

Central Asia and the Arab Revolution: Implications for the US

**Professor Stephen Blank**

Strategic Studies Institute

US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013

May 2011

Draft: not for citation or quotation without consent of the author

The views expressed here do not represent those of the US Army, Defense Department,  
or the US Government

Submitted for Testimony to the US Helsinki Commission, May 11, 2011

## **Introduction**

The Arab revolutions of 2011 have captured the world's attention and demonstrated the power of the revolutionary idea to spread like wildfire. In these regards they resemble Europe's revolutions of 1848 and 1989 that also were analogized to the spring. But it is this very capacity for rapid spread and (as in 1848) for subsequent resistance by imperiled autocracies that is on Russia, China, and every Central Asian government's political agenda even if those states will not admit it. Even if they suppress news of these revolutions, they and their partners in the Russian and Chinese governments are extremely concerned about the possibility of this crisis spreading to their doorstep. Indeed, we already see demonstrations in Azerbaijan, by no means the worst of these regimes. And there is talk of demonstrations in Uzbekistan, one of the very worst regimes in the area.<sup>i</sup>

As of May 2011 governments have fallen in Tunisia and Egypt and are on the point of falling in Yemen. However, violence has been used, or imported by rulers with some success in Syria, Libya, and Bahrain, attesting to the determination of these pillars of the old order to retain their power and prerogatives and perhaps their staying power. Indeed, even in the newly constituted governments of Tunisia and Egypt it is by no means certain that democracy in one of its variants will ultimately prevail. It already appears that the best organized party and movement in Egypt is the Muslim Brotherhood and the constellation of Salafist organizations around it. As happened in 1848 the democrats could fail and new despotisms, backed by force, could come to the fore or old ones could reconstitute or reinvent themselves. It is quite conceivable that despite the excitement of the Arab spring the practical alternatives before different Arab societies could boil down

to some new form of military authoritarianism or Islamic and clearly anti-liberal and anti-democratic parties. That outcome would undoubtedly retard the appearance of democratic movements across Eurasia and give comfort to the current upholders of the status quo. But even if a revolution broke out in Central Asia in the immediate or foreseeable future it is likewise, by no means certain that it would bring liberals or convinced Democrats to power.<sup>ii</sup> Democratic outcomes cannot be taken for granted and euphoria is clearly unwarranted.

Moreover, these regimes have some very powerful advantages. They exercise total control over their media and are intensifying those controls as noted below. They also have organized their armed forces to suppress not only external threats but also internal uprisings.<sup>iii</sup> They also have a safety valve as long as the Russian economy continues to grow because they can then export many of their unemployed young men, the usual incendiary element in demonstrations, to Russia for work and benefit from their remittances.<sup>iv</sup> And they can count on Russian and possibly Chinese military protection should a revolutionary crisis occur. They may well be able to count on US political support as well, at least for a time, even though the Administration is now counseling governments like Kazakhstan to undertake reforms. This would especially be true if they can credibly argue that their opposition is Islamist and affiliated with terrorism.<sup>v</sup> This would be an especially strong argument in the context of the war in Afghanistan.

There are also other domestic factors working for them. Liberal Democratic political actors on the ground in Central Asia who command genuine authority and mass support are scarce and have been subjected to twenty years of unrelenting and ruthless suppression. Moreover, it is by no means clear, neither should it be taken for granted,

that Central Asian populations want our concept of liberal democracy, i.e. want what we want. Moreover, past mistakes have undermined the attraction of the US or European models. Culturally and historically there is almost nothing in their experience to justify such simplistic, unfounded, and misleading policy advocacy or prescriptions.<sup>vi</sup> The middle classes, the historical mass support base for liberal democracy, are quite weak, dependent, and lack organizational resources and traditions. Civil society may be a concept without a deeply rooted reality here except in limited situations. Moreover, the region faces enormous political and economic challenges both within each state and on a regional basis. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that these rulers are afraid.

Tajikistan's President, Emomali Rahmon told his Parliament on April 20, 2011 that,

Much has been said and written about the possibility of the repetition of such events in Central Asia, --- "I want to reiterate that the wise people of Tajikistan, who were once the victims of such events, know the meaning of peace and stability. They are aware of the importance of peace and stability. --- They have gone through civil wars; therefore, they reject military solutions to any problem."<sup>vii</sup>

Similarly Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov recently said that abundance of goods at domestic markets, especially food, and cheap prices are key indicators of progress and stability.<sup>viii</sup> As a result governments in the region are doing their best to leave nothing to chance."<sup>ix</sup>

### **The Status Quo and Its Defenders**

Twenty years after the fall of Communism at least two of Central Asia's states may fairly be described as failing states, i.e. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan while Paul Quinn-Judge of the International Crisis Group believes that Uzbekistan is not far behind.<sup>x</sup> Indeed, a succession crisis there, which he deems inevitable given the absence of any

discernible plan or order for succession to the seventy-two year old President, Islam Karimov, could throw Uzbekistan into that kind of tailspin characteristic of such states. But even if Uzbekistan is not currently failing, it, like all the other Central Asian states except Kyrgyzstan is a strong autocratic despotism and all of them share many characteristics of patrimonial or even in some cases Sultanistic states. Hence succession crises may be not only something they have in common given the nature of their governance, but also in each country such crises could well be the major threat to the stability of the state, not just the particular regime in question. In turn that succession crisis and ensuing crisis of the state could possibly create an opening for a genuine Islamic movement to attempt to seize power. Likewise, although it does not seem likely right now, in the future one or more of these states could fall prey to a form of unrest analogous to what we now see in the Arab world, a succession crisis could ignite a much deeper and broader upheaval.<sup>xi</sup> Kyrgyzstan's "revolution" of 2010 is such an example, and as suggested below, the sudden death of Turkmen President Sapirmurad Niyazov in 2006 triggered widespread apprehensions about just such a major crisis in Turkmenistan and even beyond its borders.

Therefore we should be alert to the possibility of state failure in one or more Central Asian states. Indeed, it could happen almost suddenly without warning. A recent analysis of North Korea reminds us that the more repressive and artificially maintained the regime is the more sudden and precipitous is its fall. Likewise, the worse the level of oppression, e.g. state violence as in Uzbekistan, is, the greater is the nightmare upon liberation.<sup>xii</sup>

For Russia, China, and the post-Soviet governments of the CIS, these revolutions'

implications for these regimes' domestic prospects these revolutions represent a clear and present danger. Moreover, all these rulers fully appreciate the dangers they could face if these revolts migrate to their countries. For example, Russia's anxiety about the possibility of the Arab revolutions spreading to Central Asia was the topic of a public discussion in the Duma. Accordingly members of the Duma and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin called on these states to make timely reforms from above lest they be swept away like those in North Africa. Since Russia's goals are stability, without which these states cannot draw closer to Russia he recommended the formation from above of a civil society, international and inter-religious peace, responsibility of leaders for the standard of living of the population, the development of education and work with youth.<sup>xiii</sup> Clearly this is not enough and no mention is made of economic development or freedom or genuine political reform. In other words, Russia is only willing to tolerate cosmetic reforms and it is doubtful that Central Asian leaders will go beyond those limits even if they approach them.

Thus in Kazakhstan, President Nursultan Nazarbayev called for an instant election rather than a palpably stage-managed referendum to give him life tenure because that latter option was too egregious a move in the current climate. Meanwhile in Uzbekistan, an already draconian state in many ways, we see a further crackdown on mobile internet media along with denials by government agencies throughout the area that revolution is possible. Indeed, Uzbekistan has taken control over cellular companies there instructing companies to report on any suspicious actions by customers and on any massive distributions of text messages through their cellular lines.<sup>xiv</sup> Azerbaijan too has attacked Facebook and Skype.<sup>xv</sup> We also see that Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have instituted

news blackouts.<sup>xvi</sup>

Such moves emulate the draconian laws put in place by Russia and, Iran, and Kazakhstan as a result of the earlier color revolutions of 2003-05, the Iranian elections and Xinjiang uprisings of 2009, and China's move to intensify its already harsh controls on the Internet in 2011.<sup>xvii</sup> These harsh moves against electronic media come on top of a situation demonstrating that press freedom in Eurasia is at its "lowest ebb" in over a decade.<sup>xviii</sup> Meanwhile, in Azerbaijan, where unrest has been growing since late 2010 in response to the regime's moves to crack down on dissent and Islamic agitation (not necessarily the same thing), large demonstrations are now occurring. Thus the Azeri government, seeing the failure of earlier tactics is now trying to work with influential Western media outlets to change public opinion so that it will believe no changes are expected even as mild criticism is tolerated. Similarly the government will organize tours from Western elites to persuade people that the West is cooperating with Baku, and it will raise pensions, salaries, and social services while either coopting or suppressing the opposition.<sup>xix</sup>

Clearly these regimes are whistling in the wind and have good reason for anxiety. Such events undoubtedly stimulate Moscow's and Beijing's anxieties as well. They might also stimulate US anxieties since the US has inclined to support these regimes as allies in the war in Afghanistan despite their checkered domestic records, thereby showing the military priority of US policy over the impulse towards democracy promotion.<sup>xx</sup> Furthermore were a revolution to break out in Azerbaijan there would be major grounds for foreign concern for there is very good reason to believe that Iran is a major force behind the opposition AIP party whose leader was imprisoned for advocating the

regime's overthrow.<sup>xxi</sup>

Certainly there are points of similarities between Arab and Central Asian societies, e.g. youth bulges with large ranks of unemployed young men and "starkly autocratic regimes."<sup>xxii</sup> Based on statistical analysis Ralph Clem recently wrote that,

