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## Russian Federation: Apparat

By Luba Schwartzman

### **CABINET**

#### **For the government, 2001 could be a good year: More money...**

At a cabinet meeting held on 20 September, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov announced that the 2002 budget will be reviewed, and that, in light of this year's successful economy, it could be increased in practically all areas. (ORT, 20 Sep 01; via [www.ortv.ru](http://www.ortv.ru)) Kasyanov expects that the growth in Russia's gross domestic product will register at 5.5 percent (with industrial output growing by 5.8 percent and agricultural output by 7 percent), rather than the planned 4 percent. The discussion of the precise changes to the budget was scheduled for an extraordinary meeting of the cabinet on Tuesday, 25 September.

Kasyanov noted that economic growth is important "not only for maintaining the balance of the federal budget, but also for maintaining the balance of regional budgets." In particular, the government will be able "to increase the wages of budget-financed sectors." (ITAR-TASS, 0730 GMT, 20 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0920, via World News Connection)

### **JUDICIARY**

#### **... more judges...**

According to Presidential Deputy Chief of Staff Dmitry Kozak, one area that will benefit from the larger 2002 budget is Russia's judiciary branch. Whereas, in 2001, the judiciary budget was only R11 billion, in 2002 the amount will be increased to R18 billion. Kozak explained that this will make it possible to raise the salaries of judges, repair existing buildings and build new ones, and buy housing for judges. Priority should go, he suggested, to improving "working

conditions for district courts and judges, who handle most cases but work in the worst conditions." In 2002, district judges will have assistants assigned to them; in the future, judges at other levels may get assistants as well. (ITAR-TASS; 1828 GMT, 10 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0910, via World News Connection)

Conditions are particularly difficult in the Chechen Republic, where -- in November of 2000 -- 12 regional courts and a Supreme Court were re-established and re-staffed by judges who had been forced to resign and flee after the 1996 Khasavyurt cease-fire agreement. Three thousand administrative cases and hundreds of criminal ones have been examined over the past year and, according to Rossiyskaya gazeta, trust in the courts has strengthened over this period. At the same time, the special state protection afforded to federal judges and members of their families under the Law on the Status of Judges is little more than a theoretical concept, and judges in Chechnya work at their own risk. Their salaries -- 4,000 to 5,000 rubles a month -- are one-third of what drivers and secretaries at the prosecutor's office receive. In addition, the judges do not enjoy the additional guarantees and benefits bestowed upon workers of the executive branch operating in Chechnya. Nor do the judges have bodyguards -- and this is in a region where one judge was recently beaten up right outside his home, a court administration chairman was shot while driving in his car, and another city court judge receives regular telephone threats at home and work.

Chechnya's judiciary conditions do surpass those of other regions in technical backup -- but this is only because computers and 10 cars were received as a gift from the United Nations High Commission. (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 11 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0912, via World News Connection) Of course it is not surprising that judges would receive a smaller salary than secretaries or drivers -- after all, they can expect to make much more in bribes. And the assertion, oft-repeated by Russian politicians, that bribe-taking could be curbed by increased salaries, is questionable.

## **REGIONS**

### **... fewer alphabets...**

Russia's favorite regional renegade -- Tatarstan -- has been stalling too long on bringing the republic's constitution in line with the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Tatar President Mintimer Shaimiev had promised to make the required changes after the March 2001 elections, but half a year later -- and only a month before the deadline for the adjustment -- representatives of the republican parliament and members of the presidential administration have reached no agreement. (IEWS RUSSIAN REGIONAL REPORT, 29 Aug 01)

Now the stakes have been raised with a coordinated attack on Tatarstan's decision to change the national writing system from Cyrillic to Latin script. (Background information: The Tatars had used runes in ancient times, and Arabic script from the tenth century until 1927, when the Latin script was introduced. Latin script was in use until 1939 -- in those years there was even talk of adopting Russian to Latin script, so that, after the worldwide victory of the working class, it would be easier for the proletariat of all nations to communicate. Since the government's decision two years ago to reintroduce the Latin script, 70 Tatar schools already have switched.

On 14 September, an open letter urging Tatarstan's State Council to abandon its plans to Latinize was published in Rossiyskaya gazeta. The letter was signed by 37 members of Tatarstan's cultural and political elite, 29 members of the Yardem Mosque in Moscow and 56 residents of Yoshkar-Ola, Saratov, Nizhny Novgorod, Omsk, Perm, Ufa and Ulyanovsk. They warned that a change would be "[a] threat [...] to the literacy and educational level of the next generation, to access to knowledge and literature, to scientific research, to the creative process, to the dialogue between scientists, specialists and public figures, and hence to the development of the Tatar ethnic culture outside the borders of our historic homeland. Enormous amounts will be spent on new textbooks and the development of teaching methodologies, on translating books and retraining

teachers, and eventually on the replacement of advertising signs and street signs. Some people will write in the new style, others in the old style.... Why this rupture, why this schism? [...] Let us develop rather than destroy, improve rather than redraft our beloved Tatar language! Let us act in such a way that our children will understand what their fathers and mothers were writing about!" (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 14 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0914, via World News Connection)

