



Kyrgyzstan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 23 - 25 June 2010

Information on ethnic violence in Osh in June 2010 including: what sparked the violence; treatment of Uzbeks by state and non-state agents; whether police protection is available; whether freedom of movement is available for Uzbeks; information on NGOs who work with the Uzbeks; information on Uzbek traditions, culture, society and history

An undated document from *Minority Rights Group International* states:

“Uzbeks are concentrated mainly in the south and western parts of the country, especially the Ferghana valley and the three administrative provinces of Batken, Osh, and Jalal-Abad. The Uzbeks speak an eastern Turkic language which is closest to Uyghur. They are predominantly Sunni Muslim of the Hanafi school: they are descended from Turkic-Mongol invaders with strong Iranian influences. Despite their large numbers and geographic concentration, including in Osh province where they are a majority, they have tended to be excluded from exercising political power since Kyrgyzstan’s independence.” (Minority Rights Group International (Undated) *Uzbeks [in Kyrgyzstan]*)

A publication issued in 1994 edited by *Paul Friedrich* and *Norma Diamond* states in relation to Uzbek society:

“Uzbek society was traditionally organized patrilineally, with members of individual families carefully graded according to order of birth and precedence. Descent lines for Uzbeks were traditionally traced along patrilineal lines to the founding ancestor of the clan. Although each clan possessed its own territory, single leader, and center of authority, clan genealogy was often amended. Thus, with the combination of two clans in an economic or military alliance, the leader of one might recognize the leader of the other as a brother.” (Paul Friedrich and Norma Diamond [Volume Editors] (1994) *Encyclopedia of World Cultures, Volume VI, Russia and Eurasia/China*, G.K. Hall & Company, New York, p.397)

The *Encyclopedia of the World Minorities* states:

“...Uzbek social organization is more characterized by the importance of extended families and village communities. Marriage patterns strongly reflect the sedentary character of the society.” Carl Skutsch [Editor] (2005) *Encyclopedia of the World Minorities, Volume 3 P-Z*, p.1288).

An Assessment by the *University of Maryland* reports in December 2006:

“There is a moderate risk of rebellion by ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan in the near future. Ethnic Uzbeks exhibit five of the characteristics that increase the risk of violence: persistent protest; territorial concentration; generally high levels of group cohesion and organization; recent regime instability; and social discrimination and government repression.” (University of Maryland (31 December 2006) *Assessment for Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan*, Minorities at Risk Project)

This report also states:

“Tensions surrounding the role of ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan's political life began even before the republic declared independence from the USSR in 1991.” (ibid)

This report also notes:

“Ethnic Uzbeks have been represented in parliament from 1991 to present, although they have been consistently underrepresented. Uzbeks also face discrimination in jobs for the civil service as well as other practices that restrict their ability to organize politically and have fair judicial hearings to the same degree as ethnic Kyrgyz...Group members also face significant economic disadvantages.” (ibid)

In April 2010 a report published by *Freedom House* commenting on events of 2009 states:

“Members of the country's sizable Uzbek minority, concentrated in the south, have long demanded more political and cultural rights, including greater representation in government, more Uzbek-language schools, and official status for the Uzbek language.” (Freedom House (April 2010) *Freedom in the World - Kyrgyzstan (2010)*)

Eurasia Net states in a report from May 2010:

“Ethnic Uzbeks and other minorities have long complained about a lack of political representation in Kyrgyzstan.” (Eurasia Net (25 May 2010) *Provisional Government Grappling with Simmering Ethnic Tension in Kyrgyzstan*)

A report by *Human Rights Watch* from June 2010 states:

“The rioting began with a fight between mostly ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz gangs and developed into looting, arson, and shooting. One Kyrgyz nongovernmental organization told Human Rights Watch that many ethnic Uzbeks, fearing reprisals, are trying to leave the city, with some fleeing to Kyrgyzstan's border with Uzbekistan. Gas has been shut off to the entire city to prevent fires, and some neighborhoods have been left without electricity. Several clashes between ethnic groups broke out in the wake of a political revolt on April 6 and 7, which resulted in the ouster of Kyrgyzstan's former president, Kurmanbek Bakiev. In May, at least five people were killed in clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Jalal Abad, about 50 kilometers from Osh. Ethnic violence in Osh also

has historic roots. Violence between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Osh over property disputes 20 years ago this month cost almost 300 lives.” (Human Rights Watch (11 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: Protect All Ethnic Groups*).

