

**TAJIKISTAN:
AN UNCERTAIN PEACE**

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TAJIKISTAN: AN UNCERTAIN PEACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tajikistan remains the most vulnerable of the Central Asian nations. In the decade since it became independent, it has been wracked by civil war and seen its economy all but collapse. Drugs, refugees and continuing conflict in Afghanistan are ever present concerns while the political system remains fragile and prone to violence. Corruption, regionalism and external threats have all undercut implementation of the 1997 peace agreement that ended five years of civil war.

That war pitted secular and pro-Communist government forces against an alliance of democrats and Islamists. It also set region against region, as government forces had their stronghold in the North and South, whereas the opposition was most powerful in the centre of the country and the remote Pamir area. The war was devastating: between 60,000 and 100,000 people were killed, some 600,000 – a tenth of the population – were internally displaced and another 80,000 fled the country. The cost of the war is estimated at U.S.\$7 billion.

Weary of conflict, the Tajiks put high hopes in the peace agreement. Their optimism has gradually faded, however. Although fear of renewed hostilities and the presence of Russian troops to some extent are stabilising elements, several factors, domestic and external, have potential to seriously destabilise Tajikistan again. It is unlikely, however, that any single one would do so in isolation. It would more likely act as a domino on the others, unleashing a chain effect of instability.

Tajikistan faces four major challenges: constructing a viable political system and functioning state; combating criminal groups, militant gangs and drugs-trafficking; reversing economic decline; and establishing good relations with fractious neighbours and regional powers.

Establishing a political system that represents a broad range of interests will not be easy. The inclusion of Islamist opposition parties in the government in 1997 was a huge step forward, but the authoritarian urges of President Imomali Rakhmonov threaten to undermine this historic compromise. He has strengthened executive powers and recruited most government officials from his own area, Kulyab, at the expense of often better-qualified people from other regions. He also controls the parliament – some 90 per cent of the deputies belong to his camp. The judiciary is increasingly used against the opposition. Most of the media remains under the government's thumb.

Fraudulent presidential and parliamentary elections have left Rakhmonov formally unchallenged, but the elite power struggle between rival groups and regions still threatens to destabilise the political system.

The compromise by the Islamist opposition with the government ended the war but also seriously undermined the opposition with many of its supporters. Some have turned to more radical groups, including Hizb ut-Tahrir, which seeks an Islamist Caliphate throughout Central Asia.

The government has also failed to engage field commanders who did not accept the 1997 peace

agreement. Gharm and the Karategin Valley in central Tajikistan remain largely outside government control. Armed bands terrorize communities by looting, stealing, and hostage taking. Government clampdowns have removed some of the worst gang leaders but the excessive violence used may prove counter-productive.

Opposition fighters were integrated into national armed forces but lack of funds has left many effectively unemployed. It has proven difficult to provide them alternative employment, and some have turned to crime and banditry.

Years of civil war have destroyed much infrastructure. Russia's 1998 economic crisis and four years of severe drought have caused further economic damage. Corruption and cronyism is widespread, and an estimated 30 to 50 per cent of the economy is linked to the drugs trade. Some 30 per cent of the work force is unemployed, and 80 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. Emigration to Russia and other parts of the CIS has been a stabilising factor, though recent events indicate that these countries are adopting a more hard-line approach towards the immigrants.

Afghanistan also poses a serious threat to Tajik stability. Most of the 1,300 km border runs through terrain that is difficult to patrol, and Tajik authorities have repeatedly voiced concern about the drugs, illegal weapons and people that cross. Some 150,000 refugees on the Afghan side have been denied access to Tajikistan on grounds that the country lacks financial resources. There are also fears they would facilitate a resurgence of Islamic militancy and drugs smuggling.

In 1999 and 2000, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) launched armed incursions into Kyrgyzstan from Tajik territory. The IMU fought with the opposition during the Tajik civil war and received refuge in opposition-controlled areas until it moved to Afghanistan early in 2001 to fight beside the Taliban. Many of the estimated 3,000 IMU fighters in Afghanistan may have been killed by U.S. and Northern Alliance forces but some may have returned to Tajikistan. Any IMU remnants pose a threat to Tajik security and relations with Uzbekistan, which has threatened hosts to the IMU with military action.

Tajikistan is at a crossroads. Its leadership has to choose: either embark on a path of economic reform and democratisation or risk bringing the country to the brink of economic and subsequent political collapse. Although Afghanistan poses a danger to domestic stability, recent events have provided Tajikistan with a window of opportunity, as international humanitarian and other aid to is likely to increase. If spent wisely, such aid could have a stabilizing effect.

On the other hand, poor political leadership, continued nepotism and widespread corruption could significantly reduce the impact of aid. In the worst case, increased aid could simply widen the gulf between the small, wealthy ruling elite and the rest of the population and so contribute to the instability it was meant to prevent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF TAJIKISTAN

1. Include former opposition figures at all levels of government as mandated in the 1997 peace agreement.
2. End the selective prosecution of former opposition members for crimes covered by the Amnesty Law of 1997.
3. End censorship and simplify media licensing procedures.
4. Revise the Election Code to provide more transparent elections and greater legal protection for political parties.
5. Make government hiring more transparent and professional to reduce the influence of corruption and clan connections.
6. Establish an anti-corruption task-force with government, parliament, opposition, media, NGO and donor community participation.
7. Continue efforts to extend law and order throughout the country, but with better control over and reform of security forces and law enforcement bodies;
8. End harassment of Muslims under the guise of combating extremist groups.

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF UZBEKISTAN

9. Reopen transport links with Tajikistan, with appropriate security measures, and improve training and monitoring of customs officials to reduce corruption and other abuses.
10. Remove mines from the Tajik border.

TO INTERNATIONAL DONORS:

11. Increase aid for:
 - ❑ food security and poverty reduction;
 - ❑ rehabilitation of former UTO soldiers;
 - ❑ drug demand and harm reduction;
 - ❑ transport and energy infrastructure; and,
 - ❑ media and information.
12. Develop a coordinated program of political pressure, training and resources to encourage the government to tackle corruption.
13. Establish a temporary coordination body to improve effectiveness of aid projects.
14. Channel aid through traditional local structures or nascent NGOs, rather than through the government.

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TAJIKISTAN: AN UNCERTAIN PEACE

I. INTRODUCTION

Until the establishment of Soviet rule, Tajikistan's territories were shared between the Khanates of Bukhara and Kokand. In 1924 Uzbekistan was established as a Soviet Socialist Republic and Tajikistan as an autonomous republic within it. Uzbekistan received most urban centres, resources and population. Tajikistan was overwhelmingly rural.¹ Since this division ignored ethnic and linguistic factors, the Tajik intellectual centres of Samarqand and Bukhara were incorporated into Uzbekistan, while some territories with a large Uzbek population found themselves in Tajikistan. Tajiks account for 5 per cent (1.24 million) of Uzbekistan's population today while Uzbeks are a quarter of Tajikistan's population.

Modern Tajikistan is a mountainous country situated between Afghanistan (South), Uzbekistan (West, North-West), Kyrgyzstan (North) and China (East). More than half its territory is above 3,000 meters. Western parts of the country are on a lowland plain, bisected by two narrow ranges.² For geographical reasons there has been limited interaction between the various parts of the country so strong regional identities have emerged. The Pamiris of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic (GBAO) in the East speak a different language,

belong to the Ismaili branch of Shi'a Islam and are cut off from the rest of Tajikistan during most of the year.

Central Tajikistan (Gharm and the Karategin Valley), is relatively isolated in high mountains. Its people tend to be more religious and conservative. The South (Khatlon Province) and the North (Sughd Province) have substantial Uzbek communities.³ Sughd Province, in the Ferghana Valley, has close links with neighbouring Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Some 70 per cent of Tajikistan's industries are in the province, which accounts for much of the country's agricultural. Khatlon Province, one of the poorest, is predominantly rural.

Tajikistan itself was one of the poorest Soviet republics, with 40 percent of its budget subsidies from Moscow. It had the USSR's lowest per capita GDP and highest population growth.⁴ The Soviet collapse was, therefore, particularly challenging. Neither efforts to solve the new economic problems that came with independence nor nation-building have been very successful.

¹ Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS. The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan* (London: Palgrave in association with RIIA, 2000), p. 151.

² Lonely Planet, *A Guide to Tajikistan*, at www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/central_asia/Tajikistan/printable.htm.

³ Whereas relations between the two communities in the North are relatively normal, there is considerable tension between Uzbeks and Tajiks in the South.

⁴ Olivier Roy, "Is the conflict in Tajikistan a model for conflicts throughout Central Asia?", in Djalili, Grare and Akiner (eds.) *Tajikistan. The Trials of Independence* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1997), p. 132.

II. FROM WAR TO “PEACE”

On independence in 1991, Tajikistan faced perhaps more problems than any other Soviet republic in asserting its viability. It had been the most artificial Soviet creation in Central Asia, and the extent of its territory was highly contested. When the new Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was formed in 1929, the most prosperous ethnic Tajik areas – the cities of Samarqand and Bukhara – stayed with Uzbekistan. Its northern area of Leninabad⁵ has poor communications with the rest of the country but traditionally close ties to Uzbekistan.

This complex history, sharp regional rivalries within the country, the emergence of radical Islamist ideologies and the worst socio-economic conditions in the former Soviet Union, created the backdrop to the civil war that erupted in 1992.

In late 1991 the former Communist leader, Rakhmon Nabiev, from the traditional ruling elite in Leninabad Province, was elected president. The opposition candidate, Davlat Khudonazarov, won more than 30 per cent of the vote, but the election was widely considered flawed. Wary of opposition, President Nabiev sought to restrict its influence. This provoked demonstrations in March 1992. Counter-demonstrations were organised by pro-Communist supporters, mostly from the southern Kulyab region.

In May 1992 the President set up a Presidential Guard composed of Kulyabi demonstrators, with the aim of breaking up the opposition demonstrations.⁶ Fighting broke out in Dushanbe, and Russian troops intervened. Nabiev was forced to form a coalition government in which the opposition had eight of 24 ministerial posts.

However, Leninabad and Kulyab elites refused to recognize the new government, and by June fighting was widespread. In September Nabiev

was forced to resign. By December the coalition had been overthrown and a new president, the little-known Imomali Rakhmonov, from Kulyab, was elected by a special session of parliament in the northern city of Khujand. The pro-Rakhmonov Popular Front, consisting mainly of Kulyabis and commanded by Sangak Safarov, a former criminal and vodka-trader, seized the capital, Dushanbe, in December 1992.

Although the civil war officially lasted until 1997, most fighting ended by February 1993, leaving 60,000 to 100,000 persons dead and some 600,000 internally displaced. Another 80,000 had fled the country, primarily for Afghanistan, and the economy lay in ruins. Under pressure from Russia and Uzbekistan, both concerned that instability might spread, negotiations began in 1994. Fears of instability were compounded by the advances in Afghanistan of the Pakistan-backed radical Islamist Taliban movement.

Given the civil war's ferocity and underlying social tensions, it was not surprising that the negotiations between President Rakhmonov and the leader of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), Said Abdullo Nuri, under the auspices of the UN, the OSCE and Russia, dragged on. They culminated in the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan⁷ signed in Moscow in June 1997. The Peace Agreement had two main protocols:⁸

- Protocol on Military Issues: Aimed to promote a unified army from the numerous private armies, paramilitaries and gangs that formed during the civil war. This difficult process remains uncompleted, with several field commanders still independent. However, thousands of former UTO fighters were integrated into new military structures, and a nascent national army has been formed.
- Protocol on Political Issues: Most disputes in the peace process centred on politics, notably division of power in a new regime. Thirty per cent of posts (in theory at all levels of

⁵ Leninabad was renamed Sughd Province in 2000, but the old name is still frequently used.

⁶ Since the 1970s Kulyabi elites had been the Leninabad elites' junior partner in government. The Kulyabi elites were primarily responsible for the armed forces, and it is, therefore, perhaps not surprising that Kulyabis rather than Leninabadis were recruited to the Presidential Guard.

⁷ The agreement and supporting protocols can be found in Accord. *Politics of Compromise: The Tajikistan Peace Process* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2001).

⁸ There were also two other two protocols – one on refugees and one on the Act on Mutual Forgiveness.

administration) were reserved for former UTO. Although thirteen UTO representatives joined the government, including its First Deputy Leader, Khoji Akbar Turajonzoda, as deputy prime minister, the agreement was not always kept at lower levels.

The peace process was supposed to be climaxed by presidential and parliamentary elections. On 6 November 1999 Rakhmonov was re-elected, in polls described by international observers as flawed, and which opposition candidates initially threatened to boycott. The former chairman of the Democratic Party, Jumaboi Niyozov, told ICG there was no need to fiddle with the results, as Rakhmonov would have won anyway since the opposition failed to unite behind one candidate.⁹ Parliamentary elections in February 2000 were also marked by malpractice, leaving the opposition with only limited representation.

Despite high mutual mistrust and continuing controversy over implementation, the peace process was remarkably successful given the brutal conflict that had preceded it. There have been occasional skirmishes with opposition forces that have not accepted it, but the government has gradually extended its authority, and a degree of everyday life has returned.

Nevertheless, many of the underlying fractures remain. The peace agreement has done little to offset regional or elite political rivalries and socio-economic problems. Drug-trafficking, religious militancy and criminal activity remain major threats to stability, against a backdrop of regional instability that includes the military conflict in neighbouring Afghanistan.

The peace process is fragile, and a number of factors – internal and external – threaten it. The civil war attracted scant attention in 1992. Ten years later, Tajikistan is near the centre of focus as Afghanistan's most fragile neighbour and critical for Central Asian stability. The international community must take serious steps to support the peace process and prevent a return to the violence of the early 1990s.

III. DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON THE PEACE

Events in Afghanistan form the troubled backdrop to the Tajiks' attempts to reconstruct their state and economy. However, the greatest direct threat comes from interconnected domestic factors.

A. POST-CONFLICT POLITICS

By 1997 Tajikistan was effectively a failed state, with only the outward appearance of coherence. Its political system largely consisted of local warlords, a government with limited power in Dushanbe, and a variety of militant and criminal groups scattered through the country. Significant progress has been made in creating at least the semblance of a functioning state, including the formal structures of a presidential administration, parliament, and regional organs. However, political reality often rests on informal relationships, clan structures and links forged during the civil war – intertwined with a variety of criminal and business interests, semi-independent military structures and rebel groups.

Given this background, it is vital that further steps are taken to strengthen the state without undermining the compromise on which the peace agreement was based. Four threats are:

- The government's tendency to greater authoritarianism and suppression of popular participation in politics;
- the role of the Islamist opposition, and the increasing growth of radical groups outside government structures;
- the dangers regionalism poses to effective state-creation; and,
- Reform-blocking political corruption.

1. The Government

Tajikistan is a presidential republic. President Rakhmonov was a little known middle-rank bureaucrat until he was elected Chairman of the Tajik Parliament (Majlisi Oli). He won a chaotic presidential election in November 1994, with 60 per cent of the vote against Abdumalik Abdullajonov, a prominent Leninabad politician.

