

Boston University

OpenBU

<http://open.bu.edu>

Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology and Policy

The ISCIP Analyst

2005-06-08

The ISCIP Analyst, Volume X, Issue 7

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/11805>

"Downloaded from OpenBU. Boston University's institutional repository."

Russian Federation: Security Services

By Maolmordha McGowan

In successive addresses before the State Duma and a series of follow-up interviews, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Federal Security Service Director Nikolai Patrushev addressed the issue of increasing anti-Moscow sentiment in the former Soviet states. Lavrov suggested in an interview with Izvestiya that the power of Russia, ³which is growing day by day,² is a factor in rising tensions between Russia and the near abroad. Simply put, ³the strong are not popular.² (1)

Given that logic, one might assume that Russia's ³growing² power will result in further unpopularity among those whose undemocratic governments are among Russia's most trusted allies. Indeed, Lavrov noted to the State Duma that ³we are not concerned about people's strivings for democracy.² (2) How reassuring.

Regardless, Patrushev seems concerned enough for both of them.

This anti-Moscow sentiment is the product of a vast international conspiracy, Patrushev contends, as ³our opponents are trying to weaken Russia's influence in the Commonwealth of Independent States and in the international sphere as a whole. Recent events in Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Ukraine unambiguously confirm this.² (3)

The time for nuanced diplomacy is over. The FSB Director means business.

He even provided details of the supposed conspiracy, ³foreign intelligence agencies are ever more actively using non-traditional methods² including the use

of ³various non-governmental organizations² as cover to spy on Russia, incite political upheaval and bankroll revolutionary movements in the former Soviet sphere. (4) He claimed that ³several acts of espionage by secret services of the U.S., U.K., Kuwait and Saudi Arabia² had been thwarted, emphasizing that ³non-governmental organizations operating in Russia carried out these acts.² (5)

While Patrushev offered no specific ³acts of espionage,² several groups - the U.S. Peace Corps; Merlin; the Saudi Red Crescent Society and the Society of Social Reforms; and the Society of Islamic Revival, both of Kuwait - were accused of fronting for "spies."

The accused tended to disagree. Merlin, a U.K. organization, provides ³healthcare and social services to former prisoners and other patients suffering from tuberculosis in the city of Dzerzhinsk² [Russia], according to their website (6) and their spokeswoman in London. (7) The Arab groups have stressed that they were providing humanitarian assistance to Chechen refugees in Ingushetia. (8)

Accusations levied by Russia against the Peace Corps are nothing new. However, it is puzzling that the Peace Corps should be accused of being an NGO acting as a front for U.S. spies in Russia, when the Peace Corps is neither an NGO nor operating in Russia. Patrushev himself bragged in 2002 about denying visa extensions to 30 volunteers he suggested were spying, which soon led the U.S. headquarters to terminate the program in Russia. Throughout the ordeal, the organization continued to emphasize that it was entirely non-political, a statement reiterated by the U.S. Embassy. (9)

Patrushev specifically targeted the International Republican Institute (IRI), which he said has committed \$5 million in U.S. government money to its Belarussian democracy program. IRI, whose chairman is Arizona Senator John McCain, is

old news in Belarus, where President Lukashenko expelled it as well as other similar groups from the country. (10)

White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan felt the need to evade a confrontation with the Russian FSB; when asked to respond to Patrushev's allegations, he responded, "I have not seen those comments, and I have no idea what he is referring to." (11)

The White House certainly was not disguising its opinion of Lukashenko's regime when it dubbed Belarus "the last dictatorship in Europe" and called for "a change." Nor was it shying away from the issue when it signed the Belarus Democracy Act on 20 October 2004, which the White House said "demonstrates America's deep concern over events in Belarus and a commitment to sustain" with about \$30 million the various media, electoral and civil society programs for democracy promotion over the next five years. This year's contribution to the program was rolled into an "emergency appropriation" bill for the War on Terror.

Concluding his remarks on this topic, Patrushev asked the Duma to tighten the rules governing NGOs, saying that current laws are insufficient to stem the tide of foreign NGO activity that "damages the security of our country." (12)

Patrushev's accusations concerning foreign funding for CIS democracy activities are not news, but he failed to substantiate allegations of espionage.

If nothing else, Patrushev seems to have overestimated the West's concern regarding domestic events in the CIS. Following the street fighting in Andizhan, Uzbekistan last week, for example, the U.S. Administration showed its lackluster commitment to those former Soviet subjects clamoring for change when it refused to condemn explicitly the Uzbek government for firing on unarmed civilians.

A government run by former state security agents can be expected to be paranoid concerning foreign powers that support insurrection in the post-Soviet space. However inaccurate, redundant or embellished Patrushev's comments were, their timing is significant. Rather than ruin the relationship between Presidents Putin and Bush, the Kremlin may have sent Patrushev to express, in a roundabout way, its dissatisfaction with U.S. actions. President Bush's visits to Riga and Tbilisi on either side of his WWII victory anniversary visit to Moscow were not well received in the Kremlin. By accusing Americans of campaigning to undermine Russia's influence in Belarus, Moscow is highlighting the obvious: Belarus is not Kyrgyzstan and the Kremlin will work far harder to protect Lukashenko than it did Akayev.

Finally, Moscow may be concerned that the U.S. and E.U. may not be indifferent to a putative Putin successor one day being handed power in another opaque Kremlin maneuver. Thus, the coming Belarussian "elections" may be viewed as a kind of proxy for that eventuality.

If a Russian government peppered with spies can be of some use to the U.S. in its war against terrorism, it is far less likely that affronts to democracy would provoke a dedicated response from the White House. Washington is a one-issue town, and the siloviki may assume that they can get away with almost anything as long as they are considered part of the solution to that one issue. Uzbekistan's Karimov apparently bore this in mind.

Source Notes:

(1) RIA Novosti, 17 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(2) Suzanna Farzova, ³Intelligence Reports Correctly,² Kommersant, 14 May 05 via <http://www.kommersant.com/page.asp?id=577156>.