Another document from *Human Rights Watch* from June 2010 states:

“Human Rights Watch staff in Osh received reports that in some cases entire neighborhoods had emptied out, with people fleeing attacks. Several sources told Human Rights Watch that Kyrgyz gangs are targeting Uzbek neighborhoods and that many Uzbek-owned homes, shops, and restaurants have been torched. Human Rights Watch also received reports that some ethnic Uzbeks have written “SOS” on their homes in the hopes that this would deter attackers.” (Human Rights Watch (12 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: UN Should Act to Help End Violence*)

This document also states:

“Safe movement within Osh and passage out of the city is extremely difficult. Ethnic gangs from both sides have established roadblocks in the city and are preventing people from passing. Violence has also broken out in Jalal-Abad, a city about 50 kilometers from Osh that also has a large ethnic Uzbek minority and is the hometown of former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, who was ousted from power in April.” (ibid)

This document also reports:

“Riots and clashes between mostly ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz gangs broke out in Osh, the largest city in southern Kyrgyzstan on June 10. Violence, including shooting, arson, and looting has continued since then and is ongoing. At least 75 people have been killed and hundreds have suffered injuries.” (ibid)

The Guardian in June 2010 notes:

“Kyrgyzstan was tonight in the grip of a bloody ethnic war after rioting that erupted four days ago in the southern city of Osh spread rapidly to other areas, with gun battles raging between Kyrgyz and Uzbek youths. The country's interim government granted its security forces shoot-to-kill powers and promised to send a volunteer force to the region. But the violence continued, taking the death toll since Thursday night to more than 100. At least 1,100 have been wounded in what are the country's worst ethnic clashes for 20 years. Mobs of Kyrgyz men were yesterday burning Uzbek villages slaughtering residents and storming police stations, witnesses said.” (The Guardian (13 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan erupts into ethnic war*)

A report by *Eurasia Net* states in June 2010:

“Some Kyrgyz NGOs have called on Russian President Medvedev to send troops. In a petition distributed today by e-mail, the Expert Working Group of Uzbekistan, a group of Uzbek human rights NGOs, has called for outside military intervention in Kyrgyzstan from their own Uzbek government as well as NATO to

stop the violence.” (Eurasia Net (13 June 2010) *Uzbekistan Opens Border to Refugees Fleeing Kyrgyzstan; Uzbek NGO Reports 200,000*)

A report by *BBC News* states in June 2010:

“Southern Kyrgyzstan is home to a large ethnic Uzbek minority of almost a million people and despite old tensions the two ethnic groups had been living peacefully for many years. But since Kyrgyzstan's popular uprising in April in which former president Kurmanbek Bakiyev was ousted, security has deteriorated. The latest violence is the biggest challenge the new government has faced so far.” (BBC News (13 June 2010) *Fear and shock as ethnic Uzbeks flee Kyrgyz clashes*)

A report by the *United Nations News Service* states in June 2010:

“United Nations relief agencies are dispatching emergency aid and staff to Central Asia, where tens of thousands of refugees have crossed into Uzbekistan as they flee several days of deadly ethnic clashes in southern Kyrgyzstan. More than 75,000 ethnic Uzbeks are estimated to have fled Kyrgyzstan since Friday, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported today, citing figures from the Government of Uzbekistan. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it is preparing to deploy both aid supplies and staff with experience in dealing with emergencies, such as field officers and logistics experts, to help the new arrivals in Uzbekistan. The aid will be sent from the agency's stockpile in Dubai. More than 110 people are confirmed to have died and at least 1,300 others are injured as a result of the clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks that erupted last week. The southern Kyrgyz city of Osh has been the worst affected by the violence, but there have been reports of widespread killing, looting and marauding in Jalalabat and several rural districts as well. OCHA reported that the majority of residents in the ethnic Uzbek neighbourhoods of Osh has either abandoned their homes or barricaded themselves inside.” (United Nations News Service (14 June 2010) *Alarmed by inter-ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan, UN rushes aid to victims*)