The letter -- which was later pronounced a forgery by members of the State Council of Tatarstan and some of those whose names appeared in the signatures (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, 21 Sep 01; via [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org)) -- was timed to coincide with an international "Language and Culture" conference held at the Moscow Academy of Sciences between 14 and 17 September. The 500 scholars "from various countries" who attended the conference also criticized the decision, explaining that it was not only a pointless move, but also one that could create many difficulties, especially for the elderly, and even lead to widespread illiteracy. (ORT, 17 Sep 01; via [www.ortv.ru](http://www.ortv.ru))

Then, on 18 September, in an unprecedented manifestation of keeping a finger on the pulse of national events (and a chokehold on the throat of the Tatar drive for autonomy), a group of State Duma deputies suggested amending the law on state languages to require the Cyrillic alphabet to be used, except in cases where another alphabet is authorized by federal law. Apparently refreshed by their recent summer vacation, the deputies even managed to prepare these corrections to the "Law on the Languages of the People of Russia" by the next day -- the first meeting of the Duma. (ORT, 19 Sep 01; via [www.ortv.ru](http://www.ortv.ru))

The politicians, however, seemed to take to heart the Russian saying that you can't spoil kasha with too much butter. They criticized supporters of Latinization for explaining that the Latin script is more conducive to Turkic languages and declared that this is a political matter that has nothing to do with linguistic

subtleties. They claimed that the drive towards Latinization was a manifestation of globalization and asserted that Turkey has been trying to extend its influence into the Turkic members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the republics within the Russian Federation. (ORT, 20 Sep 01; via [www.ortv.ru](http://www.ortv.ru)) This was reminiscent of a statement made by Sergey Dorenko on the Russian Central TV channel two years ago that "if the whole Russian Federation switched to the Latin alphabet, Tatarstan would decide to introduce Cyrillic." (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, 28 Sep 99; via [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org))

## **MEDIA**

### **...and fewer allowances for oligarchs**

Meanwhile, in the light of the events of 11 September and consequent plans, day-by-day updates on the lifting of the Kursk, and Russia's victories (and selective defeats) in Chechnya that have monopolized the nation's attention, the Kremlin once again has taken an interest in the media. On 12 September, a member of the Duma's security committee, Gennady Gudkov, told journalists that he has "sufficient information to prove that the mass media have launched a campaign against the Russian president." In particular, Gudkov asserted that well-known media magnate Boris Berezovsky has provided financial support to publications which print "compromising material" against the president. Furthermore, he added that "certain forces in the person of foreign special services" have a stake in destabilizing the economic and political situation in Russia. To achieve this, he claimed, since last April they have been "feeding" information to certain media outlets that links the Russian president with various scandalous stories. Discrediting the power organs -- and in particular, the Federal Security Service and the Federal Protection Service -- is another goal. In response to journalists' questions concerning the reaction of the president, Gudkov replied that "the president reacts to these attacks like a real man and refuses to comment on them," but that his own duty, "as a deputy, as a representative of the State Duma's security committee [is] to inform the country's

[population] promptly." (RIA, 1236 GMT, 12 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0912, via World News Connection)

And of course, when Berezovsky is mentioned, fellow media oligarch Vladimir Gusinsky cannot be far away. On Monday, 10 September, the Moscow City Court canceled a 17 April ruling of the Savelovsky Municipal Court on Gusinsky's action against Deputy Prosecutor General Vasily Kolmogorov. Gusinsky had submitted that a phrase used by Kolmogorov in a letter to the State Duma on 5 July 2000, and subsequently reprinted in Komsomol'skaya pravda on 8 July 2000, was an insult to his honor and should be recanted in the mass media. Specifically, the paper said that "the criminal activities of Gusinsky have been confirmed by impartial evidence, testimonies of witnesses, examination results and other materials of the case." Konstantin Agadzhyanov, a representative of the Prosecutor General's Office, said that, in reviewing the case, it was determined that Gusinsky's rights were not breached in Kolmogorov's letter, and that only facts -- as determined by an investigation -- were stated. Additionally, Agadzhyanov reminded the Moscow City Court that Gusinsky currently is facing charges on another criminal case. (ITAR-TASS, 1307 GMT, 10 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0910, via World News Connection)

## Russian Federation: Armed Forces

By Walter Jackson

### **Russia's response to 11 September: A moving target**

"Dear George,

I am shocked by reports about the tragic events that happened on the territory of the United States today.... The whole international community must unite in the fight against terrorism. V. Putin" (ITAR-TASS, 1901 GMT, 11 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets)

The events of 11 September have been played out on TV screens the world over and the reaction across the globe has ranged from understandable outrage to glee (in "the usual cases"). Moscow policymakers made (tactical?) adjustments as the crisis unfolded. Since the day of the attack, Russian foreign policy has been buffeted by considerations that have evolved over time.

