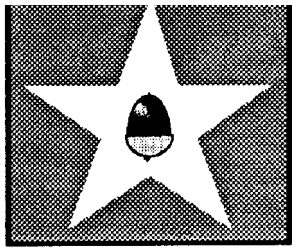
Conflict Studies Research Centre

Michael Fredholm

Uzbekistan & The Threat From Islamic Extremism

March 2003



K39

Uzbekistan & The Threat From Islamic Extremism

Michael Fredholm

This paper surveys the history of the major Islamic extremist movements in Uzbekistan and the social and political context in which the leaders and activists in these movements developed. While their potential to impose political change on Uzbekistan is limited at present, after a vigorous campaign against them, the networks established have not entirely disappeared.

"How long will countries accept oppression? Until the day of resurrection and Islamic judgement!"

Uzbek poet Yusuf Jumaev, arrested on 23 October 2001.[1]

"Such people must be shot in the head. If necessary, I will shoot them myself."

Uzbekistani President Islam Karimov on 2 May 1998, on how to deal with Islamic extremists and terrorists.[2]

Can Islamic Extremists Overthrow The Karimov Government?

That repression of the political opposition is a fact of daily life in Uzbekistan, together with a weak Soviet-style economy and falling living standards for substantial segments of the population has been shown in a number of surveys.[3] Yet President Islam Karimov remains firmly in charge of the country, apparently faced by few credible threats to his rule. Despite the activities of exiled members of the opposition and international and domestic Islamic extremists, one should not underestimate the stability of the Uzbekistani regime. Karimov is still perceived domestically as promoting, if not the national economy, then the national traditions and security of the Uzbek people. Uzbeks thus apparently accept a certain level of authoritarianism in exchange for stability and public order.

Yet Uzbekistan retains a high potential for internal unrest. As political opposition to Karimov is all but erased within Uzbekistan, the sole remaining source of opposition to the government is based on Islam, and most importantly, Islamic extremism, which is on the increase throughout Central Asia, with Uzbekistan as one of its regional bases.[4] So far, violence engendered by Islamic extremism has been limited and fairly well contained in Uzbekistan. However, it is in the interest of the international community to explore any potential cause of conflict within Uzbekistan, preferably before a widespread violent conflict breaks out, so that preventive measures can be applied. At the very least, an objective analysis along these lines will ensure that the possibilities for conflict resolution can be evaluated at an early stage in any conflict, before the facts of the situation have become too deeply distorted by the media and special interest groups.

The Islamic opposition to the Uzbek regime is not a phenomenon physically confined to that country, nor is Uzbekistan's the only government which has been affected by it. Geography and the complicated ethnic picture in the region ensure

Uzbekistan & The Threat From Islamic Extremism
Conflict Studies Research Centre
ISBN 1-904423-31-0
March 2003

that some activities of the Islamic movements, wherever they originate and whichever government is their chief target, have been identified in several neighbouring countries. Uzbek influence and counter-measures, likewise, have spread to neighbouring states.

The fertile Ferghana valley is a backward as well as the most densely populated area in all of Central Asia, home to more than ten million people, and for centuries has been a centre for Islamic traditionalism and occasional fanaticism. Since 1929 (when Tajikistan was taken out of Uzbekistan and established as a Soviet republic), the Ferghana valley has been divided among Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.[5] Northern Tajikistan has a large population of ethnic Uzbeks. A large Uzbek population also inhabits the Osh area of Kyrgyzstan, and some have agitated for the area to be transferred to Uzbekistan.[6] Uzbekistan possesses enclaves inside Kyrgyzstan unconnected by land corridors to Uzbekistan proper. In 2001, the Kyrgyz press revealed that Kyrgyzstani Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiev on 26 February 2001 had signed a secret memorandum with Uzbekistani Prime Minister Otkir Sultonov granting Uzbekistan sufficient land to acquire a land corridor to one of the enclaves, Sukh. This caused a furore in Kyrgyzstan, and the Kyrgyzstani parliament refused to ratify the agreement. Uzbekistan, however, has published official maps according to which a land corridor exists.[7]

The incursions of armed Uzbek Islamic extremists into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan's assistance in repulsing the extremists have served to highlight the Uzbek influence in this part of Kyrgyzstan. It is clear that Kyrgyzstan does not possess the armed strength to repulse such incursions without outside help, nor is she likely to be able to do so in the near future despite some attempts at military reform and recruitment.[8]

Uzbekistan has not hesitated to send security forces into neighbouring states to arrest political leaders opposed to President Karimov, sometimes without notifying the authorities or only doing so after the event. In January 1998, for instance, Uzbek opposition leader Zakirjan Normatov was arrested in Osh in Kyrgyzstan and taken to Uzbekistan.[9] In June 1994, two dissidents, Murod Zhoraev and Erkin Ashurov, were seized in Almaty, Kazakstan, by Uzbekistani security forces.[10]

Uzbekistan controls or at least wields a strong influence over a number of ethnic Uzbek warlords from neighbouring countries. The Afghan Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum was used as a force against the Afghan Taliban movement, but also against extremist groups of the Uzbekistani Islamic opposition then (and possibly still)[11] based in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.[12] While Dostum no doubt regarded those as his enemies no less than his Afghan adversaries, and Uzbekistan appears to have paid handsomely for the favour in the form of military aid (including the occasional air strike),[13] supplies, and hard cash,[14] the chief beneficiary was Uzbekistani President Karimov.

A similar warlord although of lesser stature was the Tajikistani, ethnically half-Uzbek, Colonel Mahmud Khudoiberdiev. He was reported to have been murdered in September 2001, although no evidence has been presented to prove his death (despite the two years since then, it therefore remains possible that he is alive, and that his reported death was a post-11 September plot by Uzbekistan to avoid accusations of harbouring a terrorist). In February 1996, August 1997, October 1997, and again on 4 November 1998, Khudoiberdiev staged armed uprisings in western Tajikistan, close to the Uzbekistani border, from his main bases of support in the Qurghonteppa (Kurgan-Tyube) and Khojand regions. Each time, he was said

to have invaded Tajikistan from camps located inside Uzbekistan, with military support and no doubt encouragement from Uzbekistan. The reason for Uzbekistan's support may have been the exclusion since the peace agreement of 1997 from Tajikistan's new coalition government of Khojand-based political elites who traditionally used to dominate Tajikistani politics and supplied all the republic's top leaders from 1937 to the civil war of 1992-1997. The strong Uzbek minority in Khojand has ensured that this elite retains the political support of Uzbekistan.[15]

Despite losing its main support base in Afghanistan with the fall of the Taliban, the greatest threat to the government of president Karimov may still be the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which from bases in Afghanistan and Tajikistan during 1999 and 2000 launched major raids into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.[16] Skirmishes, although perhaps geographically limited to Kyrgyzstan, continued in 2001.[17] To counter this threat, Karimov not only supported Dostum but also had the state borders mined in the districts believed to be at greatest risk.[18] This includes the borders with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Other measures to limit cross-border movement include the blasting of mountain passes, construction of fortifications at exposed points, and intensified surveillance of borders. The population of several border villages has also been permanently relocated and the villages destroyed, ostensibly for the safety of the villagers but possibly to deny the extremists a support base.[19]

The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan

Origins Of The Movement

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), or *O'zbekiston Islom Harakati* as it is known locally (*Harakat ul-Islamiyyah* in Arabic),[20] can be said to have formed part of the Arab Afghan network and shared recruiting base (primarily unemployed young men) as well as attitudes to Wahhabism with the Taliban and the Arab Afghans, the Islamic extremists in Afghanistan. The movement relied on bases in Afghanistan (Mazar-e Sharif, Kondoz, and Taloqan) and Tajikistan (Hoit in the Karategin valley and Sangvor in the Tavildara valley).[21]

