assistance of the international community and in particular UN and OSCE, Tajikistan has been successfully constructing the free and democratic society based on rule of law and OSCE principles and values.

The process of political and democratic reforms in Tajikistan is proceeding according to plan in spite of certain difficulties. Recent decisions by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on the reorganization of a number of military structures attest to our firm intention of completing the process of transforming our armed forces into an army that fully meets our real needs of today. The emphasis is on professionalism, absolute subordination to and strict observance of the laws and military regulations, and regular rotation of officers, including commanders of units and formations.

It is our hope that the international community will strengthen political and financial support for the reforms being implemented. This will speed up the process of reform and allow us to strengthen stability and consolidate the sustainable socio-economic development of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The good examples of such support are the activities of many international organizations in Tajikistan like UN, INT, World Bank, OSCE etc. UNDCP is very

active in Tajikistan and provided tremendous assistance in institution building and technical expertise to control and prevent drug trafficking from Afghanistan. We sincerely hope that this cooperation will further strengthen and UNDCP projects in Tajikistan with the support of donor countries will be fully implemented in accordance with the plan.

Finally I would like to touch upon the situation in Afghanistan since it is our strong opinion that the problems of security and stability in our region cannot be and should not be solved in isolation from the situation in Afghanistan. For a long time the situation in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime was one of the main and serious destabilizing factors and permanent threats to the security and stability in the region. With the fall of Taliban regime and the new opportunity that has come up to establish close contacts and dialogue with the new Afghan authorities on such vital issues for the whole region as security and drug trafficking. We proceed from the necessity to involve Afghanistan into the mainstream of international and regional organizations. In this regard our President, Emomali Rakhmonov, has sent a letter to the Heads of OSCE-Participating States, the OSCE Chairman in Office and the Secretary General of OSCE with the proposal to invite Afghanistan to OSCE as an OSCE Partner for Cooperation. We strongly believe that such a partnership will allow Afghanistan to become familiar with OSCE principles and values.

Dr. Schersad ABDUALLEJEN

*Advisor to the Foreign Minister on Central Asia
Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations*

Allow me first of all to thank the organisers of this conference for the opportunity to speak to such a forum. The topics on the agenda of this conference embrace the broad spectrum of problems important for both, the region and the entire international community. Most importantly, this conference attempts to rethink the global problems, the issues of stability and security in Central Asia, taking into account the new realities. This should prove that the “old thinking” that used to divide the world problems into “ours” and “theirs” belongs to the past. The former paradigms, that used to divide the regions into “centre”, “periphery”, “important” and of “secondary importance” are made obsolete by new realities.

I. From the early days of its independence Uzbekistan has considered peace and stability in Central Asia to be the top priority of its foreign policy. The complete resolution of the Afghan problem is one of the conditions for the regional stability and sustainable development of the Central Asian states. We believe it of paramount

importance to lay the foundations for a new Afghan statehood, the power structures in the centre and in the regions, new army and law-enforcement bodies. In this connection, despite the complexity and difficulties of the internal Afghan process, we hope to see the positive trends in this country take hold.

In Afghanistan there is still a huge arsenal of military hardware, weapons, mines and ammunitions, which had been accumulated over the many years of war. Getting rid of this destructive potential either by destroying or by redemption, is one of urgent tasks of the international community. We believe that demilitarisation is an important condition to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan.

What is most dangerous is the increasing flow of drugs trafficking from Afghanistan. Regrettably, in spite of numerous statements there are no specific efforts within the framework of the United Nations and other international bodies to work out the coordinated program, which can unite the efforts and possibilities of all interested parties to combat this evil.

There is a need to combat drugs trafficking not only by enhancing the law enforcement and administrative measures but first and foremost by profound structural reforms of the Afghan economy, giving a chance for the population to be engaged in peaceful labor.

II. Having a rich experience in economic, technical, humanitarian and other forms of cooperation with neighbouring Afghanistan, as well as possessing the required infrastructure and resources, Uzbekistan is ready to actively participate in international programmes aimed at social and economic rehabilitation of this country.

III. The disruption of the international terrorist network does not reduce the intensity of the problem of fighting terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking mafia and transnational organized crime. Today, the countries of the region have the real opportunity to neutralize these threats and challenges, thanks to the whole-hearted support from the international community and on condition they coordinate their actions.

IV. One of the most important conditions for peace, stability and prosperity in Central Asia is the further development and deepening of regional cooperation. The priority tasks of this interaction are the constructive completion of the process of delimitation and demarcation of interstate frontiers; rational exploitation of water and energy resources and water management structures, taking into account the interests of all sides; establishment of the region-wide transport infrastructure, development of industrial integration and trade and economic cooperation, interaction in humanitarian field and solving ecological problems.

