

Central Asia: More than Islamic Extremists

The Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have largely hidden in Russia's shadow since their independence a decade ago.¹ In the week after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, they became integral participants in the U.S. campaign against terrorism. These republics now comprise the northern component of a sustained campaign against terrorists based in Afghanistan, to the region's south. Although the debate in recent years has questioned the extent to which the United States should engage Central Asia and commit resources there, few would dispute the importance of the region to U.S. foreign policy today. This increased U.S. involvement in the region necessitates a nuanced understanding of Central Asia.

U.S. authorities recognize the need for bases in countries neighboring Afghanistan to sustain a long-term antiterrorist campaign. For internal reasons, the Pakistani government, although pledging full support, may not be able to provide secure ground bases for U.S. forces—or, if it does, the United States may not want to rely exclusively on Pakistan for its operations in Afghanistan. Attention has thus turned to Uzbekistan, one of the most pro-Western countries in Central Asia, and the only neighbor of Afghanistan that is stable and friendly enough to serve as a possible base.

Since 1999, international observers, and specifically the Washington policy community, have often viewed Central Asia as beset by an Islamic tide. The spotlight turned to Uzbekistan in particular during the summers of 1999 and

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2000 when militant rebels of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) launched insurgencies in the Central Asian republics and kidnapped Japanese and U.S. citizens. Soon after, in September 2000 the State Department placed the IMU on its list of terrorist organizations. Most recently, in his speech to Congress in September 2001, President George W. Bush singled out the IMU for attention. Major U.S. and international press outfits have attributed instability in Central Asia to attempts by radical Islamic groups such as the IMU to seize power in the region and establish an Islamic caliphate.

The reality is more complex. These groups have a relatively small number of members. The IMU has only a few thousand followers, and the legal Islamic party of Tajikistan received less than 5 percent of the votes in the parliamentary election of 2000. Rather than viewing the incursions in Central Asia by Islamic extremists as the cause of the current instability, they should be understood as indicators of a complicated dynamic within the region. This dynamic involves interlinked variables, including the role of Islam in Central Asia, the challenges of regional poverty and drug trafficking, and the ideological spillover effects of the war in Afghanistan.

An Islamic Revival in Central Asia

As early as 1991, when the five Soviet Central Asian republics gained independence, some voiced fears that a radical Islamic wave would engulf these countries.² Since then, religion has undoubtedly been revived throughout the region. This revival was a natural and potentially stabilizing factor, as it filled an ethical void that the collapse of the Communist value system had left. Initially, governments facilitated the building of mosques to help restore religion, while trying to keep religious activity under state supervision. This course of action was followed in particular in the southern parts of Central Asia, namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the Ferghana Valley region of Kyrgyzstan—where Islam has deeper roots than, for example, in neighboring Kazakhstan.

Concerns about the radical movements that formed part of this Islamic revival in the Central Asian republics exist, however, for a reason. The region borders two focal countries of the global radical Islamic movement: Iran and Afghanistan. Although of different and often antagonistic persuasions, these two countries became the center of Islamic radicalism in the 1990s. The unraveling of the Soviet Union also seemed to highlight the destructive potential of political Islam. Shortly after independence, Tajikistan descended into a murderous civil war that pitted the former Communist elite against an opposition force containing strong Islamic groups. This conflict led the four other regional states to outlaw most op-

position parties and movements in their countries, halting the development of political opposition.

Yet labeling all Central Asian governments as antireligious and suppressive would be a gross oversimplification. Governing elites realized the need to embrace the Islamic faith to fill a moral vacuum. In doing so, most Central Asian presidents have performed the *hajj*, the pilgrimage to the Islamic holy sites. Some regional governments actively promote traditional forms of Islam. Uzbekistan, perhaps the Central Asian state most criticized for its anti-Islamic stance, officially embraces the more mystical and less political form of Islam, Sufism, which originated in Central Asia and is still practiced there. Uzbekistan maintains excellent relations with the global network of the most prominent Sufi order, the Naqshbandiya.³

Religion has undoubtedly revived, filling a void left by the collapse of communism.