The official Moscow stance of the events of 11 September consisted of sharp rhetoric condemning the attacks and the attackers along with their sponsors. However, a brief capsule of comments reflects the evolutionary process of Russian policy development. Following Putin's original condemnation, his comments became vague in terms of the role Russia might play in the "war against terrorism." He has called for increased cooperation, meetings and consultations. (RADIO MAYAK, 1400 GMT, 12 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) Putin provided a great deal of rhetoric, but little substance in terms of specific areas of cooperation.

Putin's most senior lieutenants have given a little more detail, but have highlighted different approaches. Statements from the defense ministry offered limited clues to the Russian approach. Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov stated on 18 September that Russia has offered to provide the US with "vital information that could establish the true identity of those guilty of the terrorist acts in New York and Washington." (BBC, 18 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) Information is one thing, but Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin, chief of the General Staff of the Army, made it clear during a visit to Tajikistan that "Russia has never taken part in US military actions and has no intention of doing so." (ITAR-TASS, 1918 GMT, 19 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets)

Finally, the Russian leadership has sent conflicting messages to CIS states. Originally, Moscow displayed its displeasure at Uzbekistan's initiative in offering bases to the US, a fact that forced Uzbekistan to backtrack for a while. Subsequently, Igor Ivanov stated in a television interview on 19 September that



Russia would not put pressure on CIS partners and that those countries should decide for themselves whether to allow US bases/strikes from their territories. At the same time, senior Russian leaders including Kvashnin have been dispatched to the Central Asian republics, probably to ensure that Moscow is the clear leader in participation in any US coalition.

Russian officials continued to make other conflicting statements throughout the week. During a visit by Ivanov to Washington, the defense minister again provided ambiguous statements regarding Russia's role in the pending war against terrorism. (CNN, 21 Sep 01; via [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)) However, he reiterated the claim that Russia has been fighting its own war against terrorism in Chechnya (a notion surprisingly backed by US Secretary of State Colin Powell). Ivanov also confirmed that Russia would not stop Central Asian states from cooperating with the US.

During his first live address to the Russian people on 24 September, Putin outlined what specific assistance Moscow was prepared to offer the US-led alliance. First, Russia would provide intelligence information to support the US. Second, Russia would open its airspace to humanitarian aid aircraft. (RUSSIAN PUBLIC TV [ORT], 1700 GMT, 24 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring) Other actions, if any, were not mentioned. Russia has reconfirmed its longstanding support to the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan (which, indeed, Moscow had a hand in forming). (EKHO MOSKVY, 0600 GMT, 23 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

It is still too early to determine precisely what role the Russians will play in the coming efforts against international terrorism. However, nothing is without cost and for the Russians to have any role in helping the US, Moscow will want something in return. Several possibilities stand out as longstanding Russian issues with the West:

1. Major concessions on National Missile Defense (NMD) and NATO expansion.

Russia will certainly want to begin specific negotiations on the future of National Missile Defense. Moscow has long opposed the development of NMD and will make every effort to exploit the situation in an effort to get the project shelved indefinitely. It also will ask for a halt to NATO expansion. If NATO were to succumb, it would be at the expense of the Baltic states and the momentum built up by their sponsors for fast-track membership. Bulgaria and Romania would be disadvantaged even further.

## 2. A completely free hand in dealing with the Chechens.

Secretary of State Powell already seems to have agreed with Ivanov that the situation in Chechnya could be viewed as part of a counter-terrorism offensive. (CNN, 21 Sep 01) It would follow logically that the Russians could pursue an even more aggressive campaign to "purge" the Chechens. Although the Russians, in any case, have not received more than a slap on the wrist from the international community for their excesses against the Chechens, they have had to answer critics on occasion.

Another area of advantage is increased stature for the Russian intelligence services. The US is seeking support from Russian human intelligence (HUMINT). HUMINT is considered by most analysts to be the most important intelligence source for combating terrorism. (JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 21 Sep 01; via lexis-nexis) HUMINT is crucial to counter-terrorism because many terrorist cells don't use advanced technology and are therefore highly resistant to high-tech collection efforts. Because US intelligence services reduced HUMINT focus on Asia in the early 1990s (JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 12 Oct 00; via lexis-nexis), planners preparing to conduct operations in Afghanistan and perhaps elsewhere have a real shortfall of on-the-ground HUMINT operatives. It is believed that Russia has extensive networks of HUMINT developed and maintained as a result of both its presence in Central Asia and its war in Afghanistan. These existing networks could prove to be critical as a starting point for US efforts to track and attack bin Laden and the al Qaeda network. Russia can increase its visibility and

importance on the international stage by becoming the focal point for these efforts. The Russians also can pressure the international community for additional aid and credits for their struggling economy.