⁹ ICG interview with Jumaboi Niyozov, former chairman of the Democratic Party, in Khujand on 1 August 2001.

Rakhmonov has developed an increasingly authoritarian regime. On 6 November 1999 he was re-elected in a widely disputed poll. Only one opposition candidate was registered, and until the evening before the vote, the opposition threatened a boycott. Rakhmonov won an unlikely 97 per cent on an even more implausible 98 per cent turnout¹⁰. The obvious fraud was probably unnecessary to assure his victory.¹¹

Rakhmonov's record is mixed. He has played a major role in maintaining peace and building basic state structures. He has failed to open a dialogue with elements that did not accept the 1997 agreement, and his regime, at least in the 1990s, arguably exacerbated regional divisions.

Rakhmonov's power base initially rested on the Kulyab region, particularly Dangara and Farkhad. The presidential apparatus is effectively the government. In 2000-2001 he became less reliant on regional support and began instead to search out personal loyalists. He has made some personnel improvements, notably by recruiting five of eight top advisors from the North.

Rakhmonov's control over patronage gives him power to co-opt potential opponents. Government office is one of the few paths to even moderate enrichment, and the president has more opportunity than most to buy off opponents, and silence critics by including them in the system.

The president's dominance of the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT) gives him almost complete control of the legislature (*Majlisi Oli*), which is bicameral, consisting of a lower chamber (*Majlisi Namoyandagan*) and an upper chamber (*Majlisi Milli*). The 63 deputies in the lower chamber are directly elected, while the upper chamber's 33 are either elected indirectly by local councils or (for eight seats) appointed by the president. In practice parliament has little independence, but it provides an important platform for political figures, particularly its

powerful chairman (and mayor of Dushanbe), Mamadsaid Ubaidulloev, who is widely considered a future presidential contender.¹²

About 80 per cent of upper chamber seats are currently filled by government officials; two-thirds are PDPT representatives. The lower chamber is also heavily pro-Rakhmonov: the PDPT has 35 seats, the Communists thirteen and IRP two.¹³ Eleven deputies are independent but mostly pro-president.

Rakhmonov's constitutional powers are also broad.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he does not have complete control over all branches of government, and the loyalty of parts of the security services is questioned. According to one local observer: "the Ministry of National Security supports the Mayor of Dushanbe, Ubaidulloev, the Ministry of Defence supports Rakhmonov and the Ministry of the Interior is divided (50 per cent for Rakhmonov, 50 per cent for the Mayor)".¹⁵ The situation is probably more complex, and Rakhmonov is generally increasing his control over state structures. Nevertheless, there is some doubt that all security forces would be instinctively loyal to him in a civil conflict.

Given the state's fractured nature, divided loyalties are not surprising. Rakhmonov has increasingly enhanced his position, however, over the past two years, and Afghan events seem likely to further consolidate his power, as they have enhanced his international standing. He can likely count on political support at least from Russia and possibly also from the U.S. and others in the event of an extra-constitutional challenge.

¹⁰ See OSCE-ODIHR, "The Republic of Tajikistan. Elections to the Parliament", 27 February 2000. Warsaw 17 May 2000.

¹¹ ICG interview with Jumaboi Niyozov, former chairman of the Democratic Party, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

¹² OSCE-ODIHR, "Elections", op. cit., pp. 9-10.

¹³ UNDP, *Tajikistan. Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), p. 24.

¹⁴ According to the Constitution, the president appoints and dismisses the prime minister and other members of government, establishes and abolishes ministries and state committees, appoints the chairmen of the country's provinces, cities and regions, appoints and dismisses the chairman of the National Bank and his deputies, the General Procurator and his deputies. The president also establishes and chairs the Security Council and the Council of Justice. The latter controls all court appointments in Tajikistan. Moreover, the president determines the composition of the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court and High Economic Court. He has the right to issue binding edicts and decrees and declare a state of emergency and war. See *Constitution of Tajikistan*, Chapter IV. The President (articles 64-72).

¹⁵ ICG interview, July 2001.

2. Challengers

Rakhmonov is limited by the constitution to one seven-year term, which ends in 2006. Some local observers are convinced that Rakhmonov will cling to power as long as he can, pointing out that he will only be 54 at the next elections. However, attempts to stay in power against the wishes of other powerful political groups could provoke serious tensions.¹⁶

Even before the next election, instability in the country or external factors could provoke tensions between different power groups. Either in the interim or at the next election, one of Rakhmonov's main contenders will likely be Ubaidulloev.¹⁷ The chairman of the upper chamber of the parliament is formally number two in the political hierarchy, and his post as mayor of the capital is powerful. Beyond that, Ubaidulloev's business interests have reputedly made him one of the richest men in Tajikistan.

His real influence and his relations with the president are hard to ascertain. In an interview with ICG, a high-ranking opposition member asserted that "Mayor Ubaidulloev rules Tajikistan", but much information surrounding him is based on unsubstantiated rumour. Clearly the two were close allies when they came to power in 1992, but relations may have cooled recently. Nevertheless, many rumours of power struggles are probably exaggerated, although the potential is there. Rakhmonov may see him as a possible successor, but the two men may have different ideas of timing. Both politically and in business Ubaidulloev has enemies. He was the target of a bomb attack in February 2000.¹⁸

Sources of conflict may arise relating to Ubaidulloev's business interests. He has been linked to the cotton industry and the Tursunzade aluminium plant, both vital to the economy.¹⁹ He

is believed to be less given to compromise than the president. Some observers suggest that he is behind the harder line against rebels in recent months. According to one interviewee, he "advocates forceful resolutions of various problems and accuses Rakhmonov of being weak".²⁰ The other possible area of dispute is over regional elites. Ubaidulloev is particularly hostile to northern elites, and Rakhmonov's attempts to promote more officials from Sughd Province has caused some tension.

Despite the obvious potential for political dispute, it seems likely that the president and the mayor need each other for the foreseeable future. It is in the interests of neither to see the political system collapse into renewed conflict.

Other potential contenders are harder to find. Most names suggested come from the past, such as Abdumalik Abdullajonov, once a major player in the North but now in exile in Uzbekistan.²¹ Deputy Prime Minister Khoji Akbar Turajonzoda, the onetime IRP member, who is now one of Rakhmonov's most loyal supporters, at least in public, is also sometimes mentioned though his regional power base appears weak.²²

Other northerners may become more of a challenge. The governor of Sughd Province, Kazim Kazimov, is often referred to as a future leader. One of a new political generation, he is thought to be loyal to the president, whose election campaign he ran in the Bovojan-Gafur district of Sughd in 1994. His appointment as provincial governor in 1996 was unpopular as many believed he represented the

¹⁶ ICG Interview, July 2001.

¹⁷ Ubaidulloev is also from Kulyab and has enjoyed a career almost parallel to that of Rakhmonov. He served in the government from 1992-1996 until he was appointed head of the city administration. He became chairman of parliament in 2000.

¹⁸ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

¹⁹ In 1996 Ubaidulloev was demoted by Rakhmonov, apparently after Mahmud Khudojberdiev accused him of corruption.

²⁰ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

²¹ Abdullajonov served as a member of Rakhmonov's early government, but was "exiled" to Moscow as ambassador in 1993. He failed to win the 1994 presidential election but gathered considerable support in some regions and some backing from Russia and Uzbekistan. He was allegedly involved in armed incursions into Sughd Province in 1998, and he has little chance of returning to political life while Rakhmonov remains in power. Allegations of corruption have also undermined his position, and since 1998 his Party of People's Unity has been banned.

²² Turajonzoda was appointed *Qazi-kalon* (leader of the country's official religious institutions) in 1988. He was elected a deputy of the Tajik parliament in 1990. Turajonzoda joined the opposition during the civil war. In March 1998 he was appointed First Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for relations with the CIS countries. See Accord, *Politics of Compromise. The Tajikistan Peace Process* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2001), p. 89.

South. With time, however, he has become more accepted. He is reputed to have made much money from privatisation in Khujand where most centre city buildings apparently belong to him.

By promoting a northerner, Rakhmonov may succeed in forging an alliance against Ubaidulloev, who is said to be very negative to Northerners. He may also increase his own support in the region, thus strengthening his legitimacy. Although Northerners have largely been kept out of government (see section on regionalism), five of Rakhmonov's eight personal advisors are from there, perhaps indicating an effort to gain new political leverage.

3. The Opposition

Government positions are often the best opportunity available for enrichment. Not surprisingly, the most difficult part of the peace process was to agree on government jobs.

The eventual deal gave 30 per cent of all executive positions (also at provincial, district and local levels) to UTO representatives. This proved difficult to implement at middle and low levels but the UTO got thirteen ministries and state committees.²³ Among initial appointments were Khoji Akbar Turajonzoda (Deputy Prime Minister), the Democratic Party's Abdunabi Sattorzoda (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs), and Mirzo Ziyoev, a prominent member of the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) and head of UTO forces, who wanted Defence but had to settle for the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Although some advisers saw the coalition as a threat to Rakhmonov, in the short term the deal probably did more damage to the opposition. By co-opting its most active leaders, Rakhmonov effectively eliminated those best placed to challenge. Divisions between those who joined official structures and those who did not soon surfaced, with co-opted UTO leaders proving largely loyal to the president, at least publicly.

The reason, as a non-co-opted IRP leader told ICG, was that "they knew that if they were to

remain in opposition they would lose their jobs".²⁴ The case of Davlat Usmon, a prominent IRP member initially appointed Minister of the Economy, must have had affected any new ministers who harboured ideas of opposition. Usmon announced that he would challenge Rakhmonov in 1999 but swiftly changed his mind when his son was kidnapped on the eve of the elections. In March 2000 Rakhmonov replaced Usmon with former Prime Minister Yahyo Azimov.

The UTO appointee who provokes most controversy is Ziyoev, who during the civil war was UTO chief of staff and is a leading IRP member. Juma Namangani, a leader of the Islamist Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), was a Ziyoev commander, and there seems to have been subsequent cooperation, the nature of which is much disputed.²⁵ The deputy IRP chairman, Mukhitdin Kabirov, told ICG that Ziyoev and Namangani "...are friends, but that does not mean that the IRP supports the IMU. There is no contact between the IMU and us. The IMU have themselves said that they do not consider our approach Islamist".²⁶

In any event, Ziyoev's IMU contacts proved useful for Rakhmonov when, in late October 1999, he reportedly played a role in negotiating the release of four Japanese geologists taken hostage by the IMU in Kyrgyzstan. When Tajikistan expelled IMU members in January 2001 it was Ziyoev who negotiated their withdrawal to Afghanistan.

It is tempting to conclude that the Ministry of Emergency Situations was created to give Ziyoev only the illusion of power. Formally, the ministry has no mandate to get involved in armed conflicts and domestic unrest. However, since taking office in July 1999, Ziyoev has doubled the number of officers and increased its powers. The deputy leader of the Communist Party, A. Abdullaev, emphasised that Ziyoev belongs to the opposition and has his own views: "if he has a chance to use a particular situation to his advantage he will do so".²⁷ High-

²³ Rashid G. Abdullo, "Implementation of the 1997 General Agreement: Successes, Dilemmas and Challenges", in Accord. *Politics of Compromise*, op. cit.

²⁴ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

²⁵ RFE/RL, 17 January 2001.

²⁶ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

²⁷ ICG interview.

ranking ministry officials, however, insisted that the ministry would not turn against the president.²⁸

For now, the ministry is in itself not strong enough to offer major opposition but in the case of a serious split within the government, it is far from certain that it would remain loyal. It is likely that Rakhmonov is trying to use Ziyoev to reduce the threat of potentially destabilising elements while ensuring that his powers are so limited that it will be difficult for him to turn against him later.

4. Opposition Outside Government

The co-option of opposition leaders has had a significant impact on their popular support. Other factors such as poor election results, internal divisions, and pressure from the authorities are also taking a toll. Since the 2000 elections, the opposition is increasingly fragmented and decreasingly effective. The results were disastrous, especially in the 22 seats elected on a nation-wide on a proportional basis and with a 5 per cent threshold. Unlike the PDPT and to an extent the Communists, the opposition lacked the necessary staff and financial resources.

The opposition remains strongly regional. The IRP strongholds are Gharm and the Karategin Valley, while most Democratic Party voters live in Dushanbe. Both parties enjoy some support in the Pamirs, but neither can claim anything like a national base. This disadvantage was reflected in the election: only the PDPT, the Communist Party and the IRP passed the five per cent threshold, with the IRP getting just 7.5 per cent. The election tallies were reportedly tampered with.²⁹ But the IRP total was close to independent predictions, and analysts suggested that the Communists had suffered most from the fraud.

An IRP leader told ICG that the party discussed at length whether to participate at all: "we knew that the elections would not be democratic. However, if we had not taken part in them it would have made the situation tenser. The most

important thing for us was the stability of Tajikistan".³⁰ This may be true, but the elections, for all their faults, demonstrated the opposition's serious problems.

The major problem for the secular opposition is that its support base has been eroded, partly because many adherents live abroad (particularly in Russia), and partly because new parties now compete for the same electorate. The IRP, on the other hand, has to deal with voters who feel that Nuri and their party compromise too much with the authorities. There are signs that some support is being eroded by more radical Islamic movements such as Hizb ut-Tahrir. This dynamic poses a future threat to stability.

5. The Secular Opposition

The largest secular opposition group, the Democratic Party, was set up in the immediate post-Soviet period as an ostensibly liberal party opposed to Communist rule but with a strong nationalist tinge. It played a key role in the early 1990s, joined the UTO during the war, and won several government seats in the peace process.

However, the party has been severely weakened and is likely to decline further. Splits have led to defections, and many members have remained in exile. As there is no real middle-class and many people associate the Democratic Party with the start of the civil war, it is difficult for it to expand beyond Dushanbe. Besides, it lacks leadership as its most prominent figures have joined the government, provoking much internal tension.³¹

There is a range of minor parties with similar views to the Democratic Party, often revolving around one individual. As an expression of pluralism the emergence of new parties may be positive. However, given the strong executive, the opposition needs to unite if it is to act as a real check on the regime. The establishment of many new small parties without regional support or the resources to publicise themselves will further weaken the opposition.

²⁸ ICG interviews with Abdurahim Radjabov and Islom Usmanov, Ministry of Emergency Situations, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

²⁹ OSCE-ODIHR., "Elections", op. cit., pp. 4-5.

³⁰ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

³¹ ICG interview with Muzaffar Olimov, director of the Sharq Independent Research Institute, in Dushanbe, on 28 July 2001.