(3) Farzova, *ibid.*

- (4) Steve Gutterman, The Boston Globe, 12 May 05 via http://www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2005/05/12/russia_prevents_american_spy_activity/.
- (5) Timur Prokopenko, Alexander Shashkov, TASS 12 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.
- (6) <http://www.merlin.org.uk/Main.aspx?PageID=40>.
- (7) AP, ³Russia accuses foreign agencies of spying,² in *ibid*.
- (8) Saudi Red Crescent Society website, http://www.srcs.org.sa/intlaffairs_en/intl_affairs.asp?Id=1. Maria Pshenichnikova, ³Kuwait secret service not linked to RF accuses of espionage,² TASS 13 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis. The Kuwaiti charge d'affaires ad interim in Moscow said that NGOs based in Kuwait were providing only humanitarian services to refugees in Ingushetia. The Saudi Red Crescent Society also reported providing similar assistance to 5000 Chechen refugees in Angoshia.
- (9) AP, ³Russia accuses foreign agencies of spying,² AP Online, 12 May 05 via http://www.ptd.net/webnews/wed/ae/Ayb71118308.R9nw_FAC.html.
- (10) Ilana Ozernoy, ³"The Revolution is On Hold, OK?" U.S. News and World Report, 16 May 05 via <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/050516/16belarus.htm>.
- (11) AP in *ibid*.
- (12) AP in *ibid*.

Russian Federation: Foreign Relations

By Rebecca Mulder

A month in review

Feisty neighbors, an ³attack² on Russian history, border treaties, meetings with foreign leaders, summits and a Victory Day celebration have been the fuel firing Russian foreign relations throughout the month of May. The bitter dispute with the Baltic states and the ongoing confusion over Russia's stance on a nuclear Iran remain contentious issues. The events of May clearly evidence Russia's

desire to thrust itself into the world arena in a dramatic attempt to demonstrate its self-perceived strength, which Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said is ³growing day by day.² (1)

The month began with the Victory Day celebration attended by numerous foreign leaders and dignitaries; President Putin expressed his gratitude to many of the attendees the following day at the Russia-EU summit, emphasizing their ³unification in the face of a global threat² and the difficult decision-making necessary ³to achieve such sensitive goals as reconciliation and restoration of normal human relations among the peoples and states the Second World War rolled through.² (2) The Russia-E.U. summit, also held in Moscow, did not produce anything unanticipated. It reviewed cooperation mechanisms between the E.U. and Russia and reaffirmed the road maps on the creation of ³four common spaces² that were previously agreed to: economics; freedom, security and justice; external security; and research, education and culture. (3)

Russia's dispute with the Baltic states – Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania – resurfaced with international attention to the Victory Day celebration and the Russia-E.U. summit. The Baltic states asserted that the ³reconciliation and restoration of normal human relations,² which Putin praised, did not reflect Russian-Baltic relations. They chose instead to highlight a recent United States Senate resolution that notes that the Soviet Union's incorporation of the Baltic states was ³an act of aggression carried out against the will of sovereign nations² and that it ³brought boundless suffering to the Baltic people through terror, killings and deportations to Siberia.² (4) Putin stated that he is willing to sign border agreements with Latvia and Estonia if they give up their ³ridiculous territorial demands² (5) and contention that ³the Soviet Union could not occupy them [the Baltics] in 1941 because they were part of it.² (6) Putin has refused to apologize for the occupation and claims that denunciation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact by the Soviet Union in 1989 was the last word on the issue.

Some have charged that this dispute challenges Russia's role in history. One Russian historian commented that "the Baltic states' demand for recognition of their occupation by Soviet troops is partly attributable to the inferiority complex of small countries seeking recognition."² (7) Aleksandr Yakovenko, spokesman for Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called it an attempt to rewrite history. (8) During a press conference, Putin likened the disputed occupation to slave labor in America, calling it "a collusion in which small states and small people become small change."² (9) Though the repudiation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact by the Soviet Union in the 1980s gave some acknowledgement to the Baltics, it would go Russia no harm to repudiate the pact once again, this time in its new identity as the Russian Federation, in an effort to quell the dispute and provide a basis for improved relations. Russia did sign a border treaty with Estonia on 19 May, after receiving Estonia's assurances that the treaty is final and there would be no future territorial claims on Russia. A similar border agreement was signed with Lithuania in 2003; Latvia remains the only Baltic state with which Moscow has not concluded a treaty. (10) Latvia wanted to attach a clause restating its (theoretical) reservation concerning former Latvian lands illegally incorporated in Russia when Latvia was occupied by the USSR in 1940.

Numerous meetings with Asian foreign leaders were held throughout the month of May: President Putin met in the Kremlin with Chinese President Hu Jintao, with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, and with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun. A constructive Russian-Chinese dialogue remains important to Russian foreign relations though Putin (at least in public) did not discuss the dispute over North Korea's nuclear weapons program with Hu, as he did with the other two leaders. (11) Russia, India and China also committed to advancing their cooperation. Putin met with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and then with Indian President Abdul Kalam at the end of the month to work on issues of trade. (12) An upcoming, "informal"² meeting will be held with the three countries' prime ministers on 2 June in Vladivostok and will include a large range of international issues: the situation in Iraq, the Middle East

settlement, Afghanistan and North Korea. The meeting is intended to underscore the countries¹ close approaches to dealing with globalization, world stability and security, the war on terror and putative solutions to certain ethnic, regional and religious conflicts. (13)

Russia has, de facto, supported Uzbek President Islam Karimov in an attempt to keep its influence in what is becoming a very unsteady neighbor. The violent attacks on administrative buildings and a prison in Andijon, Uzbekistan in mid-May, which resulted in calls for the president and his government to step down, prompted a bloody crackdown by the Uzbek president. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov quickly concluded that foreign radicals were behind the uprisings, mainly Talibs, and endorsed Karimov's harsh response stating that ³every country with self-respect must take measures to exercise its right to self-protection.² (14) Lavrov also encouraged the Special Commission formed by the Uzbek Parliament to investigate the situation in a manner that would prevent future threats of international terrorism in the region. (15) Russia encourages Karimov's strong fight in this new ³war on terror² and certainly does not wish to see another revolution occur in this former Soviet territory.

Russia continues to send mixed signals regarding a nuclear Iran. It has supported international negotiations with Iran to blunt its nuclear aspirations, and worked a deal for the spent fuel from the Bushehr to be returned to Russia. The Director of Russia's Federal Atomic Energy Agency recently stated that Iran should not develop its own uranium but rely on others to provide it, and then warned: ³Even the U.S. cannot inflict the least damage on Russia's cooperation with Iran.² (16)

Source Notes:

(1) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 18 May 05, vol. 9, no. 94;
<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2005/05/1-RUS/rus-180505.asp?po=y>.