## Russian Federation: Foreign Relations

By Scott Bethel

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack against the US, expressions of world support flow in, including, in some instances, offers of the use of military forces and bases. The use of certain Central Asian bases and airspace as part of the US retaliatory strikes against Osama bin Ladin, al Qaeda cells and Taliban forces has accelerated an existing US military engagement policy with some CIS states. Although giving rhetorical support to the US "war on terrorism," Putin is pulling the strings tightly in an attempt to assert control over the amount and type of support individual CIS states provide. With regard to Russia's own capabilities, details have emerged regarding the proposed modernization of its air force, and security has been heightened in the north. Simulated air strikes have been carried out against Russia's traditional targets in the north, west and south.

### **Uzbekistan anti-terrorist support**

As the US begins its deployment of troops and personnel to the region, Central Asian states offer various degrees of assistance. Uzbekistan was the first to offer support, potentially including bases. Initially, Moscow voiced its displeasure at such initiatives by states in what it continues to claim as its Central Asian sphere of influence. Subsequently, Putin changed his stance, but, in withdrawing his objections, found a way of indicating that Russia's imprimatur was required, by stating that the Central Asians were offering support "in coordination" with Russia. As things stand now, "Uzbekistan will most likely play the most active part in air strikes against Afghanistan." Abdulaziz Kamilov, the Uzbek minister of foreign affairs, indirectly confirmed this in an interview with the American

newspaper Washington Post. His airfields, inherited from the Turkestan Military District, are located a half-hour's flight from Kabul. "It is entirely possible that they will be used either for refueling, or for emergency landings of American aircraft." Uzbek President Islam Karimov hopes to strengthen ties with NATO, having objected to the CIS Collective Security Treaty, and becoming instead one of the founding fathers of GUUAM (association of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova). (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 18 Sep 01)

Uzbek forces led by General Rasit Dostum have been engaged in the struggle against the Afghani Taliban regime, which actively supports Islamic insurgency in Uzbekistan. Dzhuma Namangani, leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, has been made a commander of a 9,000-man-strong Taliban military unit allegedly made up of Taliban troops, mercenaries from Pakistan and Arab countries, Uzbek extremists and others in the northern Afghan province of Takhar. (INTERFAX, 1549 GMT, 18 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0918, via World News Connection) Clearly Uzbekistan understands that it has everything to lose if the Taliban movement expands. Throughout the past week much had been much written about whether Central Asian states would permit US forces to operate on their soil. Following Putin's original objections, Uzbek senior officials, including President Karimov, had started to retract their earlier offers of basing, leaving the door open for a more wholehearted approach if presented with "proof" of bin Laden's culpability. Once Russia withdrew its objections, Uzbekistan returned to its earlier offer. Ultimately, after talks with the CIS states, Moscow made it clear publicly that each CIS state will decide on its own what level of support it provides the US in terms of military basing. However, Moscow continues to apply pressure against any substantial US presence in the region.

Two US C-130 aircraft reportedly arrived at a military airfield close to Tashkent on 22 September and unloaded various intelligence-gathering and technical equipment, plus approximately 100 US servicemen. (INTERFAX, 1753 GMT, 22 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0922, via World News Connection) Questions remain:

What further assistance to the US effort will Tashkent and others in the region provide? Will Moscow continue to apply pressure to limit such cooperation?

### **Russian military current and future readiness**

Russia is reported to be planning to modernize 80 percent of its military aircraft before 2005. Army General Anatoly Kornukov stated "In the past 10 years, the Air Force has virtually received not a single aircraft...within the next few years we will have to replace practically the whole fleet of ground support, bomber, reconnaissance and military support aircraft...we are now putting our main emphasis on modernization." Kornukov said that the Russian Air Force in the future will have three types of operational aircraft -- light, medium and heavy, two types of transport aircraft, two types of missile systems short- and long-range, and five types of radar systems. He also stated that contracts had already been let to industry. (ITAR-TASS, 1618 GMT, 15 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0915, via World News Connection) This approach resembles the US military concept of reducing the types of military aircraft. How Moscow will pay for this immense modernized infrastructure in light of other competing economic priorities remains to be seen.