Conflicts such as those in Central Asia are commonly assumed to be between Islam and secularism, whereas, in fact, the real dispute lies within Islam. The traditional, tolerant, and moderate faith to which the overwhelming majority of Central Asia's (and the world's) Muslims adhere conflicts with a radical, but numerically small, set of groups. These latter forces are mistakenly lumped together under the term "Wahhabi," referring to a form of Islam practiced in its modern form in Saudi Arabia for little more than a century. The Deobandi school of thought, another radical brand of Islam that originated in India in the nineteenth century, complements the Saudi influence.

Thus, the Central Asian elites have fervently battled what they interpret as the onslaught of an alien and inherently violent brand of Islam, exemplified by the Taliban regime that has controlled most of Afghanistan since the mid-1990s. Central Asian elites are not opposed to Islam per se, but rather to radical, politicized Islam, which is often a basis for political opposition to the governments. Although the traditional brand of Islam has little difficulty accommodating secular forms of government, an inherently intolerant and potentially violent attitude that refuses room for interpretation of religious tenets usually characterizes the radical strain. Moreover, radical groups often aspire to acquire political power and overthrow regimes that they consider infidel.⁴

The struggle within Islam shows that the repression occurring in the Central Asian republics is not purely the result of a whim of the political leadership. Radical Islamic groups that threaten the relatively weak governments in the region do exist; so do congregations with modest political ambitions, as

well as others devoid of political interest. The problem often lies in identifying the adversary. The regional elites, holdovers from the Communist nomenclature of the Soviet era, rely on the policy tool they know best—using the security apparatus and the penal system to eradicate the radical Islamic threat. Moreover, they have increasingly viewed all Islamic groups outside state control with suspicion and have cracked down on them vigorously.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Among Islamic groups in Central Asia, most attention has been drawn to the IMU.⁵ Vowing to establish an Islamic state in the mountainous Ferghana Valley (mainly populated by Uzbeks), which straddles the territories of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, the IMU launched military actions in 1999 and 2000 that plunged the region into a frenzy. The IMU is widely known to have bases in areas of Taliban-controlled northern Afghanistan and allegedly has connections with the Osama bin Laden network. Although these allegations are beyond reasonable doubt, the prevalent focus on the IMU's links with Afghanistan misses an important point: the IMU is not a solely Afghanistan-related phenomenon.

Although members of the IMU have links to Afghanistan, the group in fact relies on its positions in Tajikistan to launch incursions into the Ferghana Valley and to control drug trafficking routes. Both its incursions into Kyrgyzstan and into Uzbekistan were launched from Tajikistan, not Afghanistan. After crackdowns on Islamic groups in Uzbekistan in 1992–1993 forced ethnic Uzbeks and members of the future IMU to flee their home country, some of them, including the IMU's military leader, Juma Namangani, joined the Islamic Tajik opposition (later known as the United Tajik Opposition) in their fight between 1992 and 1997 against the Communist government of Tajikistan. Despite Tajik government assertions to the contrary, the IMU now operates in Tajikistan because of its involvement in Tajikistan's civil war. During the course of that war, these fighters also came into contact with Afghan groups and received military training in Afghanistan. Thus the IMU forged relationships with various and sometimes opposing Afghan groups, including the Taliban and the Northern Alliance.

Because Tajikistan's Islamic opposition gained positions in the country's government in a 1997 peace deal that ended the civil war, the IMU now has contacts in Tajikistan's highest echelons of power. Complicating the situation, the weak postwar Tajik government is incapable of effectively controlling the territory outside the capital Dushanbe, enabling the IMU to operate within the country with relative freedom. Hence, an effective eradication of the IMU would have to involve the IMU bases in Tajikistan, as well as in

Afghanistan. Indications suggest that the IMU's relationships with Tajik government officials, the Taliban, and the Northern Alliance have aided the IMU in fulfilling their important commercial objective—facilitating the trafficking of drugs through Central Asia.⁶

Drugs Emanating from Afghanistan

Until recently, Afghanistan produced 75–80 percent of the world's heroin through large-scale cultivation of opium poppies. Afghanistan's dearth of border posts and the rugged borderland have facilitated the rise of drug trafficking throughout Central Asia. Reports suggest that more than half of Afghanistan's opium exports are smuggled primarily through Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.⁷ In addition to locally co-opted traffickers, the IMU has been heavily involved in the direct trafficking of opiates from Afghanistan through Central Asia to Europe.