The groups that comprised the IMU had their origin in the public manifestation of the Islamic movement called *Adolat* ("Justice"), which arose in the city of Namangan in the Uzbek part of the Ferghana valley in 1990 as a response to what was perceived as widespread corruption and social injustice exposed by the liberal *perestroyka* era as well as the resurgence in Islamic activities no longer prohibited by the Soviet government. The movement, funded by sources in Saudi Arabia, was led by two young men: the passionate college drop-out and local mullah Tohir Yuldosh and the former conscript soldier Jumaboy Khojiev (later known as Juma Namangani). In 1990, the movement built the first of several mosques and madrassahs. From November 1991 to the spring of 1992, the movement, which primarily consisted of unemployed young men, apparently as many as five thousand, went on to organise protest meetings and occupy government buildings. The movement formed its own vigilante religious police force which administered summary justice in the streets. In April 1991, President Karimov, arriving to talk to the militants, was shouted down. In December 1991, the militants occupied the Communist Party of Uzbekistan headquarters. In no time, branches of Adolat rose across the Ferghana valley, in Andijon, Margilan, Kuva, Farghona and Osh (in Kyrgyzstan).[22]

Tohir (or Tohirjon) Abduhalilovich Yuldosh (also known in Russian as Tahir Yuldashev and in Arabic as Muhammad Tahir Farooq (Farukh in Russian)), was born in 1968.[23] His father died when he was five, and he was brought up by his mother, Karomat Asqarova.[24] An early member of the Uzbekistani branch of the All-Union Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), founded in Astrakhan in June 1990, he had grown disillusioned with this party's refusal to demand an Islamic state. Together with other likeminded young Uzbeks, Yuldosh formed Adolat as a platform for his demand for an Islamic revolution.[25]

Jumaboy Ahmadjonovich Khojiev, an ethnic Uzbek born in 1968 in Namangan, graduated from agricultural vocational school before he was drafted into the Soviet army in 1987. He reportedly served as an airborne soldier in Afghanistan during the last phase of the Soviet war there, eventually being promoted to sergeant, unless the elite airborne episode too is part of the myth that soon grew around his person. He is said to have become interested in Islam during his term in Afghanistan.[26]

Although Wahhabism remained unknown among government leaders at this early stage, it was clear to them that Adolat was out of control. Adolat was banned in March 1992, and the Uzbekistani government restored order, dissolving the movement. Several Adolat leaders, including Yuldosh and Khojiev, who now took the name Juma Namangani after his hometown, in 1992 fled to Tajikistan, where they joined the Tajikistani branch of the IRP, by then preparing to launch a violent civil war in Tajikistan.[27] There the two young men embarked upon very different careers, although aiming for the same broad goals.

Yuldosh began what can only be called a political career. When the civil war moved against the IRP, he joined the other key IRP leaders in exile in Afghanistan. He also travelled to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and later to Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and perhaps the Caucasus as well, to make contacts with other radical groups and to request funding from the intelligence services in these countries. Pakistan's Inter-services Intelligence agency (ISI) offered continuous funding and a base in Peshawar, the centre of the Arab Afghans. Yuldosh remained based there from 1995 to 1998. Yuldosh also received funds from various Islamic charities and, according to Russian and Uzbekistani officials, the intelligence services of Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey. Saudi Arabia contained a large Uzbek diaspora, the ancestors of which had fled there during the 1918-1928 Basmachi revolts against the Soviet power. Being now committed Wahhabis, they eagerly offered their support to Yuldosh.[28]

When Namangani arrived in Qurghonteppa, Tajikistan, in 1992, he brought with him some thirty Uzbeks and several Arabs, who had served as emissaries to Adolat from Saudi Islamic charities. These men formed the core of Namangani's force, which within months attracted additional recruits from Uzbekistan, soon totalling some two hundred, as well as additional Arabs from Afghanistan. Namangani then volunteered the services of his men and himself, as a subordinate commander, to the IRP-supported United Tajik Opposition (UTO) during the Tajik civil war. The IRP in its turn attached several Tajiks to Namangani's group and moved the volunteers to a camp in the village of Sangvor in the Tavildara valley, which became Namangani's base after 1993. Namangani, a charismatic leader and tough disciplinarian although somewhat erratic, temperamental and authoritarian, was a useful field commander to the UTO. He also made several valuable friends within the Tajik IRP: Hakim Kalindarov, who led the Tavildara groups together with Namangani, and most importantly, Mirzo Zioev, the IRP's army chief of staff from

1996 and thereby Namangani's direct superior. Zioev was the nephew of Said Abdullo Nuri, head of the IRP, and after the civil war became minister of emergency situations in the new coalition government. As for Namangani, he learnt some Tajik and married an Uzbek woman, with whom he had a daughter (in early 2001, Namangani also married a Tajik widow with two sons whose husband, an IRP member, had been killed in the Tajik civil war and accordingly was regarded as a martyr; Namangani's Uzbek wife and daughter were then in Afghanistan).[29] He also occasionally travelled to Afghanistan to meet the IRP political leadership.[30]

After the Tajik civil war ended in 1997, Namangani at first refused to accept the end of the jihad against the government. Zioev finally persuaded him to cease fighting, and Namangani settled his men at his camp in the Tavildara valley. As for himself, he acquired a residence in Hoit, a small village north of Garm in the Karategin valley. He soon appears to have become heavily involved in the transportation of heroin from Afghanistan to Tajikistan and onwards to Russia and Europe, at times travelling to Afghanistan himself. Namangani also formed a substantial personal military force, mostly Uzbeks but also Arabs, Tajiks, and Chechens. Many of his men were accompanied by their families.[31]

Yuldosh & Namangani Establish The IMU

In 1997, Yuldosh travelled to Hoit to meet his old associate Namangani. Neither was pleased with the end of the jihad. They accordingly agreed to form a new group to continue the jihad against their native country and other states in Central Asia. Some claim that Usamah bin Laden was the one who urged them to create the group. Be that as it may, it seems clear that Al-Qaeda contributed funds to the new movement. Both Yuldosh and Namangani certainly favoured Wahhabi Islam and agreed with the anti-Western rhetoric of Usamah bin Laden. In 1998, Yuldosh settled in Afghanistan, in a building offered by the Taliban in Wazir Akbar Khan, the diplomatic quarter of Kabul. He also received a residence in Kandahar. In the summer of 1998, Yuldosh and Namangani met in Kabul to formally establish the new group, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the formation of which they announced. Yuldosh also pledged to set up an Islamic state. Namangani then returned to Tajikistan. From among the Wahhabis of originally Uzbek origin from the Arabian peninsula, they (probably Yuldosh) picked Zubayr ibn Abdur Raheem, reputedly a descendant of the Mangit family which formerly ruled Bukhara, as head of the religious leadership of the IMU. The latter on 25 August 1999 issued a declaration of jihad against the government of Uzbekistan, in which he also proclaimed that foreign tourists coming to Uzbekistan would be attacked.[32]

A series of six car bomb attacks in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent had already occured on 16 February 1999, in what possibly was an attempt on the life of President Karimov that in any case killed 16 and injured more than 130 people.[33] Uzbekistani intelligence accused Yuldosh of having organised the attacks from the United Arab Emirates. Uzbekistan was consequently applying pressure on Tajikistan to expell Namangani and his men. Namangani, however, in early summer 1999 had left Hoit and moved to his camp in Sangvor in the Tavildara valley, preparing for war. In August 1999 (a date no doubt co-ordinated with the declaration of jihad the same month), he left his Sangvor camp and moved into Kyrgyzstan. Meanwhile, Yuldosh dispatched supplies and new recruits provided by the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Pakistan, and various groups in the Arabian peninsula, including the Uzbek diaspora there. Additional funds came from profits in the heroin trade.[34]