Today Central Asia is going through a difficult and important stage in its development. Central Asian states confront the challenges that will have great implications not only for the region but for the entire international community. Therefore, it is of exceptional importance to support the States of Central Asia in their aspirations to make their region more stable and fully integrated into the modern international political and economic processes.



Dr. Mukesh Kapila

PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Schersad Abduallejew

Advisor of the FM on Central Asia
Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to
the United Nations
Vienna, Austria

Mr. Rui Baceira

Councillor
Permanent Delegation of Portugal to
the OSCE
Opernring 3/1
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 586 75 360
Fax: +43 1 586 75 36 99
Email: mportu@via.at

Ambassador Paraschiva Badescu

Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat
47 A Karl Libknehta Street
744000 Ashgabat
Turkmenistan
Tel: + 993 12 35 3092
Fax: + 993 12 35 3041
Email: pbadescu@oscetm.org

Dr. Pavel Baev

Senior Researcher FSP Program Leader
International Peace Research Institute,
Oslo
Fuglehauggata 11
0260 Oslo
Norway
Tel: + 47 22 54 77 39
FAX: + 47 22 54 77 01
Email: pavel@prio.no

Ms. Catherine Barnes

Accord Program Manager, Series
Editor Conciliation Resources
173 Upper Street
London N1 1RG
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 20 7359 7728

Fax: + 44 20 7359 4081

Email: accord@c-r.orgon and
cbarnes@c-r.org

Dr. Arad Benkö

Counsellor
Department for International.
Organisations
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ballhausplatz 2
1014 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 53115 3600
Fax: + 43 1 53666 3600
Email: arad.benkoe@bmaa.gv.at

Dr. Reinhold Brender

Caucasus and Central Asia Unit (E3)
External Relations Directorate General
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 170 (CHAR 10/88)
1040 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 29 51074,
Fax: + 32 2 29 63912
Email: reinhold.brender@cec.eu.int

Dr. Simon Chesterman

Senior Associate
International Peace Academy
777 UN Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017
USA
Tel: + 1 212 687 4577
Fax: + 1 212 983 8246
Email: chesterman@ipacademy.org

Mr. Karl Deuretzbacher

Military Policy Division
General Staff Group B
Ministry of Defence
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria

Tel: +43 1 5200 25880
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17088
Email: milpol4@oebh.at

Ms. Suchitra Durai

Counsellor
Embassy of India
Kärnter Ring 2
1015 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 505 86 66 27
Fax: + 43 1 505 92 19

Colonel Walter Feichtinger Ph.D

Security Political Adviser
Federal Chancellory
Hohenstaufengasse 3
1010 Vienna / Austria
Tel: +43 1 53 115 2197
Email: walter.feichtinger@bka.gv.at

Mr. Vladimir Fenopetov

Senior Program Management Officer
Central and Eastern Europe
West and Central Asia
The Near and Middle East Programme
Operations Branch
UNDCP, ODCCP; Room E-1315
UN Office at Vienna
P.O. Box 500
1400 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 26 060 4176
Fax: + 43 1 26 060 5821
Email:
Vladimir.Fenopetov@undcp.org

Brigadier General Dietmar Franzisci

Military Strategy Division
General Staff Group B
Ministry of Defence
BAG 3
Dampfschiffstraße 2
1030 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 25400
Fax: +43 1 5200 17020
Email: mstratl@oebh.at

Ambassador Gantcho Gantchev

Head of the OSCE Office in Tashkent
Kh, Alimdjan Square
Western Side, 2nd Floor
70000 Tashkent
Uzbekistan
Tel: + 7 1 132 0156
Fax: + 7 1 2120 6125
Mobile: + 7 306061
Email: cao@osce.silk.org

Professor Pan Guang

Director
Institute of European and Asian Studies
Center of Shanghai
Cooperation Organization Studies
Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
622-7 Huai Hai Road (M) Suite 352
Shanghai
China 200020
Tel: + 86 21 643 13464
Fax: + 86 21 535 10041
Email: Gpan@srcap.stc.sh.cn

Ambassador Heidemaria Gürer

Roving Ambassador for Armenia
Azarbaijan and Georgia
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ballhausplatz 2
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 53115 3661
Fax: + 43 1 5366 3661
Email: heidemaria.guerer@bmaa.gv.at

Ms. Nasra Hassan

Chief of the Inter-Agency Relations
and Fund-Raising Branch
UN Office of Drug Control and
Crime Prevention
United Nations
UN Office at Vienna
P.O. Box 500
1400 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 26060 5588
Fax: + 43 1 26060 5850
Email: nasra.hassan@unvienna.org