The other major element in the UTO, the Lali Badaghshan Movement, is no longer in opposition. On the eve of the 2000 parliamentary elections it merged with Rakhmonov's PDPT. In the early 1990s the Lali Badaghshan, whose members were primarily Pamiri intellectuals in Dushanbe, campaigned for more attention and autonomy for GBAO. During the civil war it organised a resistance movement in the area. In 1999 it left the UTO and supported Rakhmonov's election. One of the movement's candidates entered parliament on the PDPT list in 2000.³²

Tajikistan's second largest party – the Communist – won thirteen seats in the parliamentary elections. It is essentially pro-Rakhmonov although disagrees on issues such as privatisation, where it has often joined forces with the IRP, and criticises the government over corruption and economic policy.³³ Led by Shodi Shabdolov, it has 70,000 members and is the only even quasi-opposition party with a real machine. But many members are elderly, and its attraction is often based primarily on nostalgia. It, too, is likely to decline in importance.³⁴

6. The Islamic Opposition

A range of groups with ideologies based on Islamic thinking has far more future significance. Tajikistan is the only country in Central Asia that has legalised its Islamic opposition – the IRP – headed by Said Abdullo Nuri, the UTO's key player in the peace talks.

The IRP is a moderate Islamist party, although its members probably have a much wider (and radical) range of views than its leadership. Deputy Chairman Mukhitdin Kabirov says it supports a secular democratic state and does not insist on introduction of Sharia law.³⁵

The IRP's greatest challenge is to hold its traditional electorate in Gharm and the Karategin

Valley, two of the country's poorest areas. Economic hardship has radicalised a part of the IRP electorate. Although the party has stayed more or less united, there are signs that members are growing increasingly impatient with Nuri's policy of compromise with the authorities.³⁶

The IRP leadership insists that the policy will continue. Nuri told ICG that:

We made so many compromises consciously and we are proud of this – only in this way could we bring peace to Tajikistan. Had we done as the other side [did]: stood by our political positions – people would again have taken up arms. It is impossible to set a price on peace.³⁷

Nuri's peace process loyalty seems sincere but some lower in the party may be less enthusiastic.

The IRP is widely viewed as having failed to improve conditions for devout Muslims. Mosques are being closed, and calls for Friday prayer must be made without amplification (the mayor of Dushanbe, though, made a Ramadan exception). Some 5,500 former opposition fighters are IRP members. Many suffer from 'weapons nostalgia' and are dissatisfied that they have not gained the land and credits they hoped for when they joined the party. The amnesty law is not always observed by local courts, and many are left without legal protection. Kabirov told ICG that rank-and-file members might become more difficult to control in a few years if civil society is not allowed to develop and the socio-economic situation does not improve.³⁸

Paradoxically, the one region where the IRP has grown is the North, normally considered the most secular region. By late 2001 the IRP had 7,000 members in Sughd Province (up from 4,500 in January). Some 1,500 are women. The IRP also has one deputy in the provincial parliament and twelve

³² ICG interview with Kurbonasen Khudoiev, in Khorugh, on 24 July 2001.

³³ ICG interview with A. Abdullaev, deputy chairman of the CPT, in Dushanbe on 17 July 2001.

³⁴ S. Yunusov, "Politicheskie partii [Political Parties]", *Tajikiston. Social-Political Newspaper*, 13 July 2001, p. 7.

³⁵ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

³⁶ Muzaffar Olimov, director of the Sharq Independent Research Institute, told ICG in Dushanbe on 28 July 2001: "He had to compromise with President Rakhmonov – circumstances forced him to do so. [But] as a result he lost many of his supporters".

³⁷ ICG interview.

³⁸ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

in district parliaments throughout the province.³⁹ The IRP is said to be particularly strong in Chorku District, where 80 per cent of the local population is thought to support it. Chorku – with the Karategin Valley – is considered one of the most religious and conservative parts of the country.⁴⁰ The IRP also enjoys much support in Isfara, Macha, Ura-Tiube, Panjakent and villages near Panjakent.⁴¹

One reason for growing IRP popularity in Sughd is probably the widespread dislike of the PDPT because of its domination by Kulyabis. The IRP is likely seen as the lesser of two evils.⁴²

7. Hizb ut-Tahrir

The most worrying trend for the IRP is the extent to which some devout Muslims believe that the party has betrayed the Islamic cause by its loyalty to the regime. As a result, some have defected to more radical groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, which, as in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, has grown noticeably over the last few years.

Hizb ut-Tahrir is most active in Safarabad (border region), Gizzar and Khujand, and aims primarily at youth.⁴³ Its stated aims are the creation of an Islamic caliphate in Central Asia to replace existing regimes. It does not support violence to overthrow governments, instead relying on propaganda and persuasion, mostly through pamphlets. Its members are formed into autonomous cells, with only limited links to the leadership. Information and money are

distributed via some mahalla mosques and other places where sympathisers are likely to meet.⁴⁴

To some extent Hizb ut-Tahrir's growth in the North can be explained by the fact that it borders Uzbekistan's Ferghana Valley – the stronghold of both the IMU and Hizb ut-Tahrir.⁴⁵ The latter's roots are in Uzbekistan, and it has attracted most support among ethnic Uzbeks abroad.⁴⁶ But members are not limited to ethnic Uzbeks, and Hizb ut-Tahrir's increasing support also reflects growing disillusionment with the IRP.⁴⁷ Membership growth is further related to the socio-economic situation and widespread disillusionment with the corruption and nepotism of the political system.

The IRP accepts that it must take part of the blame for the growth of Hizb ut-Tahrir:

During the last few years Hizb ut-Tahrir has become strongly activated because many Muslims are disappointed in our party. They thought their lot would change once our party came to power [but]... nothing has changed and we are making concessions.... They therefore concluded that if the IRP cannot change anything then why does one need such a party?⁴⁸

The government response has been heavy-handed. In Sughd Province alone some 100 people have been tried and another 150-200 arrested for possessing Hizb ut-Tahrir leaflets and other materials.⁴⁹ Some observers argue that the crackdown reflects the prosecutor's personal ambitions more than the real challenge to the regime and many in Khujand believe that Hizb ut-Tahrir poses a much larger threat for Uzbekistan than Tajikistan. Most Hizb ut-Tahrir leaflets distributed in Sughd Province call for overthrow of the Karimov regime in Uzbekistan rather than the Tajik leadership. Besides, said one observer, "Tajikistan has very powerful 'legal'

³⁹ ICG interview with Obaidullo Faizullaev, first deputy chairman of the Sughd IRP, on 6 December 2001.

⁴⁰ ICG interview with Nadzmidin Shokhumbod, deputy editor-in-chief, *Sughd*, on 7 December 2001.

⁴¹ ICG interview with Ilkhom Jamolov, director, Varorud. Khujand, on 4 December 2001.

⁴² In an ICG interview in Dushanbe on 13 July 2001, Deputy Chairman Kabirov admitted that "our party has not expanded in the North because we have a particularly positive image there, but rather because the population is unable to voice its concerns through other channels.... As soon as a new real political force emerges the Northerners will abandon our party".

⁴³ ICG interview with Obaidullo Faizullaev, first deputy chairman of the Sughd IRP, in Khujand, on 6 December 2001.

⁴⁴ See ICG Asia Report No. 14, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation and Regional Security*, Osh/Brussels, 1 March 2001.

⁴⁵ ICG interview with Anvar Dzhililov, chairman of the Sughd PDPT, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

⁴⁶ ICG interview in Khujand, on 31 July 2001.

⁴⁷ ICG interview in Khujand, on 31 July 2001, with Negmatullo Mirzaidov of the Varorud news agency.

⁴⁸ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

⁴⁹ ICG interview with Ilkhom Jamolov, director, Varorud news agency, in Khujand, on 4 December 2001.

Islamic leaders. These people condemn the Hizb ut-Tahrir and people trust them'.⁵⁰

The former Chairman of the Democratic Party, Jumaboi Niyozov, worries about long-term consequences:

Many young people have turned to the Hizb ut-Tahrir. Party activists are put in jail and in five years' time they will be out of prison. In prison they do not only get in touch with [radical] Islamist theory but also with elements from the criminal world. Once they are out of jail they will form groups and look for sponsors.⁵¹

IRP members are often arrested on suspicion of being members of Hizb ut-Tahrir. In the Torzunsade district a member of IRP was jailed for simply reading leaflets about the Hizb ut-Tahrir. The IRP defended him but the court ruled that he had withheld information (i.e. by not handing the leaflet over to the police).⁵²

The growth of Hizb ut-Tahrir demonstrates that there is a pool of mainly young people disillusioned with the party system but still actively involved in politics. It is possible that if a more radical group than Hizb ut-Tahrir were to emerge many would leave Hizb ut-Tahrir and join it.

Conceivably the IRP might become more radical to regain support. Activists suggest this could be achieved by political, not religious, radicalisation, for example, by more criticism of government economic policies. But this seems unlikely to win back supporters who seek more radical solutions to a much broader range of issues.

B. POLITICAL PLURALISM AND STABILITY

Rebuilding the state after the war concentrated power in the president's hands. While this may have allowed a measure of stability, further moves towards authoritarian rule may provoke opposition and channelling it out of constitutional

paths. The peace accord was based on a fundamental compromise between political forces that still exist in Tajikistan: on the one hand, a broad range of secular groups, including the government; on the other, a range of Islamist movements, ranging from moderate to extreme. regional differences also remain potent.

Further attempts to consolidate power only around the president or to undermine this compromise are likely to provoke instability. As Rakhmonov has attempted to assert more control over the state, he has also led the regime in a more authoritarian direction. The elections of 1999 and 2000 were severely criticised internationally, and there is strong concern among human rights organisations about the attitude towards opponents. The press is strictly censored, and there is little independent media.

IRP leaders comment that Rakhmonov tends to take a stronger line with the opposition after meetings with his CIS counterparts, most of whom have a strongly anti-Islamist policy. There is a danger that Rakhmonov will use the present anti-terrorist campaign as an excuse for limiting the opposition or clamping down further on independent Islamist movements.

Political stability normally improves where objective information is easily available. Tajikistan has a vacuum with most political information transmitted by rumour and innuendo. Half-truths and exaggerations are common. This does little to ensure political legitimacy and potentially can provoke instability.

It is in the interests of stability for the government to permit a nascent independent media to flourish. There are understandable concerns in the regime about the media's role. Many journalists accept that lurid reporting was at least partly to blame for inflaming the situation in 1992.⁵³ But journalists have learned from that period and have acquired a sense of responsibility for the political impact of their work.

Most media outlets are state-owned, though over the last half-dozen years some twenty non-governmental

⁵⁰ ICG interview on 5 December 2001.

⁵¹ ICG interview, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

⁵² ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

⁵³ Inter alia, ICG Interviews: Deputy Director of Varorud Negmatullo Mirzaidov, on 31 July 2001; Editor-in-Chief Rustam Odinaev of *Kulyabskaia Pravda*, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

television stations have emerged. During the last year alone licences have been awarded to three private television companies but the process is not easy. The General Director of Asia Plus, Umed Babkhanov, told ICG that he has waited three years for a licence to start his own television company to broadcast news bulletins in Dushanbe.⁵⁴ Two independent news agencies have also emerged: Asia Plus (Dushanbe) and Varorud (Khujand). There are only four national newspapers, none dailies.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, in comparison with Uzbekistan, the media is active and relatively pluralistic. Independent newspapers have united in a National Association of Independent Mass Media, and international organisations, such as Internews, CIMERA and others, have been active in providing training and technical and legal assistance. Journalists attempt to push the boundaries of the possible and often write quite brave articles. There is considerable hope for the future of the Tajik press.⁵⁶

However, there is still censorship, and certain subjects – mainly criticisms or analyses of the leadership or other controversial political issues – are off limits.⁵⁷ The publisher of the Moscow-based Tajik opposition paper *Charogi Ruz*, Dododjon Atovulloyev, was detained at the Moscow airport in early July 2001, on charges of sedition and insulting Rakhmonov.⁵⁸ At least one newspaper has been closed by the government.⁵⁹

In the state media even basic information is not always provided. State television often fails to cover important events and people learn what is happening in their country through Russian

channels, which reach 78 per cent of the population.⁶⁰ In mid-October 2001, however, Tajikistan suspended retransmission of ORT and reduced by five hours transmission of RTR. Officially this was done as they owed more than U.S.\$180,000 each in unpaid fees.⁶¹ Unofficially, however, the reason was broadcasts of interviews critical of Rakhmonov's support of anti-terrorist action in Afghanistan. RTR in early December signalled its willingness to cover its debts.⁶²

Lack of access to the media in the regions is a major problem. The General Director of *Asia Plus*, Umed Babkhanov, illustrated this by telling ICG of an incident in a village close to the Uzbek border. Children asked to name the president answered "Karimov" since their only news source was Uzbek television. Local media – state and private – struggles financially and generally lacks adequate resources. Advertising revenue is minimal, and most people cannot afford newspapers. Many in the countryside earn no more than two somoni (less than US\$1) monthly. On such an income they cannot feed their family, and newspapers, though cheap, are a luxury.⁶³

There is a real opportunity for international assistance to the media. Particularly outside Dushanbe, regional radio stations could provide a focus and uniting force. Organisations such as Internews, which provides training and technical assistance, require additional support, and long-term international aid should be directed towards genuinely independent outlets, few of which have prospect of becoming commercially viable soon, particularly outside the capital. Further training for journalists is also important as an additional surety against repetition of the media's inflammatory contribution to the civil war. With such aid, independent media could help to stabilise the fragile peace process.

⁵⁴ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

⁵⁵ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), pp. 31-32.

⁵⁶ Nuriddin Karshiboev, "Tadzhikskii zhurnalist-emigrant schitaet situatsiu v SMI obnadezhivaiushchei [Tajik journalist-in-exile finds the media situation hopeful]", in *CAMEL*, no. 19, September 2001, p. 3.

⁵⁷ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

⁵⁸ "Detained Tajik publisher awaits word of his fate", *Tojikiston Socio-Political Newspaper*, 13 July 2001, p. 13. He was released as Russia decided not to extradite him.

⁵⁹ The newspaper *Vecherny Dushanbe* was closed down after having printed an interview with Dushanbe Mayor Ubaidulloev. A court case was later opened against the editor-in-chief.

⁶⁰ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), p. 31.

⁶¹ RFE/RL, 15 October 2001.

⁶² RFE/RL, 4 December 2001

⁶³ ICG interview with Rustam Odinaev, editor-in-chief, *Kulyabskaia Pravda*, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001. Local papers cost 15 diram and those from Dushanbe cost 50 diram.

C. THREATS TO THE SYSTEM

Beyond the conflicts among rival elite groups and between regime and opposition, there are serious problems facing the construction of an effective state. Above all two issues have plagued Tajikistan even before independence: regionalism and corruption. Unless their destructiveness is limited, Tajikistan will find it extremely difficult to achieve lasting stability.

1. Regionalism

Tajikistan has four administrative provinces. Most people live in Khatlon in the South (35.1 per cent) and Sughd in the North (30.5 per cent). Only 9.2 per cent live in Dushanbe and 3.4 per cent in the GBAO.⁶⁴ Central areas such as Gharm and the Karategin Valley are not fully under government control. Khatlon Province and Dushanbe are largely artificial administrative creations that do not always coincide with people's regional loyalties: Kulyab and Qurghontepa were united in one province (Khatlon) in 1993, but the two regions still have distinct identities. The Gharm and Tavildara region to the east of Dushanbe, the most religious area and the IRP heartland, mostly remains outside government control.