The 1999 IMU incursion into Kyrgyzstan arguably took place partly as a reaction to the Kyrgyz government's relatively successful control of one of the major trafficking routes during the 1990s, the highway from Khorog in Tajikistan to Osh in Kyrgyzstan—along which IMU bases in Tajikistan are located. During and after the 1999 incursion, law enforcement officials noted a threefold increase in trafficking attempts. Drug control experts assert that the IMU controls the majority, and perhaps up to 70 percent, of the narcotics entering Kyrgyzstan.⁸ Since the 1999 incursion, however, traffickers seem to have diversified their trafficking routes and no longer rely chiefly on a single road.

Complicating the problem are members of the Tajik and Russian governments, who often vocally condemn the illicit drug trade while personally facilitating its continuation. In the first public admission of its kind, a former Russian military intelligence officer confirmed in May 2001 that Russian military personnel and Tajik government officials are complicit in the Afghan drug trade.⁹ Allegedly, vehicles and vessels that provide weapons and supplies to Tajikistan for the Northern Alliance do not go back to Moscow empty; instead, they are filled with drugs and shipped directly from Tajikistan to Russian destinations.

The drug trafficking economy has had a number of effects on Central Asia. Reports indicate that the trafficking of raw opium through Tajikistan has increased the role played by heroin-making laboratories in that country.

Ascribing all Islamic militancy in the region to Afghanistan is wrong.

The recent decrease in poppy production within Afghanistan could lead to an increase in poppy cultivation in neighboring areas, including in opposition-controlled territories in Afghanistan as well as in bordering states, including Tajikistan.¹⁰

U.S. policy needs to understand the nuances and complexities of Central Asian republics.

Last spring, with little assistance from the international community, the Taliban successfully halted significant portions of its opium production after issuing a religious edict banning poppy cultivation. Although the United Nations (UN) confirmed the eradication, large stockpiles of opium and heroin still exist, as indicated by increased levels of trafficking along the Central Asian routes.¹¹ With war breaking out between the United States and

the Taliban, concern is growing that the Taliban may either repeal its opium ban to fund the war effort or simply become unable to enforce it.¹²

Importing Taliban Ideology

Beyond drug trafficking, the rise of the Taliban government has had crucial consequences for Central Asia. The victory of radical Islam in Afghanistan has led to a limited but noticeable ideological spillover beyond Afghanistan's borders. Although these radical views remain marginal, the Taliban's overthrow of a corrupt government and imposition of order has impressed Islamic-oriented segments of the Central Asian population. Given the rampant corruption, mismanagement, and economic deprivation of Central Asian countries, imagining that the Taliban phenomenon might serve as an example for these groups is not difficult.

More directly, since the Taliban took control of most of Afghanistan's territory in 1998, the country has served as a training ground for Islamic militants who later fought in conflicts from Indian-administered Kashmir to China's Muslim-majority Xinjiang Province, the Philippines, Chechnya, and Central Asia. Moreover, many members of international terrorist networks have done part of their training in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, emerging as a safe haven for the global Islamic militant movement, has had a destabilizing influence on practically all of its neighbors and far beyond. As far as Central Asia is concerned, IMU bases in Afghanistan have made Afghanistan a direct threat to regional security.

Evidence increasingly suggests that the IMU has shifted its tactics to align itself more directly with and fight alongside the Taliban in Afghani-

stan, despite the fact that the IMU's largely ethnic Uzbek and Tajik composition contrasts with the Pashtun Taliban. In the summer of 2001, IMU members reportedly participated for the first time in the Taliban campaign against the United Front.¹³ Additionally, signs indicate that, faced with a strengthened Uzbek military, members of the group are more quietly infiltrating other countries in the region, namely Kyrgyzstan, which would symbolize a switch in tactics from head-on military incursions. The IMU may now seek instead to spread its militants in the region, especially in southern Kyrgyzstan, in order to create a challenge from within.¹⁴

Poverty in Central Asia

Although Afghanistan has undoubtedly contributed to the destabilization of Central Asia through drug trafficking and the harboring of terrorists, ascribing all crime and Islamic militancy in the region to Afghanistan would be erroneous. In fact, many of Central Asia's problems are homegrown. Islamic sentiment in the Ferghana Valley region had already expressed itself in the early 1990s, long before the Taliban movement even existed. During the past decade in Central Asia, opposition figures and journalists have been arrested and sometimes beaten, press freedoms have been significantly curbed, and basic human rights such as freedom of religion and freedom of speech have been violated.¹⁵ By limiting the number of available channels for opposition and expression, these crackdowns have exacerbated the situation.