The empirical data available suggest a very close fit between socioeconomic conditions in Egypt and Tunisia on the one hand and the five Central Asian countries on the other, especially with regard to the youthfulness of the population. In other respects and in some countries, the pre-conditions associated with political unrest are even more problematic in Central Asia than in North Africa. Certainly Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are assessed to be more corrupt and less free than either Egypt or Tunisia. However, Kazakhstan ranks higher than any of the North African or Central Asian countries in the human development indices and is less corrupt and freer than any of its neighbors. Recognizing that none of these measures capture perfectly the reality on the ground, and that other, non-quantifiable influences can be crucial to political outcomes, and if conventional wisdom regarding the importance of these structural factors is correct in the Egyptian and Tunisian cases, then this comparison with Central Asia portends turbulence ahead, particularly for Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.<sup>xxiii</sup>

To be fair, Clem's conclusions are by no means universally agreed upon. Several writers have recently argued that revolutionary upheavals are unlikely in Central Asia in the immediate future. And it is clearly the case that internal factors rather than external ones will be the determining factors concerning the incidence of a revolution.<sup>xxiv</sup> But even if one accepts the argument that the indigenous forces of liberalism are quite weak and that the populations are not visibly disposed at present to support democracy as in North Africa, the domestic conditions singled out by Clem are telling in that they create an immense amount of internal pressure for change which, if bottled up, will sooner or later explode. And, of course, that explosion need not assume a liberal-democratic character. At the same time, however, it also should be pointed out that virtually every analysis of Central Asia confirms the incidence of these pressures that Clem listed.

As discussed above, widespread official corruption, growing Islamic fundamentalism, ethnic minority and/or clan and family concerns, burgeoning populations the inability to provide basic social services for the population extant, unemployment and underemployment, large-scale out-migration and the growing dependence on remittances, increasing involvement in the international narcotics trade and the attendant rise of domestic drug use, as well as environmental degradation and squabbles over increasingly scarce water supplies all pose significant challenges to the Central Asian states now and in the future. Add to this rising food prices, inflation, power outages, deteriorating medical care, and an underperforming educational system and the prospects for Central Asia appear even bleaker.<sup>xxv</sup>

Consequently an upheaval in Uzbekistan, particularly during continuing conflict in Afghanistan, has immense geopolitical repercussions throughout the region given Uzbekistan's centrality to the war effort in Uzbekistan and the fact of its being the most geopolitically central and key prize of all the Central Asian states.<sup>xxvi</sup> Indeed, despite Uzbekistan's rank misrule it is sustained by its alliances with all of the major powers having interests in Central Asia and its key position astride the Northern Distribution Network to Afghanistan (NDN) has led US diplomats, who are fully aware of this misrule, to stress the necessity of maintaining at least "minimally decorous relations" with it to sustain the NDN.<sup>xxvii</sup>

But Uzbekistan might be the worst governed of these states only in a relative sense. Governance in all of these states displays the triumph of informal relationships: clan, tribe, and/or family, triumphing over formal and legal ones. That trend is the opposite of most modern states. So we see in Central Asia at best an incomplete modernization and the persistence of archaic social structures and practices that have nonetheless become functional in these states. Moreover, because these rulers fear any reform there is a constant temptation and tendency towards the accumulation of ever more power and wealth at the expense of the nation and ever-present tendencies towards

more, not less authoritarian or even quasi-totalitarian forms of rule. Nepotism and systematic corruption are rife everywhere. And with the rise of narcotics trafficking, widespread criminality pervades several governments. Alternative forms of corruption and predation lead to the same conclusion. These states' rulers enjoy control over or access to hugely disproportionate amounts of the state's economy which in many cases are dominated by one or two crops or raw materials like oil, gas, cotton, copper, gold, etc. At the same time they have preserved previous socio-economic structures like the Soviet system of cotton farming in Uzbekistan as highly serviceable forms of socio-political control and exploitation, e.g. child labor in Uzbek cotton farming.<sup>xxviii</sup> This phenomenon too exemplifies the *mélange* of old and new that characterizes the region's socio-political structures and creates so much difficulty for analysts and external policymakers wishing to ameliorate conditions there.

Thanks to their ability to forge this control over people and resources Central Asian leaders have translated that power and access into personalized forms of rule and rent seeking that displays and characterizes all the pathologies listed above. There is abundant evidence of widespread corruption, accelerating income differentials in income and extremely unbalanced concentrations of wealth, and pervasive signs of anomie and anomic behavior. Those signs take the form of family breakdowns, huge increases in drug addiction, criminality (including official corruption), torture of dissidents, more brutal forms of sexual discrimination and exploitation of women, ecological devastation, widespread poverty, ethnic intolerance (as in Osh in 2010), etc. Consequently most foreign observers see this region as being plagued by multiple overlapping structural crises embodying all these pathologies if not more.

Kyrgyzstan, which is anything but an autocracy, is perched precariously on the brink of ungovernability and subject at any times to mass unrest either ethnic or political, as its own officials admit. And while its leaders claim to be building democracy, this only applies to the ornamental or dignified parts of the state not its effective governing aspects. And in its case these effective aspects of governance are often carried out not just on the basis of regional, clan, tribal, or ethnic affiliation, but also by thinly disguised criminal enterprises.<sup>xxix</sup> Therefore rhetoric aside, we cannot and should not term Kyrgyzstan a democracy or a state that is building one. Indeed, it is barely a consolidated state.

Tajikistan, though clearly an autocracy, is on the verge of economic and presumably political collapse.<sup>xxx</sup> It permanently confronts multiple, reinforcing, and often overlapping pressures: economic, political, climactic, and external. Even without the spark provided by the Arab revolution it exists in a state of permanent insecurity and as a result for a long time has had to outsource its security to outside powers, particularly Russia. Therefore it is at the mercy of these outside powers. Recently China forced Tajikistan to cede it about 1 percent of its territory supposedly in return for assurances of Tajikistan's long-term security, clearly a dubious rationale. Tajikistan is also on very bad terms with its neighbor Uzbekistan over questions of water and electricity use and almost went to war with it in 2010. Tajikistan's decision to restart the Rogun dam project in 2010 triggered this spike in tensions and the Tajik media if not government clearly worries that a war with Uzbekistan might ensue that could then be exploited by unnamed third parties. Thus these media stories advocate mediation by neutral parties like the EU.

Although the Sarikamysh gas fields explored by Gazprom may satisfy Tajikistan's power needs through 2060, these reserves do not satisfy Dushanbe's goal of using water-generated hydropower to become an energy exporter in Central and south Asia. Thus Tajikistan and Uzbekistan still confront each other, increasing the need for outside mediation. But Tajikistan's problems do not end here. Instead they only begin here. Its regime is notoriously corrupt with President Ermomali Rahmon having built a \$300 million presidential palace in a state whose annual GDP is about \$700 million. He justifies this expense by claiming it is necessary to impress foreign heads of state. But clearly neither Beijing nor Tashkent is sufficiently impressed to refrain from threatening Tajikistan. Likewise, Russia, its main protector, has now raised energy tariffs on Tajikistan just before the crucial spring planting season when farmers need oil for their tractors. Russia used similar tactics in 2010 to ignite the Kyrgyz revolution of that year and to signal its unhappiness with Kyrgyz policies. Now Russia is unhappy with Rahmonov's efforts to seal off the border with Afghanistan. Instead Russia wants to resume control of the border, probably not just to curtail the drug traffic from Afghanistan against which it habitually rails. There are other issues wherein Moscow wants Tajikistan to make an overt declaration of fealty and subservience to it rather than pursue what its neighbors call multivector policies towards all the outside actors. Thus Moscow wants to confirm Tajikistan as a satellite of Russia, not an independent actor who can play other states off against each other.

Since Tajikistan depends on Russia for its energy imports and support on water issues this is a strong form of pressure. But it also faces the specter of domestic unrest, possibly inspired by the Arab revolution. Media reports criticize the regime for

“cosmetic” reforms that amount to very little and warn that the “Google generation” is longing for radical change and very frustrated. Journalists have also written recently “the people’s patience is limited.” A recent public opinion survey by TOJNews Information Company concluded that the boss of Tajikistan’s Islamic party is more trusted than is Rahmonov who got only 6.5% of the vote, another disturbing sign of potential unrest.

Yet at the same time the threat paradigm in Central Asia is not confined to the internal pathologies of misrule and what Max Manwaring of the US Army War College has called illegitimate governance.<sup>xxx1</sup> Neither is the primary threat the possibility of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. While this would be a threat should NATO withdraw from Afghanistan before achieving either a victory or political resolution there, that is currently and for the foreseeable future not the main external threat to Central Asian states. In fact, as discerning observers recognize, there is almost as much potential for inter-state conflict in Central Asia as there is for a domestic crisis that could precipitate a state’s disintegration.<sup>xxx2</sup> Indeed, the two phenomena could overlap if an internal crisis inside one state exploded, and every Central Asian leader understands this linkage and consequently strives to the utmost to avoid it. So while security in Central Asia must be understood in broad, holistic terms, the interaction of these rivalries among the local governments, combined with this illegitimate governance and external interest creates a hideously complex security situation.