In August 1999, Namangani dispatched several small IMU guerrilla groups into Kyrgyzstan towards the Uzbekistani Sukh and the Tajikistani Vorukh enclaves. On 9 August, a twenty-one-man group kidnapped the mayor and three officials of a small village west of Osh. The group demanded $1 million in ransom, supplies, and a helicopter to fly to Afghanistan. On 13 August, the Kyrgyzstani government gave in, granting the guerrillas safe passage back to Tajikistan - and probably a ransom of $50,000 - in exchange for the hostages. This enraged Uzbekistani President Karimov, who retaliated by ordering air raids on the towns of Tavildara and Garm in Tajikistan, where the IMU enjoyed considerable support - an attack vigorously protested against by the Tajikistani government. Other IMU guerrilla groups, approximately 50 to 150 IMU fighters, then moved into the area around Batken in Kyrgyzstan. They briefly occupied three villages and in an amazing coup also kidnapped a major general of the Kyrgyzstani Interior Ministry - the commander of the Interior Forces, no less. On 23 August, the IMU achieved international fame when an IMU group seized seven additional hostages, including four Japanese geologists. In addition, the IMU recruited more men among the local Kyrgyz. The confusion was now considerable, as most observers by then had no idea who the IMU fighters really were, not to mention what they wanted or where they were going. In addition, several Japanese agents and negotiators descended on Kyrgyzstan, a major receiver of Japanese aid, demanding the immediate release of the four geologists. By 4 September, negotiations were somehow opened, apparently through a Pakistani who was a member of the extremist organisation Sipah-e Sahaba (several Pakistanis from the two extremist groups Sipah-e Sahaba and Lashkar-e Jhangvi had by then joined Namangani), although at first without results. The Uzbekistani air force again went into action, this time launching air attacks on the IMU-held villages around Batken and Osh in Kyrgyzstan. The Kyrgyzstani army launched its own offensive against the guerrillas. This situation continued until 25 October 1999, when the hostages were released, probably in exchange for a ransom of $2 million to $6 million (different sources suggest different amounts, probably because some money disappeared on the way to the IMU), paid by Japan to Kyrgyzstani officials, who then handed it (or at least parts of it) over to the IMU. As winter approached, threatening to close the mountain passes through snowfall, the IMU guerrillas prepared to return to Tajikistan.[35]

Under intense pressure from Uzbekistan, senior representatives of the Tajikistani government including Mirzo Zioev were dispatched to persuade Namangani to leave for Afghanistan. Arriving before the IMU guerrillas returned, they negotiated with Namangani, who soon accepted a Tajikistani government rescue and transportation operation. In the first week of November 1999, some six hundred IMU guerrillas (one-third from Hoit, the rest from Sangvor), together with their families, were flown in Zioev's ministry of emergency situations transport helicopters from Kyrgyzstan (at least the wounded IMU fighters were almost certainly rescued by Zioev)[36] and Hoit and Sangvor to the Afghanistan border, where they were received by Yuldosh and his Taliban protectors. The IMU guerrillas settled down in Mazar-e Sharif, and their dependents were given quarters in an abandoned United Nations refugee camp at Kamsachi (originally set up to house Tajik refugees from Tajikistan), about 15 miles from Mazar-e Sharif, which the IMU had used since May 1999. In addition to Mazar-e Sharif, the IMU also opened offices in the residences in Kabul and Kandahar provided by the Taliban to Yuldosh.[37] However, having quite independently formed the military wing of the IMU, Namangani became the movement's main military leader, and thereby the most influential one.

In July 2000, Namangani returned to the Tavildara valley along with several hundred IMU guerrillas. In August, several IMU guerrilla groups, each probably of

no greater strength than at most a hundred, but probably more often fifty men, set out in what gave the impression of being a skilfully co-ordinated diversionary offensive in several directions at once. By thus dividing the already poorly co-ordinated enemy forces, Namangani managed to provide security for other IMU groups which were probably smuggling narcotics and weapons into enemy territory. The main fighting group again moved towards Batken, Sukh, and Vorukh in Kyrgyzstan. Another group appears to have remained in Tajikistan, moving through the Zeravshan valley towards Penjikent, where it turned south into the as yet poorly defended Surkhondaryo (Surkhandarya) province of Uzbekistan. There a base was established with some 170 IMU guerrillas, most probably from already established sleeper cells or recent recruits from the local population. Yet another group appears to have gone to Khojand in northern Tajikistan and somehow crossed into Uzbekistan, ultimately taking up positions in the mountains north of Tashkent. Fighting - and considerable confusion among civilians and government forces - broke out on all three fronts. Namangani had proved himself a master guerrilla leader, able to cause significant mayhem with only a handful of men.[38]

On 12 August 2000, the Batken guerrillas kidnapped first twelve mountaineers of various nationalities, then an additional four specifically American ones. The IMU guerrillas kept the American mountaineers but either abandoned or lost track of the other foreigners. The Americans were rescued within days. However, upon their return to the United States, they in a lucrative deal sold what apparently was a highly embellished account of their heroic struggle against and escape from the extremists to a major publisher and the movie rights to the tale to Universal Studios. The Clinton administration responded to the media attention (and the burgeoning Uzbekistani co-operation with the CIA) in September 2000 by declaring the IMU, which it hitherto had barely noticed, a terrorist organisation. When the IMU withdrew the surviving guerrillas in late October, and Namangani himself apparently went to Afghanistan, the United States was already flying in military supplies and counterinsurgency equipment to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. So did Russia, China, Turkey, France and Israel.[39]

In late November 2000, Namangani left Afghanistan and returned to Tajikistan with a force of some three hundred guerrillas. Mirzo Zioev was again dispatched to Tavildara to negotiate Namangani's return to Afghanistan. In January 2001, Namangani and most of his men (a small garrison was left in the Sangvor camp) were again airlifted by Zioev's government transport helicopters to the Afghan border.[40]

IMU Strategy

Why had the IMU, which wished to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan, for two years in a row instead invaded Kyrgyzstan? Two explanations are possible. One reason my be found in the geography and social situation of the region. The population of Kyrgyzstan includes large numbers of ethnic Uzbeks, and the country, in addition, is located between the areas held by extremists in Tajikistan (the Garm, Jirgatal, and Tavildara districts) and the populous Ferghana valley, shared by Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan and one of the suspected targets of the IMU intrusions.[41] Due to the Ferghana valley's large population and its conservative attitudes to Islam, the valley may be the only area in Uzbekistan where Islamic extremists are likely to gain a wide following - and from which they may be able to create an uprising sufficiently strong to make an impact against the Uzbekistani government.

The Ferghana valley, which saw considerable resistance to Russian forces before their conquest and occupation of the valley in 1876, has a history of violent uprisings. In 1898, peasant unrest in Andijon was used by local religious and secular groups to challenge local administrators as much as Russian control. A new uprising, again partly of a religious character, took place in 1916 in response to the Mobilisation Decree calling for Central Asian men to be drafted for support activities for the First World War Russian war effort. This was followed by the 1918-1928 revolt of the Basmachi ("bandits", originally a term of Soviet propaganda) movement, a response to the brutal Soviet suppression of local autonomy. Violence again erupted in June 1989 when bloody riots took place in the Ferghana valley in a conflict between ethnic Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks. The conflict was fundamentally engendered by economic decline. In June 1990, ethnic violence occurred between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the Osh district of Kyrgyzstan's part of the valley.[42]

In Kyrgyzstan, there are also two Uzbekistani enclaves that are geographically separated from (indeed unconnected to) Uzbekistan: Sukh and Shah-e Mardon. The Sukh enclave, with a predominantly Tajik population of some 43,000 people, belongs to Uzbekistan. Favourably disposed to the IRP during the Tajik civil war, many of these Tajiks subsequently transfered their loyalty to the IMU. The fact that there is no land route between the enclave and the Uzbekistani main territory made conditions favourable for the IMU in effect to occupy a piece of Uzbekistani territory - and a territory in which they could expect to win popular support - in a move the Uzbekistani army could not defeat or even react to except by a risky airlift operation. Besides, another similarly located enclave within Kyrgyzstan is the Vorukh enclave, home of a predominantly Tajik population of some 25,000 people. Vorukh, which belongs to Tajikistan, is another hotbed of Islamic extremism and support for the IMU.[43]