The region's catastrophic economic condition is another primary cause of societal discontent. Despite a marginal increase in gross domestic product in the past few years, overall living standards and production outputs remain far below 1991 levels in all of the Central Asian republics; only Kazakhstan is doing better economically.¹⁶ Endemic corruption and a lack of governmental and economic reform have compounded the situation; large portions of the population live below the poverty line and sustain their existence through the informal economy and shuttle-trading across borders.¹⁷

Since 1999, drought in the region has severely exacerbated an already fragile economic situation. In October 2001, international aid agencies warned that more than seven million people in Central Asia were vulnerable to famine in the coming winter. The drought is particularly damaging because much of the population in Central Asia lives in rural areas and depends on agriculture to survive. Only Kazakhstan had a majority of its population in urban areas as of 1990, while more than two-thirds of both Kyrgyzstan's and Tajikistan's populations live in rural areas.¹⁸

Due to security concerns and the threat of extremist incursions, governments have been diverting funds that could be used for social programs and

development projects to purchase military equipment and to train their border guards in order to bolster security. Regional governments, including those of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, have also begun to mine parts of their borders to prevent the infiltration of unwanted extremists. This precaution has negatively affected both local civilians who have fallen victim to unmarked landmines and the large portions of the population who rely on shuttle trading. The increasing obstacles for the local population to sustain their livelihoods, coupled with rapid population growth in the region, serves as a breeding ground for extremist groups to curry favor with disenfranchised and poverty-stricken segments of society.

The Rise of the Hizb-ut-Tahrir

Tapping into this frustration are groups such as a secretive organization called Hizb-ut-Tahrir, (HuT) which offers young, unemployed, and disappointed citizens an alternative. Founded in 1952 with its roots in the Middle East, the HuT shares the stated aim of the IMU—the establishment of an Islamic state across present borders in Central Asia. Unlike the IMU, however, HuT seeks to achieve this objective by propagating its tenets at the grassroots level with leaflets and fliers, rather than the use of force.¹⁹

Practically unknown three years ago, HuT has amassed remarkable support in the Ferghana region, especially as it offers an opposition voice to regional governments, which often exile or jail members of this and other opposition parties. In the spring of 2000, after having spread through parts of Uzbekistan, the group's activities intensified in northern Tajikistan and southern Kyrgyzstan. The relatively educated, urban youth appears to be a primary element among active members of HuT, and these members focus on spreading their message in rural areas among the poorer segments of society.²⁰

Within the last year, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Tajik security services have arrested hundreds, if not thousands, of suspected HuT members but seem to be fighting a losing struggle against the organization. Its popularity is growing in Uzbekistan, as well as in Kyrgyzstan, where an estimated 10 percent of the population in southern Kyrgyzstan is active in HuT. The group has been particularly effective among disenfranchised ethnic Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan, as well as among Uzbeks in Tajikistan and Tajiks in Uzbekistan, playing on their perceptions of being second-class citizens.²¹

Whereas the IMU largely discredited itself in the public eye because of its violent approach, HuT is gradually presenting itself as the only viable opposition to the present ruling elites. The lack of secular opposition forces, especially in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, where most of the opposition is in exile or jail, has been an important factor in the quick rise of HuT. The or-

ganizational skills HuT apparently possesses, including working in cells of five to seven people, only one of whom has any contact with a higher level of the HuT, and a well-funded treasury with contributions from Middle Eastern countries have also played their part.

U.S. Policy Challenges in Central Asia

In order to stem the rise of the HuT and other subversive groups in Central Asia, the United States must act now to develop a comprehensive and creative policy toward the region. Current U.S. policy has been largely ad hoc, lacking a thorough understanding of the nuances of the Central Asian republics and the complexity of their problems.²² Initial engagement with the region in the early to mid-1990s concentrated on legislation to provide bilateral and economic development assistance to the region (the Freedom Support Act of 1992); the removal of nuclear weapons from the newly independent states, including Kazakhstan; and the development of the Caspian energy reserves.

