

Central Asia Executive Summary Series

Kyrgyzstan Country Profile

**Program for Culture and Conflict Studies (CCS)
Department of National Security Affairs
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Program for Culture & Conflict Studies at Naval Postgraduate School

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This paper on Kyrgyzstan provides a broad reaching, but detailed analysis of human, structural and cultural issues affecting security and development in that country. Part of our Central Asia Executive Summary Series, the profile on Kyrgyzstan provides significant and needed context to the overall international strategy in South and Central Asia.

CCS Central Asia Executive Summary Series

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Formal Name: **Republic of Kyrgyzstan**
(*Kyrgyz Respublikasy* in Kyrgyz)
Short Form: **Kyrgyzstan**

National Flag:



State Emblem:



Source: Lonely Planet: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/asia/kyrgyzstan/>

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LOCATION:

Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked country located in Central Asia: north of Tajikistan, east of Uzbekistan, west of China, and south of Kazakhstan.

Kyrgyzstan means a land of Kyrgyz (Stan – land).

Until recently the country used to be referred as the “island of democracy” and “Switzerland of Asia.”

CAPITAL:

Capital city Bishkek (called *Frunze* during the Soviet era) is located in the north, in the Chuy valley near the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border, at an altitude of approximately 800 m (2624.67 feet), on the edge of the Ala-Too range, which is an extension of the Tien Shan mountain range. Bishkek is the largest city in the country with a population of 824,900.¹ Manas International Airport in the outskirts of Bishkek was home to the U.S. air base established in December 2001 to support the Operation “Enduring Freedom” but was closed in spring of 2009 following the Kyrgyz government’s decision to shut down the base. Bishkek is also the administrative capital of Chuy Province.

Bishkek, before becoming a capital city, was a fortified Silk Road stop on the caravan route under the Uzbek khans of large Quqon Khanate. It was then turned into a Russian garrison when Tsarist troops occupied the region in 1862. A large influx of ethnic Russians and later Slavs during the Russian and Bolshevik occupations developed the city and named it Peshpek. With about 70 percent of the population represented by Russians and Slavs the city missed indigenous historic attributes or traditional architecture making it more of a Russian and Soviet city.

The city was later given the name Frunze after Mikhail Frunze, the Bolshevik troop commander of the Eastern Front, ordered the onslaught of thousands of local people who supported resistance. Commander Frunze was born in Peshpek and the city that ironically was named in his honor in 1926.

Kyrgyz’s gratitude to the Russians, who gave pastoral nomadic Kyrgyz tribes and *juz* (traditional cast based clans) independence from Uzbek Quqon Khanate and then statehood within the Soviet Union, is expressed in preserving the monuments of the Soviet period: the Mikhail Frunze Museum, the Monument to the Martyrs of Revolution (in commemoration of Kyrgyz women who supported the Bolshevik regime and organized the local mobilization in support of Red Army) built during the Soviet period; the Lenin Statue on Ala-Too Square in downtown Bishkek which was moved recently to a less prominent place still surprise tourists and please old residents of the capital. Many street names and locations also bear Soviet heritage.

¹ As of December 10, 2008, according to the State Internet Portal, see <http://eng.gov.kg/>

INDEPENDENCE FROM THE USSR:

August 31, 1991 is celebrated as Independence Day.

Present day Kyrgyzstan was formed by the Bolsheviks in 1924, first as Kara-Kyrgyz (*Kara* means black) Autonomous province of the Russian Federative Socialist Republic after the area had been conquered by the Red Army in 1918. In 1926 it became Kyrgyz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and only in late 1936 was given a status of a full fledged republic.

Map of Kyrgyzstan



Source: <http://geology.com/world/kyrgyzstan-satellite-image.shtml>

TERRITORY:

Total: 198,500 sq km (slightly smaller than South Dakota)

Water: 7,200 sq km

Land: 191,300 sq km

Border length with China: 858km

Border length with Uzbekistan: 1,099 km

Border length with Kazakhstan: 1,224 km

Border length with Tajikistan: 870km

WEATHER:

The climate of the country varies from sub-tropical at lower altitudes in the warm valleys, cooler continental in the mountainous valley and cold in the high peaks of the Tian Shan Mountains. The country's geographic partition between north and south also offers a difference in temperature.

The warmest areas in winter are in Osh province in the south of the country. The area to the north is Issyk-Kyl (means Hot Lake in Kyrgyz) have moderate cold averaging -5°C in the peak of winter from late December - January.

The Ferghana Valley part of Kyrgyzstan is the warmest region with summer temperatures reaching up +35 °C in Osh and Jalal-Abad, and just a bit cooler in Batken. The Issyk-Kyl area never gets too hot attracting thousands of international and local tourists to its positive health effects and pleasant summer climate. The Highland mountain regions have short summers where the temperature does not exceed +13°C, the long winter season lasts from November - March with lots of snowfall and temperatures down to -20°C.

POPULATION/ DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

As of January 1, 2008:

Total Population: 5,224,300

Urban population: 1,849,600

Rural residents: 3,402,400²

Ethnic Composition of population as of January 2008:³

(in alphabetical order)

Ethnic group	Number of people in thousands	Percentage from total number
Armenian	1,1	0.0
Azerbaijan	16,4	0.3
Belarus	1,8	0.0
Chechen	2,5	0.1

² According to the National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan. See Table: 'Kalktyn Uluttyk Kuramy' (national composition of population) available in Kyrgyz and Russian at <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/razd.files/census/3.7.pdf>

³ Ibid.

Dungan (Muslims of Chinese origin)	60,3	1.2
Georgian	0,6	0.0
German	11,5	0.2
Jewish	0,6	0.0
Kazakh	38,9	0.7
Korean	18,2	0.4
Kyrgyz	3,616,5	69.2
Russian	456,4	8.7
Tajik	48,0	0.9
Tatar	35,0	0.7
Turkmen	0,5	0.0
Turk	36,4	0.7
Uighur	51,2	1.0
Ukrainian	25,3	0.5
Uzbek	754,5	14.5
Others	32,6	0.9

The total population was estimated: 5,224,300

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

- January 1 - New Year
- March 8 - International Women's Day
- March 21 - Nooruz (comes from ancient Zoroastrian tradition which many Central Asians take for an Islamic New Year)
- May 1 - International Solidarity Day
- May 5 - Constitution Day
- May 9 - Victory Day (until recently was celebrated as the Victory Day over Nazi Germany in the World War II)
- August 31 - Independence Day (from the USSR)

The dates of two Islamic holidays Orozo Ait (*Eid al-Fitr* in Arabic, the feast of End of Ramadan) and Qurban Ait (*Eid al-Adha* in Arabic, the feast of the Sacrifice) change annually depending on the Islamic calendar.

LANGUAGES:

- The official language is Kyrgyz, a Southern Turkic language which includes many Arabic and Persian words. There are two major dialects: one from the northern region and the other from the south.
- Russian is widely used in Bishkek, among intelligentsia, political and business elites. It serves as the common language of communication between various ethnic groups.
- Uzbek is spoken in Osh, Jalal-Abad and some areas of Batken provinces.

- English is in big demand, particularly among the youth for educational and professional opportunities, and to access information.

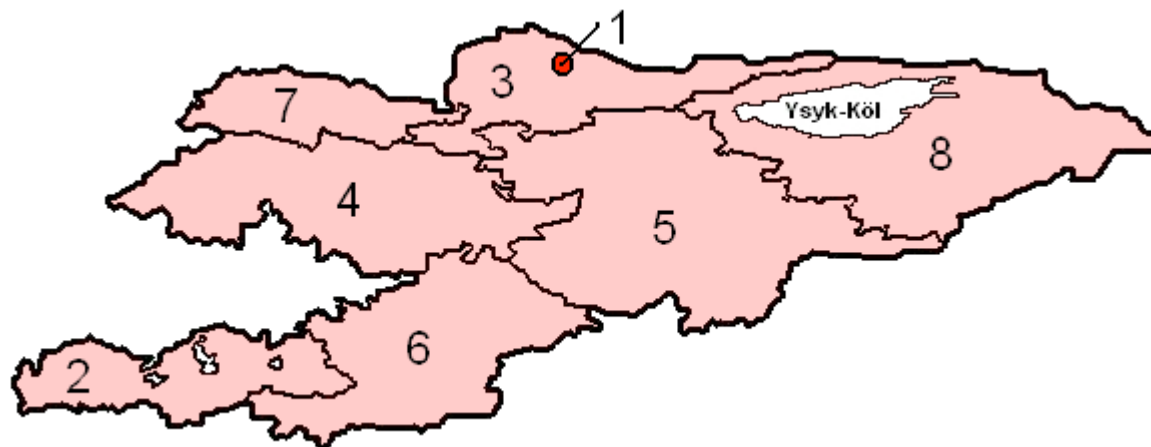
ADMINISTRATIVE SETUP:

The country is divided into 7 provinces⁴ which are subdivided into *rayons*. *Rayons* are districts similar to counties in the United States; each rayon has its own administrative center.

Rural areas consist of town type villages (in Russian: *poselok gorodskogo tipa*) and *ayil keneshi* (union of several rural settlements⁵) which are administered by *ayil ökmötu* (village administration).

Each province has a capital. Capital Bishkek and Osh City represent separate administrative units also being capital cities of provinces giving them special status. Osh city is also often called “the southern capital.”

Map of administrative units:⁶



Administrative Units (sequence: correspond to number on the above map):

No.	Administrative Unit	Area (in sq. km)	Capital City
1	Bishkek city	115,700 hectares (0.1 sq. km)	-
2	Batken Province ⁷	17,000 (8.5% of total territory)	Batken
3	Chuy Province	20,200	Bishkek
4	Jalal-Abad Province ⁸	33,700 (16.9% of total territory)	Jalal-Abad

⁴ Province in Kyrgyz is called *oblast*, a loanword from Russian.