However, another explanation for the IMU raids is equally possible. They were perhaps less connected with the Islamic revolution than attempts to maintain transportation routes for narcotics trafficking. There is an increasing flow of narcotics from and through Kyrgyzstan (drugs from Afghanistan but also locally-produced opiates and marijuana from the Ferghana valley), and Osh has become a particularly important way-station.[44] As the raids certainly were aimed at geographical objectives in the vicinity of known smuggling routes, this explanation cannot be ruled out. When small groups of raiders engaged the security forces in certain districts, the latter - too thinly stretched to keep continuous control over the border - certainly left a number of other routes unguarded, thus allowing the extremists the opportunity to move large shipments of narcotics through the region.[45] In this way, it also became possible to move weapons, ammunition, and military supplies to the IMU sleeper cells in Uzbekistan.[46] Whether such movements actually took place seems to be known only to the IMU leadership. However, fuel and ammunition, not to mention wages to fighters, cost large amounts of cash, especially so if the extremists recruit criminals and former soldiers, which appears to be the case, and not only inexperienced and uneducated volunteers.[47] The extremists need money and cannot rely only on sympathisers abroad. To distinguish between political and criminal activities and objectives when discussing the extremist movement may in fact be impossible and indeed regarded as irrelevant by the movement's leaders themselves.

IMU In The War On Terrorism

By early 2001, the IMU had bases in Afghanistan as well as Tajikistan. There also seemed to be substantial numbers of clandestine IMU sleeper cells in Uzbekistan.

Yuldosh had reportedly formed IMU cells in the Ferghana valley and also in Surkhondaryo, in southeastern Uzbekistan on the border with Tajikistan.[48] It seems more likely, however, that the latter were formed by Namangani during his stay in the area.

In Afghanistan, the base at Kamsachi was commanded by Tal Udeshev, who escaped from Uzbekistan immediately after the bombings in Tashkent in February 1999 and, after a brief stay in Peshawar, Pakistan, moved there with the blessings of the Taliban. His group consisted of 300-400 people, including perhaps as many as fifty Uighurs from China.[49] It has been suggested that the Taliban sent diplomatically embarrassing recruits such as Uighurs and Chechens to the IMU when they or their sponsor Pakistan were under pressure from respectively China and Russia to cease their support to such groups. Pakistani extremists wanted by the Pakistani authorities were also quietly dispatched to the IMU.[50] There were also bases in Kondoz, and a large IMU contingent (estimated to be 800 strong) after autumn 2000 formed part of the Taliban garrison in Taloqan.[51]

However, the main military leader of the IMU, and thereby the movement's most influential leader, was clearly Namangani. He was reputed not to get along very well with Udeshev.[52] The total strength of the movement is not known, although it has been estimated that the majority of the Arab Afghans in Central Asia (at the very most, an estimated 2,000 in Afghanistan and another 2,000 in Tajikistan; probably far less on both accounts as these figures no doubt also included dependents) were in fact IMU members, except perhaps 500 to 1,000 Arabs who served directly under Usamah bin Laden.[53] In the spring of 2001, an eyewitness reported some four hundred men in Namangani's base at Sangvor in the Tavildara valley. The membership of the IMU predominantly consisted of Uzbeks, and Tajiks from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. There were, however, also believed to be many Kyrgyz as well as ethnic Uzbeks and Tajiks from Afghanistan, and some Arabs, Pakistanis, Uighurs, Chechens, and even Slavs.[54] Some reports indicate that the IMU used Russian as a common language.[55] Morale was high, and like Al-Qaeda's Arabs, few IMU guerrillas ever surrendered, even when cornered by government troops.[56]

Despite this, the IMU can be singled out as different from the Arab Afghans as the movement - at least so far - principally fought the neighbouring governments (Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan) and thereby formed a native fighting force rather than the global movement espoused by Usamah bin Laden. It should, however, be noted that many members of the IMU appeared to originate from Afghanistan or the Arabian peninsula.

The IMU also had a greater propensity for terrorist activities *within* the region than the members of Usamah bin Laden's network, standing accused of the 1999 car bomb attacks in Tashkent.[57] For this reason, the IMU could be regarded as the key terrorist threat in Central Asia.

As compared to the often eloquently argued global aspirations of the Arab Afghans, presented on the Internet and in various publications, only limited amounts of information specifically from the IMU ever reached the West. Nonetheless, the motivation, means, and background of the IMU - so far - appeared to be essentially identical to that of the Arab Afghans. Another similarity was that the IMU forged intimate links with the Taliban. Namangani, in return for the patronage of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, not only allowed his forces to protect narcotics being smuggled from Afghanistan into Central Asia but also partly merged his units with

the Taliban in the war on the Northern Alliance. Due to these intimate ties, the IMU is believed to have established contacts with most or all Islamic extremist groups with a presence in Afghanistan. These included the Algerian *Groupe Islamique Armé* ("Armed Islamic Group," GIA) and *Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat* ("Salafi Group for Call and Combat," GSPC); the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (IFG); the Pakistani and Kashmiri group *Harakat ul-Mujahidin* ("Movement of Warriors in the Way of God"), the Yemeni *Jaish Aden abin al-Islami* ("Aden-Abyan Islamic Army", AAIA); the Somalian *Al-Itihaad al-Islamiyya* ("Islamic Alliance," AIAI); and various radical Palestinian, Chechen, and Uighur groups.[58]

It is unlikely that the IMU received much funding from supporters in Uzbekistan. While Islamic charities often collect funds for extremist groups, such collection would be difficult to organise in Uzbekistan due to the strict controls the state has imposed on mosques and religious institutions. There is, however, reason to believe that Islamic charities elsewhere, particularly in Pakistan, supplied the IMU, as they also supplied the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. So was, for instance, the Al-Rashid Trust, run by Mullah Khail al-Rashid, accused of smuggling weapons and supplies, disguised as humanitarian aid, to the Taliban and IMU.[59]

The IMU, due to its close association with the Taliban, was known to be armed as any other Taliban unit. In addition, the IMU was reportedly armed with Russian sniper rifles, night vision equipment, grenade launchers, pistols and silencers, some of which were acquired from military units in Central Asia.[60] Although it seems to be beyond doubt that the Pakistani ISI supported the IMU, some senior ISI officers reportedly believed that the IMU instead was under the control of the Russian intelligence or security services. The cause for this probably erroneous belief was the apparent ease with which the IMU crossed Central Asian borders.[61]

The political structure of the IMU remains unclear to this day and to some extent probably reflected the divisions within the organisation. Yuldosh was chief political leader. Zubayr ibn Abdur Raheem fulfilled the role of head of the religious leadership and also appeared to be the chairman of the supreme council of the IMU. However, the IMU military commander Namangani, who was known in Afghanistan as Juma Hakim[62] and also was one of the Taliban de facto defence ministers, until his death in November 2001[63] remained the most influential leader of the organisation. The organisation of the group also remained unclear at the military level. While the IMU boasted brigades formed according to ethnic backgrounds, and did carry out joint operations with Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, most of the activities outside Afghanistan consisted of guerrilla raids and drug running accomplished by small units, typically of around 15 men, under what appears to have been local commanders.[64]

In mid-2000, a new group allied to the IMU was said to have been formed, the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan (IMT). There were also rumours about an Islamic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (IMK). So far, little is known about these groups, if they ever existed.[65] On 20 May 2001, however, it was reported that Namangani a few months earlier had launched a political party under the name of *Hezb-e Islami Turkestan* ("Islamic Party of Turkestan," IPT), as an umbrella organisation of the IMU with the awoved intention to include not only Uzbekistan but also Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Chinese Xinjiang in his movement's area of operations. Namangani appointed himself leader of the party, with Yuldosh as his deputy. The IPT was reportedly formed in the Taliban-held Deh-e Dadi town, south of Mazar-e Sharif, which served as Namangani's headquarters among the IMU

training camps along the Amu Darya river.[66] Some claimed that not all IMU leaders agreed with the change. These various organisational changes may have indicated factional splits within the organisation.[67]

However, the existence of any such splits may now never become known. By late July 2001, IMU guerrillas were again attacking government forces on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border in the Batken region. Yuldosh, who from his base in Afghanistan claimed responsibility for the attacks in the name of the IMU, also announced that what the Uzbekistani army earlier in the summer had claimed to have been military exercises in the Surkhondaryo province in fact had been clashes with IMU guerrillas. Whether the guerrillas had passed through Tajikistan or been recruited from the sleeper cells already in place remained unclear, although many observers believe the latter to be more likely.[68] Little else was heard of these skirmishes, before the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States brought further attention to the region. For the Uzbekistani and Kyrgyzstani, and to some extent also Tajikistani, governments, the 11 September attacks were a godsend. By offering intelligence and other co-operation, as well as the use of bases and air space, they quickly became the beneficiaries of American military aid.[69] When the Northern Alliance swept through Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, the IMU appears to have been swept aside with their Taliban sponsors.