### **The Security Equation in Central Asia**

Therefore if we were to assess the implications of the Arab Spring or the Arab Revolution for these governments those implications might look very different to them

than they do to us. While Americans generally welcome these trends but have some concerns for their future, they haunt Central Asian and Russian, and Chinese rulers with the specter of an unmitigated disaster. The first conclusions that they drew long preceded the Arab revolutions and were inspired by the only partially successful color revolutions in the CIS of 2003-05 if not the Iranian, and Moldovan unrest of 2009. These regimes then learned what is clearly the central lesson of the Arab upheaval, namely that victory goes to he who controls the loyalty of the armed forces, usually armed forces that are deliberately multiplied and divided into several different formations, many of which have a primary mission of preserving internal security and suppressing unrest. In Russia and China we see an expansion of the number of police, paramilitary, and military units and of these organizations' missions.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Although little research has been done on these organizations in Central Asia, it is quite likely that they have been beefed up to squelch internal manifestations of dissent as in the Andijan Massacre of 2005.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Second, they have long since moved to suppress potential for organizing, again in response to much earlier crises. Elections throughout the CIS and China are a foregone conclusion and parties are essentially either created from above by the regime or denuded of any real capability for challenging the status quo.<sup>xxxv</sup> Third, they have moved, as noted above, like China, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan to suppress new information technologies. In fact, according to some commentators, Russia is working to prevent a "Facebook Revolution" by proposing that the owners of online social media be responsible for all content posted on their web sites.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Indeed, the haste and comprehensiveness with which these regimes have moved since 2003 to batten down all the hatches eloquently testifies to the fact that the structures

of governance throughout much of Eurasia remain fundamentally unstable and certainly illegitimate. This was certainly clear in 2009 given unrest in Moldova, Iran, and Xinjiang. These manifestations of unrest showed the power of the new information technology and social networking programs, and how they can be used to threaten corrupt and repressive regimes that seek to rule through electoral fraud, repression, and internal colonialism in China. There is also no doubt that these manifestations of unrest have serious repercussions beyond their borders. Often the silence of official media in authoritarian states is itself an eloquent testimony to this impact because the rulers fear the impact of such news upon their populace. We have evidence of deep scrutiny of Iranian events in 2009 in neighboring Azerbaijan whose independent media thoroughly reported the news from Iran while its official media was very quiet.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Indeed, the Azeri government actually called for stability in Iran despite its wary relationship with Tehran, a sure sign of its anxiety over the demonstrations there.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

This kind of reaction to signs of spreading unrest suggests not just that these regional governing structures are fundamentally unstable but also that they are prone to recurring crises and may again be entering a dynamic phase of political development. In fact these episodes testify to the inherent fragility of anti-democratic regimes and their recurring susceptibility to internal violence. Consequently these regimes will try to ensure beyond any doubt that the outcome is foreordained and then ratified as legitimate. In practice this suggests that across Eurasia, especially if domestic tensions grow stronger in these states we may see repeat manifestations of policies adopted against the demonstrators of 2009. Those policies comprise the following developments across Eurasia:

•We can expect increased interference with the operation of free media and in particular a crackdown on the information technology of social networking. Authoritarian regimes' success in this endeavor to date calls into question the previously unquestioned assumption that this technology inherently favors freedom and its supporters.<sup>xxxix</sup> The most extreme example of this kind of repression evidently occurred in Xinjiang in 2009.

After ethnic riots took place in July 2009, the Internet was cut off in the entire province for six months, along with most mobile text messaging and international phone service. No one in Xinjiang could send e-mail or access any website – domestic or foreign. Business people had to travel to the bordering province of Gansu to communicate with customers. Internet access and phone service have since been restored, but with severe limitations on the number of messages that people can send on their mobile phones per day, no access to overseas websites, and very limited access even to domestic Chinese websites. Xinjiang-based Internet users can only access watered-down versions of official Chinese news and information sites, with many of the functions such as blogging or comments disabled.<sup>xl</sup>

This repression can also go beyond suppression of the free use of the internet and of other forms of information technology and social networking to include periodic or at least intermittent efforts to isolate the country from foreign media, including expulsions of foreign writers, denial or visas to them, interference with the internet, news blackouts, and increased threats if not use of repression against news outlets and their reporters. These threats need not include violence, they can be effectively implemented by economic means, denying revenue from advertising, or by what Russians call telephone justice, i.e. telephone calls from authorities to compliant editors. This also means greater efforts to develop a “patriotic” media and mobilize popular support around those tamed and docile “house organs.” So it is quite likely that those repressions of new and older media will also be accompanied by favoritism for the “patriotic” media and the

systematic inculcation of nationalist xenophobia, something we see already in China, Russia, and Iran. Thus Karimov, has now charged the West with funding the Arab revolutions to gain access to oil, gas, and mineral reserves.<sup>xli</sup>

•Increased restrictions upon opposition political movements are also likely. This repression will occur, not just in terms of their freedom of communication or access to the media, but also in terms of the right to assembly and publicly protest their condition. Invariably this also entails heightened forms of repression. In Iran in 2009 the regime essentially blanketed the country with police forces and some officials threatened the opposition with heavy jail terms or even with being labeled enemies of the state.<sup>xlii</sup> And in Xinjiang that year the authorities followed suit and threatened any demonstrators with the death penalty.<sup>xliii</sup> This likely trend also means more show trials and repressions like that of Mikhail Khodorkovsky in 2009-10 and of Iranian protesters during the same period. These kinds of show trials may also be used to settle factional and clan scores in Central Asia whose states are governed by clan and patron-client politics.<sup>xliv</sup> In whatever form they appear they will be educational as Soviet rulers intended, and a deterrent to political activity in their impact. Here we should remember that Russia once again has a Gulag with political prisoners in psychiatric institutions, repressiveness and insecurity of property and the reintroduction of a “boyar”-like retinue around an all-powerful ruler who rules through a state-sponsored cult of personality.<sup>xlv</sup> Neither can we doubt Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan’s verified records of torture of prisoners.<sup>xlvi</sup> The numerous reports of the Russian authorities’ fears of social unrest during a time of economic crisis, the government’s adoption of new repressive measures to deal with them, and the strengthening of the CSTO’s capability to intervene in Central Asian states suggests that

a strong effort will be made to suppress any sign of political unrest in both Russia and Eurasia at the first moment lest it connect with growing economic grievances.<sup>xlvii</sup> Indeed, Russia has also recently enacted many new regulations designed to forestall and repress any expression of mass unrest due to the economic crisis.

Besides this fact a recent study of Kyrgyz and Kazakh counter-terrorism legislation openly links developing trends in these two sets of laws that are increasingly repressive in the absence of much terrorist activity to these states' perception of Russia whose laws they are clearly emulating as a "reference group" for them, i.e. a state that has crated the basis for persuading these states to internalize its legislation.<sup>xlviii</sup> Thus Russia's counterterror legislation which serves as a template for countries like Kazakhstan, has served as a potent instrument for the repression of democratic political activity in Russia and in these countries. As a recent study of that legislation indicates,

Aside from provisions of counterterrorism legislation that strip individual of many of their basic rights and judicial protections, the Russian law On Counteraction to Terrorism contains a number of loopholes surrounding the definition of terrorism. Terrorist activity, according to the Russian law, includes among other things, "informational or other types of assistance" at various stages of terrorism, as well as "the propaganda of terrorist ideas. Dissemination of materials or information which urge terrorist activity, substantiate and justify the need for such activity." The liability for "informational assistance" threatens to become a major deterrent to the circulation of unofficial information about terrorist attacks by broadcasting organizations. Liability for the "justification of terrorism" which was established by an amendment to Russia's Criminal Code in July 2007, has already had a chilling effect on the freedom of speech and open debate concerning terrorism. There are considerable risks of a politically motivated enforcement of these legislative proposals. The federal law on mass media has been amended with a new restriction that prohibits public justifications of terrorism by mass media sources. Given that terrorism has always been a politically charged item, it is very difficult to separate terrorism from other manifestations of politically motivated violence. The imposition of the ban the vaguely defined justifications of terrorism can promote editorial self-censorship and restrictions on the freedom of expression. It may stifle investigative journalism and promote censorship of news media articles on contentious topics related to terrorism.<sup>xlix</sup>

And new legislation to silence the media even more is currently being proposed.<sup>i</sup> Such actions betray a traditional Russian (not just Soviet) military-police approach not only to terrorism, but to the whole question of internal dissent and regime stability. Thus Andrei Soldatov observes that the FSB and Ministry of Interior, (MVD) reacted to these revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt by proposing to amend the criminal code to make the owners of social networks responsible for all content posted on their sites and to force them to register with the state.

Kazakhstan's efforts to ban the book of Rakhat Aliyev, Nazarbayev's ex-son in law and the 2009-10 purge of former high-ranking officials on corruption charges also opens the door to the possibility of a larger campaign to stifle any potential political opposition. Similar phenomena can be expected and should not be ruled out in other Central Asian states, especially given a prolonged economic crisis that could shake the pillars of the state. Indeed, even though Kazakhstan was the OSCE Chairman in 2010 its human rights situation essentially deteriorated still further.<sup>ii</sup> The new media law and the law on political parties that were supposed to embody promises made to the OSCE for reforms signed into effect by President Nazarbayev in February 2009 do not meet OSCE standards.<sup>iii</sup> Certainly Kazakhstan's earlier elections and the awarding of life tenure to Nazarbayev cannot be portrayed as manifestations of democracy. Although Kazakh authorities have rightly emphasized the country's basic religious tolerance, its freedom of religion law was found to violate the country's constitution and was withdrawn. Nonetheless it needs to be redone.