### **Forces on alert/exercise cancelled**

Of late, Russian military forces have tightened security measures in the Murmansk and Leningrad regions, keeping the anti-submarine warfare ship Admiral Chabanenko and heavy missile cruiser Pyotr Veliky underway in the Barents Sea. Ground and air forces increased their alert status and security was tightened around nuclear facilities and other important state facilities in larger Russian cities. At Washington's request following the terrorist attack on the US, the Russian defense ministry postponed the 37th Air Army exercises on 12 September. The Russian exercise includes simulated TU-95MS and TU-22 air strikes against (Russia's traditional targets in the) Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic theaters. (ITAR-TASS, 1548, 1556 & 1942 GMT, 11 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0911, via World News Connection) By 14 September, Russia was ready to

conclude the final phase of the exercise. Three TU-22MZ bombers (flying over Russian territory) fired five air-to-surface missiles against targets in the Pacific. TU-160 and TU-95 strategic bomber participation was cancelled. (ITAR-TASS, 0639 GMT, 14 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0914, via World News Connection)

### **INTERFAX-Military News Agency (MNA) merge**

The Russian Military News Agency has merged with Interfax to create a broader base for dissemination of Russian and CIS armed forces information, including military actions, exercises, and reform; weapons testing; and arms sales. Major General Vladimir Kosarev, the general director of the new agency, stated that the objective was to "cover as systematically, objectively and as professionally as possible the development of the Armed Forces, Interior Ministry, Federal Security Service, Federal Border Service, and other security and special services within the military-industrial complex." (INTERFAX, 1102 GMT, 12 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-0912, via World News Connection) Whether this is a genuine efficiency move, or an effort to exercise control over information dissemination more effectively, remains to be seen.

## **Newly Independent States: Western Region**

By Tammy Lynch

### **UKRAINE**

#### **Welcome back!**

After almost a year of watching and waiting, IMF officials finally decided last week to reinstate funding to Ukraine; the decision will mean a payment tranche of over \$375 million from the IMF this year, as well as another \$250 million from the World Bank. More importantly, the decision will allow the country to fulfill a key condition of its agreement struck with the Paris Club in July. A resumption of IMF lending means Ukraine now will be allowed to reschedule nearly \$600 million of debt held by members of the Club over 12 years. In addition, the country's

leaders hope that this nod of approval from the IMF will send a positive signal to investors. Prime Minister Anatoliy Kinakh suggested, for example, that the importance of this signal "significantly exceeds" the importance of the money itself. (UNIAN, 1306 GMT, 21 Sep 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets)

Not that the money isn't needed. Despite the fact that it is discussed very little, Ukraine continues to be hampered by huge wage arrears to its public sector workers. As of early August, the State Statistics Committee listed well over \$700 million in back wages owed to employees by the state (it is unclear whether this number included any money owed to the armed forces, but it likely did not). While the figure is 12 percent lower than the same period last year, it remains a major problem. (WINDOW ON UKRAINE, 21 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) And, of course, the country continues to pay either late or not at all for its gas and is attempting to complete the construction of two new nuclear reactors with little outside help.

Therefore, the IMF money is important and necessary. However, with a plodding bureaucracy, a questionable legal system, rampant corruption and an unstable political structure, the country will need more than IMF funding to increase its attractiveness to Western investors. The resumption of funding is indeed a significant step, but only one of many that will be necessary in the months and years to come.

### **Agreeing to agree again**

When discussing the negotiations between Russia and Ukraine over the latter's gas debt, it is necessary to know only two basic sentences. Memorize them here now, filling in the blanks accordingly: "The issue of Ukraine's debt to Russia for natural gas has been blown out of proportion, and in fact the two countries are well along the way to resolving the problem. All of the problems facing Ukraine and Russia have been discussed during my recent meeting with Russian

President in and all of the agreements achieved in the course of the meeting will be arranged during the upcoming negotiations with the Russian Prime Minister, which will take place. This proclamation was actually made in July of 1999 by President Leonid Kuchma following a meeting with Boris Yel'tsin in Moscow. (INTELNEWS, 9 Jul 99; FBIS-SOV-1999-0709, via World News Connection) It was to be the final statement on the problem of Ukraine's gas debt. Except it wasn't. It was only the first of many of the same.

Since that time, the countries have signed agreements to formulate agreements, while repeatedly announcing their intentions to agree. In August, these same tired words were once again recycled. Ukrainian News wrote, "Prime Minister Anatoliy Kinakh and Russia's Prime Minister Mikhail Kasanov reached agreement on the settlement of Ukraine's debt for Russian natural gas after talks in Moscow on 20 August. According to the agreement, the issue of Ukraine's debt for natural gas should be resolved through the signing of an inter-governmental agreement." (UKRAINIAN NEWS, 16 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) This August "agreement" followed the signing of a memorandum -- suggesting the need for negotiation and agreement -- last December by Kuchma and Vladimir Putin. But, shockingly, the two sides did not agree in September. Instead, they announced another meeting in Kyiv on 4-5 October, when a "memorandum on settling Ukrainian debt" reportedly will be signed. (INTELLINEWS-UKRAINE TODAY, 14 Sep 01) Perhaps the memorandum in fact will be signed and will be detailed and enforceable. But perhaps it is more likely that in 2002 representatives from the two countries still will be meeting and planning to agree.