It can be expected that the IMU to some extent survived the 2001 war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The organisation has probably regrouped in Tajikistan, where it may easily go into hiding while reforming after the losses taken during the war. IMU survivors probably also escaped into Pakistan together with Al-Qaeda. The defeat of the IMU and the death of Namangani in Afghanistan in late 2001 may signify the end of the movement. At the very least, its strength and power was severely reduced. Yet the IMU remains popular among large segments of the religiously inclined part of the Uzbekistani population. The IMU may well rise again, either under surviving leaders from one of the factions of the original group or as a completely new group, which merely assumes the name of a renowned predecessor. The myth of the IMU remains alive and well, and it has merged with the already existing myths of anti-Russian resistance in Central Asia and the Caucasus. One example will suffice: the word has spread in the villages and army garrisons of Central Asia that the advance guard of IMU guerrilla groups consists of beautiful female snipers armed with sophisticated guns and night vision goggles, equally prominent in seducing as killing enemy soldiers.[70] This myth probably derived from Chechnya, where many Russian soldiers swore that they were confronted by a legendary unit of Latvian (or Estonian, or both) women snipers known as the “White Tights” - a unit which allegedly turned up in every post-Soviet war against Russia and her allies.[71]

The connection between the IMU and the well-funded international Wahhabi Islamic movement has also enhanced the group’s popularity. In Uzbekistan, where any form of Islamic opposition is routinely labeled Wahhabism, this very persecution has given the Wahhabis a popular mystique that in fact encourages local Muslims to regard them as the only remaining true Muslims.[72]

Uzbekistan’s demographic development suggests that Islamic extremism will continue to gain converts. Poverty is rising, and unemployment in the Ferghana valley is reportedly as high as 80 per cent. Each year, an additional four hundred thousand young people look for employment, often without finding any. Sixty per cent of the population is under 25 years old, and this number is increasing.[73] This proves a fertile recruiting ground for violent extremist movements.

Hizb ut-Tahrir

Unlike the IMU, which primarily recruited in rural areas, the *Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami* ("Islamic Liberation Party") appears to draw its supporters primarily from the educated urban elite as well as college students, educated but unemployed youth, and skilled factory workers. Most of the arrested Hizb ut-Tahrir members are educated, urban men in their twenties. They are not necessarily deprived or living in poverty. Quite a few, perhaps most, appear to have been introduced to Islam for the first time through the Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hizb ut-Tahrir, which in Central Asia is known as *Hezb-e Tahriri Islomiya*, has become the most popular underground movement in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.[74]

Hizb ut-Tahrir was founded in 1953 in Jordan, allegedly but improbably in (the Muslim) East Jerusalem, by Sheikh Taqiuddin al-Nabhani (1909-1979), a Palestinian graduate of Al-Azhar and former member of the Muslim Brotherhood.[75] Working as a teacher and local Islamic judge, Nabhani had settled in Jordan after being forced to leave Palestine. Nabhani's dream was to create an Islamic Caliphate and rid the Islamic world of all Western influences. The organisation was outlawed in Jordan in 1969. In the 1970s, Hizb ut-Tahrir spread to Egypt (where it was also known as *Shabab Muhammad*, "Youth of Muhammad") and North Africa, especially Tunisia (where it achieved considerable influence in the 1980s). Some elitist cells within the party eventually appear to have penetrated the ruling circles in the Arab states, endeavouring but invariably failing to inititate a forceful change to Islam through military coups. In June 1974, Hizb ut-Tahrir members attempted an armed attack on the military academy in Cairo, Egypt, to capture weapons with which to overthrow the government. In the summer of 1992, other members, under the name of *Hizb al-Nahda* (also known as *Parti de la Renaissance*) were accused of plotting a coup d'état in Tunisia. In 1993, members of the group were accused of planning a coup against King Hussein of Jordan.[76] As the organisation was banned in most parts of the Middle East, its leaders established the organisation in Europe, in particular Germany, Denmark, and Britain, where London is believed to be a major centre. The first Hizb ut-Tahrir branch in Britain was founded in 1986 by Omar Bakri Muhammad. Muslim students in British universities currently form an important segment of the organisation's membership. Hizb ut-Tahrir is also popular in Turkey and is establishing a presence in Pakistan.[77] The modern Hizb ut-Tahrir is an international movement, active in various parts of the Islamic world and based on Wahhabi thought. It works for the reestablishment of the Caliphate (*Khilafah*). The movement engages in various campaign activities although it attempts to operate in strict secrecy.[78] The successor of Nabhani and current leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir is Sheikh Abdul Qadeem Zaloom, another Palestinian and former Al-Azhar professor whose location is kept a well-guarded secret. He is probably based in Europe.[79]

Members are organised in small cells (Arabic *da'ira*, Uzbek *halqa*, "circle;" in Tajikistan known as *ziyofat*) of five to seven people, headed by a *mushrif*. The regular members only know the other members of the circle, as the *mushrif* is the only one who maintains contact with the next higher stage of the organisation. The top leader within a country is known by the title of *mutamad*. Directly below him are regional or city leaders (*ma'sul*, "responsible, in charge"), each with his own group of district leaders (*musond*). The new member is expected to take an oath on the Koran, vowing never to betray the interests of Islam, never to reveal information about Hizb ut-Tahrir to the public, and fight for the establishment of a caliphate until the very end. After the new member has completed about two months of training, he or she is expected to form a new cell (women's and men's cells are for

religious reasons separate; and women's cells are regarded as less political and militant than those of the men). However, each aspirant must first be carefully investigated, including with regard to his place of work and home address, so as to avoid government infiltration.[80] Hizb ut-Tahrir maintains a web site with information in Arabic, Turkish, Russian, English, German, Danish, French, Urdu, and Malay.

The organisation's centre in Central Asia is Uzbekistan, where it claims eighty thousand members.[81] According to Uzbekistani officials, Hizb ut-Tahrir was only established in Uzbekistan in 1995. The first Hizb ut-Tahrir cell was set up in Tashkent by a Jordanian named Salahuddin with the help of two Uzbeks. The first Hizb ut-Tahrir pamplets in Uzbekistan, written in Arabic, apparently appeared in 1995/1996. Cells were then established elsewhere in Tashkent as well as in the Ferghana valley, whence the movement spread throughout the country and to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.[82] In Kyrgyzstan, Hizb ut-Tahrir is reputed to be very active in the Osh and Jalalabad regions, where local Uzbeks have distributed leaflets calling for the overthrow of existing governments in Central Asia and the establishment of a pan-Islamic state. The first secret cells in these regions appeared in 1997/1998, and since 1999 the activists there have worked openly. Almost 300 such activists were arrested in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2000 for distributing religious literature. The Kyrgyzstani authorities believe that ninety per cent of the members are ethnic Uzbeks, the rest ethnic Kyrgyz, and some claim that there are more than sixty thousand Hizb ut-Tahrir supporters (not necessarily members) in Osh alone. In Tajikistan, more than 150 Hizb ut-Tahrir activists were arrested in 2000. The Hizb ut-Tahrir seems to be especially strong in the northern part of the country (the movement claims twenty thousand members in Sughd Province, formerly Leninabad),[83] probably because most Uzbeks live there.[84] The movement has been banned in all three countries.[85] The Hizb ut-Tahrir is also gaining popularity in Kazakhstan, at least in the south and in Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city.[86] The movement even appears to have spread into China. In June 2001, two Hizb-ut Tahrir cells were reportedly found by Chinese authorities: one in Urumqi and one in Khotan.[87]