- (2) RIA Novosti, 10 May 05, 13:21 (GMT);
<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20050510/39959670-print.html>.
- (3) RIA Novosti, 10 May 05, 16:59 (GMT);
<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20050510/39961057-print.html>.
- (4) Eurasia Daily Monitor, 25 May 05, vol. 2, issue 102; ³U.S. Senate, European Parliament Condemn Occupation of Baltic States²; www.brdcst@jamestown.org.
- (5) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 11 May 05, vol.9, no.89;
<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2005/05/1-RUS/rus-110505.asp?po=y>.
- (6) RIA Novosti, 10 May 05, 18:59 (GMT);
<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20050510/39961777-print.html>.
- (7) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 10 May 05, vol. 9, no. 88;
<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2005/05/1-RUS/rus-100505.asp?po=y>.
- (8) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Dept., 21 May 05, 1163;
http://www.in.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/3efe8f02f2e3ec13.
- (9) Ibid., RIA Novosti, 10 May 05, 18:59 (GMT).
- (10) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 19 May 05, vol. 9, no.95;
<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2005/05/1-RUS/rus-190505.asp?po=y>.
- (11) Ibid., Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 10 May 05, vol. 9, no.88;
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) RIA Novosti, 27 May 05, 17:08 (GMT);
<http://en.rian.ru/onlinenews/20050527/40429395-print.html>.
- (14) RIA Novosti via Johnson's Russia List, 16 May 05, JRL 9150 no.20;
<http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/9150-20.cfm>.
- (15) RIA Novosti, 27 May 05, 19:00 (GMT);
<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20050527/40430305-print.html>.
- (16) Ibid., Eurasia Daily Monitor, 25 May 05, vol.2, issue 102.

Russian Federation: Domestic Issues and Legislative Branch

By Robyn Angley

Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Russia's rule of law

Mikhail Khodorkovsky, an oligarch and formerly Russia's richest man, and Platon Lebedev, an executive officer at Yukos, were convicted on May 31 of 6 out of 7 charges and sentenced to 9 years in a minimum-security prison by the Meshchansky District Court. They were also instructed to pay over 17 billion rubles (more than \$598 million) to tax organs for civil suits. (1) The reading of the verdict spanned from May 16 to May 31. From the start, there was little doubt as to the nature of the verdict; the primary question was the length of the prison sentence.

Khodorkovsky stood accused of tax evasion, fraud and embezzlement, particularly with regard to the privatization of state-owned entities during the 1990s. Khodorkovsky and Lebedev faced the prospect of up to ten years in prison.

The spokeswoman for the Russian Prosecutor General's Office, Natalia Vishnyakova, stressed in a press conference following the verdict that the sentence was "fair and objective." (2) Vishnyakova also stated that further charges against Khodorkovsky and Lebedev would be forthcoming. (3)

According to Karinna Moskalenko, one of Khodorkovsky's lawyers, Khodorkovsky is expected to appeal the verdict within ten days of its May 31 passage, including an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. (4)

The bulk of the charges against Khodorkovsky were connected to his position as head of Yukos, Russia's largest oil company, whose main arm was auctioned to

Rosneft, a state-owned oil company, in December for a grossly inadequate \$9.35 billion under the pretext of covering Yukos¹ back taxes. The auction heightened fears in the international investment community about the possibility of renationalization of companies that were sold in the privatization schemes of the 1990s, and has had a demonstrable impact on foreign investment. Foreign direct investment, for example, fell from \$7.5 billion in 2003 to \$6.6 billion in 2004. (5)

Khodorkovsky was reputed to have political ambitions that may have threatened President Putin. Before his arrest in 2003, Khodorkovsky was rumored to be planning to run against Putin in the 2004 presidential elections. The nine-year verdict ensures that Khodorkovsky remains in jail until after the 2008 elections. Khodorkovsky also clashed with Putin over energy taxes and government corruption.

Somewhat ironically, Khodorkovsky¹'s companies had made an increased effort to comply with the law in recent years, an effort that was not rewarded. The situation raises questions about the rule of law in Putin¹'s Russia and whether the law will be applied arbitrarily against those who appear to threaten the president¹'s monopoly on power.

Under the Soviet system justice was a farce. Attempts at judicial reform in the last fifteen years have led to slight improvements in the independence of judges and the strengthening of the arbitrazh (commercial) courts. However, the changes initiated by Putin in autumn 2004 to strengthen the power vertical brought appointment of judges well within the president¹'s sphere of authority. The presumption of guilt in Khodorkovsky¹'s trial speaks volumes about the state of the rule of law in Russia today and the extent to which reforms moving toward the consistent application of the law have genuinely taken hold.

Legal reform was an area that suffered significantly from the clashes between Boris Yel'tsin¹'s executive branch and the legislative branch during the 1990s.

Opposition to reform stymied most of Yel'tsin's attempts to initiate legislation that would develop a legal foundation for democracy and capitalism in the former Soviet Union's largest republic. With the advent of Vladimir Putin and his substantial support from the United Russia party, which, together with its allies, constituted a majority in both houses, legal reform has faced considerably fewer hurdles. Since Putin came to office, the legislature has passed laws addressing the tax code, the land code, the labor code and laws on pension reform, all issues that had crashed on the reefs of legislative opposition in the decade following the Soviet Union's collapse. (6) Although the implementation of pension reforms generated significant protest by pensioners and the military earlier this year, the fact remains that its very passage was a significant achievement given the resistance to pension reform in the Yel'tsin years by a Communist (KPRF) dominated legislature.

However, the successful passage of laws that move Russia toward the appearance of a society based on clearly expounded legal rights and precedents will remain ineffective if those laws are not applied consistently, without preferential treatment for those who have close connections with the state and without harassment of those who challenge the state's power. The irony in the case of Mikhail Khodorkovsky is that his companies had taken extra measures to follow the law in the few years before his arrest. These efforts were in contrast to those of other oligarchs who have not attempted to comply with the law, yet appear safe from the state's pursuit of lost tax revenues, such as Roman Abramovich. The uneven and inconsistent application of the law in the Khodorkovsky case demonstrates the tentative nature of genuine legal and judicial reform in Russia. Sadly, the prospects for the consistent application of laws that guarantee basic property rights and aim to reduce corruption on both the federal and regional levels appear grim.