It is widely accepted that from 1937 until the USSR's collapse in 1991 Tajikistan was ruled by elites from Leninabad Province in the North. The true story is much more complex.⁶⁵ In fact, from the 1970s the Kulyabis acted as the Leninabadis' "junior partner" in governing the republic and were primarily in charge of military affairs.⁶⁶ During the civil war elites from the two regions allied against the opposition. Since the civil war, however, their roles have been reversed. The Kulyabi elites are now the senior partner: "Kulyab won the war and became the master of the republic".⁶⁷

The usurping of power by the Kulyabis has caused considerable discontent, particularly in Sughd, where Leninabadis holding key positions have been replaced by Kulyabis. The former chairman of the Democratic Party, Jumaboi Niyozov – himself a northerner – told ICG that "regionalism as a political factor has intensified: whereas Kulyabis earlier on were appointed to positions by chance, such appointments have now taken on a systematic character".⁶⁸ Southerners have been appointed to key positions in government and profitable enterprises. Several local factory managers in Sughd are rumoured to have been forced to resign following threats or imprisonment to make way for southerners.

The influx of southerners met with hostility in the North, where Kulyabis are stereotyped as poorly educated and ill mannered. They were perceived as condescending, arrogant and pursuing private interests.⁶⁹ The murder of a popular 36-year old businessman, Akhmat Ashulov, in 1996, by two southerners, triggered more than a week of demonstrations in Khujand. Some Kulyabi appointees were dismissed by Dushanbe, but resentment remained. In April 1997 there was a large-scale riot by prisoners over plans to send them to Kulyab.

Opposition to Kulyabis is also very strong in the Pamirs, an opposition stronghold. However, whereas southerners flocked to the North to take up key positions, few want to go to remote and inhospitable Badakhshan, where there is little chance of making money. According to a local official, Boimamad Alibakhshev:

The Pamiri people have not learned to give bribes. Officials here are not in a position to make money from their positions [Pamir is the country's poorest region]. Life is difficult and for that reason nobody wants to

⁶⁴ UNDP, *Tajikistan. Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), p. 17.

⁶⁵ Shirin Akiner, *Tajikistan: Disintegration or Reconciliation?* (RIIA: London, 2001), pp. 18-21.

⁶⁶ GBAO was also a part of this system, providing middle-level officials to the country's National Security Committee.

⁶⁷ ICG interview with a local political analyst in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001. Despite its victory, the Kulyab region is among Tajikistan's poorest regions. A narrow

group of people from this area reaps the benefits of Tajik clanism, whereas the majority are just as poor as people elsewhere. The political analyst suggested that Kulyab as a region has not benefited from Rakhmonov's rule: "Kulyab is in a more difficult position than other parts of Tajikistan, but we keep silent".

⁶⁸ ICG Interview, in Khujand, on 31 July 2001.

⁶⁹ Jumaboi Niyozov, former chairman of the Democratic Party, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

come here. In Leninabad, however, officials can make money.⁷⁰

The other opposition strongholds, Gharm and the Karategin Valley, are also extremely hostile to Kulyabis but armed gangs and former UTO commanders have largely retained control. Like the Pamirs, it is also very poor and undeveloped, though probably as much a result of the widespread banditry as of discrimination from Dushanbe. Kidnappings have made many international relief organisations and NGOs reluctant to establish themselves in the area.

There have been changes, however, in the past two years. Rakhmonov has widened the elite to bring in representatives from other regions, although this process has a long way to go. Also, it is no longer possible to talk about a single Kulyabi elite. Instead, sub-elites from Kulyab play a more important role, particularly those from Rakhmonov's home district of Dangara and from Farkhar (mostly Ubaidulloev allies).⁷¹ This has led to some from other areas of Kulyab allegedly being demoted or ousted.

One of the most prominent representatives of the Kulyab elite, Salim Yakubov, allegedly lost his position for belonging to the wrong clan. He held high posts in Dushanbe including Minister of the Interior and Chairman of the Tax Committee, but lost the latter position after being accused of "anti-government activities". Since then Yakubov has apparently been developing links with northern elites who have also lost power. According to well-informed sources in Khujand, he frequently visits Tashkent to meet with exiled politicians Safidin Turaev and Abdumalik Abdullajanov, both fiercely anti-Rakhmonov.

⁷⁰ ICG Interview, in Kulyab, on 24 July 2001. Alibakhshov heads the GBAO Department of the Government Agency on Anti-Monopoly Policies and Support of Entrepreneurs.

⁷¹ Many of the Dangara group are relatives of the president or his allies. The former chairman of the State Committee on Property (*Goskomimushestvo*), Matlub Davlatov, was recently appointed chairman of the Financial Control Unit. He was replaced by Mr. Gulov, the former chairman of the Dangara district. According to ICG sources, Matlub is the son of Rakhmonov's sister, whereas Gulov's older brother is married to Rakhmonov's daughter.

If excluded elites were to ally with Makhmud Khudojberdiev and also Uzbekistan, this could be trouble for President Rakhmonov. It is not unlikely that Uzbekistan may choose to support an anti-Rakhmonov coalition. Understandably, the president is wary of heavyweight politicians who either have been or are on good terms with Uzbekistan. One such is the former governor of Sughd Province, Khamidov, an ethnic Uzbek. He was replaced by the current governor, Kazimov, in 1996. When rumours emerged in 2001 that he was to re-enter politics, he was arrested and accused of planning to assassinate Kazimov, spying for Uzbekistan, and economic crimes. His whereabouts are unknown.⁷²

Such opposition aside, the most dangerous regional dynamic remains between South and North, although government attempts to reassert control over the Gharm Valley would also provoke opposition. Most people seem to believe that the northerners – at least for now – will put up with southern domination. The former chairman of the Democratic Party, Jumaboi Niyozov, told ICG that "the political culture in Northern Tajikistan is considerably more advanced than in the Southern regions. For this reason there has been no confrontation between the North and the South". The prevailing view in the North seems to be that the relationship will automatically shift to benefit the North once the economy improves. Northerners do tend to be better educated and better businessmen, and there are signs that they are gradually reasserting themselves nationally.

However, the problem of integrating many regional identities and geographically distant regions will remain. At the least, regionalism breeds dissatisfaction and corruption; at worst, as during the civil war, it can provoke conflict. At some point, the regime may have to consider constitutional means to channel regional aspirations, whether through a federal system, or a regionally based chamber in parliament. Such radical constitutional change may be premature but it is vital that appointments to senior posts at least better reflect regional differences in order to give the governing elite more legitimacy.

⁷² ICG interview in Khujand, December 2001.

2. Corruption, Politics and External Assistance

For most government appointments an applicant needs close links with powerful people, demonstrated personal loyalty to the authorities, and money. Ability is useful, but as an opposition politician told ICG, "money and personal loyalty to President Rakhmonov are the major hiring criteria here".⁷³

Many posts are reputedly sold to the highest bidder. Customs and the tax inspectorate have the most expensive positions, with higher prices in areas of the country where the most money can be made. There are even price lists for such posts: one in the lucrative Frunze district *hukumiat* [Dushanbe] costs U.S.\$200,000, whereas those elsewhere are U.S.\$150,000. Court chairmen in Khujand are said to pay \$50,000 for their posts.⁷⁴

This corruption is endemic in the political system and economy. Among its main impacts are that:

- it ensures that positions are given on the basis of loyalty and money, not merit, so competent people often fail to get promoted;
- it undermines political and economic reform, since the system often serves the small elite who benefit from corrupt practice;
- it engenders disillusionment and is a popular aspect of some radical groups' propaganda, including Hizb ut-Tahrir; and,
- it discourages investment and limits the effectiveness of foreign aid.

The lack of competent state officials would be a major problem in a small country with a limited intelligentsia, even without corruption. The problem is particularly bad in the judiciary. A law professor told ICG that "during the last attestation, 90 per cent of the lawyers did not get their licences renewed. Tajikistan's best lawyers were amongst these. People who lacked the

necessary qualifications, however, were given licences after having paid bribes".⁷⁵

To regain money invested in getting a post, officials resort to taking bribes. According to the deputy chairman of the Kulyab city administration, Khokhoruraeva Vossieva, extortion is the most common economic crime.⁷⁶ Other corrupt behaviour includes control over export-import operations, particularly those associated with cotton, aluminium and gold. A huge range of licensing regulations give local officials control over almost any business. Hard currency earners are particularly attractive.

This type of system ensures endemic corruption. At the lowest level, officials have to pass on bribes to superiors, and so on up to the top. In some sectors, bribes are an accepted top-up to low salaries.

Few people are charged with corruption. In Sughd 500 economic crimes were registered during the first seven months of 2001. Of these only seventeen were corruption-related.⁷⁷ In Khatlon Province some 50 corruption cases were registered in 2001.⁷⁸ The reason is not inadequate legislation. Tajikistan has a law that clearly defines corruption. Articles 314-21 of the Law "on the Struggle against Crimes of Corruption", address various types of corruption, and Article 319 specifically addresses bribery.⁷⁹ The real problem is within the court system: where salaries are very low and political pressure is extensive.⁸⁰

Shokhir Khakimov, the deputy leader of the Congress of National Unity (CNU), believes that a major reason for extensive corruption is the ruling party's large parliamentary majority. More than 90 per cent of deputies support the president so there is no political to attack corruption:

I know many people who receive modest salaries but who have enormous cars and who have built huge houses for themselves. Where do they get their money from? Officials do not fill in tax declarations here,

⁷³ ICG interview in Dushanbe, July 2001.

⁷⁴ ICG interviews. There is, of course, no way of independently verifying these figures.

⁷⁵ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

⁷⁶ ICG interview, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

⁷⁷ ICG interview with Kurbonali Mukhabbatov, prosecutor of Sughd Province, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

⁷⁸ ICG interview with Abdussator Kholov, prosecutor of Khatlon Province, in Kurgan-Tiube, on 19 July 2001.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ ICG interview, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

even though we have a law against organised crime and corruption.⁸¹

The deputy chairman of the Tajik Communist Party, A. Abdullaev, told ICG that "sometimes Rakhmonov asks where the mafia is. All he needs to do is to fly around in a helicopter and he will see everything. Civil servants, whose monthly salary is U.S.\$15, are building large houses for themselves."⁸²

Extensive corruption is becoming a liability for Rakhmonov. International organisations have indicated that loans and other financial assistance will depend on effective measures against corruption. UN Development Program Administrator Kalman Mizhei warned that Tajikistan must take tougher measures to eliminate corruption and implement broad reforms or risk a reduction in aid.⁸³ Such measures must be implemented quickly if Tajikistan is to benefit from international humanitarian and other assistance earmarked for Central Asia military intervention in Afghanistan.

On 24 November 2001, Rakhmonov warned officials that he had received complaints from international organisations about embezzlement and abuse of infrastructure funds. He sacked Nurullo Ashurov – head of the government agency dealing with natural disasters – after U.S.\$60,000 for repairs went missing⁸⁴ and dismissed the director of the Centre for Credits to Educational Establishments, Juru Latipov.⁸⁵

Corruption is systemic, permeating political and economic structures. There are signs that humanitarian aid earmarked for northern Afghanistan never makes it there. Physicians for Human Rights and other organizations have complained that corruption at all levels of border control severely hampers their ability to help refugees in northern Afghanistan.

On 3 November 2001 Tajikistan grounded all non-Tajik and Russian aircraft without reason.

Physicians for Human Rights pointed out that such flights "are in some cases the only infrastructure available for rapidly moving aid workers, UN staff and essential equipment in and out of locations within northeast Afghanistan".⁸⁶ Only Tajik flights have resumed and at much higher cost. The Northern Alliance charged U.S.\$350 for flying into Afghanistan, the Tajiks U.S.\$2,500.⁸⁷

Leonard Rubinstein, the executive director of Physicians for Human Rights, has labelled the Tajik behaviour "outrageous" and urged the UN Security Council, Russia and the U.S. to use all channels necessary to ensure humanitarian aid providers and NGOs access to do their jobs.⁸⁸

A former program director for an international organization in Tajikistan argues that the West is partly to blame as there has been an insufficiently coordinated response from embassies, the UN, World Bank, ADB, IMF and NGOs.⁸⁹ There have been some NGO attempts at joint representations, particularly regarding the health ministry, which has a special reputation for corruption. However, they often lack political clout.

Some organizations such as the Aga Khan Foundation have strict controls to ensure that money is spent as intended. Other organizations, however, focus less on this. Aid channelled through several different partners, including government agencies, is most likely to go astray. There is also a need for independent audit companies to monitor public spending.

Strong political will, coupled with better financial control and radical administrative reform, will be the only way to reduce corruption. Otherwise, assistance that is essential for Tajikistan's reconstruction will be wasted.

⁸¹ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 30 July 2001.

⁸² ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

⁸³ RFE/RL 26 November 2001.

⁸⁴ RFE/RL 27 November 2001.

⁸⁵ "Prezident protiv korruptsii i vziatnichestva" [The President is against corruption and bribery], *Asia Plus*, 29 November 2001, p. 1.

⁸⁶ "Medical group calls on Tajikistan to expedite aid and humanitarian personnel across border to Afghanistan: Corrupt Policies Affecting Operations", Physicians for Human Rights. Bulletin #4, 21 November 2001, distributed by the Centre for Civil Society, 21 November 2001.

⁸⁷ ICG interview with a diplomat, in Dushanbe, December 2001.

⁸⁸ "Medical group calls", Physicians for Human Rights. Bulletin, op. cit.

⁸⁹ "Re: Tajikistan Greed and Corruption Block Humanitarian Aid", distributed by Center for Civil Society International on 25 November 2001.

D. REBELS

After five years of civil war, personal security is still the most critical concern for much of the population. Not only is there little desire to return to fighting, there is also broad support for many of the government's apparently harsh measures against former opposition commanders who have remained outside the peace agreement. In state-building terms, it is of paramount importance that the government extends its control to defend citizens from armed gangs, both criminal and ideological. However, the way in which this is done will determine whether stability is lasting or harsh merely promote further conflict.

When the peace agreement was signed, much of the country was controlled by warlords, criminal gangs or armed opposition. Since 1997 the government has gradually extended its control but some areas, such as Gharm, remain largely in the hands of local armed leaders. In addition, the state is constantly undermined by criminal activities, often conducted under protection of senior officials or law enforcement officers. Most critically, drugs trafficking has become a major business in which senior figures in government, security forces and the military are believed involved. While there is real ideological and regional tension in Tajikistan, many apparently political struggles are disguised forms of conflict over resources and illegal business.

As part of the 1997 peace agreement, half of those who had fought were to be integrated into the army.⁹⁰ Although a majority of UTO commanders supported the peace process, there was considerable dissatisfaction with how integration was carried out, including delayed government appointments.⁹¹ Nevertheless, by March 2000, 4,498 UTO fighters had been integrated into the army or security forces.⁹²

Not everybody accepted the peace, however. Some opposition fighters refused to lay down their arms. They form a loose coalition, mainly from Kofarnihon and Tavildara. In addition to

looting and charging "road fees", these groups are linked to drugs trafficking.⁹³ It is difficult to estimate how much local support they enjoy. Some believe their support is very limited and based mainly on force. But there is probably also a sense among the population in Tavildara and Gharm that government troops and administrators, most from regions such as Kulyab, could be even worse.