At present, the Hizb ut-Tahrir makes full use of videos, computer CDs, and email to publish its beliefs. Another favourite form of propaganda is the *shabnama* (a Persian word meaning "night letter"), pushed under people's doors at night. Posters are also produced and displayed on walls at night.[88] Originally, all publications were in Arabic. This has changed, and in Central Asia, most of the literature is currently in Uzbek, with some in Tajik and a few in Kyrgyz.[89] The contents as well as high quality of printing evidenced by its leaflets and other literature indicates that much of it comes in from abroad, some apparently from Libya. The movement also seems to receive funding from abroad, as at least the rank-and-file members of the organisation, mainly young men from 17 to 25 years of age, from time to time reportedly receive rewards of fifty or a hundred dollars.[90] Members with regular jobs are instead expected to contribute from five to twenty per cent of their income to the party every month. The movement also runs small businesses to get additional funds.[91]

The IMU is believed to have sought a rapprochement with Hizb ut-Tahrir, but the latter appears to have rejected the proposal. The two movements are, however, reputed to share the same values and opinions (for instance, that Uzbekistani President Karimov is a Jew, an infidel, an enemy of Islam, and a servant of the West).[92] Propaganda against Israel and the "worldwide Zionist conspiracy" is another popular topic, as is the demand that all Shia Muslims be expelled from

Central Asia (and presumably the world).[93] In addition, several hundred Hizb ut-Tahrir members reportedly fled to Afghanistan, where they subsequently joined the IMU. Hizb ut-Tahrir literature was reportedly found on several killed IMU fighters. There is accordingly little doubt that the two organisations maintained close contacts, at least at the individual level.[94]

The views of the Hizb ut-Tahrir are simplistic and single-minded as in all other Wahhabi groups; the imposition of Islamic law is in itself believed to resolve all ethnic, social, and economic problems and create a perfect society without further ado. When a European NGO attempted to fight AIDS by propagating the use of condoms among local women, the Hizb ut-Tahrir characteristically protested, claiming that the NGO was encouraging prostitution.[95]

Uzbekistan began to move against the Hizb ut-Tahrir in May 1998, after the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations had been passed. Despite its name, this law severely restricted religious worship, banning the use of unregistered mosques and requiring that all Muslim preachers be registered.[96]

Although the Hizb ut-Tahrir remains oppressed, its very aura of resistance appears to encourage new converts to the movement. This, together with the possibility that some of them will move on to violent means to bring an Islamic state into being, means that the Hizb ut-Tahrir remains a strong threat to secular rule in Uzbekistan. It should be noted that the Hizb ut-Tahrir sees its mission as consisting of three phases: inviting people to Islam, establishing an Islamic state, and finally, the expansion of the Islamic state through jihad. In the Islamic state, military conscription and training in preparation for jihad would be mandatory for all Muslim men over 15.[97] This shows that although currently advocating non-violent means, the Hizb ut-Tahrir does not rule out the use of violence. As noted, the organisation has in the past attempted violent actions elsewhere. It has also (at least in 1988) published texts advocating the hijacking of aircraft of countries considered to be opposed to Islam. Chief among such countries, the Hizb ut-Tahrir believes, is the United States, but other states with “imperialistic motives” such as Britain and Russia remain “potential” enemies, while Israel is regarded an “actual” enemy.[98] In addition, many individual members of the Hizb ut-Tahrir have expressed sympathy with the armed struggle of the IMU and say that they are willing, in some cases apparently eager, to fight. The Hizb ut-Tahrir also recruits many new members in prisons.[99] If these are already hardened militants or indeed criminals, this is a further source of an increased propensity for violence.

The clandestine nature of the Hizb ut-Tahrir also means that the organisation is prone to factionalism. At least two cases are known in which significant Hizb ut-Tahrir sub-groups established separate political movements, independent of the Hizb ut-Tahrir leadership. In early 1997, a group in the Ferghana region of Uzbekistan led by Yu. Akramov left the Hizb ut-Tahrir after a dispute with local leaders. In 1999, another split took place in Tashkent, where a significant group of Hizb ut-Tahrir members reportedly set up its own party, called *Hizb an-Nusra* (“Assistance Party”), possibly because they were dissatisfied with only non-violent means of political struggle. Factional splits have also been reported in Kyrgyzstan.[100]

In light of the American military presence in Uzbekistan, it should be noted that the Hizb ut-Tahrir from 1992 to 1999 also had a branch in California, known as the Islamic Cultural Workshop (ICW). It currently appears to have ceased activities.[101] The Hizb ut-Tahrir has announced that it supports actions against the infidel

powers (the United States and Britain) that engaged in military operations in Afghanistan.[102]

Other Militant Islamic Groups

By 1999, there were also reported to be about ten other, smaller militant Islamic groups active in the Ferghana valley, with names such as *Tabligh* ("Revelation"), *Uzun soqol* ("Long Beard"), *Adolat uyushmasi* ("Justice Union"), *Islom lashkarlari* ("Warriors of Islam"), *Tavba* ("Repentance"), and *Nur* or *Nurchilar* ("Ray of Light").[103] The number and names of these groups may well reflect old information, no longer reliable, or pure misunderstandings. Some groups of these names, such as the *Islom lashkarlari* of which Adolat was a faction as well as their successor *Tavba* (also known as *Hizbullah*, "Party of God"), were in fact groups that were crushed by the authorities in 1992 and 1995, respectively,[104] while others, such as *Uzun soqol*, are merely the popular nicknames ("the bearded ones") of Islamic extremists.[105] Others, including *Jamaat-e Tablighi*, are Islamic missionary movements based in India and Pakistan. Even so, the *Jamaat-e Tablighi* is known to have administered the recruitment of Islamic volunteers to the jihad in Afghanistan and the movement has been accused of subversive activities in Central Asia as well.[106] *Nurchilar*, finally, is a Sufi movement.[107] It probably has little to do with the other groups.

Concluding Remarks

Two conclusions can be drawn from this survey. First, there is support for Islamic extremism in Uzbekistan, often but not invariably caused by poverty and falling living standards, and these sentiments are widely aimed at the removal of Karimov and the introduction of an Islamic state. Second, Karimov currently enjoys the full support of the international community in his fight against the Islamic opposition. He, or at least his regime under a subsequent secular strongman, is likely to survive limited popular protests.

The strong probability that the Karimov regime can survive in the foreseeable future, at least as long as it enjoys international support in the form of financial aid, deliveries of arms and military supplies, as well as counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency training for its security forces, does not mean that it will remain unchanged. International - predominantly American - support to what is perceived to be a despotic regime is bound also to create hate and resentment within Uzbekistan towards the Western world. The significance of this should not be underestimated. Hatred can be kept in check by brute force and repression, but it cannot be erased by such means. If the repression is later relaxed, the pent-up hatred is likely to explode in violent popular unrest. Its targets will include, but not be limited to, the source of resentment, in this case the regime - but also the West. The American experience in Iran after 1979 could become an unfortunate precedent for current involvement in Uzbekistan, especially if the West, as is widely expected, in the future insists on the introduction of properly safeguarded human rights in Uzbekistan. Well-intentioned attempts to introduce democatisation in such a regime, perhaps by a later and different presidential administration, may, paradoxically, serve to destabilise the regime and ultimately encourage the very extremism that the outside world wishes to contain.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Harakat* 27,2000 (the web journal of the Uzbekistani opposition group Birlik; www.harakat.net/jur2700.html). Translated by Abdumannob Po'lat, Central Asian Human Rights Information Network.