The Government attempted to reign in the negative effects of the Khodorkovsky trial by initiating a bill that would set the statute of limitations on privatization

transactions at three years rather than ten. (7) However, such a move is unlikely to stem the wave of concern from international investors over the investment climate in Russia following the Yukos auction and Khodorkovsky's conviction. A June 5 statement on NTV by Deputy Prosecutor General Vladimir Kolesnikov is unlikely to ease concerns. According to Kolesnikov, the Khodorkovsky and Lebedev case may not be the only one against Russia's oligarchs selected for "special treatment" by the regime. "We have more cases in addition to those two," he said. "I can say that this case isn't the last one." (8)

The Public Chamber and citizen control of the media

In his annual address to the Federal Assembly, President Vladimir Putin mentioned the necessity for media outlets to have substantial input from citizens. As a follow-up measure, Putin requested that Premier Mikhail Fradkov and Kremlin Chief of Staff Dmitri Medvedev draft a bill vesting the Public Chamber with power to ensure civilian control over the media and submit it to the Duma by December 1. The primary idea floated for the implementation of civilian control is the creation of a committee composed of state officials and media industry representatives within the Public Chamber. (9) It is unclear whether that Chamber, whose role has been defined clearly as advisory and whose pronouncements lack the force of law, would be delegated any power to support its media oversight.

Electoral reform

The draft law on electoral reform passed its first reading in the Duma on May 20. The law moves the election of state bodies and local governing bodies to the same day, the second Sunday in March, and increases state financing to viable parties. The law also raises the threshold for participation in parliament to 7 percent and enshrines the complete shift to parliamentary elections based on proportional representation of party lists rather than the previous system that elected half of the legislators based on proportional representation and the other half on single-member constituencies using the "first-past-the-post" system.

Aleksandr Veshnyakov, Chairman of the Central Election Commission said, ³The aim of the changes is to give a boost to genuine political parties, make them more responsible for the electorate and to eliminate other defects.² (10)

However, a byproduct of the new laws will be the increased difficulty of smaller parties to pass the 7 percent threshold. This is epitomized by the democratic opposition parties such as Yabloko and the Union of Right Forces (SPS), who failed to meet the old 5 percent threshold in the last parliamentary elections. These two parties, as well as Committee 2008, have discussed forming a single party, but have not reconciled differences over party structure and leadership and whose party to use as a base of support.

Source Notes:

(1) "Court obligates Khodorkovskiy, Lebedev to pay R17 billion to tax bodies," ITAR-TASS, 31 May 05 via WNC.

(2) "Prosecution content with sentence on Khodorkovsky," ITAR-TASS, 31 May 05 via WNC.

(3) "New charges to be brought against Khodorkovskiy, Lebedev," ITAR-TASS, 31 May 05.

(4) "Khodorkovskiy lawyer not expecting review of sentence," ITAR-TASS, 31 May 05 via WNC.

(5) ³Russia tries to calm investors,² The Deal, 13 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

Somewhat naively, members of the State Duma have expressed their belief that the Khodorkovsky verdict will not have a significant impact on Russia's investment climate ("State Duma deputies comment on Khodorkovsky sentence," ITAR-TASS, 31 May 05 via WNC).

(6) ³Memorandum of the President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Finance Corporation to the executive directors of on a country assistance strategy of the World Bank Group for the Russian Federation² Report No: 24127-RU; www.worldbank.org, p.38.

(7) ³Investors fear Russian law,² UPI, 13 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(8) "INTERFAX Financial & Business Report," INTERFAX, 7 Jun 05 via WNC.

(9) ³Public Chamber to control observance by media of freedom of speech,² ITAR-TASS, 11 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(10) ³Interview with Central Election Commission Chair Alexander Veshnyakov,² Kommersant, 20 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

Russian Federation: Russian Military (External)

By Kyle Colton

Deadline passes on Georgian base closures

Although an agreement on military bases appears to have been reached between Russia and Georgia (for details see Georgia section), the background is presented herewith:

In March, the Georgian Parliament attempted to reinvigorate the bilateral base closure negotiations by passing a resolution that set an actual deadline date for the seemingly endless political dialogue between Russia and Georgia. The resolution basically stated that if negotiations failed to produce an agreement prior to the 15 May deadline then the two remaining Russian military bases would be declared illegal. The resolution included additional sanctions that could be activated such as: denying entry visas to Russian troops or technicians, prohibiting Russian military exercises, placing strict limitations on troop and equipment movement and imposing various economic sanctions on each base.

(1)

In late April, it appeared that a possible breakthrough could be on the horizon and no sanctions would be imposed. While visiting Moscow, Georgian Foreign Minister Salome Zurbishvili suggested that an agreement had been reached in principle that the withdrawal should be complete by 1 January 2008. (2) The timeline has political importance for the current Georgian leadership due to the

parliamentary elections in 2008 and the presidential elections shortly after. The base closures were important political promises made by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili when he came to office.

At the GUAM summit on 22 April, President Saakashvili said, "We hope we will be able to agree on a [mutually] acceptable, civilized, and gradual -- yet final -- withdrawal of the Russian military bases before the Moscow summit." (3) In early May with little progress in the base closure talks, Georgia continued to exert as much pressure as it could and President Saakashvili cancelled his visit to Moscow for the 60th anniversary of the Allied triumph over Nazi Germany.

History

There have been disagreements on the bases since Georgian independence, but the key date for discussion is 1999. The 1999 OSCE Istanbul Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) mandated that Russia and Georgia reach an agreement on the issue of liquidation of the Batumi and Akhalkalaki Russian military bases before 2001, but disagreements obviously persist. (4) Georgia is inching closer to achieving the closure of these two Russian military bases, and the transfer of the four other military facilities in Georgia. Russia's argument to delay base closures focuses on its military budget constraints. While their budget figures consistently change, Russia has claimed that it will take up to eleven years to close the bases in Batumi and Akhalkalaki. The Georgian position, which has remained constant, insists that three years would be quite sufficient. The Russian Defense Ministry's eleven year estimate seems almost ridiculous given the small size of these bases; there are approximately 1,500 men in Akhalkalaki and 3,000 in Batumi. (5) The vast majority of personnel at these bases does not even consist of Russian citizens. Armenians run the Akhalkalaki base and Batumi is operated primarily by Adjarian Georgians.

In addition to the Batumi and Akhalkalaki bases, there is also continuing disagreement on the Russian military base at Gudauta in Abkhazia. Russia has

stated that, in accordance with the 1999 OSCE Istanbul treaty, all military equipment has been removed and the facility is simply being used by Russian peacekeepers. Georgian authorities distrust the Russian assessment. In accordance with the CFE Treaty, OSCE inspections of Gudauta are obligatory, but Russia has managed to delay these inspections by requiring that Georgia ensure the safety of the international monitoring team, even though Georgia does not control Abkhazia. Beside the Gudauta, Akhalkalaki and Batumi military bases, Russia has several other military facilities in Georgia, which also must be handed over to the Georgian Defense Ministry. There is little progress in this regard however, and what facilities have been returned were first completely stripped of useful equipment.