Since the first IMU incursion in 1999, significant U.S. attention has focused on building the Central Asian republics' capacity to defend their own borders. Even before September 11, Central Asia had been identified as a region of increased concern due to bin Laden's presence in Afghanistan and the IMU's purported links to his network. As a direct result of these concerns, the United States increased its military engagement in the late 1990s with Uzbekistan in particular, but also with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in order to bolster regional security and strengthen borders.

Since September 11, the United States has become intimately involved in the region diplomatically, politically, and militarily. Uzbekistan became a key ally in the U.S. war on terrorism and the first neighbor of Afghanistan to host U.S. troops. In an unprecedented move, the United States on October 6 sent 1,000 combat troops from the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division to Uzbekistan. Although the emphasis of U.S. policy has shifted to a military strategy in Afghanistan involving the hunt for bin Laden and members of his al Qaeda network, the United States should not lose sight of the potential repercussions of its actions in the coming months on the Central Asian republics themselves.

Movements and forces connected to bin Laden's network are active in Central Asia as well. These states accept a great deal of risk for their direct involvement in the campaign against terrorism, whether or not terrorists are flushed out of Afghanistan. Militants in Central Asia could lash out against Central Asian regimes for supporting the United States. Terrorist groups unable to use Afghan territory could seek new bases in Central Asia, given its

geographical proximity and the weakness of the states in the region. Finally, the military conflict in Afghanistan could spill over into Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Given that U.S. engagement with Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries will unlikely remain limited to the short term, Uzbekistan has demanded U.S. security guarantees in exchange for its full cooperation. Other

countries in the region might follow suit. Because these countries will probably remain important components of U.S. foreign policy in the coming years, the United States must now craft a long-term policy of engagement with Central Asia that goes well beyond military and security cooperation.

The first step in crafting a U.S. policy toward Central Asia is to recognize the region's complexity, which lies in the interrelationship

between security, economic, social, and religious factors. Rebel Islamic incursions cause a government to unleash harsh security measures that negatively affect its social fabric and economy; poverty and economic hyperdepression in turn feed social discontent and sympathy toward underground Islamic groups. Breaking this vicious cycle and halting the further downward spiral of the region will necessitate an overarching strategy that includes concrete policy measures addressing the domestic and economic challenges within the Central Asian republics, as well as the repercussions of U.S. military action in the region.²³

One of the most immediate effects of U.S.-led military action in Afghanistan will be to exacerbate the already-dire refugee crisis. During the past 20 years, millions of Afghan refugees have been displaced, with neighboring Pakistan and Iran accepting more than 3 million refugees each during this period. More than 2 million Afghan refugees remain in Pakistan, and 1.5 million in Iran. Neighboring countries are reluctant to accept additional refugees because they cannot provide basic care for them. The UN estimates that more than a million additional refugees could arrive at these borders because of the ongoing military action.²⁴ The United States must continue to coordinate military and humanitarian activities by communicating military actions to international aid agencies in countries neighboring Afghanistan so that they can maximize their efforts on the ground. Further, the United States must continue to fulfill its pledge to provide funding to international humanitarian aid agencies and ensure that supplies are delivered throughout the winter on the ground as well as by air drops.

The United States must also recognize the wide variety of Islamic groups in the region and understand that not all Islamic strains and movements are an-

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tithetical to U.S. interests. In fact, Central Asia is home to perhaps the most moderate and tolerant of all Islamic branches. The difficulty for regional governments lies in drawing the line between movements that seek to destroy the current order and those that can be integrated into it. Currently, the threshold of repression has been placed at a level where most forms of opposition are considered disloyal; the official reactions to this opposition then fuel discontent and radicalize the Islamic opposition. In fact, a more inclusive approach toward moderate opposition groups, in conjunction with improvements in the economic situation, could deter potential members of the HuT and like-minded movements from joining. If current social and economic conditions persist or worsen, the HuT could spread while remaining below the radar screen and have a significant destabilizing effect should the movement amass a critical number of supporters and turn to more violent means.