[2] Quoted in, for instance, Center for Preventive Action (Nancy Lubin & Barnett R Rubin), *Calming the Ferghana Valley: Development and Dialogue in the Heart of Central Asia* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 1999), 53, based on Reuters, 2 May 1998.

[3] See, for instance, International Crisis Group (ICG), *Uzbekistan at Ten: Repression and Instability* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report 21, 21 August 2001). Details on the two opposition movements Birlik ("Unity", founded in 1988 and led by Abdurahim Po'lat (Pulatov), currently in exile) and Erk ("Freedom", a splinter group of Birlik founded in 1990, led by Salay Madaminov, a poet better known by his pseudonym Muhammad Solih, in exile in first Turkey, then Norway), both banned in 1992, are also found in Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press/World Policy Institute, 2002), 84-5, 150; Ahmed Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism?* (London: Zed Books, 1994), 78-80, 94, 98-9. The two opposition parties remained estranged in exile. Birlik subsequently established the Human Righs Society of Uzbekistan, while Erk formed the Independent Human Rights Organization of Uzbekistan. See also the web sites of the movements, www.birlik.net, www.harakat.net, and www.uzbekistanerk.org.

[4] See, for instance, Rashid, *Jihad*, 228.

[5] Anette Bohr, *Uzbekistan: Politics and Foreign Policy* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998), 22-3; "The Fergana Valley: A Magnet for Conflict in Central Asia", *IISS Strategic Comments* 6: 6 (July 2000). See also ICG, *Incubators of Conflict: Central Asia's Localised Poverty and Social Unrest* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report 16, 8 June 2001), 12-16.

[6] Bohr, *Uzbekistan*, 23; Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, Jane's Information Group, 31 October 2000.

[7] Arslan Koichiev, "Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan Map Out Their Differences", *Eurasia Insight*, 13 March 2001 (www.eurasianet.org); Rashid, *Jihad*, 159-60; ICG, *Central Asia: Fault Lines in the New Security Map* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report 20, 4 July 2001), 13.

[8] Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, 30 May 2002, 28 August 2001.

[9] Neil J Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the Silk Road* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000), 38.

[10] *Ibid*, 36.

[11] Galima Bukharbaeva, "US Fails to Curb IMU Threat", *IWPR's Reporting Central Asia* 103 (8 February 2002; www.iwpr.net).

[12] Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I B Tauris, 2000), 149. See also Barnett R Rubin, "Tajikistan: From Soviet Republic to Russian-Uzbek Protectorate", Michael Mandelbaum (ed), *Central Asia and the World: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1994), 217; Ralph H Magnus & Eden Naby, *Afghanistan: Mullah, Marx, and Mujahid* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), 180, 189, 191; International Crisis Group (ICG), *Tajikistan: An Uncertain Peace*, (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report, 30, 24 December 2001), 26; Rashid, *Jihad*, 137-86.

[13] *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 28 June 2000, 14, referring to a report in the Kyrgyz press about an Uzbekistani aircraft shot down while attacking Taliban positions.

[14] Lena Jonson, *The Tajik War: A Challenge to Russian Policy* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998), 54 n 41; Jane's Sentinel: Afghanistan, 17 October 2000; Rashid, *Taliban*, 53-4, 56, 72; Magnus & Naby, *Afghanistan*, 69, 166, 189; Melvin, *Uzbekistan*, 99.

[15] Bohr, *Uzbekistan*, 23, 53-4; Melvin, *Uzbekistan*, 96-7; Jonson, *Tajik War*, 35-6. See also ICG, *Tajikistan*, 12, 18-19. For some further information on Khudoiberdiev, see, for instance, Charles Fairbanks et al, *Strategic Assessment of Central Eurasia* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council of the United States and the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, 2001), 49.

[16] Bakhrom Tursunov & Marina Pikulina, *Severe Lessons of Batken* (Sandhurst: Conflict Studies Research Centre, November 1999), Internet edition; Ahmed Rashid,

"Namangani's Foray Causes Concern Among Central Asian Governments", *Eurasia Insight,* 5 February 2001 (www.eurasianet.org). See also Rashid, *Jihad,* 137-86.

[17] Arslan Koichiev, "Skirmishes Suggest IMU is Changing Tactics", *Eurasia Insight,* 16 August 2001 (www.eurasianet.org); Bukharbaeva, "US Fails to Curb IMU Threat", Rashid, *Jihad,* 181-2. See also International Crisis Group (ICG), *The IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir: Implications of the Afghanistan Campaign* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Central Asia Briefing, 30 January 2002); ICG, *Tajikistan,* 26.

[18] See, for instance, RFE/RL *Newsline,* 7 February 2001; *Times of Central Asia,* 6 October 2000.

[19] ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation and Regional Security* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report 14, 1 March 2001), 22, 24.

[20] ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation,* 4; Rashid, *Jihad,* 247.

[21] See, for instance, Orozbek Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War in the Valley of Poison: The Religious Conflict in Southern Kyrgyzstan", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 1, 2000, 11-20; Rashid, *Jihad,* 137-86. For background, see Michael Fredholm, *Afghanistan and Central Asian Security*, (Stockholm: Stockholm University, Asian Cultures & Modernity Research Report 1, March 2002).

[22] ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation,* 4; Rashid, *Jihad,* 137-40. See also Karen Dawisha & Bruce Parrott (eds), *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 382; Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1995), 93-4.

[23] Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War," 11-20; Rashid, *Jihad,* 247.

[24] Rashid, *Jihad,* 146. She publicly disowned her son in 1999.

[25] Rashid, *Jihad,* 138-9; Ahmed Rashid, "Heart of Darkness", *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 5 August 1999, 8-12; Ahmed Rashid, "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism", *Foreign Affairs,* November/December 1999, 22-35; Ahmed Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken: Adventures of an Islamic Heritage", CACI Forum Transcription, 13 April 2000.

[26] Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War", 11-20; Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken", *Washington Post,* 10 November 2001; Rashid, *Jihad,* 137-8. Khojiev was later publicly disowned by his sister Makhbuba Ahmedov and his brother Nasyr Khojiev (both arrested in 2000). Soon after, so did his mother. Rashid, *Jihad,* 147.

[27] Rashid, *Jihad,* 140.

[28] Rashid, *Jihad,* 138-41, 148.

[29] Rashid, *Jihad,* 158.

[30] Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War", 11-20; Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken"; *Washington Post,* 10 November 2001; Rashid, *Jihad,* 137-8, 141-3.

[31] Rashid, *Jihad,* 144, 145, 148.

[32] Rashid, *Jihad,* 145-8. The declaration of jihad is reprinted in Rashid, *Jihad,* 247-9.

[33] Melvin, *Uzbekistan,* 39, 57.

[34] Rashid, *Jihad,* 151-5, 159.

[35] Rashid, *Jihad,* 161-4, 175; Tursunov & Pikulina, *Severe Lessons of Batken.* See also ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation,* 7-9; and (although plagued by several errors) ICG, *Recent Violence in Central Asia: Causes and Consequences* (Central Asia/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Central Asia Briefing, 18 October 2000).

[36] Tursunov & Pikulina, *Severe Lessons of Batken.*

[37] Rashid, *Jihad,* 145, 164-7; Rashid, "Heart of Darkness", Rashid, "Taliban: Exporting Extremism", Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken".

[38] Rashid, *Jihad,* 167-70. See also ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation,* 7-9; and ICG, *Recent Violence.* For the narcotics situation, see ICG, *Central Asia: Drugs and Conflict* (Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, Asia Report 25, 26 November 2001).

[39] Rashid, *Jihad,* 170-73, 258 n.13. For the media attention given to the American hostages, see, for instance, Michael Vig, "The Great Escape: Utah Climber Recalls Six Frightful Days in Kyrgyzstan", *Salt Lake Tribune,* 26 August 2000.

[40] Rashid, *Jihad,* 176, 178.