On 10 February 2005, after a two-year interruption in political relations following the Rose Revolution, Georgian and Russian officials restarted closure negotiations. These initial negotiations produced little new, except for increased Russian demands for troop withdrawal. According to Russia's February figures, one billion dollars will be required for base closures. Additionally, Russia wanted assurances that Georgia would not host any third-party troops or military installations on its territory. This was an obvious attempt by Russia to stop Georgia's NATO membership plans. Russia also required that Georgia formally recognize Russia's primary role in settling the Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts. Additionally, Russia asked for political assurances that it would have continued access to Russian military bases in Armenia via Georgian territory and airspace.

Since February, Georgia has "succeeded" in reducing the Russian time and cost estimates to a new mutually agreeable figure of 4 years and between \$150-300 million. Chief of the Russian General Staff Yuri Baluyevsky has said that in order to support a four-year timeline some of the military hardware and property will be moved to Armenia, "It is impossible to build an infrastructure for the military hardware and property on Russian territory within four years." (6)

Current status

On 12 May, Georgian Parliamentary Chair Nino Burjanadze said that Georgia would adhere to the resolution and "impose strict measures" against the bases after the deadline. (6) That same day the U.S. Senate approved Senate Resolution 139, which stated, "Russia has failed to fulfill its obligations under the Istanbul Commitments; more than 3,000 Russian military personnel remain in Georgia at various bases and facilities throughout the country; and the Russian Federation should respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Georgia." (7)

The Georgian Foreign Minister's statement received the greatest amount of Russian attention and resulted in the Russian Duma sending an official message of condemnation. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, ""We won't yield to blackmail, if any steps aimed against our bases are taken — concerning security and threats to the lives of our citizens and of weapons ending up in someone else's hands, I assure you we won't remain passive." (8)

After the initial fire storm of emotion had died down, President Saakashvili's spokesman, Gela Charkviani, said, "Probably the correct thing now is to continue calmly. Of course, the Georgian parliament's resolution remains in force but, in parallel with this, the process of negotiations continues. And it is possible this process will bear fruit. Probably we can give this process the means to continue." (9)

On 17 May, retired Colonel General Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian negotiating team said that Georgia had "misinterpreted" Moscow's commitment to withdraw troops. "Russia pledged only to discuss the status of its troops in Georgia but not its [sic] withdrawal." (10) Additionally, he suggested that Russian military units should be redeployed to Abkhazia and South Ossetia regardless of the negotiations. (11)

Conclusion

While Georgia did not impose any sanctions despite the missed deadline, it stresses that the resolution remains in effect and sanctions are a possibility. The Russian Defense Ministry's initial response to the Georgian Parliament's resolution probably best represented its position: Defense Ministry spokesman, Vyacheslav Sedov said that "Georgian Parliamentary deputies lost their sense of reality." (12) Georgian Foreign Minister Salome Zurbishvili offered an opposing view saying, "They (Russia) are still struggling with accepting reality, with accepting they're no longer an imperialistic superpower." (13)

Despite recent setbacks in its "near-abroad," Russia certainly is not ready to accept a position of equality when dealing with other former Soviet republics. Russia's imperialist views are still too engrained in its foreign policy for such a seismic shift. As Georgia continued to pursue its national interests and works to eject these military bases, it displayed awareness that Russia might stall as long as possible. It seems certain that Russia will delay the actual implementation of withdrawal in an attempt to affect Georgia's 2008 domestic elections and its future NATO membership aspirations.

Source Notes:

(1) "Georgia: Russia calls Parliamentary Resolution on Bases 'Counterproductive'," Eurasia Insight from RFE/RL, 11 Mar 05 via www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp031105.shtml.

(2) "Georgia: Tbilisi, Moscow Report Breakthrough over Russian Military Bases," Eurasia Insight from RFE/RL, 27 Apr 05 via www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp042705.shtml.

(3) Ibid.

- (4) "Final Act of the Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe," 17-19 Nov 99 via www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1990/cfe/cfeinact99e.htm#Anchor-Join-18556.
- (5) "Motives in Georgia Are Base," Moscow Times, 13 Jan 04; CDI Russia Weekly via www.cdi.org/Russia/16jan04-6/cfm.
- (6) "Russia to Move Some Military Hardware to Armenia - Chief of Staff," Interfax, 19 May 05 via www.interfax.ru/e/B/politics/28.html?id_issue=11293546.
- (7) "Georgia and Russia March toward Diplomatic War," Eurasia Daily Monitor, 18 May 05 Volume 2, Issue 97.
- (8) United States Senate Resolution 139, "Expressing support for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia," 12 May 05 via thomas.loc.gov.
- (9) "Georgia Russia Spar Over Bases," Associated Press, 12 May 05 via dailynews.yahoo.com/s/ap/20050513/ap_on_re_eu/russia_georgia/nc:732.
- (10) "Georgia/Russia: Tbilisi, Moscow Continue To negotiate on Bases," RFE/RL, 17 May 2005, via Johnson's Russia List, #9152, 18 May 05.
- (11) "Retired Generals toughen Stance on Georgian Bases, NATO," RFE/RL, RFE/RL Newline, Volume 9, #94, Part 1, 18 May 05.
- (12) "Georgia: Russia calls Parliamentary Resolution on Bases 'Counterproductive'," Eurasia Insight from RFE/RL, 11 Mar 05 via www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp031105.shtml.
- (13) "Georgia/Russia: Tbilisi, Moscow Continue To negotiate on Bases," RFE/RL, 17 May 05 via Johnson's Russia List, #9152, 18 May 05.