Ambassador Heinrich Haupt

Head of the OSCE Center in Almaty
67 Tole Bi, 2nd floor
480091 Almaty
Kazakhstan
Tel: + 73 27 2621 762
Fax: + 73 27 2624 385
Email: hhaupt@osce.nutsat.kz

Rita E. Hauser

Chair of the IPA Board of Directors
President of the Hauser Foundation
777 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA
Tel: 212-687-4300
Fax: 212-983-8246

Dr. Peter Hazdra

Senior Researcher
Institut for Peace Support and
Conflictmanagement
AG-Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 40730
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17262
Email: lvakifk1@bmlv.gv.at

Dr. Hans-Georg Heinrich

Professor
Institute for Political Studies University
of Vienna
Währingerstr. 28
1090 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 317 13 67 24
Fax: +43 1 310 29 62

Ms. Lydia Imanalieva

First Deputy Minister of Foreign
Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs
59 Razzakov Street
720050 Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan
Fax: + 996 312 66 05 01
Email: daec@mfa.gov.kg

Mr. Yakubdjan Irgashev

Counselor
Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Porzellangasse 32/5
1090 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 315 390
Fax: + 43 1 315 39 93
Email: botschaft.uzbekistan@aon.at

Ms. Chinara Jakypova

Project Director
Central Asian Project
Institute for War and Peace Reporting
Lancaster House
33 Islington High Street
London N1 9LH
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 20 7713 7130
Fax: + 44 20 7713 7140
Email: chinara@iwpr.infotel.kg

Dr. Mukesh Kapila

Special Adviser
Special Representative of the Secretary
General United Nations Assistance
Mission in Afghanistan
Tel: + 39 0831 24 6111
Tel: + 46 73004 4629
Mobile: + 44 7798 917529
Email: kapila@un.org

Mr. Ershan Kavykhanov

Head of Department
Multilateral Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Kazakhstan
Beibetshilik Street 10
Astana 473000
Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Sultan Hayat Khan

General Director
ECO Region
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Constitution Avenue
Islamabad
Pakistan

Tel/Fax: + 9 251 920 23 38
Email: shk1944@hotmail.com

Ms. Karin Kneissl
University of Vienna
Correspondent for Die WELT
Vienna
Austria

Ambassador Ján Kubiš
Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat
Opernring 4
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 514 360 12
Fax: + 43 1 514 36 96
Email: pm@osce.org and
jkubis@osce.org

General ret. Ernest König
National Defence Academy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 40011
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17105
Email: koenig.ernest@24on.cc

Dr. Sabine Machl
OSCE Secretariat
Conflict Prevention Centre
Kaerntnerring 5-7
A-1010 Vienna
Tel. +43 51436 155
Mobile +43 664 21 55 217
Email: smachl@osce.org
sabinemachl@yahoo.com)

David M. Malone
President
International Peace Academy
777 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA
Tel: + 1 212 687 4526
Fax: + 1 212 986 1995
Email: malone@ipacademy.org

Mr. Mohiaddin Mesbahi
Professor
Department of International Relations
Florida International University
University Park Campus
11200 SW 8th Strett
Miami, Fl, 33199
Tel: + 1 305 348-1857
Fax: + 1 305 348-6138
Email: mesbahim@fiu.edu

Ms. Saodat Olimova
Analytic Group Shark
The Central Asia and the Caucasus
IAC
Dushanbe
Tajikistan
Tel/Fax + 992 372 21 89 95 / 83 70
Email: sharq@tahik.net and
olimov@tajik.net

Dr. Gabriele Rasuly-Paleczek
Institute for Ethnology
University of Vienna
Dr. Karl Lueger Ring 1
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 4277 485-06
Email: Gabriele.Rasuly@univie.ac.at

Mr. Ivo Petrov
Representative of the Secretary-
General for Tajikistan, United Nations
Tajikistan Office of Peace-Building
N° 7 Gorky Street
Dushanbe
Tajikistan
Tel: + 992 372 210 125
Fax: + 992 372 210 159
and
P.O. Box 4853
Grand Central Station
New York. N.Y. 10163 – 4853
USA
NY Tel: + 1 212 963 4650
NY Fax: + 1 212 963 4649
Email: petrov1@un.org

Mr. Hamid Ali Rao

Deputy Chief of Mission Embassy of
India
Kärntner Ring 2
1015 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 505 86 66 69
Fax: +43 1 505 92 19
Email: dcm@eoivien.vienna.at

Ambassador Herbert Salber

Permanent Mission of Portugal to the
OSCE
Kärtner-Ring 5-7
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 514 36 180

General Raimund Schittenhelm

Commandant
National Defense Academy
AG-Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 40000
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17106
Email: zentdok.lvak@mail.bmlv.gv.at