Opinions are divided as to how ideological these armed groups are. One analyst told ICG that "these people judge people who do not go to the mosque for prayers and women who do not cover their faces. They are fundamentalists and people are afraid of standing up to them as they fear for their lives".⁹⁴ The majority of those ICG spoke with, however, thought the opposite. The chairman of the Social-Democratic Party (SDP), Rakhmatulla Zoirov, claimed that not one commander was loyal to an idea: "many of them are not familiar with concepts such as 'jihad' and 'mujaheddin'. Everyone shares the same faith in our country. During the civil war people fought against the party apparatus, not against non-Muslims. Islam in Tajikistan is a way of life, not an ideology".⁹⁵

As part of the peace agreement, an amnesty was introduced to encourage commanders and fighters to integrate. The law stated that they would not be prosecuted for civil war crimes.⁹⁶ However, those who gave up their arms in accordance with the amnesty during 2001 became the object of investigation and arrest. According to the senior consultant of the Security Council, Tagai Rakhmonov, those in possession of arms should be given guarantees in return for handing in weapons.⁹⁷ This makes sense, but there is little sign of such action.

Immediately after the civil war commanders who did not take part in reintegration were in control of their fiefdoms. The state was too weak to act against them. Recently, the the government has become much more active. In September 2000, 40 followers

⁹⁰ ICG interview with Ivo Petrov, representative of the UN Secretary-General for Tajikistan, (UNTOP), in Dushanbe, on 4 December 2001.

⁹¹ Accord, *Politics of Compromise*, op. cit., p. 5.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁹³ For an in-depth analysis of the drugs trade in Tajikistan see ICG Asia Report No. 25, *Central Asia: Drugs and Conflict*, Osh/Brussels, 26 November 2001.

⁹⁴ ICG interview, in Kurgan-Tiube, on 19 July 2001.

⁹⁵ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

⁹⁶ ICG interview with Ivo Petrov, representative of the UN Secretary-General for Tajikistan, (UNTOP), in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

⁹⁷ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 6 December 2001.

of Mullo Abdullo – a prominent opposition commander – were captured in Darband (Central Tajikistan). Some 28 members of the band were killed.

In August 2001 a raid was organised against another prominent rebel leader, Rakhmon Sanginov (also known as "Hitler"). Sanginov and his associate, Mansur Muakkalov, were killed, along with many of their followers.

The raid followed the arrest of four of Sanginov's men on suspicion of involvement in the assassination of Deputy Minister of the Interior Habib Sanginov (no relation to Rakhmon) in April 2001. Rakhmon Sanginov claimed his men had nothing to do with the murder and to secure their release he took hostage seven police officers and fifteen workers from a German relief organisation. The hostages were released after negotiations, but the incident clearly provoked the government action.

The move against Rakhmon Sanginov was praised by many, especially in Dushanbe. His crime record after the amnesty law was dismal. According to official figures, his band committed more than 400 crimes – including murders – after the civil war. Nevertheless, there is fear that the brutal government response – innocent people were also killed and homes badly damaged – could cause lasting resentment against Dushanbe.

Ivo Petrov, the UN's special representative, believed the authorities were justified in tracking down Rakhmon Sanginov. He did, however, hold the view that the government and the opposition should act jointly to eliminate armed bands.⁹⁸

Said Abdullo Nuri, on the other hand, thought the authorities should have acted differently:

the authorities should have tried to make Sanginov interested in a peaceful life by giving him an opportunity to conduct business or agriculture. Sanginov did

listen to authoritative religious people. These could have been used to make him give up his arms.⁹⁹

This seems very optimistic. There was probably no way to deal with Sanginov except by force. But further actions against independent commanders will require a more nuanced approach and appreciation of the economic situation. Criminal groups thrive in the socio-economic circumstances found in central Tajikistan: it is these roots of crime that should be the focus for both government and the international community.

Part of the problem in dealing with groups like Sanginov's is that the opposition now formally integrated into the Ministry of the Interior or the army is not trusted to carry out such operations. There are some grounds for this mistrust. Among the kidnapers supporting Sanginov were young men doing military service for a sub-unit of the Ministry of Emergency Situations in the Tavildara district.¹⁰⁰ In Gharm and GBAO – traditional opposition strongholds – almost all ex-opposition have been integrated into the Ministry of the Interior.¹⁰¹

The Secretary of the Tajik Security Council, Amirkul Azimov, visited Tavildara shortly after the attack on Sanginov, and subsequently asserted that he had the support of the local power structures and local people, who feared Sanginov.¹⁰² Nevertheless, there is clearly concern over the loyalty of former UTO forces, who must be persuaded that there is no advantage in giving tacit or passive support to criminal gangs. Otherwise, there will remain concern that the government's confrontational line may backfire and trigger renewed hostilities.

The decree on integration of UTO fighters into the national security services gave combatants a choice: if they wanted to continue military service they were free to join the national army. If not, they would be demobilised.¹⁰³ Although the integration of

⁹⁸ ICG interview with Ivo Petrov, representative of the UN Secretary-General for Tajikistan (UNTOP), in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001. He said: "There is mistrust and suspicion on both sides and it is not disappearing. The leaders of Tajikistan have fallen into the trap of victory and suspicion is growing".

⁹⁹ ICG interview.

¹⁰⁰ Lidia Isamova, "Amirkul Azimov: IDU – ne nasha problema! [Amirkul Azimov: The IMU is not our problem!]", *Asia Plus*, 2 August 2001, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ ICG interview with Ivo Petrov, representative of the UN Secretary General for Tajikistan (UNTOP), in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

¹⁰² Lidia Isamova, "IDU", op. cit.

¹⁰³ UNDP. *Tajikistan. Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), p. 29.

opposition commanders into the armed structures has been more or less achieved, the authorities have found it difficult to fund an army. On 23 June 2000, the government announced that 4,000 former UTO soldiers, who had been integrated into the Army, would be demobilised by 1 August 2000. The demobilization was not particularly successful: in the end only 1,500 were demobilized, of whom at least 600 remain unemployed.¹⁰⁴ A former opposition commander currently employed by the Ministry of Emergency Situations indicated to ICG that unemployment among former commanders is much more widespread than indicated by official figures. In GBAO alone only 400 of the 2,500 men demobilized after the civil war have found proper jobs.¹⁰⁵

Many contract soldiers are older men and it is difficult for them to find jobs. Some programs provide for these men, though the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection – which plays the lead role - is short of funds. The Ministry is operating a Rehabilitation Centre for former combatants. Some financial support – though far from enough - has been rendered by the UN Tajikistan Office of Peace Building (UNTOP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNOPS and the Japanese government.¹⁰⁶ In January 2002 the Centre will admit 200 men for specialist training.¹⁰⁷ Centres for contract soldiers are also operating in Gharm and the Khatlon province. A number of temporary programs are also in train. Money is given to local communities for repair of mills, reconstruction of railways and development of agriculture. Former contract soldiers carry out the repairs and later run these projects themselves.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of Employment and Social Protection, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001. No figures exist for how many unemployed former soldiers have joined armed gangs.

¹⁰⁵ ICG interview with Ministry of Emergencies employee, August 2001.

¹⁰⁶ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of Employment and Social Protection, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹⁰⁷ ICG interview with Alisher Yarbabaev, first deputy minister of labour and social protection, in Dushanbe, on 30 November 2001.

¹⁰⁸ ICG interview with Ivo Petrov, representative of the UN Secretary-General for Tajikistan (UNTOP), in Dushanbe, on 4 December 2001.

A number of NGOs are also running programs for demobilized soldiers. One of the most well-known, Avesta, in 1998 trained 60 men from the 25th Battalion in various skills such as hairdressing, mending household equipment, sewing, etc. Avesta has also organized civil society activities for former soldiers.¹⁰⁹ Other NGOs in Khatlon Province, Tavildara and Karategin are trying to establish trust between the former soldiers and the local authorities. Minister of Employment and Social Protection Rafika Musaeva emphasized the importance of providing the former soldiers with jobs: "If we do not provide them with a job, they may be tempted to join an armed gang".¹¹⁰

E. KHUDOJBERDIEV

Armed opposition has not only come from former UTO. One of the most daring military attacks was by a former ally of Rakhmonov, the enigmatic Colonel Makhmud Khudojberdiev. Once a special operations officer in the Russian army, he served under Rakhmonov as commander of the quick reaction brigade of the Ministry of Defence.

Khudojberdiev was dismissed and took refuge in Uzbekistan after an insurrection against the government in 1997. But in November 1998, he returned apparently from Uzbekistan to try and take over Khujand. It took him only three hours to gain control in Sughd Province, where he claimed he was welcomed. He was driven out of Tajikistan after several days of fighting and escaped to Uzbekistan but in September 2001 was rumoured killed by his bodyguard.

Khudojberdiev explained his incursion into Khujand by saying "it was necessary for me to make my demands"¹¹¹ known and to make Rakhmonov understand that there are many people in the country

¹⁰⁹ ICG interview with Firuza Ganievna. Avesta, in Dushanbe, on 30 November 2001.

¹¹⁰ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of employment and social protection, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹¹¹ These included amnesty for political prisoners, the formation of a coalition government and free elections.

who do not like the current [political] situation".¹¹² When asked why such demands could not be made peacefully, Khudojberdiev argued that Rakhmonov understands only force. There are many other theories to explain the incursion, including a bid for secession by the northern regions, a move by Uzbekistan to pressure Rakhmonov, or an incursion related to drugs smuggling.

There was clearly some connivance in the affair by Uzbekistan, at least at a lower level. It is much harder to assess whether there was any official support. The Uzbek ambassador in Dushanbe, Bakhtier Urdashev, asserted that "I am convinced that the Uzbek government would never support or assist in an attack on a neighbour".¹¹³ And such allegations have also been denied by Khudojberdiev himself.¹¹⁴

Eight people who took part in Khudojberdiev's invasion in Sughd Province in 1998 were recently sentenced to between 15 and 28 years in prison by a court in Khujand. Another 250 people are facing trial on charges linked to the incursion.

Views are divided as to whether Khudojberdiev is still a threat. In early January 2001 Interior Ministry officials in Khujand announced that Khudojberdiev was planning a new invasion but this was disputed.¹¹⁵ A local official in Kulyab, Makhmad Shobadov, told ICG that 'Khudojberdiev is a nobody. He has never posed a real threat to Tajikistan and will not do so in the future either'.¹¹⁶

F. DRUGS AND CRIME

Matthew Kahane, the UN's coordinator of humanitarian aid to Tajikistan, has estimated that the drugs trade accounts for 30 to 50 per cent of the economy. The UN has identified six drugs routes from Afghanistan, two of which run through Tajikistan: one from Kunduz in northern Afghanistan up to Khatlon province, then through

the CIS to Western Europe; the other from Badakhshan (Afghanistan) to GBAO (Tajikistan), then through Kyrgyzstan to Kazakstan, Russia and onwards.¹¹⁷ Second Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Tajikistan, Vladimir Viktorovich Andrianov, told ICG that the main transit channel of drugs in Tajikistan is through areas controlled by former UTO activists.¹¹⁸

The rise in drugs trafficking since independence is dramatic. In 1991 just 10.9 kg of narcotic substances were confiscated in Tajikistan. Ten years later, in 2000, 7,128.9 kg, were seized. It is difficult to extrapolate from seizure figures the actual size of the trade, but rough estimates suggest that perhaps less than 10 per cent of opium traffic is intercepted. Even if 10 per cent were seized, this would represent some 70,000 kg of opium per year. In Tajikistan this would be worth approximately U.S.\$14 million. In Moscow it would be worth nearly U.S.\$700 million, equivalent to five times the annual state budget of Tajikistan.

Most seizures are from the thousands of small-scale traffickers who carry only a few grams of heroin at a time.¹¹⁹ Major shipments of hundreds of kilograms are seldom intercepted as they are protected by law enforcement agencies and other state bodies. "[Former field] commanders, law enforcement officials and diplomats are [also] involved in the drugs trade".¹²⁰ A former Tajik ambassador to Kazakhstan was twice caught smuggling drugs.

General Prosecutor R.T. Bobokhonov has indicated that the assassination of former Deputy Minister of the Interior Habib Sanginov in April 2001 was drugs-related. Apparently Habib Sanginov – a prominent member of the UTO and also of the National Reconciliation Commission – had been given 74 kg of heroin worth U.S.\$114,000 by other opposition members but failed to pay for the drugs.¹²¹ ICG was frequently told, however, that Sanginov had nothing to do with the trade and that

¹¹² "Makhmud Khudojberdiev: Ia eshche vernus! [Makhmud Khudojberdiev: I will return again!]", reprinted in *Charogi Ruz*, no. 1 (97), 1999, p. 7.

¹¹³ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 27 July 2001.

¹¹⁴ "Makhmud Khudojberdiev", op. cit.

¹¹⁵ RFE/RL, 9 January 2001.

¹¹⁶ ICG interview, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

¹¹⁷ F.Rose. "Narkotika finansierer den hellige krigen [Drugs are funding the holy war]", *Stavanger Aftenblad* (Stavanger), 5 October 2001, p. 2.

¹¹⁸ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

¹¹⁹ Varorud news agency, Khujand, 31 July 2001.

¹²⁰ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

¹²¹ "Iz vystuplenia Generalnogo Prokurora RT Bobokhonova po ugovnomu delu v otnoshenii ubiistva", Sanginova Kh. [From the General Prosecutor RT Bobokhonov's speech on the murder of Kh. Sanginov].

the prosecutor's speech was nothing but an attempt to discredit him and the opposition by implicating some in the murder.

Officials say that the drugs they confiscate are burnt, though there is considerable doubt. Officials are themselves involved in the drugs trade, making money selling confiscated drugs.

Narcotics smuggling thrives in an environment of political instability and economic collapse. Vested interests in the trade have nothing to gain from introducing more effective governance and increased economic prosperity. A major campaign against drugs trafficking has the potential to provoke strong opposition from senior officials involved and possibly provoke political instability, but doing nothing is also unacceptable.

The international community has a chance to intervene strongly in Afghanistan to cut production sharply. But it can also do more in Tajikistan to assist with interdiction and demand reduction. The establishment of the UN Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) in Dushanbe with extensive powers to investigate drugs crime is a useful start but assistance should also be given to Russian border guards. The latter require extensive diplomatic engagement, since it is clear that there is some involvement in the trade by Russian officers. The international community must pressure Russia to ensure that it is no longer involved in the trade and offer technical assistance to border guards if needed.

G. ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

Rebuilding the state, asserting some measure of law and order, and combating regional rivalry, drug trafficking and crime will all be impossible unless there is improvement in the economic situation. Even without the destruction caused by the civil war, the Tajik economy would have faced severe problems on independence.

In 1991 subsidies from Moscow covered more than 40 per cent of Tajikistan's expenditures.¹²²

¹²² Barnett R. Rubin, "The Fragmentation of Tajikistan", p. 1, at http://www.soros.org/textfiles/cen_Eurasia/rubin3.txt.