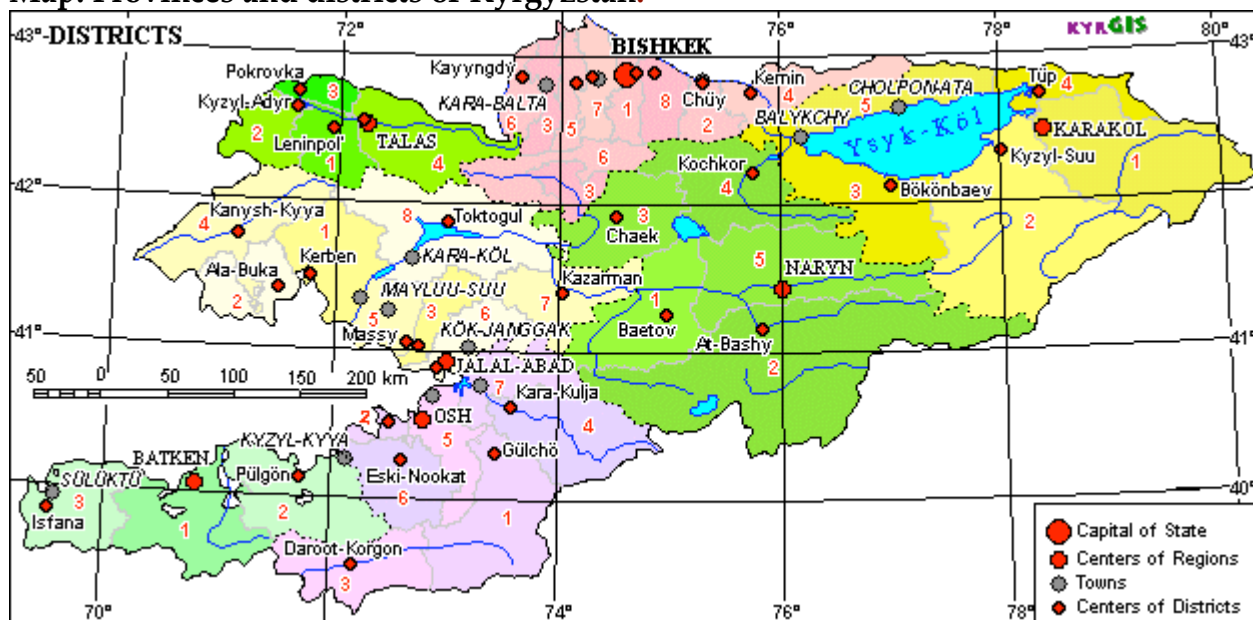
⁵ In Russian: *selskiy naselonyi punkt*.

⁶ Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Administrative_divisions_of_Kyrgyzstan

⁷ Until 1999 Batken province was a part of Osh oblast until IMU incursions into Kyrgyzstan prompted more attention of the central government and more resources to Batken district of Osh province.

5	Naryn Province	45,200 (25% of total territory)	Naryn
6	Osh Province	29,200	Osh ⁹
7	Talas Province	11,400 (5.7% of total territory)	Talas
8	Issyk Kul Province	43,100 (21.6% of total territory)	Karakol

Map: Provinces and districts of Kyrgyzstan:¹⁰



The numbers on the map above represent districts in each province:

Jalal-Abad province

Centre - Jalal-Abad

Nº	District	Center
1	Aksy	Kerben
2	Ala-Buka	Ala-Buka
3	Bazar-Korgon	Bazar-Korgon
4	Chatkal	Kanysh-Kyya
5	Nookan	Massy
6	Suzak	Suzak
7	Toguz-Toro	Kazarman
8	Toktogul	Toktogul

Talas province

Centre-Talas

Nº	District	Center
1	Bakay-Ata	Leninpol'
2	Kara-Buura	Kyzyl-Adyr
3	Manas	Pokrovka
4	Talas	Talas

Naryn province

Centre- Naryn

Nº	District	Center
1	Ak-Talaa	Baetov

Ysyk-Köl province

Centre-Karakol

Nº	District	Center
1	Ak-Suu	Karakol
2	Jeti-Ögüz	Kyzyl-Suu
3	Tong	Bökönbaev
4	Tüp	Tüp
5	Ysyk-Köl	Cholpon-Ata

Chüy province

Centre- Bishkek

Nº	District	Center
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⁸ From 1959 to 1990 was part of Osh province.

⁹ As of June 2003 Osh city is a separate administrative unit; at the same time it is also a capital of Osh province.

¹⁰Source: <http://enrin.grida.no/htmls/kyrgyz/soe2/english/map/map3.htm>

Osh province			Batken province			Chuy province		
Centre - Osh			Centre-Batken			Centre-Chuy		
Nº	District	Center	Nº	District	Center	Nº	District	Center
1	Alay	Gülchö	2	At-Bashy	At-Bashy	1	Alamüdün	Lebedinovka
2	Aravan	Aravan	3	Jungal	Chaek	2	Chüy	Chüy
3	Chong-Alay	Daroot-Korgon	4	Kochkor	Kochkor	3	Jayyl	Kara-Balta
4	Kara-Kulja	Kara-Kulja	5	Tyan`-Shan`	Naryn	4	Kemin	Kemin
5	Kara-Suu	Kara-Suu				5	Moskva	Belovodskoe
6	Nookat	Eski-Nookat				6	Panfilov	Kayyngdy
7	Özgön	Özgön				7	Sokuluk	Sokuluk
						8	Ysyk-Ata	Kant

SIGNIFICANT TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES:

The Tian Shan (in Chinese means *Heavenly Mountains*), Pamir and Alay Mountain Ranges constitute most of Kyrgyzstan's landscape. The country is rich in lakes, rivers and glaciers which provide abundant water resources for the country. Lake *Issyk Kul* is the famous tourist place in Central Asia. Song Kyl and Chatyr Kul are other major lakes; Naryn (535 km, longest river in Kyrgyzstan), Talas, Chuy, and Kara Darya are the longest rivers. In the southern part of the country is the fertile soil and warm climate of the Ferghana Valley ideal for producing agricultural products. The Chu and Talas Valleys are other areas of irrigated land. Nearly 5 percent of the country's total geography is woodlands. Most of Kyrgyzstan's area is above 1,000 m; average altitude is above 2,500 m; 40 percent is above 3,000 m; and the highest point is Peak Pobedy¹¹ (7,439 m).

LITERACY:

Kyrgyzstan has a legacy of high literacy achieved in Central Asia during 70 years of Moscow's rule over the region. According to official national census of 1999, only 40,129 out of 3,090,680 people (population whose age was 15 years old and older) were illiterate.¹²

Due to a lack of funding in the education sector, and low pay wages for teachers there is a shortage of teachers in both regular and vocational schools

¹¹ In Russian *pobeda* means victory.

¹² National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan. See Table in Russian: 5.03.00.19 Gramotnost' naseleniya (po dannym perepisei naseleniya) (Literacy of population (according to census). Available at: <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/din.files/education/5030019.pdf>

throughout the country. A 2007 report suggested the number of teachers was only 3,000 nationwide.¹³

Number of Higher Educational Institutions:

From 1990 (a year before independence) to 2007 the number of academic institutes and universities had grown from 9 to 49, according to the National Statistics Committee.¹⁴ Since Kyrgyzstan allows private education almost one-third of higher education schools are privately owned. 33 schools are public and 16 are private (including foreign/international) institutes and universities. In the 2007-08 academic year 250,460 students were enrolled in 49 higher education schools throughout the country.¹⁵ The number of schools and students are high for such a small country. Students represent nearly 5 percent of total population (477 students per 10,000 citizens). Forms of study include full-time, evening and distance learning taught by 14,400 teachers. Female students constituted 56.3 percent of all students. About 55,000 applicants are accepted in universities and institutes every year.

In 2009 the number of higher education schools grew to 55. There have been concerns about the quality of private universities and institutes in particular where bribes for exams are widely known.¹⁶ A few university teachers in Osh and Bishkek admitted to taking bribes to survive due to low wages.¹⁷ Presently, the position of rector (president) of a prestigious university is among the most lucrative jobs in the country as they control the hierarchy of the bribe taking chain.

HEALTH FACILITIES:

The Ministry of Healthcare provides official statistics on healthcare indicators which show decline in the number of services including hospital beds, medical personnel and healthcare facilities.¹⁸

Hospital beds:

Number of beds per 10,000 population¹⁹

¹³ “Kuda dvizhetsa sistema obrazovaniya Kyrgyzskoy Respubliki?”(Where is the education system of Kyrgyz Republic moving to?), Emil Kanimetov, July 7, 2007. Available in Russian at: <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1189112220>

¹⁴ See Table: 5.03.01.01 Chislo uchebnyx zavedeniy po vidam uchrishdenii (The number academic schools per level of education) available in Russian, National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan at <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/din.files/education/5030101.pdf>

¹⁵ See Table: 5.03.01.04 Chislo detei i uchashihsa po vidam uchrishdenii (Number of children and students per level of education) available in Russian, National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan at <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/din.files/education/5030104.pdf>

¹⁶ The list of all 55 institutions in Russian is available at http://www.minedu.kg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=34

¹⁷ CCCS’ interviews in Bishkek and Osh in 2005 and phone interviews in May of 2009.