Dr. John Schoeberlein

Director
Program on Central Asia and the
Caucasus
Harvard University
625 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
USA
Tel: + 1 617-495-4338
Fax: + 1 617-495-8319
Email: schoeber@fas.harvard.edu

Dr. Waheguru. Pal Sidhu

Senior Associate
International Peace Academy
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
USA
Tel: +1 212 867-8277
Fax: + 1 212 983-8246

Email: sidhu@ipacademy.org

Dr. Ben Slay

Director
UNDP Regional Support Centre,
Grosslingova 35
81109 Bratislava
Slovak Republic
Tel: + 421 2 59337-444
Fax: + 421 2 59337-450
Email: ben.slay@undp.org

Ambassador Ernst Sucharipa

Director
Diplomatic Academy, Vienna
Favoritenstrasse 15A
1040 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 505 72 72-116
Fax: + 43 1 504 22 65
Email: e.sucharipa@dak-vienna.ac.at

Neclă Tschirgi, Ph.D.

Vice President
International Peace Academy
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017-3521
USA
Tel: + 1 212 687-4606
Fax: + 1 212 986-1995
Email: tschirgi@ipacademy.org

Mr. Ertan Tezgor

Deputy Director General
for Caucasus and Central Asia
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Balgat 06100 Ankara
Turkey
Tel: + 903 1 287 56 64
Fax: + 903 1 227 85 46
Email: ertan.tezgor@mfa.gov.tr

Mrs. Margarita Trajkova

Mission Programme Officer
(Central Asian Desk)
Conflict Prevention Centre
OSCE Secretariat
Karntner Ring 5-7

1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 51434 574
Fax: + 43 1 514 36 96
Email: mtrajkova@osce.org

Dr. Richard Trappl

Professor
Institute for Sinologie
Schlüsselg. 3/13
1080 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 4277 438 43
Fax: +43 1 4277 438 49
Mobile: + 43 664 325 8024
Email: richard.trappl@univie.ac.at

Mr. Bakhtiyar Tuzmukhamedov

Associate Professor of International
Law Constitutional Court
21 Ilyinka Street
103132 Moscow
Tel: + 95 206 1625
Fax: + 95 206 7790
Email: btuz@ksmail.rfnet.ru and
btuz@newmail.ru

Mr. Francesc Vendrell

Special Representative
of the European Union for Afghanistan
Email: francesc.vendrell@mae.es

Mr. Johannes Wimmer

Deputy Head, Department for
International Organisations
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ballhausplatz 2
1014 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 53115 3600
Fax: + 43 1 53666 3600
Email: Johannes.wimmer@bmaa.gv.at

Brigadier General Wolfgang

Wosolsobe
Military Policy Division
General Staff Group B
Ministry of Defence

AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 25800
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17085
Email: milpolltr@bmlv.gv.at

Ambassador Margit Wästfelt

Deputy Permanent Representative of
Austria to the OSCE
Ballhausplatz 2
1010 Vienna
Tel.: + 43 1 53115 3255
Fax: + 43 1 53666 227
Email: margit.waestfelt@bmaa.gv.at

**INTERNATIONAL PEACE
ACADEMY STAFF:**

Colonel Jussi Saressalo

Military Adviser
International Peace Academy
777 UN Plaza
New York N.Y. 10017
Tel: + 1 212 687 4579
Fax: + 1 212 983 8246
Email: saressalo@ipacademy.org

Ms. Wambui F. Waweru

Program Assistant
Professional Development Program
International Peace Academy
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Tel: + 1 212 687 4520
Fax: + 1 212 983 8246
Email: waweru@ipacademy.org

**Austrian Ministry of Defense
Staff:**

Ms. Karin Schlagnitweit

Operations Officer
National Defence Academy
AG Stiftgasse 2a

1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 40712
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17262
Email: generalsek@oeog.at

Capt Ernst Felberbauer
Operations Officer
National Defence Academy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 40710
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17262
Email: mwb32@bmlv.gv.at

Ms. Sandra Kick
Operations Officer
Bureau for Security Policy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 27013
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17112
Email: mwb24@bmlv.gv.at

Mr. Andreas Wannemacher
Operations Officer
Bureau for Security Policy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 27028
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17112
Email: mwb27@bmlv.gv.at

Ms. Sonja Reichel
Operations Officer
Bureau for Security Policy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 5200 27027
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17112
Email: mwb19@bmlv.gv.at

Colonel Axel Wohlgemuth
National Defence Academy
Institute for International Peace
Support
Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna
Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 40393
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17262
Email: lvakifk1@bmlv.gv.at

First LT Harald Zaske
Operations Officer
National Defence Academy
AG Stiftgasse 2a
1070 Vienna / Austria
Tel: + 43 1 5200 40150
Fax: + 43 1 5200 17105