The subsidies cut left Tajikistan with serious budgetary problems. But it was the civil war that destroyed the economy almost completely, including infrastructure and putting a severe strain on financial resources. According to official estimates the war cost U.S.\$7 billion¹²³ – the equivalent of eleven state annual budgets.¹²⁴ It also produced a huge number of people in need of financial assistance and social security payments: more than one million refugees and internally displaced people required help to return home after the war. Approximately 150,000 people were killed – many of them breadwinners. Some 55,000 children lost their parents.¹²⁵

Just as the civil war ended, the Tajik economy was hard hit by the Russian economic crisis in 1998. The official exchange rate of the Tajik rouble against the dollar fell by 47.5 per cent between August 1998 and August 1999.¹²⁶ Many Tajiks working in Russia lost their income or found business no longer profitable. To compound the damage, since 1998 Tajikistan has suffered successive natural disasters. Major floods have destroyed or damaged its infrastructure, homes and crops, and two years of severe drought have led to a sharp drop in agricultural output. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Tajikistan produced 180,000 tons of grain last year compared with 500,000 tons in 1999. Harvests this year are 25% lower than last year.¹²⁷ In 2000 people lost 70 per cent of their crops and in 2001 75 per cent.¹²⁸

According to ILO estimates, unemployment is close to 30 per cent – though Tajiks think the number much higher¹²⁹ particularly in GBAO (East) and Khatlon (South). The young are especially badly hit by unemployment - some 70 per cent do not have a job. Women are also harder hit than men, with 52

¹²³ Talbak Nazarov, "Foreword", UNDP, *Tajikistan Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe:UNDP, 2000), p. 4.

¹²⁴ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹²⁵ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of labour and social security, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹²⁶ Asian Development Outlook 2000, Special Chapter, *As the Century Turns. The Social Challenge in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/for the Asian Development Bank, 2000), p. 79.

¹²⁷ ICG telephone interview with Rafim Jumaev, FAO agronomist, in Dushanbe, on 13 December 2001.

¹²⁸ ICG interviews with Abdurakhim Radjabov and Islom Usmanov, Ministry of Emergency Situations, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

¹²⁹ UNDP, *Tajikistan Human Development Report 2000* (Dushanbe: UNDP, 2000), p. 19.

per cent unemployed. Some 80 per cent of the population is poor, one third "very poor" and almost one fifth "destitute".¹³⁰ The Red Cross estimates that 40 per cent of the population cannot afford medical care. Children are often not sent to school as they have no proper clothes to wear.¹³¹

There is a welfare net of sorts: social security expenditure is 40 per cent of the 2001 state budget. But payments are miniscule. In 2001 the minimum pension was only two somoni (less than U.S.\$1) per month. The average pension is 5.42 somoni (just over U.S.\$2).¹³² Salaries are also very low: in 2000 the monthly average was not more than 15.57 somoni (just under U.S.\$4). The minimum salary for 2001 was three somoni, or just over a U.S. dollar.¹³³ From 1 January 2002 the minimum monthly salary will be raised to four somoni¹³⁴ – far from enough to make ends meet.

Perhaps worst hit is GBAO, the vast, sparsely populated region in the Pamir Mountains. During the Soviet period up to 1,000 trucks a day supplied the region with goods. Now traffic is 50 to 100 trucks.¹³⁵ Since there is little local cultivation, some 70 per cent of all food products are imported. Prices are 50 per cent higher than elsewhere, though people tend to be poorer. If poverty throughout Tajikistan is 50 to 55 per cent, the figure for GBAO is locally estimated to be 99 per cent.¹³⁶ Officially 21 per cent of the

work force is unemployed. Unofficial estimates are 45 per cent.¹³⁷ To survive, people depend on external assistance, mostly from the Aga Khan Foundation.¹³⁸ Local leaders realise that "the government cannot provide subsidies similar to those the province received directly from Moscow during the Soviet period".¹³⁹

Khatlon Province also experiences particular hardship. Most of the fighting during the civil war took place in its Kurgan-Tiube region. Consequently it suffered the most infrastructure damage and loss of life. The highest increase in unemployment rates has been observed here.¹⁴⁰ Agriculture is the main occupation, but produce prices are low. As the province lacks industry, only 12 per cent of production is processed locally. It does not pay to distribute agricultural produce elsewhere as prices are low and transportation costly.¹⁴¹ Khatlon has also been hit hard by drought. Southern regions have been particularly affected by disease including malaria, typhoid and tuberculosis. Medicine is expensive, treatment nearly unavailable.¹⁴²

The appalling economic situation and the sharp decline in social infrastructure probably do not themselves endanger stability. But they provide all the ingredients required for other threats to peace to increase.¹⁴³

¹³⁰ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of labour and social security, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹³¹ "Srednaia Azia na poroge krizisa [Central Asia on the threshold of crisis]", *Krestianskie Vedomosti*, 16 October 2001, p. 14.

¹³² ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of employment and social protection, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹³³ *Goskomstat. Tajikistan v tsifrah. Kratkii ekonomicheskii sbornik* [National Statistics Committee. Tajikistan in numbers. A short economic digest] (Dushanbe: Goskomstat, 2001), p. 37.

¹³⁴ "Pensii i zarplaty vozrastut [Pensions and salaries are going up]", *Asia Plus*, 29 November 2001, p. 1.

¹³⁵ ICG interview with Sohیب Nazar Beknazarov, leader of the GBAO Communist Party, in Khorugh, on 24 July 2001.

¹³⁶ Information provided by local residents at a conference organised jointly by the United Nations and the Tajik Association of Young Political Scientists, in Khorugh, on 25 July 2001.

¹³⁷ ICG interview with Boimamad Alibakhsov, in Khorugh, on 24 July 2001.

¹³⁸ "If it was not for the Aga Khan, large numbers of people would have died from starvation", Sohیب Beknazarov, leader of the GBAO Communist Party, told ICG in Khorugh, on 24 July 2001.

¹³⁹ ICG interview with Safarov, deputy leader, GBAO Democratic Party, in Khorugh on 24 July 2001.

¹⁴⁰ ICG interview with Rafika Musaeva, minister of employment and social security, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹⁴¹ ICG interviews with Umar Kamolov, director, and Makhmudjon Alizoda, editor-in-chief, Kurgantepa TV, in Kurgan-Tiube, on 19 July 2001.

¹⁴² As of late July 2001 620 people were suspected of having contracted typhoid, and 153 cases had been confirmed. Officially thirteen people had been hospitalised and seven had died. ICG interview with Sukhrob Shofarukhshoev, editor, Kulyab TV, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001. During the first seven months of 2001 eleven people died of tuberculosis in the Kulyab area. Turko Dikaev, "Kulyabu ugrozhaet epidemia? [Is Kuliab threatened by an epidemic?]", *Asia Plus*, 2 August 2001, p. 5.

¹⁴³ The deputy chairman of the IRP, Mukhitdin Kabirov, told ICG that "the socio-economic crisis presents the biggest risk for peace". ICG interview in Dushanbe on 13 July 2001.

Others tend to argue, probably correctly, that mass social unrest is unlikely because Tajikistan has an authoritarian political tradition that makes people more likely to put up with their lot. In GBAO, in particular, people claimed that there was no tradition of social unrest. There is also the view that people were even worse off during the civil war.¹⁴⁴

A key source of income for many are remittances from workers abroad, mainly in Russia and other CIS countries. A large proportion of the young male population has left the country to work abroad and sends money home to families, thus partly defusing the potential for socio-economic unrest. Minister of Employment and Social Security Rafika Musaeva estimates that 300,000 to 400,000 people have migrated to Russia in search of employment.¹⁴⁵ Unofficial estimates indicate that as many as 700,000 people – one-sixth of the population – go to Russia and other CIS countries for seasonal work.¹⁴⁶ The Russian embassy estimates Tajiks in Russia at just under a million people.¹⁴⁷ Some 70 per cent of those who fought for the opposition during the civil war have gone to Russia for work.¹⁴⁸

The total income is hard to calculate but probably between U.S.\$30 and U.S.\$50 million

Similar views were held by the chairman of the Democratic Party, Mamadruzi Iskandarov: "Kulyab is the poorest part of the country, and it accounts for the largest number of poor people. Local commanders will be unable to control them [if the economic situation deteriorates further] and as a result a terrible uprising of hungry people may take place". ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 16 July 2001.

¹⁴⁴ ICG interview with Rustam Odinaev, editor-in-chief, *Kulyabskaia Pravda*, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001: "People hope that the situation will get better. They still remember the great famine here during the civil war. For nearly a year people survived on 30 grams of bread per person".

¹⁴⁵ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

¹⁴⁶ Konstantin Parshin, "Tajikistan gains global prominence, yet fights regional isolation", 14 November 2001, at www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav111401.shtml.

¹⁴⁷ ICG interview with Vladimir Viktorovich Andrianov, Second Secretary, Embassy of the Russian Federation, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

¹⁴⁸ ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman, IRP, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

monthly.¹⁴⁹ Most goes straight into family budgets and is thus a vital constituent of living standards. This work also is most attractive to young men, the group that would otherwise be tempted by criminal activity at home.

The director of the Varorud news agency in Khujand told ICG that "Were the Russian border to be closed to Tajiks ... social unrest would be possible as so many people would be out of work".¹⁵⁰ It is therefore worries Tajikistan that CIS countries are cracking down on illegal migrants. In early November 2001 8,500 illegal immigrants were detained in Kazakhstan, mostly Tajiks. Kazakhstan and Tajikistan signed an agreement, effectively limiting travel to five days.¹⁵¹ Kazakhstan effectively closed its border to Tajiks temporarily, and the Moscow-Dushanbe train ceased operations for a time. Traffic has resumed, though no passengers are allowed to leave or board in Kazakhstan.¹⁵²

In Russia, too, there is political opposition to Tajik workers. Governor Anatolii Guzhvin of the Russian province of Astrakhan recently urged "special efforts to regulate immigration" in response to Tajik migrant shanty towns.¹⁵³ Yet Tajiks are likely to continue to find work in Russia where employers seek informal, illegal workers who accept low wages, particularly in construction and other traditional industries. Tajiks also often work in markets and the fruit and vegetable trade and similar sectors. Close political ties also make it unlikely Russia would close an economic lifeline that also gives Moscow more influence over Dushanbe.¹⁵⁴

It is obvious that without foreign assistance the economy will continue to decline and may gradually come under increasing control of drugs cartels and criminal groups. The government has begun to attract small levels of foreign investment but there are many obstacles. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdunabi Sattorzoda believes that "foreign

¹⁴⁹ ICG interview with Khojamarkhmad Umarov, professor of economics, in Dushanbe, on 12 October 2001.

¹⁵⁰ ICG interview, in Khujand.

¹⁵¹ Parshin, op. cit.

¹⁵² ICG interview with Kalibek Koblandin, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Tajikistan, in Dushanbe, on 5 December 2001.

¹⁵³ RFE/RL, 21 November 2001.

¹⁵⁴ In 2001 Russia used threats of visa regimes against both Azerbaijan and Georgia to ensure more political compliance by their governments.

investors will only invest in Tajikistan once they are convinced that it is not fraught with danger".¹⁵⁵ Security fears are indeed a key reason investors avoid the country. The U.S. State Department and other governments advise against travel to Tajikistan. This advice should be amended. The security situation in Dushanbe at least is no worse than in many cities not under such restrictions.

But the main problems facing investors go much deeper. As EBRD President Jean Lemierre has said, "certain basic standards have to be met [to attract foreign investment and thus facilitate economic growth in Central Asia]: internationally agreed accounting norms, publication of balance sheets, disclosure of information, open access for companies and transparency in government". The EBRD has questioned the independence of Tajikistan's new audit office and branded its bankruptcy law "ineffective".¹⁵⁶ Tajikistan lacks a proper banking system¹⁵⁷ and widespread corruption also deters investment.

One area in which the international community could make a significant difference is in rebuilding infrastructure. The country lacks a sufficient technical base from which to develop industry and agriculture.¹⁵⁸ Although rich in water resources, it imports some 20 per cent of its electricity as it lacks funds to develop its own energy.¹⁵⁹ By investing in hydro-electrical power the international community could help Tajikistan become energy self-sufficient, stimulate industry and also provide a source of hard-currency income from energy exports.¹⁶⁰

Humanitarian and medical aid to poor regions, currently suffering draught, high unemployment, disease and lack of funds, is necessary to keep Tajikistan stable in the short run, but more long-term benefit could be achieved by micro-credits and similar projects to local communities. These communities can no longer rely on subsidies from Dushanbe and lack the means to invest in ailing industries and agriculture.

A major problem for the South is that roads and rail-links are in a very poor state. Investments in the road network would allow for more efficient transportation of goods and could enhance national cohesiveness. Extraordinary geography makes a coherent transport network complex and expensive but economic and stability gains might make a major effort in this sphere worthwhile.

Tajikistan's Soviet-era economy and living standards were not sustainable without transfers from the centre. Equally, any realistic view of the economy suggests that in the short term it will not be self-sustaining without major donor assistance. Much of this aid is justifiable in self-interest: Tajikistan's stability really is of significant interest for the international community. But if assistance is to continue and even increase, it must be better focused and used more effectively. The keys are Tajik political leadership and high-level donor cooperation and political pressure.

¹⁵⁵ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 16 July 2001.

¹⁵⁶ Alec Appelbaum, "EBRD report calls for greater transparency in Central Asia and the Caucasus", Distributed by the Armenian News Network, 21 November 2001.

¹⁵⁷ ICG interview with Rakhmatulla Zoirov, chairman, SDP, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

¹⁵⁸ ICG interviews with Umar Kamolov, director, and Makhmudjon Alizoda, editor-in-chief, of Kurgantepa TV, in Kurgan-Tiube, on 19 July 2001.

¹⁵⁹ Tajikistan has the eighth highest concentration of hydropower resources in the world, Daler Nurkhanov, "Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan seek to bolster power-generating capacity, break energy dependence", 2 August 2001, at www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav080201.shtml.

¹⁶⁰ ICG interview, in Khujand, on 31 July 2001.

IV. EXTERNAL PRESSURES ON THE PEACE

Tajikistan's complex internal structure is matched by difficult relations with neighbours on three borders. While ties to the north with Kyrgyzstan are slowly improving, to the west Uzbekistan continues attempting to isolate itself from what it believes to be Tajikistan's exports: drugs and rebellion. To the east the border areas with China are largely unpopulated, but to the south lies a 1,300-km border with Afghanistan. Tajikistan also has close relations with Russia, particularly in defence. Russia remains a key policy arbiter whose views will always have to be taken into account.

A. AFGHANISTAN

The relationship with Afghanistan is complex, including cross-border ethnic ties and, in peacetime, strong trading links and other cross-border exchanges. But there has been a strong fear of destabilising Afghan events. Indeed, the Taliban advance in 1994-95 partly prompted the Tajik peace talks.

There was little Tajik enthusiasm for the Taliban and considerable fear of what would happen if the Northern Alliance lost. Tajikistan supported the Northern Alliance politically and logistically, both for practical reasons – to keep the war off the border – and for ideological and ethnic reasons – the greatest part of the Northern Alliance was ethnic Tajik, and the extreme religious ideology of the predominantly Pashtun Taliban was unattractive. The Northern Alliance had an embassy in Dushanbe and received supplies through Tajikistan.