¹⁸ See Report of the Ministry of Healthcare of Kyrgyzstan on reform in healthcare, in English, at <http://eng.med.kg/Files/R2004Eng.pdf>

Province	2000	2001	2002	2003
Kyrgyz Republic	70,4	61,9	55,3	52,9
Batken	64,3	61,3	56,0	49,8
Jalal-Abad	62,2	54,8	47,3	45,7
Issyk-Kul	53,8	36,1	31,8	29,9
Naryn	59,9	57,8	34,3	31,6
Osh	60,2	56,2	52,2	53,2
Talas	58,8	55,8	40,0	27,3
Chui	56,2	34,9	32,3	31,4

Bishkek city	29,5	28,8	27,1	26,4
Osh city				36,5

Doctors:

Doctors of all specialties including dentists per 10,000 populations, by regions:²⁰

Year:	1996	2001	2002	2003
Administrative Unit:				
Kyrgyzstan	32,9	27,2	26,0	25,7
Bishkek city	46,2	30,7	28,7	30,1
Osh city	-	-	-	25,2
Chui oblast	24,3	19,2	18,5	18,3
Issyk-Kul province	27,8	22,8	21,4	20,2
Naryn province	25,7	23,1	19,9	18,8
Talas province	25,0	20,8	19,4	18,7
Osh province	20,2	17,8	17,3	14,5
Jalal-Abad province	20,7	16,6	15,8	15,4
Batken province	-	16,3	15,7	15,4

Due to deficiency in state's funding in the healthcare sector and widespread poverty, access to private healthcare facilities resulted in increase of problems related to people's health and well being, weakening confidence in the country's

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 14, Table 2-4. Total number of beds and number of beds per 10 000 population, by regions (indicator 1.2/3.2) at <http://eng.med.kg/Files/R2004Eng.pdf>

²⁰ Ibid, Table 2-6. Health personnel (doctors) per 10000 population, by regions (indicator 1.4.1.).

health facilities. The mortality rate increased from 675.3 per 100,000 in 1999 to 717.3 in 2003.²¹ The child and maternal mortality rates and other indicators are among highest in the former Soviet Union zone. Babies, children and women while in hospitals in southern cities of Osh and Nookat were infected with HIV via tainted blood and the reuse of needles.

As reported in U.S. press in April of 2008, 72 children and 16 mothers were infected with HIV due to professional negligence in the Osh and Nookat state hospitals. This illustrates the alarming state of affairs in the health sector. The government does not provide free treatment for mother victims and only pays \$29.00 to parents of infected children for treatment.²²

According to the healthcare minister Marat Mabetov, Kyrgyzstan lacks almost 50 percent of medical cadres particularly in rural areas.²³

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE:

The government: ²⁴

Title/position	Name of person holding the position
President of Republic of Kyrgyzstan	Kurmanbek Bakiev ²⁵ 
Prime Minister, Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers	Igor Chudinov

²¹ Ibid, Table 1.6. Indicator 6: Leading causes of mortality, including mortality rate per 100000 population and percent of total mortality attributable to each cause. Available at: <http://eng.med.kg/Files/R2004Eng.pdf>






²² For instance read: Associated Press, April 9, 2008, ‘Kyrgyz mothers catching HIV from babies: After contracting virus in hospitals, infants pass disease by breast-feeding’ at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24034536/>

²³ “Marat Mambetov: Zdravoooharanenie v Kyrgyzstane ispytyvaet pochni 50-ii protsentnyi defetsit kadrov” (Marat Mambetov: Healthcare in Kyrgyzstan experiences almost 50 percent lack of cadres), Information Agency “24.kg,” May 29, 2009. Available in Russian at: <http://www.paruskg.info/?p=10398>

²⁴ The list of members of Cabinet of Ministers as of April 25, 2009





²⁵ Official web site of the President Bakiev: <http://www.president.kg/en/>

	
First Deputy Prime-Minister	Omurbek Babanov 
Deputy Prime-Minister	Uktomkhan Abdullaeva 
Ministers:	
Minister of Economic Development and Trade	Akylbek Japarov 
Minister of Finance	Marat Sultanov

	
<p>Minister of Industry, Energy, & Fuel Resources</p>	<p>Ilyas Davydov</p> 
<p>Minister of Justice</p>	<p>Nurlan Tursunkulov</p> 
<p>Minister of Internal Affairs (police)</p>	<p>Moldomusa Kongantiev</p> 
<p>Minister of Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Kadyrbek Sarbaev</p> 

<p>Minister of Education and Science</p>	<p>Abdulda Musaev</p> 
<p>Minister of Healthcare</p>	<p>Marat Mambetov</p> 
<p>Minister of Labor and Social Development</p>	<p>Nazgul Tashpaeva</p> 
<p>Minister of Culture and Information</p>	<p>Sultan Raev</p> 
<p>Minister of Defense</p>	<p>Bakytbek Kalyev</p>

	
Minister of Emergency Situations	Kamchybek Tashiev 
Minister of Agriculture, Water Management, and Processing Industry	Iskenderbek Aydaraliev 
Minister of Transportation & Communications	Nurlan Sulaymanov 
Chairpersons of the State	Committees:
State Committee for National Security (formerly Kyrgyzstan branch of KGB)	Murat Sutalinov

	
<p>State Committee for State Property Management</p>	<p>Tursun Turdymambetov</p> 
<p>State Committee for Migration and Employment</p>	<p>Aigul Ryskulova</p> 
<p>State Tax and Duties Committee</p>	<p>Ahmatbek Keldibekov</p> 
<p>State Committee on Customs</p>	<p>Nurlan Akmatov</p> 

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Official Political Parties:

Kyrgyzstan, which in the recent past was called an “island of democracy”, had more than 100 registered political parties and movements before last parliamentary elections in December of 2007. Easy party registration laws allowed people to organize political groups of various orientations. Many parties had small membership while others were even unknown by the general public. Many parties critical of the executive branch had representation in the legislation.

The recent amendment to the Constitution states that parliament members are elected on the party lists basis for 5 year terms.

- ***Ak-Jol Eldik Partiyasi:*** Ak-Jol (literally translates as *white road* or *bright path*) and Eldik Partiyasi means *people's party*). Short form used: ***Ak-Jol***. The party was created in 2007 by the merger of Ata -Jurt (Fatherland), El Kelechegi (Great Future), Menin Olkom (My Country), Republican Party of Labor and Unity, and a few smaller parties informally headed by President Bakiev. Bakiev resigned from his official chairmanship of the party because officially the head of the executive branch cannot be a member of a political party. President Bakiev was involved in establishing a new party which would be loyal to the leader of the country who faced growing disagreement with the legislative branch.

The Jogorku Kenesh (means *Great Council*; the name of Kyrgyz parliament) was dissolved in 2007 by the president and his party received 71 seats out of 90 at the last parliamentary elections in December of 2007 which were criticized by international and local observers for breaching the international elections norms.

Many local and international experts view Bakiev's efforts in creating a party based parliament with a strong pro-president presence in the legislation as a way to politically weaken traditionally independent Jogorku Kenesh and minimize the presence of influential parties critical of the government. The victory of Ak-Jol Party at the 2007 elections was a successful step in strengthening the power of the executive branch.

President Bakiev's justification for creation of a new party was announced at the Ak-Jol party founding ceremony speech in October of 2007: “In the best cases, they simply criticize the authorities for their mistakes. But who will, who should, take care of affairs? Which political forces [or] political parties have done real

work, have made progress toward those goals that stand before the country? Up until today, there haven't been any."²⁶

In reality, considering the development of political events in the country, it is obvious that the example of the Russian former president Putin's domination in the Duma through "Unified Russia" Party is a motivation for legal changes in the election of parliamentarians.

Other dominant Kyrgyz parties with large membership nationwide are:

- ***Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan***

The party has 8 seats in the parliament.

- ***Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan***

The party has second largest representation in the Jogorku Kenesh by occupying 11 out of 90 seats.

- ***Socialist Party Ata-Meken (Fatherland)***
- ***Ar-Namys (Dignity) Party***
- ***Erkindik (Freedom)***

In early May the Socialist Party Ata-Meken and the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan decided to merge. This is most probably explained by the opposition parties' efforts to defeat the current president.

Jany Kyrgyzstan (New Kyrgyzstan) Party faces a split among those who call for support of President Bakiev and those who are inclined to support opposition.

Banned Religious movements/parties:

According to the constitution, Kyrgyzstan is a secular state and no parties based on religious platform may function legally, regardless whether they use violent or peaceful means.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation)

The party's goal is rebuilding the single Islamic Kilafah State (Caliphate) through propagation and peaceful transformation of Muslim society and finally establishing 'Islamic household.'²⁷ The radical party which is predominately Sunni, with Islam as an ideology, does not employ violent means but Central Asian governments have accused HT in terrorism.

HT is anti-Western, anti-Semitic, anti-secular, considers democracy a Kufr system, and calls for overthrow of Muslim governments which do not obey the party's vision of the Islamic governance and according to them, the country is currently a 'Kufr household.'²⁸

²⁶ "Kyrgyz President Aims to Build Ruling Party," October 17, 2007, RFE/RL, Bruce Pannier, available at: <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1078973.html>

²⁷ See 'About Hizb-ut-Tahrir' at the official web site of the party: <http://www.hizbuttahrir.org/index.php>

²⁸ Ibid.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir members first appeared in Central Asia in mid-1990s in Uzbekistan. The massive arrest campaign launched by the government after the Tashkent February 1999 bombings brought the party in spotlight which has been unknown for Central Asians. The government blamed IMU and Hizb-ut-Tahrir but arrested not only alleged members of these organizations but anybody who regularly attended prayers and was known for religious piety. Hizb-ut-Tahrir's regular members openly criticized the unpopular government of Karimov and did not accept the offer to ask pardon from President Karimov for pardon. The bravery brought respect of many people who might have not shared the ideology of the organization but agreed with critical statements towards the ruling regime.

Although the party claims to be peaceful some members left the party and either joined the militant movements or created their separate cells (not associated with HT) which use violence. The organization is banned in all Central Asian states.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir, despite its popularity in early stages of its appearance in Central Asia, failed to become a popular movement due to highly secretive recruitment, heavy repressions, little interest among populace in political Islam and theological discrepancies with mainstream Islamic doctrine called *Aqidah* in Arabic. Differences in doctrine of *Ahl as-Sunna wal-Jama'ah* (majority of Muslims) and of HT is a significant obstacle for broad public support and recruitment of new members, particularly among religiously educated Muslims. Regular members are more preoccupied with political work and often do not have much of religious knowledge that we believe the organization is more of a secular political party, despite religious rhetoric, than a religious organization. The frequency and quantity of leaflet distribution among populace in the region has been decreasing and the number of arrests of alleged members of HT has dropped down which in combination indicate the party loses the ground in Central Asia.