Worse, the new law on the Internet restricts freedom of expression via the Internet and aroused a large amount of controversy.<sup>liii</sup> Indeed, according to US experts this law is

even more draconian than Russia's law and could easily serve as a template for other Central Asian governments.<sup>liv</sup> Beyond the fact that Nazarbayev openly advocated limitations on the freedom of the Internet, there have been recent massive hacker attacks on opposition websites and Internet resources.<sup>lv</sup> Andrey Richter, an expert from the OSCE, has confirmed that this law completely contradicts the promises made by Kazakh authorities concerning civil and human rights.<sup>lvi</sup> As Alexei Simonov, Head of the Glasnost' Defense Fund observed,

Kazakhstan's desire to be a European power is quite noticeable despite its Asian location. So I think that Astana will have to listen to the opinion of human rights activists, because the image of Kazakhstan, which is already not the most glowing, will be ruthlessly torpedoed by these amendments [to the law on the media and concerning the internet], Kazakhstan will quickly find itself at the bottom, among states that are not liked because they severely violate the human right to freedom of speech and opinion.<sup>lvii</sup>

Although Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin and Ambassador to the US Erlan Idrissov have repeatedly stated that a genuine multi-party system, independent media, and term limits for the president are or have been enacted into legislation and that Kazakhstan is "determined to continue our policy of democratization in conformity with international human rights standards," Kazakhstan is and remains a Potemkin democracy.<sup>lviii</sup>

Authoritarianism has remained inviolate and unchanged since 1991 and much of the social science literature that could be used to analyze Kazakhstan's political system would point to a continuing authoritarianism and little reform. However, there is the possibility that Kazakhstan's commitment to the accords it made with the OSCE in Madrid in 2007 could enable activists to utilize those principles of international and domestic accords to launch a more vigorous campaign for the Kazakh government to

observe human rights as it committed itself to doing and thus replicate the experience of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a generation ago.<sup>lix</sup>

It also is clearly ruled in dynastic fashion with Nazarbayev astutely balancing clans and factions. Niyazov's death reportedly forced Nazarbayev to start thinking about succession in 2007 and it also alerted these clans who had hitherto not challenged him or the regime to follow suit. The result has been something of a series of continuing intrigues around this issue. According to Stratfor.com,

Nazarbayev decided to step down in 2010 in order to be able to bolster whoever succeeded him and keep the peace. But the infighting proved too strong and risky, compelling Nazarbayev's supporters to name him "Leader of the Nation" – meaning he would always be in charge, no matter the position. The declaration was more a safety net than anything. The political theater surrounding rumors of succession decisions grew more dramatic over the past year, leading to the decision in January to call for a snap election for April.<sup>lx</sup>

At the same time he had originally planned to call for a referendum to certify his position and make it unassailable till 2020. Unfortunately Western governments communicated their unhappiness with this move and it certainly seemed impolitic as the Arab revolution gathered steam. So it was shelved and a snap presidential election called.<sup>lxi</sup>

Nevertheless the election was widely reported to have major shortcomings and Nazarbayev's political advisor Yermukhamet Yertsybayev told reporters that "I think the president is going to run the country for ten years more, and if someone in the West doesn't like it, they'll have to get used to it."<sup>lxii</sup>

However, in the meantime a game of balancing rival clans and factions continues while members of the inner circle, especially his daughter and son-in law, Timur Kulibayev, who are worth an estimated \$2.5 billion, become targets of corruption investigations abroad and bywords for corruption.<sup>lxiii</sup> Under these circumstances it is not

surprising that in the wake of his election Nazarbayev announced his intention to strengthen the Parliament and regional governments while deconcentrating central executive power.<sup>lxiv</sup> Whatever the democratizing implications of his plan may be or whatever ambitions for democracy Nazarbayev has, this move widens the circles of elites, dilutes the clans and factions close to him, and strengthens his hand to pick his successor while diffusing power so that nobody can amass too much power in the future. Nazarbayev's charge to his new government is to reduce corruption although that is hard to do given the corruption at the top. Second, Yertsybayev apparently envisages reforms from the top to create state-led parties of power and of opposition.<sup>lxv</sup> This system would allegedly be a "Presidential-Parliamentary system" able to function in Nazarbayev's absence. And there are rumors that Kulibayev would duly lead the opposition party, thus confirming the continuation of a kind of Potemkin democracy.<sup>lxvi</sup>

This plan has apparently infuriated opponents of the regime but they are in no position to stop it. It would appear that Nazarbayev's concept of reform is to ensure a smooth transition to his successor whoever that may be, not to strengthen the overall system's responsiveness to society. Instead he apparently aims at building a relatively closed but seemingly self-sustaining system of presidential-Parliamentary relationships. But this is likely to be a chimera in the absence of the rule of law, governmental accountability, and genuine reform. Indeed, it may lead to new authoritarianism or to sustained political strife after Nazarbayev leaves the scene.<sup>lxvii</sup> Since the succession remains unresolved and nobody can stop the ruling family's corruption or machinations to revise the constitution whenever it likes, it is doubtful that genuine democracy can be initiated from the top or that the nature of the state will change substantially as long as

Nazarbayev rules and possibly for some time after that. Whether it works or not, this and other trends in Kazakhstan highlight the unresolved nature of the succession and the fact that the astute economic policies followed until now depend too much on one man's wisdom. Despite his great achievements this is not the best augury for the future. Meanwhile in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan we do not even see this much effort to advance reforms but it is clear that there are struggles for power and position within the inner circles of these regimes.

- Finally along with the growth of repression and electoral chicanery we can also expect a growth in officially sponsored xenophobia and nationalism. We already saw that in Kyrgyzstan in 2009 and it would not be hard to stimulate such feelings since every government in Central Asia has been busily proclaiming a kind of state nationalism since 1991. As a result, and given the widespread phenomenon of ethnic diasporas and minority nationalities in Central Asia there are ready targets for such campaigns in almost all of these states.

The point is that these regimes are so aware of their inherent fragility that they know very well that the spread of democracy or even of reform, not to speak of revolution in any one nearby state immediately puts them all at risk. To them ultimately there is no difference between the spread of democracy or military defeat in their peripheries because it will amount to the same thing, the loss of their power. It is not by chance that in 2006 Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov wrote that for Russia the greatest threat to Russian security was efforts to transform the “constitution” of any of the CIS members.<sup>lxviii</sup>

Therefore we can expect more resistance to the US' calls for democratization and human rights, which, in fact, have been attenuated under the present Administration. It makes no sense to demand that states like Turkmenistan conform to human rights obligations when we refuse to press China or Russia, the latter being a signatory of the Helsinki treaty, to uphold their treaty commitments. Since Russia is in many ways an alibi and a cover for other Eurasian states who are merely adding to their ultimate insecurity by these practices, this makes pressing Russia to adhere to its human rights obligations doubly important even if Moscow does not like to hear it. For if we refrain from doing so, this only tells Russian leaders that we are not serious in our commitment and that they can therefore disregard us with impunity. And we leave ourselves wide open to charges of hypocrisy throughout the CIS. Moreover, when the reckoning for these states comes, as it surely will, we will once again be caught unprepared without a policy response to that crisis.

### **Practical Policies of Repression**

Another lesson that was learned even before these Arab uprisings was to crack down on Islamic beliefs, practices, and institutions. For example, in Azerbaijan the government has struck against both Islamic trends and their political advocates. The latest episode in Azerbaijan's "twilight struggle" between the government and the Islamist opposition revolves around the government's ban of the Hijab for teenage girls in Azeri high schools. As we know from other Islamic countries like Iran, the Hijab signifies not just extreme religious affiliation but also a political statement about the nature of the society, state, and the role of women in society. Azerbaijan's government, with its traditional tolerance for a looser form of Muslim observance and Western tendencies, has

opposed this kind of medievalism and sought to ban it from its schools. Naturally this ban aroused the ire of the apparently growing religious Islamic community leading to demonstrations at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011. The leader of the outlawed and overtly pro-Iranian Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (AIP), Movsun Samadov was then arrested on January 7 after he posted videos denouncing President Aliyev. While this arrest may have violated his civil rights, as we understand them, Samadov was not just opposing the Hijab ban. Instead his screed came right out of the Iranian and Islamic playbook. He accused Aliyev of destroying mosques, trying to ban the Muslim call to prayer, harassing women who wish to wear the Hijab and compared him to a 7th century caliph vilified by Shi'a Muslims. He urged a revolution to oust the despotic regime and its personality cult, quoted Mohammed for people to give up their lives for religion's salvation, and asserted that Azerbaijan will face even bigger tragedies as long as the government is fully controlled by the Zionists.

The government rightly claimed that he was not only inciting revolution and suicide attacks on the government but that they also found weapons in his home as he and over 20 other believers were arrested. The AIP naturally denied all these charges and from here we cannot ascertain who is right. But Samadov clearly was inciting revolution and violence and his party rejected the authority of the official Muslim religious leader of Azerbaijan who is appointed by the government. And since the controversy began, the Iranian media has weighed in by attacking the Azeri government for the Hijab ban, suggesting again that it is led by or inspired by Israel to attack Islam. In Tajikistan, President Ermomali Rahmonov has launched a crackdown on Mosques, called home 100 students from Iran who were allegedly being exposed to subversive religious dogmas.

But over 90 percent of them are not continuing their studies. Meanwhile Rahmonov also inveighs against “alien” religious sects that are allegedly active in Tajikistan.<sup>lxi</sup> Such moves are intended to prevent any organized opposition from arising. Similarly in Uzbekistan the Karimov regime has launched a new crackdown on religious Muslims.<sup>lxx</sup>

### **Militarization and the Threat of Inter-State Intervention**

But Central Asian practical responses to the Arab revolution hardly end here. As the Arab revolution has become an international affair, triggering both domestic and international violence, most notably in NATO’s Libya operation, Central Asian leaders understand that first they must maintain total control over the organs of force and repression and that if they do not do so they risk foreign intervention, either from Russia (and possibly China) or from their neighbors. Though our knowledge of Central Asian militaries is incomplete, it is clear that in the last few years we see a growing militarization of Central Asia that has expressed itself in increased defense spending, a tried and true method of cementing military loyalty. This militarization is also directly attributable to the rivalries among Central Asian states.