The closest cross-border ethnic link is between Badakhshanis. During the civil war members of the Tajik opposition sought refuge in and received military assistance on Northern Alliance territory. Most of the 70,000 who fled during the civil war were accommodated in northern Afghanistan.

Tajik opposition to the Taliban was also religiously motivated. Tajikistan is the only Central Asian country where the Islamists are in mainstream politics. The Islamic Renaissance

Party also opposed the Taliban: Its chairman, Nuri, said in an interview "the Taliban...looks at Islam from a traditional tribal view. That is the reason why what they have been doing contradicts many rules and laws of Islam, by for instance denying women access to education".¹⁶¹ Tajik imams with little sympathy for the IRP expressed similar views.¹⁶² Also, Tajiks in the GBAO (Pamir) and Afghanistan are Ismaili Muslims, a brand of Shi'a Islam. Their religious leader is the Aga Khan, and their faith differs from that of Sunni Muslims.

Whereas Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in 2001 made diplomatic advances towards the Taliban to prevent a spillover of Afghan violence, Tajikistan did not. Before the US-led intervention some politicians had suggested that Tajikistan would be better off establishing official links with the Taliban, as the likely winner of the Afghan civil war.¹⁶³ Fears that the Taliban would not stop their advance at the border were probably unfounded – border violations were along the stretch controlled by the Northern Alliance.¹⁶⁴ This was recognised by some politicians, but most mistrusted the Taliban.¹⁶⁵

Tajik Reactions to the U.S. Intervention. Given this background, strong Tajik support for the US-led campaign might have been expected. However, Tajik reactions have been cautious and at times contradictory. The authorities expressed support for the campaign against terrorism. MP Mamadjon Ilolov in late September 2001 told the *Washington Post* that "we have a common goal [with the U.S.] in the struggle against terrorists". President Rakhmonov in September said Tajikistan was ready to co-operate in combating terrorism, though he did not specify how.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ "Tajik opposition head recalls meeting with Taliban leader, Q & A with Said Abdullo Nuri," Eurasiat, 13 November 2001, at www.eurasianet.org/departments/quanda/articles/eav111301.shtml.

¹⁶² ICG interview with Khodji Mullo Haidar Sharifzoda, chairman of the Ulema of the Kulyab district of Khatlon Province, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

¹⁶³ ICG interview with a high-ranking member of the Democratic Party, in Dushanbe, on 16 July 2001.

¹⁶⁴ ICG interview with Sukhrob Shofarukhshoev, director of Kulyab TV, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

¹⁶⁵ ICG interview with Makhmad Shobadov, head of the finance department of the Kulyab City Administration, in Kulyab, on 20 July 2001.

¹⁶⁶ RFE/RL, 24 September 2001 and RFE/RL, 25 September 2001.

However, there is significant apprehension of the U.S.-led campaign. The chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the Parliament, Ibrahim Usmonov, on the eve of the intervention announced that "if the U.S. launches attacks against Afghanistan which will cause casualties among the civilian population and damage to economic objects and cultural relics, it will become itself like terrorists".¹⁶⁷ Some analysts expressed concern that support for a military campaign could have a negative impact in the longer term: "The American presence will be temporary, whereas Afghanistan will always be on the other side of the border also when the Americans have left".¹⁶⁸

There is also some concern for the wider implications of the intervention. One journalist expressed fears that "Afghanistan is turning Rakhmonov into a dictator. If [as a result of his support for the anti-terrorist campaign] he will receive active support from Bush and Putin as well as international recognition, growing dictatorship will be the result".¹⁶⁹

While allowing humanitarian aid to transit, officials consistently denied U.S. statements and rumours that they had agreed to let the U.S. use bases for military purposes. Rumours surfaced that troops and aircraft had arrived in late September 2001.¹⁷⁰ Foreign Minister spokesman Igor Sattarov stated that Tajikistan had not consented to host U.S. forces. Unnamed U.S. Defence Department officials were cited in the *Washington Post* on 23 September 2001 as saying that while the U.S. deployment in Uzbekistan would be publicly acknowledged, in Tajikistan it would not be.¹⁷¹ By early November, however, it was quietly confirmed that Tajikistan was allowing U.S. and NATO troops to use three

airbases.¹⁷² Rakhmonov publicly confirm that he was ready to permit foreign access to airbases on 4 December 2001.¹⁷³

Tajikistan is keen to receive economic and humanitarian aid.¹⁷⁴ The main concern is the impact on popular opinion. The authorities fear that their help to the military campaign could provoke unrest. The attitude of the Islamist opposition has been mixed. The IRP immediately condemned the 11 September terrorist attacks but also opposed U.S. strikes against Muslim countries lest they trigger a "clash of civilisations".¹⁷⁵ The IRP also rejected Taliban calls for a jihad against the West. However, the party does not represent the entire Muslim community, many parts of which, including Hizb ut-Tahrir, view it as too moderate.

The Tajiks also feared Taliban retaliation. With the military decision in the Afghan north, the chances of a retaliatory strike receded sharply, but the early decision to reinforce the border by a special 300-man unit showed that the threat was taken seriously.¹⁷⁶

Unlike Uzbekistan, which can act relatively independently and was quick to announce its willingness to co-operate with the U.S.-led campaign, Tajikistan has less room for manoeuvre and had to consider Moscow's attitude carefully. Russia was initially cautious about accepting U.S. forces on Tajik territory. Eventual Russian support for the campaign was clearly a factor in Dushanbe's final position.

Tajikistan's greatest concern was that the military campaign would trigger a massive refugee flow. Igor Sattarov, head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information, warned that Afghan refugees would facilitate a resurgence of Islamic militancy and drugs smuggling and

¹⁶⁷ Daler Nurkhanov, "U.S. moves against Afghanistan cause concern in neighbouring Tajikistan", 20 September 2001, www.eurasianet.com.

¹⁶⁸ O. Nymoén, NTB, "Søker nye allianser mot Afghanistan", *Stavanger Aftenblad* (Stavanger), 20 September 2001, p. 2. Concern for an eventual U.S.-Russia confrontation within Tajikistan was indicated in an ICG interview with Mukhitdin Kabirov, deputy chairman of the IRP, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

¹⁶⁹ ICG interview, December 2001.

¹⁷⁰ RFE/RL, 24 September 2001.

¹⁷¹ RFE/RL, 24 September 2001.

¹⁷² RFE/RL, 14 November 2001.

¹⁷³ The Russian television station ORT on 4 December 2001 reported that Rakhmonov had agreed to give French and U.S. combat aircraft access to the airbase in Kulyab, RFE/RL, 5 December 2001.

¹⁷⁴ In an ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 5 December 2001, the chairman of the Communist Party, Shodi Shodi Shobdullo, said: "The Tajiks are hoping that the American presence will bring financial rewards and therefore do not oppose it...[however] earning one U.S. dollar is more difficult than earning a Russian rouble".

¹⁷⁵ RFE/RL, 5 October 2001.

¹⁷⁶ RFE/RL, 16 October 2001.

"increase the possibility of using Tajikistan for subversive operations" against neighbours.¹⁷⁷ President Rakhmonov reiterated security concerns and Deputy Prime Minister for Defence and Security Saidamir Zuhurov warned against the economic consequences.¹⁷⁸

Before the U.S.-led campaign, there were already about 150,000 displaced Afghans in Northern Alliance controlled territories.¹⁷⁹ According to the Afghan cultural attaché in Dushanbe some 60,000 people sought refuge in a camp in Khodjoboudin, some 60-70,000 were living in a similar camp in Panshir and others in smaller camps in Bogashan and Rustok. Whereas the Badaghshan camp was receiving international assistance, it has been difficult for aid organisations to reach the camp in Panshir. Another 17,000 Afghan refugees are located on islands in the Panj River.¹⁸⁰ Tajikistan turned down a UNHCR to accept the Panj-refugees, and Rakhmonov claimed that among them were "several men armed to their teeth".¹⁸¹

Northern Alliance victories reduced pressure to admit refugees. If the new Kabul regime does not prove viable, however, it may resurface. It is not hard to cross the border. Afghans have entered Tajikistan illegally on a number of occasions. Tajiks living in villages by the Panj River told ICG that Afghans often cross the river for weddings and other festivities. Poorly paid Russian border guards are easily bribed.

The IMU has been fighting beside the Taliban, particularly in Konduz, and the U.S. has been targeting its camps and forces. Reports of the death of Juma Namangani remained unconfirmed at publication but it is clear the IMU has sustained significant losses. Tajikistan worries

that remnants may try to cross the border. Events in Kyrgyzstan in summer 2001 seem to indicate that IMU tactics have changed and that it operates in small cells rather than in larger groups. Thus even if Namangani is dead, the IMU will not necessarily disappear.

The secretary of the Tajik Security Council, Amirkul Azimov, denied in an interview on 2 August 2001 that there were any IMU bases in Tajikistan.¹⁸² But it seems likely that the lack of government control in the Gharm region, where Namangani had bases until 2000 at least, could permit remnants to re-establish themselves.

Events in Afghanistan will continue to have a profound effect but the threat to Tajikistan's stability is indirect. There is little chance of any dangerous Taliban regrouping or, presently, of major refugee flows. The Tajiks have already expelled the IMU three times.¹⁸³ The Minister of Emergency Situations, Mirzo Ziyoev, told ICG that the IMU and other terrorists – he mentioned Mullo Abdullo, the former UTO commander – no longer pose a further security danger to Tajik security as they are simply too few.¹⁸⁴

However, as long as there is instability in Afghanistan the drugs trade will flourish and there will always be potential for a refugee emergency. If a viable Afghan peace is not made, the anti-terrorist campaign there continues, and Tajikistan help fails to bring financial benefits, domestic opposition may grow. On 13 November 2001 the government announced that it would upgrade its struggle against international terrorism. There is some concern that Rakhmonov may take harsher measures against the opposition under cover of this. As pointed out by a local journalist, "if anybody were to turn against Rakhmonov now, they would be branded 'terrorists' and dealt with accordingly".¹⁸⁵ This could in turn increase domestic opposition.

¹⁷⁷ RFE/RL, 25 January 2001.

¹⁷⁸ "Eurasia. Afghan refugees camped on Tajik-Afghanistan border", at www.eurasia.org/departments/rights/articles/eav100101.shtml. Zuhurov said: "We are not in a position to provide shelter and fair living conditions even to our own refugees. To admit the Afghan refugees we will need billions of dollars for nutrition, placement and medical service".

¹⁷⁹ ICG interview with Marc Gilbert, OSCE Ambassador to Tajikistan, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

¹⁸⁰ Saida Nazarova, "Afghan Refugees Abandoned", IWPR Reporting, no. 51, 11 May 2001.

¹⁸¹ RFE/RL, 8 January 2001.

¹⁸² Lidia Isamova, "Amirkul Azimov: IDU – ne nasha problema!", *Asia Plus*, 2 August 2001, p. 5.

¹⁸³ ICG interview with Obaidullo Faizullaev, first deputy chairman of Sughd Province, an IRP member, in Khujand, on 6 December 2001. Second Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Dushanbe Vladimir Viktorovich Andrianov claimed to ICG that the IMU previously paid for their bases in Tajikistan and now is without funds.

¹⁸⁴ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 3 December 2001.

¹⁸⁵ ICG Interview, in Khujand, December 2001.

B. UZBEKISTAN

Moscow's decision to turn Tajikistan into a Soviet Republic in 1929 was not welcomed in Uzbekistan. For their part, Tajiks have contested the Uzbek right to the Surkhan-Darya region in general and to the important cities of Samarqand and Bukhara in particular where a large proportion of the population are ethnic Tajiks.¹⁸⁶

During the Soviet period there were close links between the Communist Parties of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Representatives from the latter sometimes unofficially had to answer for their decisions to the former. Since the collapse of the USSR relations have gone through several stages. During the first part of the civil war (1992-94), Uzbek President Karimov supported the ruling Communist elite politically and provided training and military assistance to the pro-government Popular Front. He was motivated in part by a fear of Tajik nationalism and Islamism and possibly also by fears that if the opposition took power in Tajikistan it could inspire his own opposition. Once the Kulyabi group became ascendant in 1995, Karimov changed policy, seeking to forge an alliance between the Leninabadi elite and the Tajik opposition.¹⁸⁷

Tajikistan accused Uzbekistan of giving financial and military support to Makhmud Khudojberdiev during his incursion into Sughd Province in November 1998. This was denied but it seems clear that Khudojberdiev had some logistical help from the Uzbek military and could cross the border at will. Relations declined further in 1999 and 2000 as Uzbekistan accused Tajikistan of allowing the IMU to operate from its territory. Uzbek officials claimed that they warned Tajikistan that Uzbek rebels were on their territory as early as 1998 but the Tajik authorities denied this. There is a strong suspicion that Tajikistan's refusal to act against the IMU was partly a response to the Khudojberdiev incident.

Uzbekistan's introduction of a visa regime has caused anger among not only Tajiks but also ethnic Uzbeks. Tajik citizens who do not live in border areas have to apply for a visa through the Uzbek Embassy in Dushanbe, which is time-consuming, costly and not always successful. Cross-border trade has also been made more difficult by the visa regime.¹⁸⁸ Politicians blame Uzbekistan for its blockade on gas supplies and the poor treatment by Uzbek custom officials.¹⁸⁹

More recently, the Tajiks have voiced their anger with Uzbekistan's decision to mine the border in Panjakent, Isfara and Asht regions – supposedly to prevent new IMU infiltration.¹⁹⁰ At least 37 people have been killed and 68 injured (none IMU members) by the mines.¹⁹¹ A majority of the dead are said to be ethnic Uzbek. Many people go to Uzbekistan for temporary jobs. As corrupt customs officials frequently confiscate most or all of their earnings when they return, locals feel that they have no choice but to cross the border illegally. In Asht seven people have been killed by mines.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ "People here [in the North] are very unhappy about the Uzbek border police. Many people have relatives across the border and now it is only possible for us to spend five days in Uzbekistan without a visa". ICG interview with Abdurakhim Sharipov, leader of the Department on Social-Cultural Questions, Contacts with Public-Political Organisations and Interethnic Relations, in the Sughd provincial administration, in Khujand, on 30 July 2001.

¹⁸⁹ ICG interview with A. Abdullaev, deputy chairman of the CPT, in Dushanbe, on 17 July 2001.

¹⁹⁰ A large portion of the border guards patrolling the Tajik-Uzbek border in Sughd Province are former opposition fighters. The border unit in Asht, for instance, is headed by Alovatsho Shamsov, the former commander of the Rushansk UTO (Pamirs), and several men from his UTO unit are serving with him. Members of the former opposition also patrol the border in Penjikent, Ganji, Nausk and Proletarskii. Some analysts think that the decision to station members of the opposition along the Uzbek border was deliberate. During the civil war the opposition fought against Makhmud Khudojberdiev, who launched an invasion into Sughd Province from Uzbekistan in November 1998. Tajikistan fears that Khudojberdiev's troops may again try to cross the border, and the authorities may hope that the former Tajik opposition will be more determined to oppose this than those who fought beside him during the civil war.

