

The Spirit of Shanghai: Foreign Policy  
Coordination Against Democracy  
Movements within the Shanghai  
Cooperation Organization and Implications  
for U.S. Policy

Portland State University Taskforce on US  
Democracy Promotion and Assistance  
Policies



2010



## **Policy Taskforce Members**

**Dr. Bruce Gilley – Advisor**

**Honore Arias**

**Heidi Busche**

**Luke Carlson**

**Dino Gojak**

**Richard “Pete” Hunt**

**Jonathan Jackson**

**Joseph Lowery**

**Eric Moore**

**Kyla Ogle**

**Louis Panush**

**Mee Seon Pierce**

**Nolan Plese**

**Andrea Smith**

## **Executive Summary**

We begin with a basic history of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its goals, emphasizing the SCO focus on security/stability objectives, and how this relates to subverting democratic norms. The focus of the report is not the SCO itself but the cooperation between member states on things like border security, extraditions and upholding authoritarian norms. We use the term the “Spirit of Shanghai” to identify these authoritarian norm which include crack downs on dissidents and minorities that get unfairly labeled as terrorists. After a brief presentation of that history, we present the administrative foundation of the SCO by examining the SCO secretariat. Regime perspectives of the member states and how they often diverge is examined, along with general public opinion in the region and what affect the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ has had on the views of citizens in SCO member states. A comparative discussion of the SCO and other international organizations, which includes a content analysis of statement rhetoric, is followed by a look at the possible authoritarian implications of UN voting similarities amongst member states. Border issues relating to extradition, energy, and resources are reviewed by observing the actions of Russia and its former territories, and then further exemplified through a case study involving Chinese manipulations of the Uighur population of Central Asia.

Across SCO member states we discovered a large number of strong authoritarian trends, such as repression of journalists, increased rules limiting NGO’s, establishment of rules that ineffectively target corruption, and the use of constitutions to bolster executive power and justify authoritarian practices. Despite finding many of these trends, it is difficult to prove any outright sharing of practices or cooperation occurring between these states, except for small instances of education collaboration, or party “research” occurring in other states. We find room for hope, as our military findings suggest that the SCO appears to have weak military collaboration and seems unlikely to pose a threat to outside sources; especially since individual state are struggling to control internal extremist groups. While the contemporary roster of Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states may remain limited in the future by Russian and Chinese ambitions to preserve the institution’s existing political status quo, it is the opinion of this taskforce that the potential outward diffusion of SCO values and norms to nearby states will remain high in the long-term and should, therefore, be a principal concern for the democracy assistance community and policy makers, alike.

Analyzing a variety of states situated along the SCO's periphery, this task force finds that a general diffusion of illiberal norms and values associated with the so-called '*Spirit of Shanghai*,' is driven both by geo-political and market-oriented ambitions of SCO principal members—Russia and China—but is equally aided by a growing demand among neighboring states for the particular types of direct diplomatic, security, and economic support the SCO is able to provide.

Russian ambitions to restore political influence among former Soviet states as well as a need to protect its control of the European energy market have functioned not only to jeopardize prior democratic accomplishments in both Ukraine and Georgia, but have simultaneously served to sustain inter-state tensions/conflict in the southern Trans-Caucasus. In a less direct manner, Chinese economic expansion and energy investments are here associated with promoting regime stability and thereby increasing overall resilience to internal and external democratic pressures in Turkmenistan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Specific regime engineering and stabilization mechanisms are, however, likely to be matched by the willful adoption of SCO principles and practices in peripheral states such as Iran that seek to curry favor with the SCO's two UN Security Council members as part of larger diplomatic and security concerns. We thus find the high potential for both mimicry and practical cooperation to become strategic resources in a general politics of *quid pro quo*.

Concluding this section, a macro-level analysis of U.S. Democracy Promotion and Assistance in Central Asia is undertaken in order to develop the necessary foundation for framing policy recommendations based upon the broad-based findings of this report.