Kiril Nourzhanov’s analysis of Central Asian threat perceptions highlights this sense of threat from each other. Nourzhanov notes the need to break away from a Western-derived threat paradigm that sees everything in terms of the great power rivalry commonly called the new great game and the main internal threat to regimes, namely insurgency even though these are certainly real enough threats.<sup>lxxi</sup> While these threats surely exist, they hardly comprise the only challenges to Central Asian security. Thus he writes that,

Conventional security problems rooted in border disputes, competition over water and mineral resources, ubiquitous enclaves and ethnic minorities, generate

conflict potential in the region and are perceived as existential threats by the majority of the local population. One of the very few comprehensive studies available on the subject arrived at the following conclusions. 1)relations among the countries of Central Asia are far from showing mutual understanding on the whole range of economic issues; 2)the most acute contradictions are linked to land and water use; and 3) these contradictions have historical roots and are objectively difficult to resolve, hence they are liable to be actualized in the near future in a violent form.<sup>lxxii</sup>

This is not just another academic analysis. In fact, border problems, mainly between Uzbekistan and all of its neighbors, have long impeded and today continue to retard the development of both regional security and prosperity.<sup>lxxiii</sup> Indeed, it is not too far to say that given the antagonism between Uzbekistan and its neighbors, especially Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, hostile relations and even the use of force is never far from a possibility.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Nourzhanov is not alone in calling for this new approach to regional security. As S. Frederick Starr also noted,

On the other hand this perspective on Central Asian security or the second alternative of seeing it in the context of local governments' internal stability is arguably incomplete. Anyone studying security issues in Central Asia quickly recognizes that environmental factors--the use and control of land, water, energy, and other raw materials, and the reclamation of polluted lands-- play an extremely important role in that region's security and political agendas.<sup>lxxv</sup>

Similarly the International Crisis Group likewise concluded that the international community must urgently approach the issues of border delimitation with more urgency than before.<sup>lxxvi</sup> Anyone looking at Central Asian security can readily see that tensions over borders, particularly between Uzbekistan and its neighbors, generate constant interstate tensions in Central Asia.<sup>lxxvii</sup> The same is true for water use, an issue that has already brought the EU and UN into efforts to help arrange multilateral solutions among Central Asian states to prevent what could easily become a war among or between them.

Due to these trends a regional arms race has taken root in Central Asia. In 2007

alone military spending in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan rose by 48%.<sup>lxxviii</sup>

As Nourzhanov further notes,

The bulk of the money would be spent on heavy weapons, fixed-wing planes, and navy vessels which is hard to explain by the demands of a fight against terrorism alone. Remarkably the danger of intra-regional armed conflict is not seriously analyzed in any official document. The current Military Doctrine of Kazakhstan (2000) which talks about the tantalizingly abstract ‘probability of diminished regional security as a result of excessive increase in qualitative and quantitative military might by certain states’, may be regarded as a very partial exception that proves the rule.<sup>lxxix</sup>

Much evidence corroborates this last point. For example Kazakhstan has increased defense spending by 800% in 2000-07.<sup>lxxx</sup> And the state defense order is expected to double in 2009.<sup>lxxxi</sup> Indeed, the trend towards militarization was already evident by 2003.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Nourzhanov also notes that Central Asian leaders have put themselves or been put in an impossible position by having to recite public paeans to regional cooperation when they are contradicting it in their actions. Likewise, their invocations of Western threat scenarios that prioritize terrorism and insurgency are belied by events since only in Kyrgyzstan has there been an insurgency.<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

Thus there is good reason to believe that Central Asian states fear their neighbors as much as they do the possibility of Russian and/or Chinese intervention. While China, in line with its overall policy remains wary of direct military intervention in the domestic affairs of a Central Asian state, Russia does not. Indeed, it clearly contemplates this possibility and is implementing the means to effectuate such intervention to prevent revolution either with a local government or regardless of its views. In the first case, after protracted bargaining in 2006 Uzbekistan granted Russia the right to use its airfield at Navoi as a base, but only under special conditions. Russia will only be able to gain access to Navoi in case of emergencies or what some reports called “force majeure”

contingencies. In return Russia will provide Uzbekistan with modern navigation systems and air defense weapons. In other words Uzbekistan wanted a guarantee of its regime's security and Russian support in case of a crisis. But it would not allow peacetime Russian military presence there.<sup>lxxxiv</sup>

But in other cases Russia sees no reason to solicit the host state's cooperation. Russia, in particular seems to be so anxious about the possibility of unrest in Central Asia spreading from a domestically triggered insurgency in other states like Kyrgyzstan, that here too it has suggested has suggested joint intervention with Kazakhstan. Thus in a 2006 assessment Ilyas Sarsembaev writes that,

Some Russian military analysts consider that if Kyrgyzstan were overtaken by a complete political collapse, Russia and Kazakhstan could impose some kind of protectorate until stability could be reestablished and new elections held. In this scenario, the United States would allow Moscow to take action in Kyrgyzstan, because most of its own resources would already be mobilized in Iraq and Afghanistan –and probably in Iran and Syria. Russian help would then be welcomed and much preferred to that of China. Indeed, if Russia did not dare to put itself forward as a stabilizing force, China might use Uyghur separatism.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

Obviously this assessment links the prospect of state collapse in Kyrgyzstan to international rivalries (the so called new great game) and to the possibilities of separatism among China's Uyghurs. Thus it implicitly postulates the paradigm outlined above, i.e. a direct link from state failure to foreign invasion or intervention and even the threat of state dismemberment. And where there is not an actual sign of state failure but a domestic situation that could be manipulated to provide pretexts for intervention, Russia has already prepared the legal ground for doing so. On August 11, 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev sent a letter to the Duma urging it to revise Russia's laws on defense. Specifically he urged it to revise the existing laws to pass a new law,

The draft law would supplement Clause 10 of the Federal Law On Defence with

paragraph 21 specifying that in line with the generally accepted principles and provisions of international law, the Russian Federation's international treaties, and the Federal Law On Defense; Russian Armed Forces can be used in operations beyond Russia's borders for the following purposes:

- To counter an attack against Russian Armed Forces or other troops deployed beyond Russia's borders;
- To counter or prevent an aggression against another country;
- To protect Russian citizens abroad;
- To combat piracy and ensure safe passage of shipping.

The draft suggests that the Federal Law On Defence be supplemented with Clause 101, setting, in accordance with Russia's Constitution, the procedures for decisions on use of Russian Armed Forces beyond the country's borders.<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

The ensuing law goes beyond providing a "legal" basis for the offensive projection of Russian military force beyond Russia's borders and thus justifying the war of 2008 and any subsequent attack against Georgia in response to alleged attacks on "the Russian citizens" of the supposedly independent states of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It also provides a basis for justifying the offensive use of Russian force against every state from the Baltic to Central Asia on the selfsame basis of supposedly defending the "honor and dignity" of Russian citizens and culture from discrimination and attack. In the context of our discussion attacks on Russians could well be or be twisted to mean that a state has lost control of the situation at home and requires or the situation requires direct forceful intervention from outside.

This should not surprise us. After all, in the wake of the Russo-Georgian war President Medvedev announced that he would form now on base his foreign policy on five principles. Among them are principles that give Russia a license for intervening in other states where the Russian minority's "interests and dignity" are allegedly at risk. Medvedev also asserted that Russia has privileged interests with countries which he

would not define, demonstrating that Russia not only wants to revise borders or intervene in other countries, it also demands a sphere of influence in Eurasia as a whole.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Yet even as it postulates a diminished sovereignty throughout Central Asia, Russia has responded by strongly supporting the current status quo in all of these countries, clearly believing that the only alternative to it is worse. Thus logically, if not pragmatically its policy is ultimately contradictory. On the one hand it has become the bastion and alibi for Central Asian states behind which they hide and whose justifications for autocracy they emulate. On the other hand, it is a revisionist state whose policies clearly express its belief that Central Asian states are not truly sovereign. As Yuri Fedorov writes regarding the 2009 law on military intervention,

Russia's self-proclaimed right to defend its troops against armed attacks affects Moscow's relations with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, all of which are parties to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and, with the exception of Belarus, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and which also have bilateral arrangements on military assistance with Russia. Russian troops and military facilities are deployed in all of these states, with the exception of Uzbekistan. Neither the Collective Security Treaty, nor any bilateral arrangements imply Russia's right to make unilateral decisions about the form, scope and very fact of employing its forces in the aforementioned states. All of these issues were to be decided either by all parties to the CSTO collectively, or by parties to the corresponding bilateral treaty. Decisions on counter-terrorist activities in the framework of the SCO are made by consensus. The new Russian legislation did not cancel out the multilateral or bilateral decision-making procedures yet it devalued those procedures in a sense. If Russian troops deployed in some of these countries are involved in international or internal conflicts, which is quite possible, Moscow will have a pretext for using them and duly deploying additional units in a unilateral manner. The right to defend Russian troops on foreign soil is of particular importance for Russia's relations with Ukraine and Moldova. The Ukrainian government has demanded the withdrawal of the Russian naval base after 2017, while Moldova insists on the immediate departure of Russian troops from Transnistria. In turn, Moscow has set its sights on stationing its troops there indefinitely. In such a context, skirmishes of any degree of gravity involving Russian servicemen in these countries may furnish Moscow with a pretext for military intervention.<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