## **MOLDOVA**

### **Economic war?**

Last week, Igor Smirnov, self-proclaimed president of the breakaway Dniestr Republic, denounced the decision of Moldovan authorities to change the country's custom seals. While a change in a seal might normally mean very little,



this change means that the seals held by the republic (per an arrangement made with the Moldovan government in 1996) no longer will be valid. From this point on, Chisinau controls all customs and border activity. All cargo in and out of the Transdnestr region, which was declared previously only to Dniestr, now must be declared in Chisinau. To ensure that this occurs, new customs posts have been created with money given by the United States as part of a grant to GUUAM countries for upgrading customs facilities.

At a recent press conference, the deputy director general of Moldova's customs department noted that the new requirements are designed "to introduce uniform customs rules in order to put an end to commodity smuggling, corruption, and human traffic." Nicolai Makarov suggested that the Dniestr Republic's ability to control its border with Ukraine had led to the region becoming "a contraband warehouse." He said Ukraine had stopped accepting cargo stamped with the old Dniestr seal and that "dozens" of cargo vehicles had been registered so far as they delivered goods to the Dniestr region. (INFOTAG, 21 Sep 01; via AZI - Independent Journalism Center)

Victor Doras, President Vladimir Voronin's representative, put the situation bluntly. "President Vladimir Voronin shall not give up his firm decision to establish order on the Republic of Moldova's state border. There's no way back." (IBID.)

The firm decision to establish order comes, of course, as a result of Smirnov's inability (or unwillingness) to begin any type of negotiation over Dniestr's status with Voronin. It also follows Smirnov's decision to refuse Voronin entry to the region, even though the latter was born in the area. These choices have been taken personally by the Moldovan president, and he undoubtedly is doing his best to show his power.

The World Trade Organization, of which Moldova has just become a member, welcomed the customs move and the European Parliament also signaled its

support. "Our chief objective," Voronin noted, "is to establish order in exports and imports, as is demanded by the World Trade Organization. This is in the interests of citizens living on both sides of Dniestr." (INFOTAG, 14 Sep 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1914, via World News Connection)

Voronin did not stop there, however. A week ago, the president met openly with the man attempting to unseat Smirnov as head of the Dniestr region in an upcoming election. Aleksandr Radchenko, a member of the Communist Party, met with Voronin on 14 September. Although Voronin made no public comments in support of Radchenko, the meeting sent a clear message -- the same message sent by the customs decision. Voronin is doing his best to take charge of Moldova -- all of Moldova. He has a long way to go, of course, and in the long run these recent moves may amount to little more than grandstanding. But, Voronin clearly has knocked Smirnov off balance, while giving Moldova its first taste of power in the Dniestr conflict in many years.

## Newly Independent States: Caucasus

By Miriam Lansky

### **Region reacts to terror in US**

#### **GUUAM**

On 12 September, the Washington embassies of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan issued a joint statement of condolences and called for "joint combat" against terrorism. ([www.guam.org](http://www.guam.org))

#### **Azerbaijan**

President Heydar Aliiev expressed condolences in a press release on 11 September only hours after the attack. Calling terrorism a crime "contrary to all human values," Aliiev pledged "unequivocal readiness" for cooperation against

terrorism. In an unambiguous gesture, Aliev postponed indefinitely a long-awaited visit to Iran.

Azerbaijan's former National Security Adviser and highly respected elder statesman, Vafa Guluzade, remarked that the US could use these sad circumstances to reshape the international order. "After the Pearl Harbor attack on the United States the country became a superpower. I think the US will collect their efforts and take actions which will alter many geopolitical realities and many geopolitical concepts. The role of the United States will change too."

Later in the interview Guluzade emphasized the secular Muslim countries' support for the United States. "As regards the threat from the Taliban - take notice of Uzbekistan. [Uzbek President] Islam Karimov loudly proclaimed that he offers all his airports to the US for the anti-terrorist actions. Pakistan said the same thing. Turkey will participate as a member of NATO. Clearly no one takes threats from terrorists seriously. Some are trying to play the 'Islamic card' as though a war between Christianity and Islam was about to begin. This is stupid. Clearly, Muslim states support the US - because all normal people are against terrorism." (www.echo-az.com, 18 Sep 01)

### **Georgia**

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and his most serious political rival, the parliamentary chairman, Zurab Zhvania, on 13 September put aside their differences to pay a joint visit to the US embassy in order to convey their condolences personally. After expressing sadness over the attack on the US, Shevardnadze commented that it was the work of "Several reactionary states which are fighting against democracy and people's freedom." (GEORGIAN TELEVISION, 1000 GMT, 13 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