A report published by *Amnesty International* in June 2010 states:

“Eyewitnesses have reported that groups of armed civilians, mostly young men claiming to be Kyrgyz, were roaming the streets of Osh, targeting districts of the city inhabited mainly by Uzbeks shooting at civilians, setting shops and houses on fire and looting private property. While official figures for the past two days of violence speak about more than 60 people killed, unconfirmed reports given to the independent Ferghana.ru news agency by local district council representatives in Osh said that at least 500 Uzbek civilians had been killed by midday on 12 June and over 2,000 had been injured, many seriously.” (Amnesty International (14 June 2010) *Kyrgyz government must protect its population*)

The Economist notes in June 2010:

“The cause of the rampage involving Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks, which began in Osh, Kyrgyzstan's second-largest city, remains unclear. Observers believe that the events were orchestrated by individuals taking advantage of long-standing

tensions between the two ethnic groups. The interim government has blamed ex-president Kurmanbek Bakiyev and his supporters. It says they instigated the unrest to prevent a national referendum on its proposal for a new constitution, which was scheduled to be held on June 27th. Mr Bakiyev, who was ousted in a popular uprising in April and now lives in exile, has rejected the charge. This wave of violence has been shaped by politics. Mr Bakiyev hails from the south of the country. His stronghold was in Jalal-Abad, where he still has many supporters. Ethnic Uzbeks, who play almost no role in Kyrgyzstan's public life—whether in government, regional administrations, or the military—have tended to prefer the interim government, which has set its sights on turning Kyrgyzstan away from authoritarian presidential rule to a parliamentary republic.” (The Economist (14 June 2010) *Violence in Kyrgyzstan, Stalin's harvest*)

A report by *Minority Rights Group International* in June 2010 states:

“Minority Rights Group International (MRG) condemns the targeting of ethnic Uzbeks in recent attacks in Kyrgyzstan, and calls on state authorities to guarantee the security of minorities, who face a continued threat of violence. According to the Kyrgyzstan Health Ministry, 118 people have been killed and 1,609 wounded in the violence between Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks, which began on 10 June. Reports say as many as 100,000 Uzbeks are attempting to flee the country and are awaiting entry into neighbouring Uzbekistan, whilst tens of thousands have already crossed the border.” (Minority Rights Group International (14 June 2010) *MRG calls for protection for minorities as ethnic Uzbeks flee violent attacks in Kyrgyzstan*)

A report by *BBC News* in June 2010 states:

“Tensions have been high in the area since the toppling of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. When Mr Bakiyev was ousted in an uprising on 7 April 2010, his stronghold in the south became the centre of instability. Among the Kyrgyz population, pro-Bakiyev elements organised resistance to the interim government by seizing government offices and taking officials hostage. The sizeable Uzbek community displayed sympathy to the new government in Bishkek. As Roza Otunbayeva, the interim president, struggled to control the south, well-established criminal elements and drug dealers exploited the power vacuum. The spark for communal violence was provided by a clash between Kyrgyz and Uzbek gangs. It soon turned into street fighting among the youth in Osh. Fuelled by rumours of atrocities on either side, angry mobs from other towns and villages arrived in Osh, forcing large numbers of ethnic Uzbeks to flee.” (BBC News (15 June 2010) *Q&A: Kyrgyzstan's ethnic violence*)

In June 2010 a report in *The Guardian* notes:

“Witnesses said the attacks by the Kyrgyz population on the Uzbek minority were attempted genocide. The violence erupted in Osh last Thursday evening, possibly ignited by a row in a casino. But much of it appeared co-ordinated and planned, Uzbeks said. The attacks took the prosperous outlying Uzbek areas of town unawares.” (The Guardian (16 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan killings are attempted genocide, say ethnic Uzbeks*).