## Acronyms

ADB – Asian Development Bank  
ASEAN – Association of South East Asian Nations  
AU – African Union  
BP – British Petroleum  
CAAEF – Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund  
CAREC – Central Asian Regional Cooperation  
CNOOC – Chinese National Offshore Oil Company  
CNPC – Chinese National Petroleum Corporation  
CCP – Chinese Communist Party  
CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States  
CRS – Congressional Research Service  
CSTO – Collective Security Treaty Organization  
DPA – Democracy Promotion & Assistance  
DPC – Diagnostic Products Corporation  
ETIM –East Turkistan Islamic Movement  
ETLO - Eastern Turkistan Liberation Organization  
EU – European Union  
FDI – Foreign Direct Investment  
FCPA – Foreign Corrupt Practices Act  
FIDH – International Federation for Human Rights  
FSB – Federal Security Service (Russia)  
FSA – Freedom Support Act of 1992  
G8 – Group of Eight  
G20 – Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors  
GJ&D – Governing Justly and Democratically  
HRW – Human Rights Watch  
IVLP – U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program  
IMF – International Monetary Fund  
IMU – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan  
IRB – Islamic Rebirth Party  
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
NPC – National People’s Congress (of China)  
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations  
NYT - New York Times  
OAU – Organization for African Unity  
OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe  
OSI – Open Society Institute  
RATS – Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (Now RCTS)  
RCTS – Regional Counter Terrorism Structure (Formerly RATS)  
SEC – Securities and Exchange Commission  
SCO – Shanghai Cooperation Organization  
SORM – System for Operational-Investigative Activities  
SSI – Schnitzer Steel Industries

SWRA – Shortwave Radio Africa  
UN – United Nations  
UNBISNET – United Nations Bibliographic Information System  
UNHCR – Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees  
UNHRC – United Nations Human Rights Council  
UNGA – United Nations General Assembly  
UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime  
UR – United Russia  
USAID – United States Agency for International Development  
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
UTO – United Tajik Opposition  
WUYC - World Uighur Youth Congress  
XUAR - Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>History of the SCO</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SCO Regime Perspectives</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>SCO Secretariat</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Public Opinion</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Ideology of the SCO and Content Analysis</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Policy Affinity among SCO Member States: Establishing the Authoritarian Internationale</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Borders Disputes</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Repression: Constitution Sharing and Soft Power</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Repression: NGOs, Human Rights and Media</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Party To Party Cooperation: Training Between the Chinese Communist Party and United Russia</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Military Cooperation</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>SCO Military Intervention</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Peripheral States</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Mongolia</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Armenia</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Georgia and Ukraine</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>U.S. Democracy Promotion and Assistance in Central Asia: Challenges &amp; Lessons Learned</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Policy Recommendations</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>191</b>



## History of the SCO

### History

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has its origins in border negotiations between the Soviet Union/ Russia and the People's Republic of China in the early 1990s. Through treaties concluded in 1991 and 1994 the two countries resolved longstanding conflict and delineated a border of 4,600 miles. The ongoing negotiations became multilateral with the 1991 independence of former Soviet Central Asian Republics along the Chinese border. In April 1996 the heads of state of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan signed the Agreement on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area.<sup>12</sup> This was followed by the 1997 Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Border Area. These agreements outlined substantial and detailed measures of military cooperation and transparency along all five states' mutual borders.<sup>3</sup> As the first meeting of the five heads of state took place in Shanghai, the cooperation mechanism became known as the "Shanghai Five."<sup>4</sup>

The Shanghai Five continued to meet annually to strengthen multilateral relations and facilitate discussion of political, security, economic, diplomatic, cultural, and humanitarian issues. "Head of State" meetings were expanded to include ministerial sessions and lower-level conferences of other government agencies and bodies. Uzbek president Islam Karimov attended the 2000 summit in Dushanbe as a guest, and Uzbekistan (which does not share a border with China) formally joined the organization the following year.<sup>5</sup>

In June 2001, the now six countries further consolidated their relations by declaring intent to establish a formal international body—the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. An organizational charter was adopted the next year at a meeting in St. Petersburg. The post of SCO Executive Secretary (later renamed Secretary-General) was approved in May 2003 and soon filled by Chinese career diplomat Zhang Deguang. In September 2003 the Program of

---

<sup>1</sup> Hessbruegge, Jan A. 2004. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: a holy alliance for Central Asia? *Al Nakhlah*, Article 2 (Spring): 2.