Traditionally, HT was popular among ethnic Uzbeks; besides Uzbekistan the organization was also active in the border areas of neighboring countries populated by ethnic Uzbeks. Currently the group is most active in Kyrgyz and Tajik sections of the Ferghana Valley and southern regions of Kazakhstan.

HT in Kyrgyzstan: an aggressive public diplomacy

The most recent significant conflict between the authorities and HT occurred in the city of Nookat in southern Kyrgyzstan on October 1, 2008 when locals celebrated Islamic religious holiday Orozo Ait but the government suddenly refused to provide the center of the city for festivities and charity which traditionally have been held every year. The government's refusal to allow public celebration led to a peaceful rally to the district administration building and then turned into mass riots. The security forces launched mass arrests: 32 individuals (25 ethnic Uzbeks and 7 ethnic Kyrgyz) had been arrested and 90

more people are on the government wanted list. Surprisingly the authorities included children of 10 and even 4 years old and elderly who are 71, 74 and even 81 years old. Human rights organizations claim the police used torture during investigation and demanded money for release among many other violations of human rights.²⁹

The reason behind government's ban on publicly celebrating Orozo Ait was fear that HT would exploit this holiday for its public relations campaign when the party members provide free meal to poor and agitate masses to join the organization and change the government. In Kyrgyzstan's more liberal conditions than in other states of the region HT utilized the opportunity to propagate its ideas more ambitiously. HT's materials in Kyrgyz provided by ethnic Kyrgyz were able to reach the audience in northern regions of the country, including, Chuy, Bishkek and Naryn. In February 2007 the law enforcement arrested 11 members of HT who came from the south to Naryn to help rebuild the area hit by the earthquake. Despite that the party had been banned the leadership of the outlawed group shifted from closed secretive tactics to openly mass agitation via words and deeds to gain support.

The new government of President Bakiev is less tolerant of decent and more even so towards Islamists of any kind. Recently the government banned headscarves in public schools, prevented school children from attending Friday prayers and extradited refugees from Uzbekistan. Bakiev's policy reflects his own authoritarian style and attempts to please the regime of Uzbekistan which demands from Bishkek to destroy Uzbek president's critics residing in Kyrgyzstan when discussing the natural gas export.

According to a leading expert on Islamist organizations in Kyrgyzstan Ikbaljan Mirsaitov, there are currently about 2,000 members of HT which is much less than the number cited by authorities.³⁰ Some experts on HT in Kyrgyzstan, including official estimates, claim the party has 15,000 members in Kyrgyzstan and 20percent of them are representatives of various ethnic groups besides Uzbeks and Kyrgyz: Tatars, Russians, Chechens, Meskhetian Turks and others.³¹ The party is banned since 2003.

According to Country Reports on Terrorism 2008 by the U.S. State Department, "Kyrgyz officials reported growing support for and bolder public outreach by HT. Supporters of terrorist groups the Islamic Jihad Group (IJG) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) were also believed to maintain a presence in

²⁹For more details on the conflict read the report of Human Right Center "Memorial" at <http://www.memo.ru/2009/03/02/0203091.htm>

³⁰ I. Mirsaitov, "Information on members of Hizb-ut-Tahrir is lifted up few fold," 12 March 2009. available at: <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1236808020>

³¹ "Osobennosti proyavleniya politicheskogo Islama v Kyrgyzstane" (Peculiarities of development of political Islam in Kyrgyzstan), N Kurbanova, April 28, 2009, Centrasia.ru News Agency. Available at: <http://www.centrasia.ru/news.php?st=1240897920>

Kyrgyzstan, and Kyrgyz authorities alleged that both groups received material support from HT.”³²

Other Islamist organizations banned in Kyrgyzstan:

The Kyrgyz Government and other Central Asian states, members of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, all include the following ethnic Uyghur separatist groups in the list of Central Asian terrorist organizations:

1. Sharqiy Turkestan Islamiy Harakati

[in English - **Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement**]

(a.k.a. Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party; ETIM; ETIP)

2. Sharqiy Turkestan Azatliq Teshkilati

[in English - **East Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO)**]

China uses its power to curtail support for any Uyghur separatist group and ethnic Uyghurs from the local governments. The region has comparatively large economic influential Uyghur Diasporas, particularly in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan which share borders with China.

Most of Uyghurs in Central Asia are disillusioned over the Chinese government’s policy towards approximately 18 million Turkic Muslims of the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), historically known as Eastern Turkistan. Muslim ethnic groups of Kyrgyzstan and from neighboring states are sympathetic with Uyghurs as they share common religion, culture and history viewing China’s presence as illegitimate while Central Asian leaders extradite “the enemies of Chinese State” without much investigation as to whether the person was actually involved in separatist, terrorist or extremist activities. In 2006, Huseyin Celil, a naturalized Canadian citizen of Uyghur origin who fled China in mid-1990s, has been sent back to the People’s Republic of China by the Uzbek authorities despite the protests of human rights organizations and the Canadian authorities. The extradition of Uyghurs to China is a matter of tensions between Uyghur Diasporas and the local governments.

³² Country Reports on Terrorism 2008, U.S. State Department, Chapter 2. Country Reports: South and Central Asia Overview, Kyrgyzstan, available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2008/122434.htm>

HUMAN TERRAIN:

Kyrgyz are the dominant ethnic group in the country estimated at 3,616,500 or 69.2 percent of population as of January 2008.³³ The nation is predominantly Sunni Muslim of Hanafi School of Jurisprudence.

There are traditional kin-based and regional cleavages beneath the modern structure of the Kyrgyz society which dominate the political culture and explain the trajectory of events.

Kyrgyz Clans Networks

Kyrgyz people received statehood only after the arrival of Russian Bolshevik administration. It divided the territory ruled by Central Asian Khanates along the ethnic lines resulting in creation of an autonomous republic in 1926. In 1936 it became a full fledged member of the union of 15 Soviet states. Disjoined nomadic tribal group identities were represented in the pre-Soviet period rather than one unified national identity.

The outcomes of the Tulip Revolution reveal the significance of clanship and political culture. A wished overthrow of the Akaev's old corrupt and nepotistic network and the re-installment of another clan occurred when the more vicious group of Bakiev's family members and friends came to power and redistributed resources.

Although tribal or regional affiliations might not matter in relation to various issues of everyday life, they are important for politicians in Bishkek. Igor Chudinov believes his ethnicity (Russian) was an important factor when he was appointed as Prime Minister: "I'll say openly: I am the least one in this country under the influence of local clans and regional groupings."³⁴ Most Kyrgyz are attached to certain regional and tribal groupings. Slavs, who migrated to the country during the Soviet period, have no local roots and are considered neutral in local rivalries and are regarded as good professionals.

Today kin based clanship and regionalism, important elements of political culture of Kyrgyz, still exist and play a significant role in political life in the rivalry for access to economic assets. To residents of rural areas the extended family is still an important part of self-identity, less so for urbanized Kyrgyz.

Clanship:

TRIBAL DIVISION OF KYRGYZ ETHNOS

Kyrgyz are divided into 3 major tribal confederations:

³³ According to the National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan the total population was estimated 5,224,300. See Table: 'Kalktyn Uluttyk Kuramy' (national composition of population) available in Kyrgyz and Russian at <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/razd.files/census/3.7.pdf>

³⁴ Intervyi na temy, Moskovskii Komsomolets, January 28, 2008, posted by Tazar.kg. Available at: <http://www.tazar.kg/news.php?i=7723>

<p>“Sol kanat” (the left wing) also called “Arkalyk”</p>	<p>Ichkilik (internal)</p>	<p>“Ong kanat” (the right wing) also called “Otuz Uul”</p>
<p>According to North – South informal regional divide the tribal groupings are informally associated with :</p>		
<p>“Northerners”</p>	<p>“Southerners”</p>	<p>“Southerners”</p>
<p>Has 7 tribes in the north and west of the country:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sary Bagysh 2. Kushchu 3. Solto 4. Tynay 5. Sayak 6. Saru 	<p>This group includes several tribes, some of which were not of ethnic Kyrgyz origin (for instance Kypchaks) but have assimilated with ethnic Kyrgyz and now view themselves as Kyrgyz. Reside in Osh, Batken and parts of Jalal -Abad provinces in the south.</p>	<p>Has less and smaller tribes than northerners. Geographically based in Jalal-Abad and partially Osh provinces of southern part of the country.</p>
<p>Each of the seven has a dominant characteristic, and all have fought each other for influence. Majority of the country’s leaders, including Askar Akaev came from the Sarybagysh clan.</p>	<p>Some locals believe that President Bakiev is of Uighur origin.</p>	
<p>Sarybagysh clan in Akayev’s government was represented by many government officials. The list includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temirbek Akmataliyev, minister of finance, comes from Akayev’s village and clan; -Tashtemir Aitbaev, minister of Interior; -Cholpon Baekova, chairperson of Constitutional Court; Osmanakun Ibraimov, secretary of state; - Bolot Dzhanzuzakov, chairman of National 	<p>Southern Osh province had 5 governors from the northern part of the country appointed by Akaev. Former president’s frequent reshuffling of northern governors, who were perceived by southerners as rivals against the southerners coming to extract resources for personal enrichment, had increased frustration in the south.</p> <p>During Akaev era prominent public figures and MPs Azimbek Beknazarov, Adahan Madumarov, Omurbek Tekebaev, Dooronbek Sadyrbaev, Masaliev, Bekturn Asanov and Alisher Abdimomjunov all have ties with Ichkilik clans based either in Osh, Jalalabad or Batken regions in south. Once prime Minister under Akaev and current president Bakiev is also an Ichkilik southerner.</p>	

Security service; - Amanbek Karypkulov, chief of presidential staff.	
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A group of Kypchaks, a Turkic sub-ethnic group within Kyrgyz, demanded a separate status of nationality as a sovereign ethnic group during the national census conducted in Kyrgyzstan in March – April of 2009. Kypchaks, once a powerful confederation of pastoral steppe tribes and brave warriors, migrated to Central Asia from the Irtysh River basin. They constitute a sub-ethnic group either within larger Kyrgyz or Kazakh ethnic groups. The Kypchak language is lost and they speak the language of the dominant ethnicity of the locality: Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakh in Kazakhstan and Uzbek in Uzbekistan. Today most of Kypchaks reside in the Ferghana Valley.