¹⁹¹ OSCE figures cited by Nadzmidin Shokhumbod, deputy editor-in-chief, *Sughd* newspaper, during an ICG interview, in Khujand, on 7 December 2001.

¹⁹² The Uzbek Embassy in Dushanbe defends the mines, arguing that Uzbekistan has evidence armed groups intent

¹⁸⁶ According to Tajik estimates, 50 per cent of the population of Bukhara and 90 per cent of the inhabitants of Samarqand are ethnic Tajiks. ICG interview with Kurbonali Mukhabatov, prosecutor of Sughd Province, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

¹⁸⁷ Ryan Calder, "A New Face for Islamism: The Evolution of Moderate Political Islam in Tajikistan", BA thesis, Harvard University, 19 December 2000, pp. 104-108.

The closure of the Uzbek-Tajik border has a negative impact on the Tajik economy. Some 80 per cent of the country's foreign markets can only be accessed through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Tajikistan's access to the Uzbek railway network has also been cut. Transporting goods through Uzbekistan has also become very costly due to high official and unofficial customs charges. This has a further negative impact on border communities. Previously people in Asht brought their goods to the market in Kokand, some 25 km away. Now they must travel the 60 km to Khujand. Most young men have abandoned the area and gone to Russia in search of employment.

The Tajiks also voice concern about the situation of Tajiks in Uzbekistan's Sukhand-Darya border region.¹⁹³ Many Uzbek Tajiks were deported from there following IMU activities in 2000. A journalist in Khujand claimed to ICG that "the way the ethnic Tajiks in Uzbekistan are treated can only be described as a genocide against a nation".¹⁹⁴ Uzbek Ambassador Urdashev insisted that only a few villages – perhaps 500 or 600 people including ethnic Uzbeks – high up in the mountains had been evacuated to protect from IMU incursions. However, according to Tajik estimates, between 36,000 and 100,000 Tajiks have been forcibly resettled. Tajikistan also claims that Uzbek refugees from Tajikistan have since been settled in the abandoned villages.¹⁹⁵

There are signs that Uzbekistan is restricting ethnic Tajiks' access to literature and education in their own language. In July 2001 some 16,000 books given by the Tajik government to Tajik language schools in Uzbekistan were burnt on order from the Uzbek Government. In Bukhara another 10,000 brochures, books and other literature in Tajik were turned into pulp and given to a local poultry factory for packing eggs. The Tajik faculty of the Samarqand State University was closed in 2001 and every year several Tajik schools are shut throughout Uzbekistan. Chances

of ethnic clashes breaking out in Samarqand and Bukhara, however, are considered slim.

Uzbekistan complains that the Tajiks are not doing enough to protect ethnic Uzbeks, who are 25 per cent of the country's population. During the civil war the Tajik opposition fought against the Uzbeks, who supported the government. As pointed out by a journalist in Khujand, "Tajiks and Uzbeks fought against each other in the South during the civil war. Tajiks living in the South have a particular dislike of Uzbeks."¹⁹⁶ A local official in southern Tajikistan – himself an ethnic Uzbek – told ICG that relations are strained, and it is difficult to be an ethnic Uzbek in the South.

In the North, however, relations are better. There has been extensive intermarriage, and most people are bilingual. Uzbeks also hold high posts in Sughd Province¹⁹⁷ The two groups are much more integrated than the Kyrgyz and Uzbek in neighbouring Kyrgyzstan. As in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbeks in Tajikistan are becoming more estranged from Uzbekistan due to repressive policies of the Tashkent government and actions such as the introduction of a Latin alphabet that is not used in Tajikistan.¹⁹⁸

C. RUSSIA

Russian-Tajik relations are relaxed. Russia and Tajikistan have been strategic partners since 1993 when they signed an economic, political and military cooperation agreement. The Tajik president on 26 October 2001 announced that Russia is the corner stone of Tajik foreign policy, and relations with Russia are "a fundamental condition for the development of the sovereignty and independence of Tajikistan".¹⁹⁹

Tajikistan is the only Central Asian country in which Russian troops patrol the external border. Some 25,000 soldiers, about 85 per cent ethnic Tajiks, under Russian command are stationed on the border. The Tajik army patrols only 70 km of the 1,300-km long Tajik-Afghan border (GBO). Some 12,000

on overthrowing the Uzbek leadership are in Tajikistan. ICG interview in Dushanbe on 27 July 2001.

¹⁹³ ICG interview with Anvar Dhzhililov, chairman, Sughd People's Democratic Party, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

¹⁹⁴ ICG interviews, in Khujand, on 29/30 July 2001.

¹⁹⁵ ICG interview with Safarov, deputy chairman of the PDPT, in Dushanbe, on 16 July 2001.

¹⁹⁶ ICG interview, in Khujand, on 31 July 2001.

¹⁹⁷ ICG interview with Kurbonali Mukhabbatov, prosecutor of Sughd Province, in Khujand, on 1 August 2001.

¹⁹⁸ ICG interviews, in Khujand, on 29/30 July 2001.

¹⁹⁹ RFE/RL Newswire, vol. 5, no. 205, part I, 29 October 2001.

troops – mostly Tajiks commanded by Russian officers — of Russia's 201st Division are also based in Tajikistan. Their tasks are "to protect the Russian-language population of Tajikistan and to assist the Russian border troops".²⁰⁰ Soldiers from the 201st Division are currently stationed in Dushanbe and Kulyab.

Matthew Kahane of the UNDP argues that "the Russian troops are very important as they have a stabilizing effect on Tajikistan".²⁰¹ According to Sulton Mirzoshoev, the director of the "Kokhi Bakhdat" state complex and close to President Rakhmonov, Tajikistan needs the Russians to secure the Afghan border and clamp down on drugs and weapons smuggling and armed bands. The Russians also train Tajik border guards.²⁰²

Possibly for this reason, Russia was not asked to withdraw its troops following the collapse of the USSR. Although officially the Russian troops remained neutral during the civil war, they are thought to have supplied pro-government forces with weapons and other military equipment, and there were clashes with the UTO opposition along the Afghan border. Russia also played a key role in implementing the peace process.²⁰³

It is understandable that the opposition is ambivalent about the Russian presence. While acknowledging Russia's role in protecting their country, it is concerned for Moscow's political agenda. Deputy IRP Chairman Kabirov acknowledges that "the domestic political situation very much depends on the Russian soldiers".²⁰⁴ Whether Russian troops would ever be used to quell domestic disorder is unclear.

V. CONCLUSION

It is widely believed in Tajikistan that the peace owes much to war weariness. However, several external and domestic factors have the potential to destabilise Tajikistan to a point where conflict again erupts. Although President Rakhmonov has maintained stability so far, events such as the incursion by Makhmud Khudojberdiev in 1998, the government crackdown on armed bands in 2000 and 2001 and a spate of political killings indicate that the peace is fragile.

Afghanistan will continue to be one of the factors most likely to destabilise Tajikistan either directly or indirectly. Close to half the poor Tajik economy is drugs-related. Weapons are also smuggled across the border, and Islamic fundamentalists have on several occasions made their way into Tajikistan. Refugees stranded on the Afghan side of the border are also seen as a threat by the authorities.

In an effort to reduce drugs trafficking in Tajikistan, international organisations and NGOs should make humanitarian aid to border communities a priority. These areas are among the country's poorest and are in desperate need of humanitarian help as well as development funds. There is also a huge need for better schools and teaching materials, medical facilities and drugs, clean drinking water and agricultural equipment. The Aga Khan Foundation has made its humanitarian aid conditional on communities ending opium poppy cultivation. This approach has proved effective.

Since the signing of the peace agreement in 1997 the executive has strengthened its powers at the expense of the legislative, the opposition has not been fully integrated into government structures, and regionalism remains very much alive. The government has failed to recognise that democratisation and economic reform would reduce tensions and improve stability. Reform, not cronyism and corruption, is the best guarantee for staying in power in the long term.

Effective government can best be achieved by introducing transparent recruitment criteria for all government posts and by training those already holding positions. Qualifications rather than personal loyalty, payments and regional affiliation should guide recruitment, and an independent task

²⁰⁰ ICG interview with Vladimir Viktorovich Andrianov, Second Secretary, Russian Embassy in Tajikistan, on 17 July 2001.

²⁰¹ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 3 August 2001.

²⁰² ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 16 July 2001.

²⁰³ See, for instance, Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS. The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan* (London: Palgrave in association with the RIIA, Russia and Eurasia Programme, 2000).

²⁰⁴ ICG interview, in Dushanbe, on 13 July 2001.

force should be established to attack public sector corruption.

The international community must provide technical and financial assistance to help Tajikistan reform its public sector. Financial assistance in the form of aid, grants and loans should be dependent on such reform and the introduction of measures against corruption. However, donors must also assist implementation and put controls in place to ensure that money is spent as intended.

Humanitarian aid should be more evenly distributed throughout Tajikistan and dispatched directly to recipients rather than Dushanbe ministries. The Tajik authorities need to simplify administrative procedures for humanitarian aid. Due to recent events in Afghanistan, international aid is likely to increase. To ensure maximum efficiency and minimal duplication, donors and NGOs should co-ordinate efforts. This could be done by a temporary co-ordination body to draw up guideline priorities.

Measures should be taken to raise opposition representation in the executive and judiciary. Efforts to assist former civil war commanders and fighters back to civilian life must be continued and strengthened. This could be done by setting up rehabilitation centres in areas where non-integrated fighters are most numerous. Donors should give priority to assisting the Ministry of Labour in this. International NGOs could also target former commanders for re-training and loans to help them set up small businesses or farms.

Allowing parties with moderate platforms access to power and facilitating pluralism in the media is the best way to fight more extremist movements such as the Hizb ut-Tahrir. The opposition should be given access to the state media. Censorship should end and licenses be given to those wishing to set up their own television or radio companies. Tajik National Television and Radio should be transformed into an independent broadcaster. As the advertising market is almost non-existent and much of the population too poor to purchase newspapers, donors should assist the Tajik media with funds and training.

To increase judicial independence, political control should be relaxed and the salaries of

lawyers raised. Tajik courts should respect the 1997 Amnesty Law and stop prosecuting members of the opposition for crimes committed during the civil war. Those already sentenced in violation of the amnesty should be freed. Military action against armed bands in central parts of the country should as far as possible be taken in consultation with the opposition.

Regionalism is one of Tajikistan's most serious problems. The civil war erupted largely due to the failure to include elites from regions other than the northern Sughd Province in government but it brought elites from the southern Kulyab district to power. Rather than sharing power, the Kulyabi elite has systematically recruited its own people to most posts in government and industry. This has not only bred discontent in the regions, but also promoted inefficiency and corruption in the state administration. There are signs that the government is largely ignoring former opposition territory such as Gharm and the GBAO when distributing funds.

The international community should support projects aimed at reducing poverty and strengthening civil society in these areas. Such measures may encourage some people to give up their arms and return to civilian life. The government should be encouraged to distribute funding more evenly between the regions. It also needs to improve infrastructure to make travel and trade between regions easier. Donors and lending bodies should ensure that all regions actually get access to their funds and that they do not instead end up in ministries in the capital. To help, the international community could organise training programs for local officials.

The loss of Soviet subsidies, civil war, natural disasters, the 1998 Russian economic crisis and four years of severe drought, together with widespread corruption, have seriously damaged the Tajik economy. Tajikistan lacks a clear-cut strategy for energising its economy. Since the end of the civil war, the focus has very much been on nation-building rather than economic reform. Large-scale emigration to Russia and other CIS countries has had a stabilising effect but there is desperate need of foreign investment and loans to rebuild infrastructure and upgrade and develop industries and agriculture. A failure to improve the economy could trigger social unrest.

Donors and lending institutions such as the EBRD have signalled to the Tajik authorities that they must take effective action against corruption and improve investment legislation before loans and other financial aid will be delivered. This is appropriate but Tajikistan is not able to end corruption on its own. It needs international help also for this.

To keep Tajikistan from sliding back into conflict, a wide range of measures is required to address the factors analysed in this report. As they are interlinked, it is important that a broad approach be adopted that addresses each, not just one or two in isolation. Either Tajikistan embarks on democratisation and economic reform or it runs the risk of economic and political collapse. In its own enlightened self-interest, the international community should provide the assistance needed for this large task on which the stability of Central Asia very much depends.

Osh/Brussels, 24 December 2001

APPENDIX A MAP OF TAJIKISTAN



APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development	ODIHR	Office for Democratic Initiatives and Human Rights of OSCE
ABD	Asian Bank of Development	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
DPT	Democratic Party of Tajikistan	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
CAMEL	Central Asian Media Electronic Bulletin	PDPT	People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan
CIMERA	Civic Development Media Support Research and Analysis	PUMA	OECD's Public Management Programme
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
CNU	Congress of National Unity	SDP	Social-Democratic Party
CPT	Communist Party of Tajikistan	SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management in Central and Eastern European Countries. A joint OECD-EU initiative.
DFID	Department for International Development	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	UNTOP	United Nations Tajikistan Office for Peace Building
GBAO	Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic	USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
IDB	Islamic Development Bank	UN	United Nations
ILO	International Labour Organisation	UNHCR	United Nations Humanitarian Crisis Relief
IMF	International Monetary Fund	UTO	United Tajik Opposition
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan		
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party		
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting		
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation		
NISPAcee	Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe		
NRC	National Reconciliation Commission		
ODCCP	UN Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention		

APPENDIX C

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

The International Crisis Group (ICG) is a private, multinational organisation committed to strengthening the capacity of the international community to anticipate, understand and act to prevent and contain conflict.

ICG's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts, based on the ground in countries at risk of conflict, gather information from a wide range of sources, assess local conditions and produce regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers.

ICG's reports are distributed widely to officials in foreign ministries and international organisations and made generally available at the same time via the organisation's Internet site, www.crisisweb.org. ICG works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analysis and to generate support for its policy prescriptions. The ICG Board - which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media - is directly involved in helping to bring ICG reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. ICG is chaired by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari; former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans has been President and Chief Executive since January 2000.

ICG's international headquarters are at Brussels, with advocacy offices in Washington DC, New York and Paris. The organisation currently operates field projects in nineteen crisis-affected countries and regions across four continents:

Algeria, Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Zimbabwe in Africa; Myanmar, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in Asia; Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia in Europe; and Colombia in Latin America.

ICG also undertakes and publishes original research on general issues related to conflict prevention and management. After the attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, ICG launched a major new project on global terrorism, designed both to bring together ICG's work in existing program areas and establish a new geographical focus on the Middle East (with a regional field office in Amman) and Pakistan/Afghanistan (with a field office in Islamabad). The new offices became operational in December 2001.

ICG raises funds from governments, charitable foundations, companies and individual donors. The following governments currently provide funding: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Foundation and private sector donors include the Ansary Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Open Society Institute, the Ploughshares Fund and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

DECEMBER 2001

APPENDIX D

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