A representative of the Georgian foreign ministry, Kakha Sikharulidze, confirmed that Georgia is ready to provide military bases, air space and intelligence for an

anti-terrorism campaign. (PRIME NEWS AGENCY 1025 GMT, 21 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

Russian officials and media sought to punish Tbilisi for its willingness to cooperate with Washington by intensifying accusations against Georgia for sheltering Chechen refugees in Pankisi gorge. Unproven allegations that Chechen fighters and bases are located in Georgia have been voiced on many prior occasions. This time a new wrinkle emerged when Russian media charged that Georgian interior ministry troops were providing safe passage for Chechen fighters. The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded with an angry note and Georgian television described the incident as a clumsy attempt by Russia to portray Georgia as a sponsor of international terrorism. (GEORGIAN TELEVISION, 1500 GMT, 21 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

### **Armenia**

Armenia's President Robert Kocharian offered his condolences and remarked that terror must be "destroyed by joint efforts." On the same day he talked of expanding military-political cooperation with Russia and deepening its role in any Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. (ARMINFO, 11 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring) On 14-15 September, Russia's President Vladimir Putin visited Yerevan, where he renewed his offer of acting as a guarantor of any potential settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and signed an agreement formalizing the activities, remuneration, and legal status of Russian military advisers and specialists, a category distinct from the Russian forces stationed in Armenia. (Jamestown Foundation MONITOR, 19 Sep 01)

On 19 September Armenian Defense Minister and Security Council Secretary Serge Sarkisian met with Iran's ambassador to Armenia, Fakhad Koleini, to discuss matters of regional security. (ARKA NEWS AGENCY, 20 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) The Armenian president plans to visit Iran in November. Also on 19 September, Armenian Prime Minister Andranik Karkarian held a meeting

with the defense minister of Cyprus, Socrates Asikos. The two endorsed deepening the Armenia-Greece-Cyprus "coalition" and expanding cooperation between Iran, Greece and Armenia. (ARKA NEWS AGENCY, 19 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) Armenia also had concluded deals to sell arms and ammunition to Syria and Lebanon in early September. (ARMINFO, 3 Sep 01; via ISI Emerging Markets) The defense ministers of both states are expected to visit Armenia in the coming months. Armenia has become firmly bound in military cooperation with states that are generally seen as the main sponsors of international terrorism.

### **Chechnya**

Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov expressed condolences in a 12 September telegram to US leaders: "Why do we, the Chechens, grieve deeply and sincerely with you, America? Because America is the only country in the world today that has a tradition of protecting oppressed peoples . A blow against America is a blow against peace in the whole world. We regard it as a blow against Chechnya and other oppressed nations of the world." The statement was carried by the official press center of the Chechen president: [www. Chechen.org](http://www.Chechen.org). In addition, these formal condolences were relayed in Washington, DC, by Chechnya's representative, Lyoma Usmanov.

Other comments from Maskhadov also were carried on the Chechen.org web page: "I am shocked! I simply cannot believe this! Who lifted his hand to commit this crime? Is he a human being? Please notify all that we in Chechnya grieve together with the American people! I decisively condemn all terrorist acts, and I consider that countries that connived in the terrorist acts against the United States must inevitably be punished by the world community." (See also Chechnya Weekly, 18 Sep 01)

On 18 September the head of the Russian administration of Chechnya, Akhmad Kadyrov, arrived in Cairo for the first stop of his Middle Eastern tour. From Egypt

he will travel to Syria, Jordan and Iraq. The goal of the trip is to persuade the Arabs that "the present war in Chechnya has absolutely nothing to do with Jihad." (ITAR-TASS, 18 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

Many English-language news outlets have quoted mistakenly the views of Movladi Udugov and his Qatar-based Kavkaz tsentr as representative of Chechnya. He came forward on 13 September with the theory that Russia and Israel are the most likely state sponsors of the terrorist acts in New York and Washington, DC, which, according to Udugov, have diminished the status of the US among world powers. "Within minutes Americans lost a feeling of security and superiority. The position of the world leader is again vacant."

In his interview Udugov is more careful than the Western media outlets that identify him as a spokesman. His title is "Deputy of Shamil Basaev in the Majlis of Muslims of Ichkeria and Dagestan," and he says explicitly "the reaction of the Chechen side is contained in the statement by President Aslan Maskhadov." Udugov never claims to speak on behalf of Chechnya or the Chechens.