<sup>2</sup> The agreement outlined restrictions on military deployment and activity within a hundred kilometer (62 mile) demilitarization zone along the border.

<sup>3</sup> Bailes, Alyson J.K. et al. 2007. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Policy Paper Number 17: 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas. 2008. Catching the 'Shanghai Spirit': How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Promotes Authoritarian Norms in Central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies* 60: 1327.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation of SCO Member-States was signed and the organization's first budget was approved. SCO Observer status was granted to Mongolia in 2004 and to India, Iran and Pakistan in 2005.<sup>6</sup> Belarus and Sri Lanka were granted dialogue partner status in 2009.<sup>7</sup>

## **Goals**

The stated goals of the SCO are improving regional cohesion through effective cooperation in politics, trade and economy, technology, energy, and environmental policy; pursuing joint efforts to maintain peace, security, and stability in the region; and moving towards the establishment of a “new, democratic, just, and rational political and economic international order.”<sup>8</sup>

Such rhetoric suggests a desire to promote the ‘Spirit of Shanghai,’ that is, the spirit of cooperation through which the Shanghai Five came together on the world stage. SCO Secretary-General Bolat Nurgaliev described the ‘Spirit of Shanghai,’ or ‘Shanghai Spirit,’ as “principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for the diversity of civilizations, and desire for common development.”<sup>9</sup> These components are present in the founding documents of the organization and signify the guiding principles behind the organization's steady development. Such language ostensibly reflects the manner in which countries at various stages of development and regime-type have employed a consensus-based approach to resolving regional conflicts.

‘Shanghai Spirit’ themed coordination and cooperation isn't limited to the formal SCO framework. The term is broadly used to refer to Chinese and Russian driven multilateral and bilateral policy diffusion and emulation within Central Asia. By this interpretation, the SCO is a consequence rather than cause of increasing political accord in a region often beset by conflict. Some observers interpret this ‘spirit’ as more than mere regional norms, but rather as the foundation of an openly-illiberal international body constituted to check the current American dominated international system.<sup>10</sup>

## **Security**

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Shanghai Cooperation Organization. “Introduction to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.” SCO Website [secsto.org].

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Dikov, Ivan. Secretary-General of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Bolat Nurgaliev: SCO Will Grow in Importance. December 28, 2009. *Sophia News Agency*.

<sup>10</sup> Ambrosio. 2008. p. 1327.

Security cooperation has been a primary focus of SCO activities since its inception. Two years before the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks in New York, practical coordination of issues related to international terrorism and cross-border criminal activity were being addressed by the “Bishkek Group,” comprising the heads of law enforcement agencies and special services of Shanghai Five/ SCO states.<sup>11</sup> These efforts were formalized with the 2001 Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism, which the SCO would loosely define as “three evils.” Convention signatories agreed to coordinate in addressing ‘three evils’ related matters and committed them to reciprocally extradite persons involved in such activities.<sup>12</sup> Consensus on these definitions is noteworthy in that semantic hang-ups often prevent international cooperation in addressing similar aims.<sup>13</sup>