North – South regional divide:

High mountainous landscapes divide the Chuy, Talass, Issyk-Kul and Naryn provinces in the north from Osh, Bakten and Jalal-Abad provinces in the south. The two regions of the country are linked by the Bishkek – Osh road. Costly flights run daily between the two major cities and less frequent flights between Bishkek to Batken and Jalal-Abad cities. Despite comparatively new unifying common ethnic identity, the differences in historical, political and economic developments impact relationships between regional and kinship affiliations. The Bolsheviks did not disrupt the internal political rivalry between local elites as long as they were loyal to Moscow. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the political battle of the former nomadic horse shepherds in the north which undergone forceful urbanization and embraced Russification against the settled tribes of the agricultural south, where Islam and close interaction with Uzbek and Tajik cultures had a significant influence, reemerged and the appearance of little known Askar Akaev became a result of an inter-regional political settlement.

North and South have their regional dialects of the Kyrgyz language.

Major ethnic minorities

Uzbeks:

Ethnic Uzbeks represent 14.5 percent of the total population. Uzbeks constitute the majority of important southern cities such as Osh, Kar-Suu and Jalal – Abad. Uzbeks were the largest indigenous minority since the region was under the Uzbek Qoqon Khanate until the Bolsheviks divided the major local ethnic groups into separate republics but the borders were drawn with a high degree of planned arbitrariness.

Inter-ethnic clashes between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz which erupted in June of 1990 in the Osh province resulted in nearly 1,000 casualties, most of whom were Uzbeks. Sponsored by the KGB, which tried to instigate inter-ethnic conflicts to regain control of the colonies, Kyrgyz nationalists organized violent attacks on

Uzbeks with the epicenter in Uzgen, an ancient Uzbek city. Violence was characterized by brutality towards women, children and the elderly. This event planted the seeds of mistrust between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the south. Although there is status quo in relationship between the two it is more fragile than it may appear on the surface.

Since Kurmabek Bakiev assumed the presidency, arrests and kidnappings of ethnic Uzbeks allegedly linked to Hizb-ut-Tahrir and IMU by the National Security of Uzbekistan with permission of the Kyrgyz authorities have increased and have led to at least two killings of prominent Uzbeks. These developments along with the underrepresentation of Uzbeks in the government and in law enforcement add to the level of tensions between two ethnic groups.

Russians:

Currently, less than a half million ethnic Russians reside in Kyrgyzstan while in 1999 they numbered 603, 201.³⁵ During the years of independence every third Russian (or nearly 700,000) left the country. Most Russians (Slavs in general) reside in major cities, primarily Bishkek and Osh.

The first wave of emigration started in 1989 and in the early years of independence in the early 1990s. The inter-ethnic clashes in the Ferghana Valley during Gorbachov's political relaxation period, although not anti-Russian, raised fear among Russian Diaspora which forced more than 100,000 Russians to leave Kyrgyzstan.

With independence most government positions were transferred to ethnic Kyrgyz and many Russians realized their dominant status was lost. Anti-Russian statements by Kyrgyz nationalists on the community level made Russians feel threatened politically and sometimes physically which contributed to departure of thousands of ethnic Russians and Slavs from the country. However, high unemployment and low wages became the major factor of the second wave of emigration which started in the late 1990s. Worsening socio-economic conditions, corruption, police abuse and lack of employment opportunities continue motivating many Russians to depart the Kyrgyz Republic.

Kyrgyz - Russian relations are usually stable and positive. Closer relations between the two states were solidified by closer of the U.S. air base at Manas International Airport which was aimed at receiving economic compensation from Russia.

In comparison with Uzbekistan the Kyrgyz government has tried to preserve Russian Diaspora which consisted of highly trained professionals the country lacked with the departure of thousands of qualified personnel.

³⁵ Table 5.01.00.03 'Natsionalnyi sostav naseleniya' (Ethnic composition of population), available at: <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/din.files/census/5010003.pdf>

RELIGIONS/SECTS:

Ethnic Kyrgyz constitute the majority of population and the second largest ethnic group Uzbeks are both Sunni Muslims of Hanafi School of Jurisprudence. Ethnic Russians belong to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Nominally Muslim nomadic tribes of Kyrgyz, more in the past than at present, also practiced their ancient local religious traditions, including shamanism, which were at odds with Islam. Kyrgyz in the south are generally more religious than in the north due to the influence of the Uzbeks and Tajiks of the Ferghana valley. Although Quqon Khanate ruled from 1710 to 1876 over all Kyrgyz tribes the modern southern Kyrgyzstan is geographically closer to the capital of the Khanate in the Ferghana Valley city of Quqon. In recent years the north has seen an increase in the percentage of Kyrgyz who have strong religious sentiments towards Islam in comparison with previous years. The Central Mosque in capital Bishkek is overcrowded at Friday prayers and now donations are being collected for construction of a new mosque for 10,000 worshipers in the capital. Many mosques have been built in other cities in the north during the independence. Uzbeks, residing in the south, have traditionally been religious and are viewed by Kyrgyz nationalists and the secular government with suspicion. The southern Kyrgyzstan with its center city of Osh was an epicenter of anti-Bolshevik resistance in 1920s.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union Western Evangelist Christian missionaries, mostly from America, descended on the Kyrgyz soil in an effort to recruit converts from among formerly atheist Soviet populations.

FOREIGN MILITARY BASES:

Russian military base in Kant

Located only 20 km from the capital Bishkek is the military base originally established in 1941 (after the invasion of German Nazi forces into the USSR) as a Soviet air force base. It also served as a military pilot training school for military air crews for the Soviet Air Force.

The Russian-Kyrgyz agreement of 2003 authorized Russian military to rent the base for 15 years with a 5 year extension term. The Russian Federation spent US \$2.6 million in upgrading the base in 2003 and intends to invest even more to reconstruct the runways which should be able to accept heavy TU-160 and TU-95 ("Bear") bombers.

The airbase, under command of the Russian 5th Air Army based in Uralsk Military District, is also used by the Collective Security Treaty Organization

[CSTO], a security alliance of some post-Soviet states³⁶ led by Russia aiming to foster its influence over the region.

The Kant base presently hosts about 500 Russian troops, four L-39 combat training jets, two MI-8 combat transport helicopters, five SU-25 attack aircrafts and five SU-27 fighters and six IL-76 transport aircrafts.

In late April of 2009 Nikolai Bordyuzha, Secretary-General of CSTO, during a visit to Kyrgyzstan said that Russia's leadership plans to increase the number of military aircraft at Kant. He explained the decision is dictated by the situation in the region, including Afghanistan.³⁷

In late May of 2009 the Russian Government proposed 49 years long lease contract with 25 years of automatic prolongation if no sides decides to end the deal. The Kyrgyz side expressed its readiness to accept the offer. President Medvedev is to sign the document which will then be sent to Bishkek for consideration.

Kyrgyzstan receives US\$ 4,5 million and military and technical aid from Russia as a compensation for rent of the Kant base.³⁸

US Air Base at Manas International Airport

The US base was established in support of Operation “Enduring freedom” in December of 2001 on the territory of the Manas International Airport in the outskirts of capital Bishkek. Kyrgyzstan, threatened by Taliban’s expansion close to the borders of the former Soviet Central Asian states and in expectation of financial compensation, expressed its willingness to host the American and NATO forces targeting Al-Qaida and Taliban in Afghanistan.

American Manas Air Base was home to the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing and approximately 1,000 military personnel from the United States, Spain and France are assigned to the wing, along with 650 U.S. and host-nation contractor personnel. Coalition aircrafts supporting the mission includes U.S. KC-135s, Spanish C-130s and French C135FRs.³⁹

³⁶ Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are members of this organization. There are rumors that Uzbekistan is considering to leave CSTO.

³⁷ “Russian will beef up Kyrgyz base,” April 21, 2009, The Moscow Times.com. Available at: <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/article/600/42/376415.htm>

³⁸ “News: Russian Govt. Approves Kyrgyz Airbase Lease Extension to 49 Years,” May 29, 2009. Available at: <http://defense-technologynews.blogspot.com/2009/05/dtn-news-russian-govt-approves-kyrgyz.html>

³⁹ More information on the US Manas Air base can be obtained from its official web site: <http://www.manas.afcent.af.mil/>

On February 20, 2009 the Foreign Ministry of Kyrgyzstan delivered an official letter to the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek demanding the base to be closed within 6 months. Although Russian and Kyrgyz authorities deny the closure of the American base was the result of Russia's financial assistance package promised to an impoverished country. Since the region depends heavily on foreign aid, many observers believe Russians promised to provide 2,150 million in loans to cement Moscow's diplomatic efforts to oust the U.S. bases from the region.

There were long negotiations between the United States and Kyrgyzstan interceded by Afghan President Karzai who asked Kyrgyz president to allow Americans to continue renting the base. The American side offered to pay a higher rent if the Kyrgyz government reconsiders its decision to evict US and NATO troops.