In this light, the United States should reevaluate its assistance policies toward the region, particularly focusing on the weakest states, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and should concentrate on increasing its regional humanitarian and development aid. Between 1992 and 1998, for example, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan received only \$3 million and \$70 million, respectively, for economic assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development.²⁵ Even modest increases could translate into significant results. In this regard, the United States should also ensure that pledged assistance funds are allocated and implemented. Experience dictates that Tajikistan actually receives only a fraction of what has been pledged.²⁶ Finally, the United States should also help develop creative initiatives that will alleviate regional problems, including the disenfranchisement of ethnic and religious groups in the region; the economic hyperdepression and drought that plague many areas; and interstate conflicts over borders, energy, and water.

Finally, the United States should increase its support for exchange programs to the region, particularly in programs that provide opportunities for young leaders and entrepreneurs to study abroad in the United States or to engage in short-term training courses. Likewise, the forging of contacts between members of the U.S. business and political community and the countries of Central Asia will be important. One important mechanism on the political level could be the new Congressional Silk Road Caucus. This bipartisan and bicameral initiative was launched in the fall of 2001 specifically to forge U.S. economic, political, and cultural ties with the region.

The United States has a significant uphill public-relations battle when it comes to its policy toward Islamic countries worldwide. The most blatant

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example of a flawed policy has been toward Afghanistan itself. After the fall of communism and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the United States simply disengaged from the scene and left Pakistan with the problems the joint U.S.-Pakistani proxy war in Afghanistan had created, such as warlordism, a massive refugee population, Islamic militancy, and

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drug trafficking. This departure contributed in no small part to the rise of the Taliban and Pakistan's support for it. This time, the United States should be careful not to repeat in Central Asia—or in Pakistan—the mistakes of the 1980s. The United States needs to reassure these countries that its engagement is long term and not limited to a short antiterrorist operation that could leave its allies more vulnerable.

The United States will have a sizable advantage when it engages in the region this time because the governments and people of the Central Asian republics value how Western governments—especially the United States—perceive them. With the depth of the region's current problems, a policy that lacks understanding of the dynamics in Central Asia may exacerbate an already fragile situation and allow the Western-prophesized “Islamic tide” to swallow the region.

Notes

1. Central Asia, defined geographically, is commonly understood as the region encompassing the five former Soviet “stans,” which are now states celebrating the tenth anniversaries of their independence this year: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The region that is Central Asia, however, historically extends beyond the borders of the five newly independent Central Asian republics to western China and Afghanistan. The term “Central Asia” in this article refers to the wider definition of the region, which includes Afghanistan. The term “Central Asian republics” refers exclusively to the newly independent Central Asian states.
2. The titles of some of the early books on the region reflected this paradigm clearly. See Ahmed Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism* (London: Zed, 1994); Dilip Hiro, *Between Marx and Muhammad* (London: Harper Collins, 1994).
3. Specifically, the Washington, D.C.-based Islamic Supreme Council of America, part of the Naqshbandiya order, supports the current government in Uzbekistan. See <http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org>.
4. For a wider discussion of political Islam, see Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: Tauris, 1994); John L. Esposito, *Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform?* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997).