Kyrgyzstan's revolution in April 2010 and ensuing ethnic pogroms against resident Uzbeks in June 2010 also exemplify Russia's propensity to intervene to ensure its preferred domestic outcome. Although Russia's fingerprints were all over the April 2010 coup, it and many external observers felt that the new regime was not stable enough. Even before the ethnic rioting began on June 10-11, Russian figures announced that Russia and Uzbekistan had agreed that they should intervene to stabilize the situation there.<sup>lxxxix</sup> But Uzbekistan had actually refused to do so. Indeed, President Karimov openly stated that Kyrgyzstan's problems were exclusively its own internal affair and that the violence and instability were being fomented from outside, i.e. probably Russia, a view also shared by the Tajik media.<sup>xc</sup>

Instead Uzbek President Islam Karimov turned to China. We can see this from the communiqués of his meetings with President Medvedev and Hun Jintao as they arrived for the SCO summit on June 10-11, 2010. The communiqué with Medvedev was correct but formal. But Karimov's meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao reported a fulsome communiqué extolling the millennium of relations between Uzbekistan and the Celestial Kingdom at the start of this meeting followed by a statement that the two presidents then conducted an extensive review of regional and geopolitical issues that could only mean Kyrgyzstan's stability.<sup>xcj</sup> President Hu Jintao offered a six point formula for Sino-Uzbek relations where point 6 called on both countries to intensify multilateral coordination to safeguard both states' common interests and stated that both countries must cooperate against threats to security in Central Asia. Karimov welcomed these proposals, suggesting quite strongly that Uzbekistan was leaning away from Moscow towards Beijing, not least because of Moscow's unceasing efforts to obtain a

second military base in the Ferghana valley around Osh so that it could control that valley.<sup>xcii</sup> It also appears that Uzbekistan also obtained China's support for a position blocking Russian intervention in Kyrgyzstan in the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) where China is not a member, but also where a clear-cut Chinese policy aligned to that of Uzbekistan, would carry weight.

Possibly Russia lacks the necessary forces to conduct a peace support operation in Kyrgyzstan, or does not want to have to choose between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbeks, standard practice in Russian "peacemaking operations," or else the mission was murky, protracted, costly, and uncertain at best. Nevertheless troops were apparently ready to go to Kyrgyzstan and at least some leaders in Moscow wanted to carry out this operation.<sup>xciii</sup> However, since then Moscow has prevailed upon its military alliance in Central Asia, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) to develop both the forces and the conditions for domestic intervention in member states in the event of upheaval there.

With Bishkek's consent, the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) amended its charter in December 2010 to include intervention in internal conflicts of member states, a change clearly related to Kyrgyzstan's ethnic clashes.<sup>xciv</sup>

Consequently it is not just an urgent domestic policy affair for Central Asian leaders to suppress unrest not to mention democratic reform, by all means possible, it also is also an equally urgent matter of the sovereignty of their states. The prospect of state failure leads interested external actors to prepare policies of neo-colonial subordination of Central Asia to their interests and ambitions. As we noted above the prospect of losing power due to a revolution equates to losing power due to defeat by an external government. Although Central Asian claim that they have had largely stable governments for twenty years and resent the implication that they have to learn

governance from the West, in fact the paradigm of ongoing potential instability has much validity to it. Moreover, it teaches harsh but true lessons. Failure to master internal security dynamics opens the way to long-standing hard security threats. Moreover, such interventions are hardly confined to Russia.

Many observers feared Uzbek intervention in Kyrgyzstan's ethnic pogrom of 2010. Indeed, the default posture in dealing with major or potentially major Central crises in Central Asia is the expectation that they could jump state lines and lead to a general regional or at least interstate crises. When Turkmenistan underwent a succession due to the sudden death of President Niyazov in late 2006 there was widespread apprehension internally and in Central Asia that it could lead to war both at home and throughout the region. This particular crisis also showed that there is an all too ready acceptance by analysts and governments interested in the region that such crises or other kinds of threats to state stability justify calls for foreign intervention.

When Niyazov died Senior Research Associate of International and World Economies Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academician Vladimir Yevseyev, argued that to prevent internal instability in both Turkmenistan and the region Russia and Kazakhstan should play a key role in the post-Niyazov Turkmenistan.<sup>xcv</sup> This observation captures the fact that instability in one Central Asian state is widely perceived as being likely to spread to neighboring states. In other words, something like the mentality of the domino theory is deeply rooted in elite calculations here. In the Niyazov succession we saw a simultaneous belief in the fundamental uncertainty of the Turkmen and even regional security equation coupled with the belief that major change might be even worse. While many argued that a succession struggle, could, if

done in a peaceful fashion, deescalate tensions, a violent struggle would further inflame inherent deep-seated tensions throughout the area. Shokirjon Hakimov, the leader of Tajikistan's opposition Social Democratic Party of Tajikistan, stated that, "Undoubtedly, if the forthcoming political activities in Turkmenistan concerning the designation of the country's leader take place in a civilized manner, then they will certainly have a positive influence on the development of pluralism in the region."<sup>xcvi</sup> At the same time, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev revealed both his government's hopes and its apprehensions by saying that his government has an interest in Turkmenistan's stability. Therefore "Kazakhstan is not going to get involved in any wars for Turkmenistan."<sup>xcvii</sup> The sentiments behind this statement speak for themselves.

This kind of sentiment is still the case. Uzbekistan's hostile relations with Tajikistan emerge from the following example. Uzbek papers, obviously under governmental control, openly speculate that due to a poor food security situation, in other terms undernourishment, Tajikistan's situation is potentially explosive. They charge that due to this poverty and hunger families sell their daughters to Chinese people or engage in narcotics trafficking to make money and that the government is not even always feeding its soldiery. Therefore they charge that Tajikistan might be vulnerable to an Egyptian style revolution.<sup>xcviii</sup> There are many such examples, most notably in the general skepticism and pessimism concerning the staying power of the new Kyrgyz government. But they are not confined, as we have seen, to expectations or assessments concerning Kyrgyzstan's "democracy."

### **Implications for US Efforts at Democracy Promotion**

All of these phenomena present a bleak picture for all foreign efforts, private or public, US or EU, or other parties' efforts to promote democracy in these states. To the extent that these organizations exist they infuriate the leaders of Central Asia, and provide ever ready pretexts for them to blame the US or other forces for attempting to undermine them. Since it is unclear if the US has a definite media policy for this region to make clear that such charges are unfounded, and essentially the work of Russian and local government propagandists seeking to blind people from comprehending their own domestic situation or the failure of the Russian efforts at intervention in the Ukraine and Georgia after 2003, the field has been left open to the purveyors of such charges. Second, more recent assessments of democracy promotion has suggested that they are too tied to the US or other foreign governments or organizations and though well intentioned, misconceived in terms of local realities.<sup>xcix</sup>

To the extent that the Arab revolutions continue and possibly become more violent and to the degree that other governments fall victim to this tide, e.g. Libya and Syria, it is likely that repressive measures directed against these democracy promotion programs will grow. This will be even the case if it looks to local rulers like pressure for reform is growing in their own countries. This poses a serious problem for US policy in the region. That policy today has the overwhelming priority of establishing lasting ties with local governments, particularly in the military sphere, because of our quest for victory in Afghanistan. Every indicator of policy, whether it be the record of defense and other assistance, the statements issued after high-level visits, etc indicates that the priority of establishing lasting military, political and economic ties far outstrips the commitment on the ground to improving governance and human rights in these countries.<sup>c</sup> This is said

as fact, not as critique, for one can credibly argue that our priority is indeed the war on terrorism centered in Afghanistan. Nonetheless we will be blamed for democracy promotion whether or not the US promotes democracy. Our strategy must therefore not only highlight human rights shortfalls in Central Asia, but also in Russia and China and do so in a way more consonant with local realities as suggested in some of the recent critiques of those programs.<sup>ci</sup> To the degree that Central Asia becomes more important for the US and we seek to build a lasting, multi-dimensional US presence there, we have no choice but to be a strong and effective advocate throughout Eurasia for principles that local governments have accepted in solemn international accords. For if we fail in that task the inevitable day of reckoning that will come will also sweep aside our previous policy achievements that will have then be shown to be built on sand.