In result of the extensive talks between the two sides the agreement was reached: the military base will turn into a cargo transit center of non-military items into Afghanistan. The Kyrgyz government agreed to use the Manas airport in exchange for higher rent in the amount of US\$ 60 million and aid to Kyrgyzstan in the amount of US\$ 41, 5 million.⁴⁰

During the meeting between Russian President Medvedev and President Obama in Moscow in early July Moscow the deal was signed that will allow U.S. military cargo aircrafts to overfly Russian airspace and transit overland necessary military and non-military deliveries to Afghanistan which most probably will lead to Kyrgyzstan's permission to transport military shipments despite "non-military items only" agreement.

SECURITY SITUATION

There are currently several important internal and external developments which will influence the security situation in the country:

A. Internal developments:

1. Presidential elections on July 23, 2009;
2. Criminalization of politics;
3. Sharpened tensions between powerful political and business elites;
4. Return of a large army of labor migrants put additional pressure on poor socio-economic conditions

B. External developments:

1. Political/security situation in Afghanistan;
2. Kyrgyz - Uzbek relations

⁴⁰ "МК": С "Ганси" выдачи нет. Киргизия заработала на одной базе дважды, Igor Karmazin, Moskovskiy Komsomlotes, June 24, 2009. Available at: <http://www.centrasia.ru/news.php?st=1245796800>

Internal Developments:

Presidential Elections (July 23, 2009)

The important event for Kyrgyzstan in 2009 and beyond is the election of the president for next 4 years. Considering the present tendency towards authoritarianism, the outcomes of the elections will have serious implications for the political trajectory of the country. The authorities and the political parties in parliament worry that the funding which NGOs receive from abroad will influence the course of elections and ultimately may sponsor President Bakiev's defeat.

The Ak-Jol and the Communist parties are sponsoring a new legislation to ban NGOs from engagement in political activity and elections, including election monitoring which should be enacted before the July 23rd presidential election. Pro-President party Ak-Jol which holds 71 seats and its ally - the Communists occupying 8 seat out of total 90 in the parliament, have been suspicious of links between local NGOs. They also view the West as an orchestrating force of color revolutions in the post-Soviet space. Considering the pro-Russian sentiments prevailing in the Jogorky Kenesh (Kyrgyz parliament) the government and its allies in the legislature have taken all measures to oppose the opposition's victory during the election.

There are additional changes in the election process which will help the president:

- According to Constitution, no less than 50,000 signatures must be presented in the application for official registration of presidential candidates;
- The Government banned local NGOs and the country representation offices of international organizations from monitoring the election process at the ballots;
- Ink marks on hands during the election which prevented people from voting several times for their candidates will not be used this time;
- Driver license which is not a significant ID as it is in the United States and which is easier to obtain than the passport will be sufficient to vote.

President Bakiev submitted his application to the Central Commission on Elections and Referendums [CCER]⁴¹ to run for elections for the second term.

As of June 15, 2009 CCER registered the applications from the following candidates, besides the president:

1. Temir Sariev - the leader of "Ak- Shumkar" political party;

⁴¹ Official web site of the Commission: <http://www.shailoo.gov.kg/>

2. Jenishbek Nazaraliev - a famous doctor and the head of a well known clinic in Bishkek;

Other three politicians have submitted the applications but are still waiting the decision of Central Commission on Elections and Referendums which presently checks the applications and signatures of their supporters and conducts the Kyrgyz language knowledge test of candidates:

- 1. Nurlan Motuev**, a businessman informally called a “coal king” and also the leader of the “Zhoomart” people’s patriotic movement;
- 2. Toktayim Umetalieva** – chairperson of the Association of non-governmental and non-commercial organizations;
- 3. Almazbek Atambaev** - the chairman of Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan. He was chosen as a candidate from United People’s Movement that brought together opposition fractions aimed at defeating the current president.

CCER rejected the application documents from Akbaraly Aitikeev, a businessman and chairman of the Party for protection of interests of agriculture industry employees and low income families. CCER claimed many signatures of his supporters were forged.

Among all candidates the strongest political challenge to President Bakiev is expected from Almazbek Atambaev.

At the meeting between President Bakiev and some NGOs participants in May, they agreed to create a Coordinative Council of government structures and NGOs. It is expected that the meetings between the government and the civil society sector will be held regularly. However leading NGOs linked to political opposition and human rights groups did not join the event. The creation of the council is perceived by critics as the government’s instrument of pacifying the disparagement from opposition rather than a sincere attempt to solve the problems of authoritarianism, corruption, criminality, unsolved cases of political assassinations.

The largest party in the parliament Ak-Jol announced it will fully support President Bakiev at the presidential elections. The Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan stated they would not have a candidate from the party but will support the incumbent president. The Communist Party which had been in opposition to the former President Akaev is loyal to the current president who allowed the party to get few seats in the parliament in exchange for loyalty.

The growing number of candidates and a split among opposition parties make it easy for current president to win the elections.

Issue of Returning Labor Migrants

Up to 300,000 Kyrgyzstan’s labor migrants are expected to return from Russia and Kazakhstan in 2009. The influx of a large number of unemployed who will

need jobs or welfare is a serious concern for national and local authorities. The population heavily suffering from unemployment and low wages now will face even further social problems and economic hardships. People also expect a price increase for major food items like bread and flour of 15-20 percent. Housing services are expected to increase up to 45 percent.⁴²

Criminalization of Politics

Employing criminal groups by the new leadership that needed broader public support and access to economic resources in early stages of Bakiev's realm has led to legitimization of some powerful criminal figures attempting to dominate politics and state assets. Since Kurmanbek Bakiev became president in 2005 the killings and unresolved mysterious deaths of politicians and journalists has become a part of political life in the country. In the first two years after the Tulip Revolution contract killings took the lives of 25 famous public figures, including businessmen, politicians, a famous actor and a well known sportsman.⁴³

On April 4, 2009 the murder of the fifth parliamentarian within last four years sparked a lot of debate and claims within the Kyrgyz society about President Bakiev's close ties with the criminal world: Tashbolot Baltabaev, a leading member of the opposition party 'Ata Meken' and a parliamentarian, suspects that "The criminal world and [political] power go hand in hand, and that is regarded as being in the order of things." He further warns that "... the shootouts and contract killings will continue."⁴⁴

The list of individuals involved in politics killed/ dead/ disappeared since 2005:

1. Parliamentarian Sanjarbek Kadyraliev, killed outside his home on April 14, 2009 by an unidentified lone gunman who shot him once in the back of the head. Politician and businessman Kadyraliev was close to the president and belonged to pro-presidential political party Ak Zhol (White Path). Kadyraliev is known for his criminal past when he confronted another gang group leader in the south Bayaman Erkinbayev who was also MP. Many believe Kadyraliev is responsible for the assassination of his major mafia rival Erkinbayev.

2. Former head of the president's administration Medet Sadyrkulov was killed in a car incident on March 13, 2009. The investigation is under way. Some opposition figures accused the government in organizing the car crash to

⁴² "Kyrgyzstan: Returning Labor Migrants are a Cause for concern," Eurasianet.org, April 3, 2009. Available at: <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/news/articles/eav040309e.shtml>

⁴³ "Kyrgyzstan: Impediments to State-Building," Johan Engvall, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0C54E3B3-1E9C-BE1E-2C24-A6A8C7060233&lng=en&id=34004>

⁴⁴ 'Politician's Murder Shakes Kyrgyzstan,' Institute for War & Peace Reporting, Anara Yusupova and Ayday Tokonova, RCA, No.573, April 16, 2009, Available at: http://www.iwpr.net/?p=rca&s=f&o=351794&apc_state=henprea

eliminate an influential politician who joined the opponents of President Bakiev and a former presidential aide who knew “too much” about his former boss.⁴⁵

3. The political observer of *'Reporter – Bishkek'* independent newspaper Syrgak Abdylidaev was knifed on March 3, 2009 by unidentified individuals. The journalist produced critical reports about the government's policies which many observers believe became the reason for the authorities' vendetta against Abdylidaev. He is in critical conditions.

4. Parliamentarian Ruslan Shabatoev a member of the opposition Social Democratic Party, disappeared in late of 2008. The police investigation produced no results.

5. A well-known journalist for Voice of America Alisher Saipov (an ethnic Uzbek) was shot outside of his office in Osh in late October 2007. He is believed to be have been killed by Uzbek National Security Service on the territory of Kyrgyzstan for critical reporting about Uzbek president with illicit approval of President Bakiev. This was in exchange for a better natural gas supply deal from Uzbekistan for natural gas hungry Kyrgyzstan.

6. In August of 2006 the Kyrgyz security service officers shot a famous Imam Rafiq Qori Kamoluddin, an ethnic Uzbek preacher whose mosque attracted up to 10,000 people at a Friday prayer in the border city of Kara-Suu. Imam was well known for his criticism of Karimov's foreign and internal policies. Qori Kamoluddin's supporters believe he was killed by the Kyrgyz troops but on the request from an Uzbek counterpart.

7. Chairman of the Kyrgyz parliament's committee for legal affairs, defense and law and order Tynychbek Akmatbaev was shot dead in Moldavanovka prison near the capital on October 22, 2005 when he tried to pacify prisoners' protest against bad conditions in Kyrgyz jail. Experts on Kyrgyz politics believe the newly appointed president relied on support of Tynychbek Akmatbaev's brother Rysbek who was allegedly a mafia baron in the north of the country where southerner President Bakiev had little support. Prime Minister Kulov had an alliance with the rival underworld gang leader Azizbek Batukaev, an ethnic Chechen accused in killing MP Akmatbaev who also had ties with the criminal world in the past. The conflict between two powerful criminal groups led to conflict between President Bakiev and then Prime Minister Kulov which indicates the ability of influential criminal figures to project power on the government. Following the death of Tynychbek his brother, a mafia baron Rysbek, became MP after being cleared of triple homicide. During Akaev

⁴⁵ Read 'Kyrgyz Politician's Death Widens Opposition-Government Gulf,' Institute for War & Peace Reporting, Anara Yusupova and Ayday Tokonova, RCA, No.570, March 16, 2009, Available at: http://www.iwpr.net/?p=rca&s=f&o=351039&apc_state=henprca

presidency Rysbek Akmatbaev was wanted on a list of charges at home but President Bakiev's alleged support for Rysbek set the notorious criminal and his six accomplices free of all charges. In May of 2006 mafia boss and newly elected MP Rysbek Akmatbaev was shot dead in outskirts of capital Bishkek, however there were rumors that he is alive but faked his assassination.