Extraction, via administrative expulsion, deportation, or even kidnapping by security forces operating outside of state borders, has emerged as one of the more controversial means SCO member states have deployed in assisting one another. Russian secret services have recently coordinated with other SCO member state governments to create a “single search list for law enforcement” that has expedited the arrest and subsequent deportation of refugees fleeing politically motivated prosecution in their home countries. Uzbek and Chinese citizens, amongst others, are being forcibly returned to their countries of origin to face lengthy prison sentences and possible torture.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the extradition commitment, the 2001 convention encouraged members to cooperate in four manners: through the exchange of information and intelligence; by meeting requests for help in operational search actions; in developing and implementing measures to prevent, identify, and suppress offending actions; and in collaborating to stop the flow of finance and equipment to the guilty parties.<sup>15</sup> The convention also addressed such universal problems as drug trafficking, cyber-sabotage, and aspects of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Bailes, Alyson J.K. et al. 2003. Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Policy Paper Number 3: 48.

<sup>12</sup> Bailes, et al. 2007. p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Lukin, Alexander. 2007. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: what next? *Russia in Global Affairs* 5, 3: 142.

<sup>14</sup> “Expelling refugees as a means of imitating the anti-terror campaign.” Memorial Human Rights Center (Russia). <http://www.memo.ru/>.

<sup>15</sup> Shanghai Cooperation Organization. “Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism.” SCO Website. [secsto.org]

<sup>16</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2007. p. 24.

The SCO's security policy should be considered within the context of the region's recent history of violence and instability, which is a reflection of both political upheaval, and tension between the region's varied ethnic groups.<sup>17</sup> There were numerous uprisings in Soviet satellite states during the perestroika period under Mikhail Gorbachev, including fierce interethnic clashes in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan between Uzbeks, Meskhetian Turks, and Kyrgyzs. The end of the USSR in December 1991 precipitated a civil war in Tajikistan that dragged on well past its formal conclusion in 1994. Major fighting lingered in the highlands until 1997, and episodes of violence associated with the conflict were still occurring as recently as 2001. Uncompromising remnants of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) eventually merged with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and fled to Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup>

The threat posed by Islamist/ jihadist-associated groups is perhaps the most pressing for SCO member states. These militant groups have ties across the Central Asian region, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 1999 IMU militants crossed from their bases in Afghanistan and Tajikistan into Kyrgyzstan's Batken Province, took Japanese hostages and clashed with Kyrgyz troops launching attacks on Uzbekistan. The IMU was also linked to July 2004 attempted suicide bombings of US and Israeli embassies in Uzbekistan.<sup>19</sup> The most dramatic Islamist violence to date is associated with the events in Andijan, Uzbekistan in May 2005 when brutal repression by government troops was triggered by protests and the occupation of government buildings by both IMU supporters and those responding to wider socioeconomic discontent.<sup>20</sup>

The SCO's two largest actors, China and Russia, have grappled with ethnic Islamic self-determination movements in Xinjiang (Northwest China) and Chechnya, respectively. Though most observers would agree that both the Uighur and Chechen movements comprise both violent and non-violent factions, China and Russia have both used strong arm tactics to stifle all expressions of ethnic separatism. Given this context, it is not surprising that the SCO emphasized the principles of "noninterference in internal affairs" and "territorial sovereignty." Even while professing to respect human rights, SCO heads of state have jointly expressed dismay about "the

---

<sup>17</sup> For graphical representation of ethnic breakdown of SCO member states, see Appendix A

<sup>18</sup> Matveeva, Anna. Giustozzi, Antonio. 2008. The SCO: A Regional Organization in the Making. Crisis States Research Centre Working Paper 39: 1, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

use of double standards in questions of human rights and interference in the internal affairs of other states under the pretext of defending them.”<sup>21 22</sup>

The SCO approach to international security, particularly the threat of terrorism, is arguably broader in application than that of the United States and its allies. While Washington under the Bush Doctrine linked terrorism to rogue states that condoned or coordinated terrorist activity, the SCO nations from the outset have linked domestic and international terrorism to regional separatist movements and factions of religious extremists operating autonomously in the margins of state borders. Thus, the SCO approach to terrorism is related both to territorial integrity and the preservation of secular, if authoritarian, regimes in Central Asia.<sup>23</sup>