Newly Independent States: Caucasus

By Tammy Lynch

CHECHNYA

No longer simply a ³Chechen² conflict

On May 19, Moscow-backed Chechen President Alu Alkhanov suggested that the region ³is entering a new stage connected primarily with . . . the process of

restoration of the economy and social sphere.² (1) Two weeks earlier, Major-General Ilya Shabalkin, a spokesman for the Russian government's Regional Operation Headquarters in Chechnya, repeated the oft heard statement, ³The situation in Chechnya remains stable and is under control of the authorities and law enforcement agencies.² (2)

These statements followed numerous claims of high profile ³successes² by Russian and pro-Moscow Chechen forces. In particular, during May, Russian forces claimed that they had killed Chechen leader Alash Daudov, reportedly an ally of Shamil Basayev, and announced the death of former Chechen Vice President Vakha Arsanov. (3)

Also during May, Russian representatives continued to state that rebel attacks have become less frequent. This is impossible to verify, given the control over media access in Chechnya, but clearly Chechnya's rebel fighters have not laid down their arms. Just four days after Shabalkin suggested that Chechnya had entered its new stage, six Russian soldiers were killed and 14 were injured during 17 attacks conducted over a 24-hour period. (4)

However, even if all statements made by Russia's representatives were true regarding Chechnya, it likely would make little practical difference for the country. Even if the conflict in Chechnya were winding down as claimed, the conflict in Dagestan is winding up.

In recent months, Chechen rebel leaders have spoken of expanding their fight to regions outside of Chechnya. Most recently, Doku Umarov told Radio Free Europe that rebel fighters would ³take the war to enemy territory.² (5)

In Dagestan, where only six percent of the total population is ethnically Russian, Chechnya's warlords have been welcomed and protected by large segments of the population. Ramzan Kadyrov, pro-Moscow Chechen Deputy Prime Minister and the commander of the most brutal division of the Chechen armed forces,

regularly complains about Chechen fighters receiving safe haven in Dagestan. ³They recuperate there, gather themselves up and make hasty raids into Chechnya,² he said. (6) Kadyrov¹'s attempts to take his forces over the border into Dagestan to ³locate and eliminate² Chechen terrorists have resulted in violent clashes with both local police and residents.

It would appear, however, that militants in Dagestan are paying far more attention to Dagestan than to Chechnya. Although it is difficult to find credible and substantiated information about violence in the Caucasus, by piecing together numerous reports from a variety of news sources, it is possible to see clearly the trend toward escalating violence in Dagestan.

During 2005, most sources, including the Russian government, agree that approximately 30 police officers have died in terrorist attacks in Dagestan. In May alone, at least seven officers were killed either in bomb or gun attacks. Three top officials also were assassinated; the Dagestani Minister of Nationalities, Information and Foreign Relations was killed in an explosion, and both the police chief and the head of the Interior Department of the Buinaksk region died during separate gun battles.

In addition, 13 people were injured in bombings, the Dagestani Interior Minister survived an attack by gunmen on his car, a bomb was defused near the Federal Security Services headquarters, 23 artillery shells were removed from a mountain underpass in Buinaksk, police officers narrowly escaped injury when a bomb exploded as they passed, two men were intercepted before they were able to detonate ³suicide belts,² another man was intercepted before explosives went off in his bag and a bomb was defused in an automobile.

Things clearly are not calm in Dagestan. Even more, on May 29, a bomb exploded outside the Health Minister¹'s home in the republic of Ingushetia. It may be that the conflict is spreading even further.

Dagestani leaders suggest that the ethnic tensions in Russia's most diverse republic are providing fertile ground for separatist leaders. Local residents repeatedly have shown themselves more than willing to confront Russian forces. When met with this attitude during one of his forays into Dagestan, Ramzan Kadyrov suggested, "Wahhabi ideas are taking root in all regions adjacent to Chechnya."² (7)

The population of Dagestan does not appear willing to back down in the near future. In mid-May, residents of the village of Botlikh in the Botlikhsky District staged the latest in a series of protests against the construction of a new Russian army base in their neighborhood. The residents have caused repeated delays in construction, first by destroying the equipment at the construction site and then by blockading the area. (8) Neither side seems ready to back down, and the result could exacerbate an already tense atmosphere.

Not surprisingly, news of the protests against the Russian army base was not reported in the mainstream Russian media, but was trumpeted in the Chechen rebel press. It would appear that Major-General Shabalkin was correct when he spoke of Chechnya entering a "new stage."²

GEORGIA

Russian military pull-out . . . how and for what?

On May 30, after years of negotiation and often-heated rhetoric, the Georgian and Russian Foreign Ministers announced an agreement on the closure of Russia's military facilities in Akhalkalaki and Batumi, Georgia. "We have achieved our goal,"² Georgian Foreign Minister Salome Zurbashvili said. (9)

The closures will be accompanied by the withdrawal of at least the vast majority of Russia's 3,000 troops. Whether all troops will be withdrawn will depend on the result of negotiations going on now. This is because, although Zurabishvili and

her counterpart Sergei Lavrov portrayed their agreement as a ³done deal,² actually it is far from complete. In fact, the initialed agreement must be translated into a detailed technical protocol, which then must be ratified by the Russian Duma. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili was careful to underscore this point, although he welcomed the deal. This is ³a political agreement,² he said, which needs ³legal formulation.² (10)

Three potential difficulties are most apparent from the agreement: First, both sides must agree to definitive dates for the withdrawal of both weapons and troops. Russia agreed generally that Akhalkalaki will close by the end of 2007, while the closure of Batumi ³will be completed within 2008.² (11) However, exact dates for the start of withdrawal have not been specified, as desired by Georgia. The country's negotiators worry about delaying tactics similar to those employed following Russia's previous agreements to withdraw its troops and weaponry first by 1997, subsequently by 1999, then by 2002. (12)

Georgia is insisting also on the clear delineation of a plan to monitor ³the situation on the territory formerly used by the Russian military base [at] Gaduata [Abkhazia].² (13) Georgian representatives have repeatedly suggested that Russian hardware and personnel have not been fully withdrawn from Gaduata – as claimed by Russia. However, the separatist Abkhazian government will not allow access to its territory in order to verify the situation.

Georgia reportedly has expressed also concern about Russia's plan to relocate some portion of its weaponry to Armenia instead of Russia. This plan provoked a sharp ³diplomatic note² from Azerbaijan, which fears that the weapons could find their way inside its borders, into the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. However, Russia has already begun relocating weaponry to its Gumri base in Armenia from Batumi. Specifically, on 31 May, thirteen train cars arrived in Armenia loaded with hardware and ammunition. (14) Since Armenia has welcomed the transfer of weapons, it would appear that this method will continue.