8. Bayaman Erkinbayev, a member of the Kyrgyz parliament since 1995 and a supporter of President Akaev who was also known as a leader of a powerful criminal group in the south, did not survive the third assassination attempt. Bishkek died on September 21 and various explanations were rumored about who killed Erkinbayev but the law enforcement offered no credible conclusions of the official investigation. Some experts believe Erkinbayev was killed by a rival criminal group that tried to seize the strategic economic asset - Kara-Suu bazaar on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border which brought lucrative profits to the owner of this market. Others suspect the new political leadership got rid of a pro-Akaev politician and a powerful gang leader to control the rich resources of the southern region. By installing new criminal leaders loyal to a new government the president ensures political support in the south and access to wealth for his family.

9. Parliamentarian Jyrgalbek Surabaldiev, who was known for his sympathy with former president Akaev, was killed by unidentified gunmen on June 10, 2005 in the centre of Bishkek. The assailants have not been found. MP Surabaldiev head of the "Union of Entrepreneurs -New Step" and a powerful businessman was also suspected in having ties with criminal groups that caused suspicion that criminal groups behind then Acting President Bakiev were redistributing resources and eliminating competitors. This is the first case of an MP murder in Kyrgyzstan.

A well recognized expert on Kyrgyzstan Erica Marat says new hybrids of power relations developed within the state after the Tulip Revolution, "Common economic interests between criminal and political actors merged within the state apparatus. Both groups could operate in sync in maintaining licit and illicit businesses while simultaneously representing the state and enjoying legal status."⁴⁶

Many observers claim Bakiev's family members are involved in illegal business activities occupying important positions in the government while formally engaging in the private sector. Many Kyrgyzstanis say that Bakiev's family is much larger than of the former president (Askar Akaev has no brothers; Bakiev has seven brothers) and therefore the current president and his family has significantly higher financial and political appetite.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ "The State Crime Nexus in Central Asia: State Weakness, Organized Crime, and Corruption in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan," Erica Marat, Silk Road Paper, October 2006, p. 93. Available at: <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/Silkroadpapers/0610EMarat.pdf>

⁴⁷ CCS's phone interviews with several residents in Bishkek and Osh, April 2009.

Local and foreign journalists cite that businessman Maxim Bakiev, President's younger son whose nickname is 'prince', is connected to the criminal world and engaged in extortion and other illegal economic crimes.⁴⁸ The famous case of Maxim's efforts to seize a profitable TV Radio company 'Pyramida' in December of 2005 symbolized the aims and tactics of President Bakiev's family clan. These are more dangerous than of the family of former President Akaev.

Despite that Maxim denies his involvement in politics and claims he's only a businessman there are allegations of Maxim's political pressure on his father's opponents. Former head of the Central Election Commission (CEC) Klara Kabilova in a video address to citizens of Kyrgyzstan⁴⁹ accused Maksim Bakiev of threatening her in front of employees. This threat was made in front of employees of the CEC one week before the elections for 491 city and town council positions.⁵⁰

There are rumors that the president's brother Janybek (more often called Janysh) Bakiev is controlling drug trafficking in the south. In 2006 Janysh was fired as deputy head of the National Security Service after the parliament learned he was helping his brother to get rid of powerful critics. Janysh allegedly ordered the deputy head of Manas International Airport to plant drugs in the luggage of highly respected Parliamentarian Tekebaev who was travelling to Poland in 2006.⁵¹ Since his brother acme president Major General Janybek Bakiev has installed many corrupt police officers on key positions in law enforcement in the south to arrange the smooth delivery of drugs.⁵²

In general crimes of various types are on the rise. According to statistics from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as of February of 2009, 2,600 crimes were reported which is 5.1 percent higher than in February of 2008 and 18.6 percent higher than the previous month. Murder rate increased to 14.8 percent from

⁴⁸ For instance read articles: "Kyrgyz TV Station alleges takeover attempt," Eurasianet.org Daily Digest, December 9, 2005. Available at:

<http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/kyrgyzstan/hypermail/200512/0006.shtml> or read in Russian "Delo Poroskuna-Sirotinoy nesot risk dla kirgizkix elit: Vsesilnyi mladshiy syn prezidenta Kirgizii 'prins' Maksim Bakiev otobral u zakonnyx vladeltsev pansionat 'Utos' na beregu Issyk-Kyla" (The case of Poroskun-Sirotina bears a serious risk for the Kyrgyz elites: almighty younger son of Kyrgyz president 'prince' Maxim Bakiev forcefully took over 'Utos' resort on the beach of Issyk-Kul Lake) by Viktor nesinov, December 13, 2007. Available at http://compromat.ru/page_24966.htm

⁴⁹ Video address of Klara Kabilova in Russian is available at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQbC1VhzI50>

⁵⁰ Read "Local Kyrgyz elections spark national uproar, amid fraud allegations and threats" The ISCIP Analyst Volume XV Number 2 (9 October 2008), Section: Central Asia, at <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol15/ed1502.html>

⁵¹ For details on this case read "Kyrgyzstan Rocked by Smear Scandal," Institute for War & Peace Reporting, RCA No. 463, 12-Sep-06, at

http://www.iwpr.net/?p=rca&s=f&o=323794&apc_state=henirca2006

⁵² "Narkotiki vygodnee amerikanskoy bazy" (Drugs are more profitable than American base), Positsiya.ru Internet news agency, April 24, 2009. Available at: <http://www.posit.kz/?lan=ru&id=105&pub=23920>

February 2008 to February of 2009; an increase is also cited for other type of offenses: rape up 3.8 percent, hooliganism up 1.7 percent; burglary up 3.9 percent and economic crimes up 1.4 percent.⁵³

Anara Tabyshalieva, a well - established specialist on Kyrgyz politics, claimed that there were 24 known organized criminal groups and four criminal networks in the country in 2006.⁵⁴

President Bakiev's attempts to strengthen his grip on power and secure his re-election in July of 2009 are managed by his family members and friends occupying lucrative positions in the government and seizing maximum assets from the private sector. More than former president Akaev the current president relies on services of the criminal authorities in pacifying resistance to his political and financial advancement throughout the country. Although the nexus between the political elite and the criminal groups existed before the 2005 Tulip Revolution, the mafia barons have never been as influential as they are now. This threatens the country by shifting the balance towards further criminalization of state institutions and monopolizing the economic policies which will ultimately lead to turning the republic into a criminal state.

Sharpened Tensions between Powerful Political and Business Elites

The 2005 Tulip Revolution disrupted the inter-clan equilibrium established during the Akaev era and triggered the attention of political and business elites whose well-being depends on new parity between the players. Surprisingly even for opposition leaders to Akaev, their bet on Kurmanbek Bakiev brought disillusionment when the new president dismantled the old king and now tries to become a new one.

The emergence of new people in the political and business arena associated with the new president and their gains at the expense of the old powerful figures is still an ongoing process and needs careful attention. Resources are scarce and the country cannot satisfy economic demands of all interested parties while general socio-economic conditions of the common people do not improve. The traditional thirst for political power in Kyrgyz society is explained by the centralized distribution of resources by the executive branch with the private sector largely dependent on ties with powerful politicians. Therefore access to political power gives access to economic resources and exemption from the law.

⁵³ Kyrgyz Respublikasynyn sotsialdyk-ekonomikalyk abaly (Social-economic situation in Kyrgyz Republic), January – February 2009, National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyz Republic, Monthly Publication, Bishkek 2009, Section Prestupnost' (Crime), pp. 110-111. Report is available in Kyrgyz and Russian at: <http://www.stat.kg/stat.files/doclad/obzor2.pdf>

⁵⁴ See "Political violence on the rise in Kyrgyzstan," Anara Tabyshalieva, 01/25/2006 issue of the CACI Analyst, at <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/3691>

Along with economic contention between powerful elites there is growing political opposition to President Bakiev. Although unable to unite the opposition parties and the NGOs intend to confront the current president during the elections.

There are growing fears in Kyrgyzstan that Kurmanbek Bakiev will be willing to use force against demonstrators if unfair elections in July spark public revolt. The July presidential elections will be the test for Bakiev and his clan's strategy to neutralize rivals and weaken political opposition. His victory in the elections will allow him to further strengthen his personal grip on power and widen Bakiev clan's access to national assets.

External Developments:

Kyrgyzstan's security and economic conditions are subject to a significant influence from external relations with next door neighbors, regional and global players. Poor in natural resources and technologically disadvantaged, a nation is isolated from seaports and dependant on neighbors for communication and energy and totally reliant on larger players like Russia and China for security. At this moment of the history Kyrgyz Republic faces challenges in relations with Uzbekistan and has growing concerns over the situation in Afghanistan.

Political/security situation in Afghanistan

Starting 1999 the Kyrgyz Republic has been affected by the instability in Afghanistan. During the conflict between the Northern Alliance and Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, in an attempt to overthrow the regime of President Karimov in Uzbekistan, tried to infiltrate southern Batken province on their way to Uzbekistan. Uzbek Islamists also crossed Kyrgyz border and clashed with the law enforcement in 2000 and 2006.