## Notes

- <sup>i</sup> “Muhammad Tahir, Governments Move To Thwart ‘Arab Spring’ In Central Asia,” *Human Rights Society In Uzbekistan, Blog Archive*, <http://en.hrsu.org/2011/04/28/in-the-arab-world-from-getting-a-foothold/>, April 28, 2011, and *Eurasia Insight*, April 28, 2011
- <sup>ii</sup> Yevgeny Shestakov, “Could the Revolutionary Fervor in North Africa Reach the Former Soviet Central Asian States,?” *The Telegraph*, April 1, 2011; Catherine A. Fitzpatrick, “Will the Revolutions in the Middle East Have an Impact on Uzbekistan,?” *Eurasia Insight*, [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org), February 4, 2011; Georgiy Voloshin, “Don’t Expect Mideast-Style Revolution in Central Asia,” *Global Asia*, VI, NO. 1, Spring, 2011, <http://globalasia.org/1.php?c=e379>
- <sup>iii</sup> See the following articles on the Uzbek and Kyrgyz militaries, “Interview With Major General Kabul Berdiyev, Minister of Defense of Uzbekistan,” Moscow, *Krasnaya Zvezda Online*, April 30, 2011, *Open Source Center, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Eurasia Henceforth, FBIS SOV*, April 30, 2011; Sergey Sidorov, “Interview With Kyrgyz Defense Minister Abibila Kudayberdiyev, Bishkek, *V Kontse Nedeli*, in Russian, April 22, 2011, *FBIS SOV*, May 3, 2011
- <sup>iv</sup> Gabor Stier, “Final Warning: Central Asian Dictators Bought Time for Reform,” *RIA Novosti, Valdai Discussion Club*, April 13, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/valdai\\_op/20110413/163505830.html](http://en.rian.ru/valdai_op/20110413/163505830.html)
- <sup>v</sup> K.Kumkova, “Kazakhstan: Astana Powerbrokers Wrestling With the Succession issue,” *Eurasia Insight*, May 10, 2011
- <sup>vi</sup> Sean Roberts, *Saving Democracy Promotion From Short-Term U.S. Policy Interests in Central Asia*, A Century Foundation Report, Century Foundation, New York, 2009; and see the Discussions in Anna Kreikemeier and Wolfgang Zellner, Eds., *The Quandaries of Promoting Democracy in Central Asia: Experiences and Perspectives From Europe and the USA: Report of a Transatlantic Workshop at the Center for OSCE Research in Hamburg, Centre for OSCE Research Working paper, No. 18, 2007*
- <sup>vii</sup> Tahir
- <sup>viii</sup> Ashgabat, *Turkmen TV Altyn Asyr Channel*, in Turkmen, April 28, 2011, *FBIS SOV*, April 29, 2011
- <sup>ix</sup> “Governments Move To Thwart ‘Arab Spring’ In Central Asia,”
- <sup>x</sup> Paul Quinn-Judge, “Conventional Security Risks To Central Asia: A Summary Overview,” Paper Presented to the Conference, Energy, Environment, and the Future of Security in Central Asia, Understanding the Security Implications of Critical Energy and Environmental Issues, Rome, October 15-16, 2009
- <sup>xi</sup> Ralph S. Clem, “From the Arab Street to the Silk Road: Implications of the Unrest in North Africa for the Central Asian States,” *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, LII, NO, 2, 2011, pp. 228-241
- <sup>xii</sup> Robert D. Kaplan and Abraham M. Denmark, “The Long goodbye: The Future North Korea,” *World Affairs*, May/June, 2011 CLXXIV, No. 1, pp. 12-13
- <sup>xiii</sup> “Sokhranit’ Stabilitnost’ v Tsentral’noi Azii- Uchastniki Parlamentnarskikh Situatsii v Gosdume,” [www.duma.gov.ru/news/273/71937/print=yes](http://www.duma.gov.ru/news/273/71937/print=yes), April 13, 2011
- <sup>xiv</sup> Murat Sadykov, “Uzbekistan Tightens Control Over Mobile Internet,” *Eurasia Insight*, March 15, 2011, [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org); Fyodor Lukyanov, “Learning From Libya and

Singapore,' *Russia in Global Affairs*, January 25, 2011, <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/redcol/Learning-from-Libya-and-Singapore-15124>; "Anti-Revolution Agenda: Seize the Control Over Cellular Companies," [www.neweurasia.net/cross-regional-and-blogsphere/anti-revolution-agenda-seize-the-control-over-cellular-companies](http://www.neweurasia.net/cross-regional-and-blogsphere/anti-revolution-agenda-seize-the-control-over-cellular-companies), March 15, 2011; "Uzbekistan Zashchishchaeyet Seti Peredachi Danykh ot Buntovtsikov," [www.uznews.net](http://www.uznews.net), March 17, 2011

<sup>xv</sup> "Azerbaijan Puts Skype in Its Sights," *Eurasia Insight*, May 4, 2011, [www.euraisanet.org](http://www.euraisanet.org)

<sup>xvi</sup> Tahir; Fitzpatrick

<sup>xvii</sup> "China Creates Agency to Regulate Cyberspace," *New York Times*, May 5, 2011, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

<sup>xviii</sup> Heather Maher, "Report: Press Freedom 't Lowest Ebb' in More Than a Decade," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, May 5, 2011

<sup>xix</sup> Baku, *Azadilq*, in Azeri, April 27, 2011, *FBIS SOV*, April 29, 2011

<sup>xx</sup> Clem, p. 236; Baktybek Abdrisaev, "Last Flight Out of Kyrgyzstan," *Washington Post*, February 20, 2009, p. 23; Lora Lumpe, *U.S. Military Aid to Central Asia 1999-2009: Security Priorities Trump Human Rights and Diplomacy*, Open society Institute, 2010; Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Robert Blake, "The Obama Administration' Priorities in South and Central Asia,' Speech at the Baker Center, Rice university, Houston, Texas, January 19, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rmks/2011/155002.htm>

<sup>xxi</sup> Stephen Blank, "Azerbaijan and Human Rights: Not As Simple As It Looks," *Central Asia Caucasus Analyst*, February 16, 2011

<sup>xxii</sup> Clem, p. 232

<sup>xxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234

<sup>xxiv</sup> Roman Muzalevsky, "Toward an Arab-Style Uprising in Central Asia,?" *International Relations and Security Network*, May 3, 2011, [www.isn.ethz.ch](http://www.isn.ethz.ch) Voloshin

<sup>xxv</sup> Clem, p. 238

<sup>xxvi</sup> *Ibid* p. 235

<sup>xxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236

<sup>xxviii</sup> "Cotton in Uzbekistan," *Environmental Justice Foundation*, <http://www.ejfoundation.org/page142.html>; "We Live Subject to their Orders": A Three- Province Survey of Forced Child Labor in Uzbekistan's 2008 Cotton Harvest, *International Labor Rights Forum*, <http://www.laborrights.org/sites/default/files/publications-and-resources/UzbekCottonFall08Report.pdf>

<sup>xxix</sup> Erica Marat, *The State-Crime Nexus in Central Asia: State Weakness, Organized Crime and Corruption in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*, Washington and Uppsala: CACI&SRSP Silk Road Paper, October 2006; "Kyrgyzstan's Powerful Criminal Gangs," *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, February 26, 2009, <http://www.janes.com/subscribe/jid/doc>

<sup>xxx</sup> Paul Quinn-Judge, *Tajikistan: On the Pot-holed Road to Failed-State Status*, International Crisis Group, 2009, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/central-asia/tajikistan/on-the-pot-holed-road-to-failed-state-status.aspx>; Stephen Blank, Tajikistan: Rahmon Facing Pressure on All Sides,' *Eurasia Insight*, March 29, 2011,

<sup>xxxi</sup> Max G. Manwaring, *The Inescapable Global Security Arena*, Carlisle Barracks, PA:

---

Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2002, pp. 2-3

<sup>xxxii</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, "Russia-Central Asia Advances and Shortcomings of the Military Partnership," Stephen J. Blank, Ed., *Central Asian Security Trends: Views From Europe and Russia*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2011, pp. 1-2

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Stephen Blank, "Civil-Military Relations and Russian Security," Stephen J. Blank, Ed., *Civil-Military Relations in Medvedev's Russia*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College 2011, pp. 1-76; Murray Scot Tanner, "How China Manages Internal Security Challenges and Its Impact on PLA Missions," Roy Kamphausen, Andrew Scobell, and David Lai, Rfd, *Beyond the Strait: PLA Missions Other Than Taiwan*, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2009, pp. 39-97

<sup>xxxiv</sup> *FBIS SOV*, April 30, 2011; *FBIS SOV*, May 3, 2011; Erica Marat, *The Military and the State in Central Asia: From Red Army to Independence*, London: Routledge, 2009; Roger N. McDermott, *Kazakhstan's Defense Policy: An Assessment of the Trends*, London: Create Space, 2009; Idem. *Countering Global Terrorism: Developing the Antiterrorist Capabilities of the Central Asian Militaries*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2004 are the only extant studies of Central Asian militaries, clearly there is a lot we do not know about their staying power in domestic crises.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Max Bader, *The Curious Case of Political Party Assistance in Central Asia*, OSCE Academy Bishkek, 2010

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Andrei Soldatov, "Kremlin's Plan to Prevent a Facebook Revolution," *The Moscow Times*, February 28, 2011

<sup>xxxvii</sup> "North of Tehran," *Osservatore Balcani*, [www.osservatorebalcani.org/article/articleview/11520/1/407](http://www.osservatorebalcani.org/article/articleview/11520/1/407), June 30, 2009; Shahin Abbasov, "Azerbaijan: Monitoring Iranian Events For Political Lessons," *Eurasia Insight*, June 26, 2009

<sup>xxxviii</sup> *Ibid*; "Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Calls For Stability In Iran" *Associated Press*, June 19, 2009

<sup>xxxix</sup> "Undermining Democracy: Strategies and Methods of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Authoritarians," *Undermining Democracy*, pp. 3-4; Rebecca Mckinnon, China' "Networked Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy*, XXII, NO. 2, April-June, 2011, pp. 32-46; Xiao Qiang, "The Battle for the Chinese Internet," *Journal of Democracy*, XXII, No. 2, April-June, 2011, pp. 47-61; Evgeny Internet Control,? *Journal of Democracy*, XXII, NO. 2, April-June, 2011, pp. 62-72

<sup>xl</sup> McKinnon, p. 40

<sup>xli</sup> Richard Orange, "Uzbek President Accuses the West of Funding Arab Revolts," *The Telegraph*, May 10, 2011,