A report issued In June 2010 by the *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* states:

“An estimated 100,000 refugees from southern Kyrgyzstan (up from previous estimate of 75,000) have been admitted into Uzbekistan following violence pitting ethnic Uzbeks against ethnic Kyrgyz in southern Kyrgyzstan since 10 June.”
(United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (16 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan Civil Conflict Situation Report #2*)

A report by *Reuters* from June 2010 states:

“Clashes between its main ethnic groups, Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, erupted in the south on June 10 and escalated into the deadliest violence in the former Soviet republic in 20 years. At least 187 people have been killed and nearly 2,000 wounded, mainly in Osh, a low-rise city of mud-brick houses and crumbling Soviet-era architecture near the Uzbek border.” (Reuters (16 June 2010) *Kyrgyz city still tense after ethnic fighting*)

This article also states:

“Uzbeks and Kyrgyz have blamed the attacks on each other. The office of U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay has said the attacks appear to have begun with five coordinated attacks that then took on an inter-ethnic character.” (ibid)

A report by the *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* states in June 2010:

“Security in Osh remains fragile while pockets of violence persist around the villages of Nariman and Kashkar Kyshtak near Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan.”
(United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (16 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan Civil Conflict Situation Report #4*)

The Guardian reports in June 2010 that:

“The ethnic violence – which the UN said was orchestrated – has prompted more than 100,000 Uzbeks to flee to Uzbekistan, with tens of thousands more camped on the Kyrgyz side of the border or stranded in no man's land.” (The Guardian (16 June 2010) *Uzbeks 'threatening to blow up Kyrgyzstan oil depot'*)

A report by *Logistics Cluster* in June 2010 states:

“Following ethnic clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyz Republic, the security situation has deteriorated rapidly since 11 June as ethnic tension and violence against civilians spread to southern parts of the country. It is estimated that there are approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons in Kyrgyzstan while Ministry of Emergencies of Uzbekistan says some 75,000

refugees have crossed the border into Uzbekistan.” (Logistics Cluster (16 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan Update 16 June 2010*, p.1)

A report by *Human Rights Watch* from June 2010 states:

“Residents of Kyrgyzstan's southern city of Osh are being brutally attacked, beaten, and raped, despite government claims that the situation has stabilized...” (Human Rights Watch (17 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: New Attacks Against Uzbeks*)

A report by *Amnesty International* from June 2010 states:

“While urgently needed humanitarian assistance is beginning to reach refugees and internally displaced persons in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, allegations are mounting that Kyrgyzstani security forces may have colluded in some of the human rights violations, in particular violent acts against ethnic Uzbeks, which drove thousands of people to flee the violence which engulfed the south of Kyrgyzstan over the last six days.” (Amnesty International (17 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: Call for an international independent and impartial investigation*, p.1)

This report also states:

“The deadly violence which has devastated large parts of the south of Kyrgyzstan is said to have started on 10 June with clashes between rival gangs of mostly Kyrgyz and Uzbek youths which rapidly escalated into large-scale arson, looting and violent attacks, including killings, on mainly Uzbek-populated districts in Osh. Subsequently, the violence spread to the city of Jalal-Abad and surrounding towns and villages.” (*Ibid*, p.2)

A report by the *Internal Monitoring Displacement Centre* in June 2010 states:

“Violent clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and the Uzbek minority in Osh and Jalal-Abad Provinces of Kyrgyzstan have forced 260,000 Uzbeks to flee by 16 June, according to UN estimates. They have mostly fled from Osh city to rural areas where, according to the ICRC, they have taken shelter in cramped mosques and farms and are receiving food and shelter from the local population. The Guardian reported on 16 June that tens of thousands of IDPs had also gathered near the Uzbek border, although according to the UN some had returned home after learning that only the elderly, women and children are allowed to cross, thus splitting up families. Around 100,000 have crossed the border into Uzbekistan in search of international protection. In Osh city, ethnic Kyrgyz have fled to other neighbourhoods dominated by their ethnic group while thousands of Kyrgyz have been confined to their barricaded basements by Uzbeks gangs. Electricity, gas and water supplies have been cut off, and shops and markets are closed. Several hundred people have been killed, and thousands have been injured. Awaiting improved security conditions, the Kyrgyzstan government and international agencies prepare to aid the IDPs - more than half of whom are children - with food, clean water and medical services. The government has encouraged displaced families to go home as soon as the security situation has improved. Tensions have been growing for months, and particularly after violent protests prompted a change in government in April. UN officials and analysts