Kyrgyz military is underequipped and poorly trained which makes it incapable defending the republic from external threats. Kyrgyzstan heavily relies on security and military aid from Russia, China and the U.S.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan views southern Kyrgyzstan, which is a part of the Ferghana Valley, as a recruiting ground for support and an integral part of the Islamic state they aim to build in Central Asia.

Incursions of Central Asian Islamist groups linked with Taliban and Al-Qaida into Kyrgyzstan and other states of the region might intensify due to military operations against Taliban and Al-Qaida in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Authorities of Kyrgyzstan claimed on June 23, 2009 the units of Kyrgyz National Security Committee clashed with and killed 5 well trained and equipped fighters of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in a private house full of explosives and ammunition in Tashbulak settlement of Suzak District of Jalal-Abad province

neighboring with Uzbekistan – the prime target of IMU and IJU.⁵⁵ The Kyrgyz officials identified the militants but refused to announce the names but admitted they are not citizens of Uzbekistan and belong to IMU.⁵⁶ Although the Kyrgyz officials believe the Islamist group linked with Taliban was IMU it is possible that the five member group identified in Ferghana Valley was a cell of Islamic Jihad Union fighters which launched attack on law-enforcement in Andijan province of Uzbekistan on May 26.

Kyrgyz – Uzbek Relations

The relations between the two have a significant impact on Kyrgyzstan's economic development and security. Several important issues impede healthy relations between the neighbors: water distribution, hydro-electric stations, border demarcation, and water supply.

- **Water distribution**

Water sharing between upstream countries Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on one side and downstream states Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the other side becomes a cornerstone issue for regional stability. Decrease of water levels, mainly coming from Syr Darya and Amy Darya and continuous growth of water consumption due to increase of population in the region, Kyrgyzstan's (Kambarata -1 and Kambarata -2) and Tajikistan's (Rogun) plans to build giant hydro-electric stations are of great concern for downstream countries. These issues along with the Aral Sea disaster are serious problems the leaders from five states have enormous difficulties to resolve.

The Kyrgyz authorities seem to be very determined to build the gigantic Kambarata hydroelectric stations despite strong resentment from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Addressing the meeting with NGOs in Bishkek on May 5 President Bakiev announced: "We will build the Kambarata hydroelectric power stations in Kyrgyzstan whether one likes it or not."⁵⁷

Kyrgyzstan tries to establish the new terms for water, which should be treated as commodity with a price set by upstream countries. Uzbekistan strongly objects to this notion and demands that water be treated as a common good for the entire region.

⁵⁵ "Kyrgyzstan says killed five Islamist militants," Reuters news Agency, June 24, 2009, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/featuredCrisis/idUSLO876210>

⁵⁶ "Kyrgyzstan Says Slain Militants Were Uzbek Nationals," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, June 25, 2009, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/Kyrgyzstan_Says_Slain_Militants_Were_Uzbek_Nationals_/1762715.html

⁵⁷ "KYRGYZSTAN: BAKIYEV STANDS UP TO UZBEKISTAN AND TURKMENISTAN ON HYDROPOWER PROJECTS," Eurasianet.org, May 7, 2009, available at: <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav050709d.shtml>

Uzbekistan, for lack of payment, cuts supply of natural gas to Kyrgyzstan during the winter season. The Kyrgyz hydro- energy sector has to let water run through the Toktogul Dam to generate power but this causes flooding in Uzbekistan which experiences shortage of water during the summer season. The Kyrgyz side is frustrated that Uzbekistan sells natural gas to Kyrgyzstan at almost world price (US \$240 per 1,000 cubic meters) without any discount. Also not allowing Bishkek to use its internal hydro energy capacity, the Kyrgyz authorities have to maintain water reservoirs to hold water until summer for downstream states.

Tashkent's view is that natural gas is a commodity and requires investment into production, transportation and maintenance of pipelines while water is a God given resource running from the Mother Earth's mountains to all and upstream countries should not take control of this common good.

- **Border demarcation**

On April 19 approximately 40 police and border patrol troops of Uzbekistan illegally entered Kyrgyz territory and searched homes of residents in the village of Chek of Jalal-Abad province. The Uzbek officers behaved rudely claiming they were conducting anti-terrorism operations.

Kyrgyz Prime Minister Chudinov informed the parliament that 80 percent of Uzbek-Kyrgyz border is agreed to. The remaining 20 percent is a difficult portion of areas in Kugart, Shahimardan, Sokh enclave and few other places. The Prime Minister explained that the border agreement is complicated due to conflicting documents and maps that mark the border of Central Asian states first in 1924 and then in 1956.⁵⁸

This border incident highlighted the importance and urgency of resolving the border demarcation issue. The unfinished demarcation of the border often sparks local conflicts between Uzbek law enforcement and Kyrgyz residents.

Amid the attacks of Islamic Jihad Union fighters on law enforcement facilities and 2 suicide attacks on police officers in Andijan and Khanabad cities on May 26 near Uzbek -Kyrgyz border in volatile Ferghana Valley, the Uzbek government ordered digging 3 meters wide and 3 meters (in some areas, such as Madaniyat, Bekabad - up to 5 meters) deep trenches along the border. Along some border areas such as Chek-2 the Uzbek authorities remove the houses of locals in order to create a buffer zone to protect the border - the Uzbek authorities fear new incursions of Islamic militants into Uzbekistan from Kyrgyz territory. One sided security measure of the Uzbek side triggered frustration in Bishkek which view the unfriendly action of neighbor as illegal since the both sided have not completed the delimitation process.

⁵⁸ "Igor Chudinov: 80 protsentov granitsy Kyrgyzstana s Uzvekiastanom soglasovany" (Igor Chudinov: 80 percent of Uzbek-Kyrgyz border is agreed upon), Nargiza Yuldasheva, Information Agency "24kg", April 22, 2009. Available at: <http://www.24.kg/parliament/2009/04/22/112622.html>

Inflexible and unfriendly border policy of the Uzbek government have caused obstacles for trade, water supply, travel and even led to a death of a local trader. On June 7, Ulug Usmanov, an ethnic Uzbek from Kyrgyzstan was shot by Uzbek border guards when he tried to cross the border into Uzbekistan in the point not designated for trespassing near the commercial town of Karasuu. The Uzbek authorities seized the body of the killed 29 years old resident of the border town and had not returned it to relatives for several days. Ulug Usmanov and many other local traders used to cross the Uzbek border to buy fruits and vegetables and other food stuffs and return to Kyrgyzstan after paying bribes to Uzbek border guards but this time he became a victim of Tashkent's barbaric treatment of local residents living in the valley that linked three republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Even when the Soviets formally introduced borders between these brotherly nations, locals would travel without restrictions.

- **Gas supply**

Power cuts for many hours during winter season threaten the government's ability to provide energy. Energy is critical and a matter of survival for any regime in power in Bishkek. Every year the Kyrgyz authorities face uncertainty about Tashkent's willingness to sell the volume needed for Kyrgyzstan and annual increase of price for this strategic commodity.

In 2009 the price of natural gas from Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan was set at US \$ 240 per 1,000 cubic meters while Uzbekistan was demanding US\$ 300 and the 2009 price is US\$ 95 higher than in 2008. Irregularities with timely payment have been another problem with energy trade relations between the two states.

APPENDIX 1

Links to news and resources on Kyrgyzstan/ Central Asia

Official sources:

Official Web site of the President

www.president.kg

State Portal

www.government.gov.kg

Ministry of the Foreign Affairs

www.mfa.kg

Ministry of Finance

www.minfin.kg

State Customs Committee

www.customs.gov.kg

State Committee for taxes and fees

www.sti.gov.kg

State National News Agency “Kabar

www.kabar.kg

Kyrgyz Diplomatic Services

http://www.kds.kg/main_en.html

State Committee on State Property

www.spf.gov.kg

News Agency “Gazeta.kg”

www.gazeta.kg

News Agency “24.kg”

www.24.kg

News on Kyrgyzstan/ Central Asia in English, Russian and Uzbek:

Information Agency Ferghana.ru:

<http://www.ferghana.ru/>

News on Kyrgyzstan/Central Asia in English and Russian:

EurasiaNet:

<http://www.eurasianet.org/index.shtml>

CentralAsiaNews:

<http://en.ca-news.org/>

News on Kyrgyzstan/Central Asia in Russian:

Russian news web site Centrasia.ru:

<http://www.centrasia.ru/>

FreeDoilnanet, radio news in Russian, Uzbek and Kyrgyz:

<http://www.freedolina.net/>

News on Kyrgyzstan/Central Asia in English:

RFE/RL in English:

<http://www.rferl.org/section/Kyrgyzstan/159.html>

BBC Asia:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/default.stm>

Institute for War & Peace Reporting:

http://www.iwpr.net/?p=rca&s=f&o=346738&apc_state=henprca

The Times of Central Asia:

<http://www.timesca.com/>

CentralasiaNews.net:

<http://www.centralasianews.net/>

Transitions On Line News:

<http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/section.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&tpid=16>

Turkish Weekly:

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/category/5/central-asia.html>

Central Asia - Caucasus Institute Analyst:

<http://www.cacianalyst.org/>

News on Kyrgyzstan in Kyrgyz only:

RFE/RL in Kyrgyz:

<http://www.azattyk.kg/>

BBC in Kyrgyz:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/kyrgyz/>

Zaman:

<http://kg.zaman.com.tr/kg/>

Analytical Reports:

International Crisis Group:

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1251&l=1>

Russian and Eurasian Security Network:

<http://www.res.ethz.ch/news/sw/index.cfm>

National Bureau of Asian Research:

<http://www.nbr.org/>

RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy:

http://www.rand.org/international_programs/capp/pubs/central.html

Official Web sites of ministries, international organization:

Regional International Organizations:

Shanghai Cooperation Organization:

<http://www.sectsco.org/>

Eurasian Economic Community:

<http://www.evrazes.com/>

Collective Security Treaty Organization:

<http://www.dkb.gov.ru/>