Udugov was President Dzhokhar Dudaev's press secretary during the first war, a position which allowed him to develop a broad network of contacts among the media, which continue to look to him for information. After the first war he served briefly as prime minister and foreign minister under Maskhadov but then left the government to join the ranks of the radical opposition in 1998. In January 1999 he joined with other irreconcilable to form the Shura -- a shadow government working for the overthrow of the legitimate Maskhadov government. In 1999 Udugov became deputy to "Emir" Shamil Basaev in the Majlis of Ichkeria and Dagestan - it was under the banner of this unofficial entity that roughly 800 Dagestanis and 200 Chechens staged attacks into Dagestan in the summer of 1999. After the start of the second war, denounced in Chechnya as a provocateur, Udugov moved to Qatar, from where he still runs the Kavkaz tsentr web site. In Chechnya, the Maskhadov government has issued a warrant for his

arrest. Although Udugov runs interviews with Basaev and implies continued cooperation with the Chechen commander, even this flimsy tie to influential Chechen circles is open to doubt. Maskhadov's spokesmen have said frequently that Basaev is under Maskhadov's command and Basaev has never contradicted those statements. (EKHO MOSKVY, 7 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring)

Kavkaz tsentr has led journalists astray on many occasions, including an incident in January 2000 when it disseminated forged documents alleging an imminent deportation of Chechens. Some Western news outlets ran the story and were embarrassed after it became clear that the story was false. Apparently, that embarrassment was not sufficient medicine, since many in the media still have not sought out more reliable sources.

## Newly Independent States: Central Asia

By Fabian Adami

### **One thing only is clear: Agreement with Russia is the key**

In the days immediately following the attack on America, it looked as if Uzbekistan would seek to offer help to the United States, independently of Russian influence. Several encouraging statements were received from President Islam Karimov's government, including an interview during which Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov stated that Uzbekistan would be prepared to "Discuss all forms of cooperation" in fighting terrorism. (WASHINGTON POST, 17 Sep 01)

An objective analysis of the situation in Central Asia would suggest that Uzbekistan has the most to gain from an alliance with the United States. President Karimov has little love for the Taliban government in Afghanistan, which supplies and supports the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The IMU has been a continuing source of instability not just for Uzbekistan, but also in

the region as a whole. Karimov would be likely to view cooperation with the United States as an opportunity to gain support, both military and financial, in order to attempt finally to defeat the insurgency.

It is obvious that President Karimov was trying to assert an Uzbek foreign policy independent of Russian influence. Uzbekistan has several large bases remaining from the Soviet era, including a major airbase at Tashkent and another at Termez (which lies directly on Uzbekistan's border with Afghanistan) and could offer an attractive alternative to bases in Pakistan. [THE TIMES (LONDON), 17 Sep 01]

Russia's reaction to Uzbek statements on 17 September was swift. Speaking in an interview with TV 6, Duma Defense Committee Deputy Chairman Aleksey Arbatov claimed that Uzbekistan would only cooperate with America in order to gain aid, which it believed had not been sufficiently provided by Moscow. (TV 6, 17 Sep 01; via BBC Monitoring) Furthermore, a rapidly arranged tour of Central Asia by the Russian Security Council secretary, Vladimir Rushailo, was followed by a denial from the Uzbek foreign ministry spokesman, Bakhodir Umarov, that the possibility of Uzbek support for US Operations had ever been discussed. (RFE/RL, 21 Sep 01) This statement, when viewed together with Uzbekistan's entrance into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, was viewed as a signal that the indicators of independence in Uzbek foreign policy may be disappearing. However, since then Uzbekistan has demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with the US.

Whereas the Uzbek government attempted to determine its own response to US requests, Tajik President Imomali Rahmonov's statements said only that Tajikistan would consult with Russia before responding to any solicitations from Washington. Kazakh and Kyrgyz reactions were similar, with both Presidents Askar Akaev and Nursultan Nazarbaev stating that they might be willing to provide assistance to NATO and the United States, but that they too would



consult with Russia before any action could be taken. (BBC MONITORING, 18 Sep 01)

Clearly this reassertion of authority by Moscow was designed specifically to ensure that Russia would be the only party capable of negotiating with the United States on the issue of bases, thereby giving Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov leverage in planned talks with Secretary of State Colin Powell.

According to press reports, Ivanov informed Powell that Russia would not stand in the way of cooperation between the US and Central Asia. (CNN, 21 Sep 01; via [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)) It is clear, however, that Russian support for US retaliatory strikes is conditional on major concessions from the Bush administration, most probably with regard to Russia's campaign in Chechnya, NATO expansion, and possibly National Missile Defense.

While support from Central Asia and Russia may be important to America's aim of attacking Osama bin Laden and the Taliban in Afghanistan, particularly with respect to overflight rights and air bases, one must question whether it should be at the cost of Moscow's reassertion of domination in the region.

Russia wants to ensure that, if the Bush administration wishes to use bases in Central Asia, it must negotiate with Moscow, rather than directly with the Central Asian heads of state. However, at least Uzbekistan does not agree.

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