5. In the summer of 2001, the IMU announced it had renamed itself as the Islamic Party of Turkestan (IPT). This change likely amounts to the acquisition of a political identity, but also extends the scope of the movement: Turkestan is the historic term for Turkic-populated regions in Central Asia, which extend far beyond Uzbekistan, the IMU's primary focus.
6. For an excellent analysis of the issue, see Tamara Makarenko, "Terrorism and Religion Mask Drug Trafficking in Central Asia," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 12, no. 11 (November 1, 2000).
7. Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Central Asia: Charges Link Russian Military to Drug Trade," *RFE/RL*, June 8, 2001. For detailed information on the drug trafficking situation in Central Asia, see also Martha Brill Olcott and Natalia Udalova, "Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road: The Security Environment in Central Asia," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Working Paper*, no. 11, March 2000.
8. International drug control officials, communications with author, Washington, D.C., May 2001; Tamara Makarenko, "Crime and Terrorism in Central Asia," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 12, no. 7 (July 1, 2000).
9. See Asal Azamova, "The Military Is in Control of Drug Trafficking in Tajikistan," *Moscow News*, no. 22 (May 30, 2001) (interview with Anton Surikov).
10. "Civil Order Still a Distant Prospect in Tajikistan," *Jamestown Monitor*, July 18, 2001.
11. "Russians Seize Two Tons of Opium," United Press International, July 15, 2001; Alexei Igushev, "Tajikistan: Two Tons of Opium Went Up in Smoke," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, August 1, 2001.
12. Ken Guggenheim, "Afghan Opium Production May Rise," Associated Press, September 26, 2001; Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Afghanistan Remains a Major Drug Trader despite Taliban Ban," *New York Times*, September 26, 2001, sec. B, p. 4.
13. Anthony Davis, "Foreign Fighters Step Up Activity in Afghan Civil War," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 13, no. 8 (August 1, 2001). The Taliban government has also reportedly appointed the IMU military leader, Juma Namangani, to the post of commander in chief for military operations against the Northern Alliance. See "Saudi Bin-Ladin Appointed Afghan Taleban Commander in Chief," BBC Monitoring, Tajik Radio first programme, Dushanbe, in Tajik, August 1, 2001.
14. Aziz Soltobayev, "Collective Security Exercises," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, September 26, 2001. See also Arslan Koichiev, "Skirmishes Suggest IMU Is Changing Tactics," *Eurasianet*, August 6, 2001.
15. Human rights groups such as Human Rights Watch and the Committee to Protect Journalists have thoroughly documented these cases. See also Fiona Hill, "Silencing Central Asia: The Voice of Dissidents," testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittees on International Operations and Human Rights and on the Middle East and South Asia, July 18, 2001, available on the Brookings Institution Web site at <http://www.brook.edu/views/testimony/hill/20010718.htm>.
16. This steep decline is largely a result of the collapse of industries that could only be sustained through the Soviet supply and distribution system. See Nancy Lubin, Keith Martin, and R. Rubin, *Calming the Ferghana Valley* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 1999), p. 61.
17. See Gulzina Karim Kyzy, "Kyrgyz Shuttle Trade in Crisis," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, August 1, 2001. See International Crisis Group, "Incubators of Regional Conflict? Hyper-Depression in Localities in Central Asia," *ICG Asia Report* no. 16, p. 8.

18. For details on demographics and the rural population in the Central Asian republics, see Cynthia Buckley, "Rural/Urban Differentials in Demographic Processes: The Central Asian States," *Population Research and Policy Review* 17, no. 1 (February 1998): 71–89.
19. For more details on Hizb-ut-Tahrir in the region, see Uran Botobekov, "Spreading the Ideas of the Hizb-ut-Tahrir in South Kyrgyzstan," in *Islam in the Post-Soviet Newly Independent States: The View from Within*, eds. Alexei Malashenko and Martha Brill Olcott (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center, July 2001); Bakhtiyar Babadzhonov, "On the Activities of Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan," in *Islam in the Post-Soviet Newly Independent States: The View from Within*, eds. Alexei Malashenko and Martha Brill Olcott (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center, July 2001). Both works are available at <http://pubs.carnegie.ru/english/books/2001/07am2/toc.asp>. A wealth of information from and on radical Islamic movements is posted on the Internet. Examples are located at <http://www.ummah.org/> and <http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/>.
20. Alexei Igushev, "Hizb-e-Tahrir Activities in Tajikistan," *Central Asia–Caucasus Analyst*, April 11, 2001; Gulzina Karym Kyzy, "Kyrgyzstan under the Revival of the Islamic Militant Specter," *Central Asia–Caucasus Analyst*, May 23, 2001.
21. Alisher Khamidov, "Frustration Builds among Uzbeks in Southern Kyrgyzstan," *Eurasianet*, March 26, 2001.
22. For an in-depth analysis of U.S. policy toward the region over the past decade, see Fiona Hill, "A Not-So-Grand Strategy: United States Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia since 1991," *Politique étrangère* 1 (January–March 2001). The article is available in English on the Brookings Institution Web site at <http://www.brook.edu/views/articles/fhill/2001politique.htm>.
23. For additional policy recommendations for U.S. policy toward the region, see Fiona Hill, "The Caucasus and Central Asia," *Brookings Institution Policy Brief*, no. 80, May 2001, available at the Brookings Institution Web site at <http://www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb080/pb80.htmf>.
24. Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, "UNHCR Prepares for Influx of Afghan Refugees into Neighboring Countries," September 26, 2001 (press release).
25. U.S. General Accounting Office, *Foreign Assistance: U.S. Economic and Democratic Assistance to the Central Asian Republics*, August 1999 (report to the chairman of the U.S. House Committee on International Relations).
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