[www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/uzbekistan/8505104/Uzbek-president-accuses-the-West-of-funding-Arab-revolts.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/uzbekistan/8505104/Uzbek-president-accuses-the-West-of-funding-Arab-revolts.html)

<sup>xlii</sup> Sam Dagher, "A Peek Inside Iran Shows Protests Fading Under Withering Gaze," *New York Times*, July 9, 2009, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

<sup>xliii</sup> Edward Wong "China Official Threatens Death Penalty After Riots," *Ibid.*; China Says Ethnic Violence in Check Amid Heavy Troop Presence,"

- 
- <sup>xliv</sup> Joanna Lillis, “Kazakhstan Corruption Scandals An Indicator Of Clan Infighting in Astana,?” *Eurasia Insight*, July 10, 2009
- <sup>xlv</sup> Jonas Bernstein, “ Lev Ponomarev, Russia has Four Categories of Political Prisoners,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, February 13, 2008.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> U.S. Department of State, 2010 Human Rights Report, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160515.pdf>, April 8, 2011. . pp. 15-16; Catherine Fitzpatrick, “Norwegian Helsinki Committee on Turkmen Prison: “A Clear Order Must Go Out to End These Horrible Practices,” *Eurasia Insight*, May 6, 2011
- <sup>xlvii</sup> The CSTO is the subject of a forthcoming study by the author
- <sup>xlviii</sup> Mariya Y. Omelicheva, *Counterterrorism Policies in Central Asia*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011
- <sup>xlix</sup> Mariya Y. Omelicheva, *Counterterrorism Policies in Central Asia.*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 53
- <sup>l</sup> Viktor Khanayev, “Mass Quality Added to Mediums of Information,” Moscow, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta Online*, in Russian, February 24, 2011, *FBIS SOV*, February 24, 2011
- <sup>li</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, “Address of H.E. Dr. Marat Tazhin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan 16<sup>th</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council, Helsinki, December 4, 2008” MC.DEL/53/08 5 December 2008, (Henceforth Tazhin Address) [www.mfa.kz](http://www.mfa.kz)
- <sup>lii</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>liii</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>liv</sup> Remarks of US NGO experts at the CSIS meeting with them in Washington, May 28, 2009
- <sup>lv</sup> Sergey Rasov, “Outside the Access Zone,” Moscow, *politkom.ru*, in Russian, April 21-22, 2009, *FBIS SOV*, May 8, 2009
- <sup>lvi</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>lvii</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>lviii</sup> Remarks of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Krol in CSCE Hearings; Tazhin, Speech, Republic of Kazakhstan, “Statement By H.E. Mr. Marat Tazhin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, At the High Level Segment, 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council, Geneva, March 4, 2008 (Henceforth Tazhin Speech)
- <sup>lix</sup> “Statement of Dr. Eric M. McGlinchey Before the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe, United States Congress, Washington, D.C., May 12, 2009
- <sup>lx</sup> “Kazakhstan’s Succession Crisis: a Special Report,” [www.stratfor.com](http://www.stratfor.com), March 31, 2011
- <sup>lxi</sup> Alexei Makarin, “Kazakhstan: President Nursultan Nazarbayev Will Have to Choose Successor During the New Term of Office,” *Moscow, Kommersant*, in Russian, April 4, 20”Kazakhstan’s Leader Pushes to Empower the Parliament,” [www.stratfor.com](http://www.stratfor.com)11, *FBIS SOV*, April 4, 2011
- <sup>lxii</sup> Kathy Lally, “Kazakh President Holds Fast as Arab Revolutions Topple Others,” *Washington Post*, April 13, 2011. [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)
- <sup>lxiii</sup> “Kazakhstan’s Succession Crisis: a Special Report”; William Courtney, “: The Father of Kazakhstan,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 5, 2011

- <sup>lxiv</sup> “Kazakhstan’s Leader Pushes to Empower the Parliament,” [www.straftfor.com](http://www.straftfor.com), April 8, 2011
- <sup>lxv</sup> Vladimir Socor, “Kazakhstan’s Presidency Initiates Discussion on Political Reforms,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, April 15, 2011
- <sup>lxvi</sup> Farangis Najibullah, “Who Would Succeed Kazakh President Nazarbayev,?” *Eurasia Insight*, April 24, 2011
- <sup>lxvii</sup> Kumkova
- <sup>lxviii</sup> Sergei Ivanov, “Russia Must Be Strong,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 11, 2006, 14.
- <sup>lxix</sup> Stephen Blank, “Azerbaijan and Human Rights: Not As Simple As It Looks,” *Central Asia Caucasus Analyst*, February 16, 2011; Stephen Blank, Tajikistan: Rahmon Facing Pressure on All Sides,’ *Eurasia Insight*, March 29, 2011,
- <sup>lxx</sup> Mushfig Bayram, “Uzbekistan: Crackdown on Devout Muslims Continues,” *Refworld, UNHCR, from Forum 18*, January 27, 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic,464db4f52,,4b604d431e,0.html>
- <sup>lxxi</sup> Kirill Nourzhanov, “Changing Security Threat Perceptions in Central Asia,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* LXIII, NO. 1, 2009, p. 94
- <sup>lxxii</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>lxxiii</sup> Chingiz Umetov, “Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan: Border Hassles Abound,” *Transitions Online*, May 4, 2009, [www.tol.cz](http://www.tol.cz)
- <sup>lxxiv</sup> By June 2009 Uzbekistan had again closed its borders with Kyrgyzstan and the later was digging trenches along that border while relations with Tajikistan were hardly better.
- <sup>lxxv</sup> Starr, p. 4; see also Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, *Central Asian Security: The New International Context*, London and Washington, D.C.: Royal Institute of International Affairs and Brookings Institution Press, 2001 is an exception in this regard
- <sup>lxxvi</sup> Nourzhanov, p. 94
- <sup>lxxvii</sup> Umetov,
- <sup>lxxviii</sup> Nourzhanov, p. 95
- <sup>lxxix</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>lxxx</sup> Almaty, *Interfax-Kazakhstan Online*, in Russian, January 23, 2009, *FBIS SOV*, January 23, 2009
- <sup>lxxxi</sup> Almaty, *Kazakhstan Today Online*, in Russian, February 24, 2009, *FBIS SOV*, February 24, 2009
- <sup>lxxxii</sup> Stephen Blank, “Central Asia’s Strategic Revolution,” *Regional Power Plays in the Caucasus and Central Asia, NBR Analysis: National Bureau of Research, Asia, Seattle, Washington*, 2003, pp. 51-76
- <sup>lxxxiii</sup> Nourzhanov, pp. 94-95
- <sup>lxxxiv</sup> “Uzbek Airfield Is Made Available to Russia in Emergencies,” *Ferghana.ru Information Agency*, December 22, 2006
- <sup>70</sup> Ilyas Sarsembaev, “Russia: No Strategic Partnership With China in view,” *China Perspective, Perspectives Chinois*, No. 645, May-June 2006, p. 33
- <sup>lxxxvi</sup> <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/sdocs/news.shtml>, August 11, 2009

---

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> “Interview given by Dmitry Medvedev to Television Channels Channel One, Russia, NTV, “August 31, 2008,

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/08/31/1850\\_type82916\\_206003.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/08/31/1850_type82916_206003.shtml);

<sup>lxxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>lxxxix</sup> “Russia and Uzbekistan to Bring Stability to Kyrgyzstan,”

<http://rt.com/Politics/2010-06-08/russia-uzbekistan-stabilize-kyrgyzstan.html>, June 8, 2010

<sup>xc</sup> Moscow, *ITAR-TASS*, in English, June 19, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 19, 2010;

Caversham, *BBC Monitoring*, in English, June 19, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 19, 2010;

Tashkent, *Uzbek Television Service*, in Uzbek, June 18, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 18, 2010

<sup>xc</sup> “Uzbekistan-China: Toward Enhancing Cooperation,” June 10, 2010,

<http://www.gov.uz/en/press/politics/5730>

<sup>xcii</sup> Beijing *Xinhua Domestic Service*, in Chinese, June 9, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 9, 2010

<sup>xciii</sup> Mikhail Zygar and Konstantin Gaaze, “The Russians Are Not Coming,” Moscow:

*Rusky Newsweek Online*, in Russian, June 22, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 22, 2010; Moscow,

*Ekho Moskvyy*, June 14, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, June 14, 2010; Simon Shuster, “Why Isn’t

Russia Intervening in Kyrgyzstan,?” *Time*, June 16, 2010,

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1997055,00.html>; Authors’ conversations with foreign intelligence officials, 2011

<sup>xciv</sup> Bruce Pannier, “Russia’s Star on Rise Again in Kyrgyzstan,” *Eurasia Insight*, April 9, 2011

<sup>xcv</sup> “Kazakhstan Should Influence Stabilization of Situation in Turkmenistan, Russian

Expert,” *The Times of Central Asia*, December 22, 2006, Retrieved from Lexis-Nexis

<sup>xcvi</sup> “Tajik Opposition Leader Mulls Impact of Turkmen Developments,” Dushanbe,

*Asia-Plus News Agency*, in Russian, December 22, 2006, Retrieved from Lexis-Nexis

<sup>xcvii</sup> “Kazakhstan Not to “Get Involved in Any Wars for Turkmenistan,?” Astana, *Russia*

*& CIS General Newslines*, December 29, 2006, Retrieved from Lexis-Nexis

<sup>xcviii</sup> Blank, Tajikistan: Rahmon Facing Pressure on All Sides,’

<sup>xcix</sup> Roberts

<sup>c</sup> Lumpe, Blake,

<sup>ci</sup> Roberts