The base closure issue that could be most problematic revolves around a Russian-proposed ³anti-terrorist center.² The initialed agreement states, ³An agreed-upon portion of the military personnel and material-technical facilities and infrastructure of the Russian military base [at] Batumi would be used in the interests of the Georgian-Russian Anti-Terrorist Center (GRATC) that is being created. This would be formalized by a separate document.² (15) This wording leaves open the possibility that a significant portion of Russian personnel and weaponry could remain within Georgia, amounting to little more than a renaming of the Batumi base. However, Georgian negotiators say that the Russian presence would be small, and, ³The center will not be a military unit.² Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Merab Antadze said, ³It will employ representatives of secret services engaged in information and analytical work.² (16) All of this, of course, is yet to be finalized in negotiations. Judging from past experience, Russia may not readily agree to these limits – at least, not without significant incentive. Without these incentives, it is very possible that the actual legally-binding agreement (as far as any agreement of this kind is binding for Russia) could not be signed for some time.

President Saakashvili, who has seen popularity decrease and heard complaints from within his own party, has identified the resolution of the Russian base issue as a cornerstone of his presidency. There are questions, therefore, about what concession he may be willing to make in order to get a deal completed quickly. One of the concessions Russia may be seeking is membership in the GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) organization. Following base withdrawal negotiations on 30 May, Zurabishvili did not object to the idea that Russia would become part of the regional grouping, even though it is designed as a counterbalance to Russian influence in the region. Further, Ukraine, the de facto GUAM leader, signaled on 29 May that it may accept Russian membership. (17) This would seem radically to alter Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's

earlier comment that ³GU(U)AM's goal is to create a zone of stability and security in the region which is to become a worthy part of the E.U.² (18)

Following the negotiations over the base closures, one would hope that Georgia has truly made progress in developing equal relations with Russia, and not sacrificed an organization that has the potential to provide it an alternative voice in the years to come.

Source Notes:

(1) ITAR-TASS, 19 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(2) Voenno-Promyshlenny Kuryer, April 05; Defense and Security via Lexis-Nexis.

(3) Agence France Presse, 1230 GMT, 17 May 05 and Agence France Presse, 1401 GMT, 16 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(4) Agence France Presse, 1739 GMT, 23 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(5) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 10 May 05; Associated Press, 2025 GMT, 10 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(6) Nezavisimaya gazeta, 29 April 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(7) Ibid.

(8) The Chechen Times, 26 May 05; BBC Monitoring, via Lexis-Nexis.

(9) Agence France Presse, 30 May 05 via Yahoo News.

(10) Civil Georgia, 30 May 05 via www.civil.ge.

(11) Text of Joint Declaration of the Foreign Ministries of the Russian Federation and Georgia, 30 May 05 via www.civil.ge.

(12) For the latest 2002 agreement, see Istanbul Summit Declaration, Article 19, November 1999 via <http://www.osce.org/mc/13017.html>.

(13) Text of Joint Declaration of the Foreign Ministries of the Russian Federation and Georgia, 30 May 05 via www.civil.ge.

(14) Azad Azarbaycan TV, 1530 GMT, 01 Jun 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(15) Text of Joint Declaration of the Foreign Ministries of the Russian Federation and Georgia, 30 May 05 via www.civil.ge.

(16) ITAR-TASS, 24 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(17) "Russia may join GUAM in the future - Ukrainian Speaker," ITAR-TASS, 29 May 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

(18) RIA Novosti, 22 April 05 via Lexis-Nexis.

Newly Independent States: Central Asia

By Fabian Adami

Kyrgyzstan update: stability ensured?

Two months ago, amidst a series of nationwide protests and riots, the government of President Askar Akaev collapsed. In the immediate aftermath of the "revolution," Kyrgyzstan's Parliament appointed an interim government consisting of Feliks Kulov, Kurmanbek Bakiev and Roza Otunbaeva. (1)

Despite Otunbaeva's presence in the leadership, it became clear rapidly that the race to succeed Akaev would be fought out between Bakiev and Kulov, the latter having been acquitted by the Supreme Court of all outstanding charges against him. (2) Although a legitimate election between two candidates seemed attractive at face value, it created the specter both of national division and of further upheaval in the form of possible intervention in the democratic process by the nation's Security Services, believed to be loyal to Kulov.

Several days after Kulov's candidacy was confirmed, it emerged that Otunbayeva had taken upon herself the role of facilitator or interlocutor between the two candidates, telling the press that Kulov would receive an important government post even if the Presidential election was decided in Bakiev's favor. (3) On Wednesday 4 May, Kulov's candidacy was made official when his party, Ar Namys (Dignity) officially nominated him for the Presidency. (4)

Nine days later, Kulov unexpectedly announced his withdrawal from the campaign. Reports indicate that Bakiev and Kulov met on 13 May and agreed to run on a joint ticket. Under the terms of their agreement, Kulov was given the post of Acting First Deputy Prime Minister. (5) If, as expected, Bakiev wins the Presidential election, Kulov will be appointed Prime Minister, and granted considerably expanded powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss ministers and oblast heads. (6) A day after reaching the accord with Bakiev, Kulov released an official statement, explaining that the decision to withdraw from the election campaign had been made in the interests of maintaining "stability and peace" in the country. (7)

It is important to note that Kulov's withdrawal was also aimed in a broader strategic direction. Specifically, he noted that events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, showed the "fragility of peace" in Central Asia. The Uzbek situation, he intimated, had played a role in his decision to agree to share power with Bakiev. (8) Kyrgyzstan's southern regions, particularly the area surrounding the border towns of Jalalabad and Osh are home to a vocal Uzbek minority, numbering some 13.8% of the population according to the 1999 census. (9) This minority has been problematic for Bishkek in the past, having been particularly critical of the erosion of its rights during Akaev's tenure.

Bakiev's power center is in the aforementioned southern regions. As such, it is entirely conceivable that he and Kulov calculated that a "southern presidency" would serve the vital national interest of reassuring the Uzbek population in Kyrgyzstan that its rights are being represented at the highest possible level, thereby preventing the possible spread of unrest from across the border. The idea that a compromise has been reached, at least in part due to the Uzbek crisis, is supported by the fact that several other important Presidential candidates, including Almazbek Atambayev (leader of the Social Democrats), Abdygul Chotbayev (National Guard Commander) and Amangeldi Muraliyev

(Minister of Economic Development) have also withdrawn from the election, citing regional security concerns. (10)

Kyrgyzstan's new leadership is demonstrating that it can react to and preempt possible crisis situations. In this instance, the removal of a potentially divisive election (with larger regional implications), and the formation of a "coalition" can be viewed as a positive development. At the same time, the Kyrgyz leadership must be careful not to regress into the undemocratic behavior which so characterized Akaev's rule, and which the opposition, now in power, so heavily criticized, in the name of national "stability."