reported that the ethnicity-based displacement and other crimes could escalate and affect the whole region.” (Internal Monitoring Displacement Centre (17 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: Hundreds of thousands flee ethnic violence*)

A report by *BBC News* in June 2010 states:

“At least 191 people have been killed in the clashes, the health ministry said, although some observers have said the death toll is higher. According to ICRC workers, “several hundred people” have been killed in the fighting.” (BBC News (17 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan's crisis is 'immense', says Red Cross*)

A publication by the *International Crisis Group* in June 2010 notes:

“We urge the United Nations Security Council to take immediate steps to address the ongoing crisis in Kyrgyzstan. With a death toll likely to reach far higher than the official count of 200 and an estimated 400,000 displaced in Kyrgyzstan and across the border in Uzbekistan, the situation poses a significant threat to international peace and security. The Kyrgyz authorities have primary responsibility for halting the violence and resolving this crisis, but reports from the ground provide ample evidence that the government is unable to protect those in need, and Kyrgyz authorities have already acknowledged that they need substantial assistance. In the past week, violence along ethnic lines has engulfed Osh and Jalal-Abad, resulting in killings, rapes, beatings, and widespread burning and looting of homes and other properties. There are a growing number of reports that Kyrgyz military and other security personnel not only failed to stop the violence, but in some cases may have been active participants. In the last two days there have been fewer reports of violent attacks but some continue. Claims that the situation is stable are belied by the extremely tense standoff that remains. Ethnic Uzbeks who remain in Osh are in some cases trapped in isolated neighborhoods, living in fear behind barricades. The government itself recognizes that new violence could flare at any moment.” (International Crisis Group (17 June 2010) *Joint Letter to the UN Security Council Regarding the Ongoing Crisis in Kyrgyzstan*)

This document also reports:

“The humanitarian situation is grave and increasingly urgent because Kyrgyz forces cannot be relied upon to provide the secure environment needed for humanitarian assistance to reach the population. Humanitarian organizations are having great difficulty accessing those needing assistance, and report incidents of theft and looting of aid. Some 100,000 ethnic Uzbeks have sought refuge in Uzbekistan; the border is now closed. As many as 40,000 who fled the violence are without shelter, and given the destruction of hundreds of houses, many of the displaced have no homes to return to even should they feel safe to do so. Repatriation of the displaced will require much greater security and confidence within the displaced community.” (ibid)

A report by *IRIN News* in June 2010 states:

“Most of the 767,000 ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan live in the south, in the Kyrgyz part of Fergana Valley, the most densely populated area in the region where land is scarce.” (IRIN News (17 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: Delicate ethnic balance*)

This report also states:

“Before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Kyrgyz were a minority in Osh, the main urban centre in the south. Historically they were mainly nomads living in rural areas, while Uzbeks were farmers and town-based artisans and traders.” (ibid)

It is also noted in this report that:

“After independence in 1991, the ethnic make-up changed dramatically. Many Russians left and more Kyrgyz started to migrate to Osh, looking for schooling and work opportunities following the end of agricultural subsidies and the disintegration of collective farms. Tensions rose as Kyrgyz started to penetrate traditional Uzbek economic strongholds, including trade and commerce.” (ibid)

The *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* states in June 2010:

“ACTED, Save the Children and local NGOs Golden Gold and Eret are carrying out a rapid needs assessment in Osh and Jalal-Abad and will share this information shortly” (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (18 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan Unrest and Refugees in Uzbekistan Situation Report #6*, p.3).