[41] Tursunov & Pikulina, *Severe Lessons of Batken*; Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, 31 October 2000. See also "Fergana Valley: A Magnet for Conflict in Central Asia".

[42] Background: Melvin, *Uzbekistan,* 12-16. 1989 riots: Melvin, *Uzbekistan,* 25, 48; Center for Preventive Action, *Calming the Ferghana Valley,* 56. See also Shakhobitdin

Ziiamov, "On the 1989 Ethnic Conflict in Uzbekistan", *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 6, 2000, 134-8. 1990 riots: Melvin, *Uzbekistan*, 26.

[43] Rashid, *Jihad*, 159-160; ICG, *Central Asia: Fault Lines*, 13.

[44] Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, 31 October 2000.

[45] Tursunov & Pikulina, *Severe Lessons of Batken*; Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, 31 October 2000. See also "Central Asia's Narcotics Industry: The New 'Golden Triangle'", *IISS Strategic Comments* 3: 5 (June 1997).

[46] Rashid, *Jihad*, 167.

[47] Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture", *Foreign Affairs* 79: 6 (2000), 115-126, on 122-3.

[48] Rashid, *Jihad*, 141.

[49] Rashid, "Heart of Darkness", Rashid, "Taliban: Exporting Extremism", Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken".

[50] Rashid, *Jihad*, 175-6.

[51] Rashid, "Namangani's Foray".

[52] Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War", 11-20; Rashid, "From Deobandism to Batken".

[53] Fredholm, *Afghanistan and Central Asian Security*.

[54] Rashid, *Jihad*, 158; Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism 13, Jane's Information Group, 27 November 2001.

[55] Rashid, *Jihad*, 174.

[56] Rashid, *Jihad*, 168, 171.

[57] Melvin, *Uzbekistan*, 39, 57. See also the US Department of State web site, www.usembassy.org.uk/terror121.html; Michael Fredholm, "The Prospects for Genocide in Chechnya and Extremist Retaliation against the West," *Central Asian Survey* 19: 3/4 (September-December 2000), 315-27.

[58] Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism 13, 27 November 2001.

[59] *New York Times*, 25 September 2001.

[60] Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism 13, 27 November 2001.

[61] Rashid, *Jihad*, 216.

[62] *Dawn* (Pakistan), 21 May 2001.

[63] *Washington Post*, 26 November 2001.

[64] Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism 13, 27 November 2001.

[65] IMT: Jane's Sentinel: Tajikistan, 31 October 2000; IMK: Kiemiddin Sattori, "Tajik Press About the Youth and Islam", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 3 (15), 2002, 126-34, on 131.

[66] *Dawn* (Pakistan), 21 May 2001; Rashid, *Jihad*, 180-1.

[67] Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism 13, 27 November 2001.

[68] Rashid, *Jihad*, 181-2; Interfax, 11 June 2001.

[69] Fredholm, *Afghanistan and Central Asian Security*.

[70] Rashid, *Jihad*, 10.

[71] Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 50.

[72] Rashid, *Jihad*, 46.

[73] Rashid, *Jihad*, 82.

[74] Rashid, *Jihad*, 111, 115-36.

[75] Rashid, *Jihad*, 116. See also Ashirbek Muminov, "Traditional and Modern Religious-Theological Schools in Central Asia", *Political Islam and Conflicts in Russia and Central Asia* (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 1999), 101-111; Bakhtiyar Babadzhanov, "The Fergana Valley: Source or Victim of Islamic Fundamentalism?", *Political Islam and Conflicts in Russia and Central Asia* (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 1999), 112-123; the movement's web site, www.Hizb ut-Tahrir.org. In Britain as well as Pakistan (where the movement is banned), the movement maintains a web site under the name *Khilafah* (www.khilafah.com; www.khilafah.com.pk). As the Hizb ut-Tahrir is banned in most British universities, the movement also operates under the name Islamic Heritage Society. On the Internet, the Hizb ut-Tahrir is also active under the name Muslim Student's Website or Muslim Student Home Page (www.acgnet.co.uk/islam.htm). Michael Whine, "Islamist Oganizations on the Internet", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 11: 1 (spring 1999), 123-32, on 129. Some independent observers, not necessarily well-informed, suggest that the party was founded in 1952.

[76] Dilip Hiro, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Paladin, 1988), 3, 70-1; Avraham Sela (ed), *Political Encyclopedia of the Middle East* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 234, 374, 545, 742; Steven Emerson, *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 195-6. See also Erkin Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 3 (15), 2002, 119-26. The Hizb ut-Tahrir involvement in the 1974 coup attempt is well documented, the others less so.

[77] Rashid, *Jihad*, 118-19; interview with Omar Bakri Muhammad on Danish television, 2002. Hizb ut-Tahrir's spokesman in Copenhagen is Fadi Abdullatif.

[78] Muminov, "Traditional and Modern Religious-Theological Schools", 101-111; Babadzhanov, "Fergana Valley," 112-123; the movement's web site, www.Hizb ut-Tahrir.org.

[79] Rashid, *Jihad*, 116, 119. Books by the founder and the present leader of the Hizb ut-Tahrir include Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, *The Islamic State* (Lahore: Hizb ut-Tahrir, 1998; first published in 1962); Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, *Islamic Concepts* (np, UK: Al Khilafah, nd); Abdul Qadeem Zaloom, *How the Khilafah Was Destroyed* (Lahore: Hizb ut-Tahrir, 1998). Another book by one or both of these two authors include *The Economic System in Islam*. The Hizb ut-Tahrir also publishes a magazine, *Al-W'ai* ("Consciousness").

[80] Alima Bissenova, "Is Hizb ut-Tahrir Going Public in Its Struggle?", Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst, 18 July 2001; Rashid, *Jihad*, 119; ICG, *The IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 7; Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan", 120.

[81] Bissenova, "Is Hizb ut-Tahrir Going Public", Rashid, *Jihad*, 119, 120; ICG, *IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 7.

[82] Rashid, *Jihad*, 120-21, 130-31.

[83] Rashid, *Jihad*, 131.

[84] Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan". For more details on the regional membership of the Hizb ut-Tahrir, see ICG, *IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir*.

[85] RFE/RL *Newsline*, 4 January 2001, 20 February 2001; Jane's Sentinel: Kyrgyzstan, 31 October 2000; Rashid, "Namangani's Foray".

[86] Rashid, *Jihad*, 130-31.

[87] *Economist*, 29 September 2001, 30 March 2002.

[88] Rashid, *Jihad*, 120-21, 130-31.

[89] Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan".

[90] Babadzhanov, "Fergana Valley", 112-123.

[91] Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan", 121.

[92] ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation*, 6-7.

[93] Rashid, *Jihad*, 123.

[94] Rashid, *Jihad*, 133.

[95] Rashid, *Jihad*, 121, 129.

[96] Rashid, *Jihad*, 125, 146.

[97] Rashid, *Jihad*, 117-18.

[98] Emerson, *American Jihad*, 196-7.

[99] ICG, *IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 8-11.

[100] ICG, *IMU and the Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 9; Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan", 123.

[101] Emerson, *American Jihad*, 193-7.

[102] Kurmanov, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan", 122.

[103] ICG, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilisation*, 18.

[104] Muminov, "Traditional and Modern Religious-Theological Schools", 101-111.

[105] Moldaliev, "An Incongruous War," 11-20.

[106] Viacheslav Belokrenitskiy, "Islamic Radicalism in Pakistan: Evolution and Regional Role", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 6, 2000, 104-116. For Jamaat-e Tablighi, see John K Cooley, *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), 82-5.

[107] Muminov, "Traditional and Modern Religious-Theological Schools", 101-111.

Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the
Author and not necessarily those of the
UK Ministry of Defence

ISBN 1-904423-31-0

Published By:

Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

Conflict Studies Research Centre
Haig Road
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 4PQ
England

Telephone: (44) 1276 412995
Fax: (44) 1276 686880
E-mail: csrc@defenceacademy.mod.uk
http://www.csrc.ac.uk

ISBN 1-904423-31-0