Uzbekistan's rebellion

For several months, peaceful protests have been occurring outside the city court of Andijan. The cause of the demonstrations was the arrest and arraignment of 23 local businessmen on charges of supporting Islamic extremist groups. (11)

On the evening of 12 May, local government forces apparently arrested several protestors, and transported them to Andijan's prison. At midnight, a group of approximately 100 (apparently supporters and relatives of the businessmen) attacked a local military garrison and seized their weapons. (11) The same group proceeded to the prison, where they reportedly freed approximately 4000 inmates, including the 23 businessmen. (13) Some 10,000 protestors then gathered outside the Andijan administration's office building, located in the town's central square, and began to demonstrate, calling for Karimov's resignation, as well as protesting the regime's economic policies, spiraling unemployment, and the "lack of foodstuffs" available in the region. (14)

According to witnesses at the scene, the town's central square had been surrounded and cut off by Interior Ministry and Army forces. On the morning of 13 May, these troops began firing indiscriminately into the square from all sides; no regard was given to separating the armed from the unarmed. (15) When the

crowd began to flee the scene, troops in trucks, jeeps and armored personnel carriers pursued the crowds through the streets, killing men, women and children as they moved. (16)

On Saturday 14 May, government forces initiated a massive cleanup operation removing bodies to unknown locations. Renewed protests occurred at several spots in the city, and there were reportedly several further shootings. That night, some 546 persons succeeded in escaping the sealed town, crossing into Kyrgyzstan near Jalalabad early the next morning. (17)

That morning, President Karimov held a press conference in which he claimed that the jail-break, and subsequent demonstrations had been planned and orchestrated long in advance by Islamic extremists linked to Hizb-ut-Tahrir and the Taliban in Afghanistan (Karimov alleged that telephone conversations with "their sponsors and masters" had been recorded). (18) Karimov claimed that he had ordered forces in the area "not to use weapons," because he wished to resolve the situation peacefully. (19) As of 13 May, no journalists—including foreign correspondents—were allowed into Andijan. That ban is apparently still in force. The same day, demonstrations broke out in Korasuv, a neighboring town. Residents demanded that the mayor reopen border crossings with Kyrgyzstan, which have been closed for the last two years. When he refused, protestors torched several government buildings, including police headquarters. (20) Government forces surrounded Korasuv and on 19 May, entered the town, arresting the ringleaders of the protests there, apparently without loss of life. (21)

The incident in Andijan has resulted in massive international pressure being exerted on Uzbekistan. Britain, the United States and the United Nations have all demanded that President Karimov allow an independent investigation, in order to establish what occurred. Perhaps as a result of this pressure, Uzbek authorities, on May 18, allowed a group of diplomats to tour the town under tightly controlled conditions. (22) The Uzbek Prosecutor General, Rashid Qodirov has stated that

169 people were killed in Andijan, but that government forces had "categorically" killed "only terrorists" during the operation. Qodirov claimed that all the civilians who were killed were hostages murdered by the "terrorists." (23) This number may be too low. A report in the British Independent using an anonymous Uzbek military source indicates that the number of dead is at least 500. (24)

The Uzbek government's assertions and actions with regards to the Andijan incident beg several questions. First, if Karimov's claim that he ordered troops not to open fire is true, then who controls Uzbekistan's Security Apparatus (and thus, surely the country), if not the President? Second, if Karimov's assertions regarding Islamic extremist involvement are correct, why the cover-up? Given Uzbekistan's position as a vital ally in the United States led Global War on Terrorism, action against Islamic terrorist groups is likely to be viewed at least somewhat sympathetically on an international level. As yet, the Uzbek government has not produced any convincing evidence of either Hizb-ut-Tahrir or IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) involvement in Andijan, and Karimov has steadfastly rejected all calls for an independent investigation. (25) At this moment in time, it seems clear that the demonstrations were political and economic—not Islamist in motivation—directed against the corruption and economic hardship which so seriously affects the Fergana valley. President Karimov clearly has learned the lessons of Kyrgyzstan and Georgia. The crackdown in Andijan was a warning that he will use all necessary means to maintain his grip on power, and will brook no opposition or even localized 'rebellions.' In this instance, the cry of "Islamic extremism" sounds little more than a rehearsed refrain.

Source Notes:

(1) See NIS Observed: An Analytical Review, Volume X, Number 6 (28 Apr 05).

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

- (4) AKIpress News, 4 May 05; AKIpress News Agency via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (5) AKIpress News, 16 May 05; AKIpress News Agency via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (6) AKIpress News, 13 May 05; AKIpress News Agency via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (7) TCA-Kyrgyzstan, 21 May 05; The Times of Central Asia via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (8) Ibid.
- (9) CIA World Factbook, "Kyrgyzstan" via www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/kg.html#People.
- (10) TCA-Kyrgyzstan, 21 May 05; The Times of Central Asia via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (11) "How the Andijan Killings Unfolded," BBC News, 21 May 05 via www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4550845.stm.
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) Central Asia Report, 17 May 05; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (14) TCA-Uzbekistan, 13 May 05; The Times of Central Asia via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (15) TCA-Uzbekistan, 21 May 05; The Times of Central Asia via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (16) "How the Andijan Killings Unfolded," BBC News, 21 May 05 via www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4550845.stm.
- (17) Ibid.
- (18) Uzbek Television First Channel, Tashkent in Uzbek, 14 May 05; BBC Monitoring via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (19) RTR Russia TV Moscow in Russian, 17 May 05; BBC Monitoring via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (20) "Uzbek Troops Shut off Second Town," BBC News, 16 May 05 via www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4549873.stm.

- (21) "Uzbek Troops Retake Rebel Town," BBC News, 19 May 05 via www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4561279.stm.
- (22) "Foreign Envoys Visit Uzbek Town," BBC News, 18 May 05 via www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4557689.stm.
- (23) Uzbek Radio First Program, Tashkent in Uzbek, 17 May 05; BBC Monitoring via ISI Emerging Markets Database.
- (24) "Uzbekistan: In the Narrow Lane, the Machine Guns Chattered Remorselessly for Two Hours," The Independent, 22 May 05 via www.news.independent.co.uk/world/asia/story.jsp?story=640374.
- (25) "Uzbekistan Rejects UN Inquiry into Killing of Civilians," The Independent, 21 May 05 via www.news.independent.co.uk/world/asia/story.jsp?story=640069.

Copyright Boston University Trustees 2005

Unless otherwise indicated, all articles appearing in this journal were written especially for *Analyst*. This article was originally published at <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol10/ed1007.html>.