A report by *Human Rights Watch* from June 2010 states:

“Kyrgyz troops wounded at least 20 people, two of whom died, during a security operation on June 21, 2010, in the predominantly Uzbek village of Nariman in southern Kyrgyzstan, Human Rights Watch said today. The operation followed the removal of barricades erected by the residents to protect the village. ‘With tensions in southern Kyrgyzstan still extremely high, the military should avoid actions that further escalate the situation,’ said Ole Solvang, emergency researcher at Human Rights Watch who is in Osh. ‘These incidents underscore why so many Uzbeks say they don’t trust the security forces. The police and army should be protecting people, not abusing them, during security operations.’” (Human Rights Watch (21 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan: Security Forces Abuse Civilians*)

Radio Free Liberty/Radio Europe notes in June 2010:

“It will go down as one of the crueler ironies of the interethnic clashes convulsing southern Kyrgyzstan that the violence was fueled, in part, by ethnic Uzbeks’ concerted effort to integrate into Kyrgyz political life. In the aftermath of the April 7 uprising that prompted the flight of former President Kurmanbek Bakiev, ethnic Uzbek leaders sensed an opportunity to end discriminatory practices in the south and gain a political voice -- an effort that already began to backfire in late May

when Uzbeks and Kyrgyz clashed at the People's Friendship University in Jalal-Abad. The latest clashes, which left hundreds if not thousands dead and displaced an estimated 400,000 Uzbeks, may serve as the death knell for the dream of integration." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Europe (22 June 2010) *Kyrgyzstan's Uzbeks Say 'Our Voices Are Not Heard'*)

This article also states:

"As Uzbeks slowly return to their homes in southern Kyrgyzstan, the question looms if any kind of deeper rapprochement is possible, if Kyrgyzstan can guarantee long-term security for ethnic Uzbeks, and if the Kyrgyz government can somehow satisfy Uzbeks' overarching demand for greater meaningful participation in the Kyrgyz state" (ibid)

This article also reports:

"The background to the ethnic Uzbeks' push for rights and voice is the long-standing complaint that they are treated as second-class citizens in Kyrgyzstan" (ibid)

This article also notes:

"While Uzbeks were prominent in business, often to the consternation of Kyrgyz who found themselves squeezed out of commercial sectors, they were underrepresented in parliament, in local administrative positions, and in the police and military" (ibid)

It is also noted in this article that:

"It was common for southerners to describe Uzbeks and Kyrgyz as "living in parallel," readily distinguished by dress, appearance, and language, with distinct traditions, fairly low rates of intermarriage, and infrequent business partnerships. Ethnic Uzbek leaders said relations worsened under Bakiev, who stoked Kyrgyz nationalism and gave his cronies free rein to monopolize wealth and power in the south -- often at Uzbeks' expense" (ibid)

This article also reports:

"In the first week of May, an ethnic Uzbek delegation met with leaders of the interim government in Bishkek to call for provisions in the draft constitution that would benefit the Uzbek community. Demands included proportional representation for ethnic Uzbeks at all levels of government administration and state recognition of the Uzbek language, meaning that street signs, textbooks, and official documents would be printed in Uzbek as well as Kyrgyz. Uzbek leaders also called for the deletion of a line on official documents that signifies the ethnicity of the document holder and for a change in the country's official name, from the Kyrgyz Republic to Kyrgyzstan, in an attempt to counter a perceived nationalistic direction in the articulation of Kyrgyz statehood. Kyrgyz police search detained ethnic Uzbeks in Nariman, in Osh, on June 21. At a local level, Uzbek leaders in the south worked with police to strip dark tinting off car

windows and to pull over cars driving without license plates -- a response to numerous complaints that extortionists in unmarked cars with darkened windows were shaking down Uzbek businesses with impunity. Though many of the Uzbek demands appeared innocuous, the fact that minority Uzbeks were tampering with a delicate interethnic dynamic was enough to infuriate some Kyrgyz" (ibid)

A report by *Eurasia Net* from June 2010 states:

"With violence currently on the ebb in southern Kyrgyzstan, Uzbeks who fled across the border to Uzbekistan are pondering their options. While some are returning home, many others are hesitating out of fear of a renewal of interethnic clashes. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 75,000 ethnic Uzbeks, mostly women and children, crossed into Uzbekistan from Kyrgyzstan in mid-June, amid violent clashes that left hundreds dead." (Eurasia Net (22 June 2010) *Uzbek Refugees Wrestling With Stay-Go Dilemma*)

This document also states:

"Many refugees interviewed by the UN said that they wished to return home as soon as possible. About 34,000 refugees have already returned to Kyrgyzstan, according to an AKIPress report on June 22" (ibid)

This document also states:

"While many have left, many more refugees are reluctant to return to Kyrgyzstan." (ibid)

It is also noted in this report that:

"Compounding the dilemma that some are confronting about whether to stay or go, Uzbek officials are telling those who want to go back to Kyrgyzstan that they will not be readmitted to Uzbekistan as refugees again, no matter the circumstances. Even amid the flow of returnees, a substantial number of displaced Uzbeks still on the Kyrgyz side of the border are staying near the frontier, hoping they will get an opportunity to cross into Uzbekistan. Apart from security concerns, some internally displaced persons (IDPs) say they have nowhere else to go." (ibid)

This report also states:

"Kyrgyz provisional leaders have tried to assuage Uzbek concerns. Provisional President Roza Otunbayeva, for example, visited the mainly Uzbek district of Aravan on June 21, pledging that authorities in Bishkek were committed to promoting the return of the displaced. 'Be assured, we will rebuild both Osh and Jalal-abad,' she said." (ibid)

It is reported by *UNHCR* in June 2010:

"UNHCR urged caution on Wednesday over the returns of refugees and other displaced people to southern Kyrgyzstan following reports that thousands of

people were going back to their communities, with some under pressure to do so from local officials. In a statement released in Geneva, the refugee agency applauded the efforts of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to address the needs of displaced people, but said it was essential that returns were voluntary and on the basis of people being properly informed." (UNHCR (24 June 2010) *UNHCR cautions that returns in Kyrgyzstan must be sustainable*)

This document also states:

"UNHCR has been working with the authorities in both countries to address the needs of people displaced by violence that erupted almost two weeks ago in the southern city of Osh and surrounding areas. As well as unverified numbers of deaths an estimated 300,000 people were displaced inside Kyrgyzstan while around 100,000 fled across the border into Uzbekistan." (ibid)

A report by *Reuters* from June 2010 notes:

"The clashes have deepened divisions between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks who have a roughly equal share of the population in the south. Many Uzbeks are blockaded inside their neighbourhoods of Osh, the epicentre of the violence, too afraid to emerge." (Reuters (24 June 2010) *PREVIEW-After the bloodshed, Kyrgyzstan votes on its future*)

It is reported by *Action Aid et al* in June 2010:

"The security situation in Osh is reported to have improved but southern Kyrgyzstan remains volatile..." (Action Aid et al (24 June 2010) *The CBHA respond to the humanitarian crisis in Kyrgyzstan*)

A report by *Agence France Presse* from June 2010 states:

"Almost all the refugees who fled Kyrgyzstan during ethnic clashes and crossed the border into Uzbekistan have now returned, the deputy head of the country's border service said Thursday. "Around 70,000 refugees have already returned to Kyrgyzstan," Cholponbek Turusbekov told journalists. "Only yesterday around 26,000 refugees returned." The Kyrgyz border service has said 75,000 Kyrgyz citizens fled to Uzbekistan during this month's violence, as gangs looted and burnt down the homes of the large ethnic Uzbek population in the country's south. International aid groups have put the number at more than 100,000, however. Large-scale unrest has ceased in the southern region, where officials say up to 2,000 people may have been killed during the ethnic clashes between the majority Kyrgyz and minority Uzbek populations." (Agence France Presse (24 June 2010) *Almost all refugees return to Kyrgyzstan: official*)

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Agence France Presse (24 June 2010) *Almost all refugees return to Kyrgyzstan: official*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any

particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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