There have been several bilateral agreements between SCO member states that reflect the organization’s consensus on security issues. In August 2000 China signed a military cooperation agreement with Uzbekistan and offered it military equipment for anti-terrorist operations and military training, followed by another cooperation agreement in September 2001. In March 2002 China signed military-technical assistance agreements with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>24</sup>

Within the SCO framework China and Kyrgyzstan conducted a cross-border anti-terrorist military maneuver in October 2002. This marked the first time China had participated in a regional military exercise. In August 2003 all of the original Shanghai Five states took part in a second joint anti-terrorism exercise. The prominent live exercise confirmed the SCO’s commitment to preventing cross-border movements and confronting ‘three evils’ identified groups.<sup>25</sup>

In January 2004 the SCO established the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) as a permanent organ with its base in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. RATS’ mandate is to carry-out “analytical work,” but it also performs operational actions such as developing a shared databank on “three evils” organizations (including their structures, leaders, members, operational channels and financial resources); contributing to command and tactical-operational training, and helping to draft international legal documents related to prosecuting international terrorism.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Hessbruegge, 2004, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Declaration by the Heads of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. 10 June, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2003, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2007, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states prioritized drug trafficking as a primary focus for the organization with the signing of the 2004 Agreement on Cooperation in Fighting the Illegal Trafficking of Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors. Regulating the drug trade is a difficult task for Central Asian states hampered by ill-defined and ill-guarded borders, weak enforcement capacities, and endemic corruption.<sup>27</sup> Many observers believe the problem was exacerbated in the region by an influx of poppy from Afghanistan following the United States led invasion in 2001.<sup>28</sup> The 2004 agreement committed SCO member states to step up participation in international efforts to create an “anti-drug security belt around Afghanistan, and to explore other programs that might help stabilize the country.”<sup>29</sup>

## **Economy**

Economic coordination has been a stated goal of the SCO since its inception. Yet the task has proven elusive. The SCO has produced numerous documents and statements outlining proposed coordination. Member heads of state, economic ministers and other high-placed officials meet annually at SCO Conventions to consider economic cooperation plans. The organization has established an SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association, and even put forth the idea of an SCO Energy Club. Yet none of the major proposals has been implemented. What coordination exists is usually bilateral or of a limited multilateral fashion. The so-called “first priority pilot projects” approved by the SCO foreign and economic trade ministers in 2006, including completion of a highway running between Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan and development of a transshipment terminal in Kashgar, China, were already underway before the SCO formally became involved.<sup>30</sup>

Many observers believe that efficient regional economic coordination is unlikely to occur through the SCO-framework. The respective economic and political orientations of SCO member states are too disparate to facilitate a functioning free trade area. Energy cooperation would seem a likely area of coordination as SCO member states have common interests in energy fuels of the Caspian and Central Asian region and their transportation. Yet existing deals are exclusively limited to China, Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan on a bilateral basis. These contracts reflect

---

<sup>27</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2007. pp. 24, 54.

<sup>28</sup> Hessbruegge. 2004. p. 2. Lukin. 2007. p. 142.

<sup>29</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2007. p. 54.

<sup>30</sup> Lukin. 2007. p. 144.

the incompatible interests of the SCO's two largest players. Russia, an energy supplier, maneuvers for high energy prices, while China, a consumer, needs them to be lower.<sup>31</sup>

Construction began in 2009 on a massive Turkmenistan-China pipeline, which will carry natural gas from the Dauletabad gas field in eastern Turkmenistan through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan into China's northwestern Xinjiang region. Completion of the pipeline would end Russia's long-standing dominance over Central Asia's natural gas market.<sup>32</sup>

Conflicting interests are also apparent in lack of progress in Beijing's push for an "SCO free trade zone." Russia and the Central Asia states are all too aware of the challenge China's dynamic economy would pose in an open market, and are justifiably wary of lowering protectionist barriers. A more transparent commercial environment would "accelerate the extension of Chinese influence, undermine Russian interests, and potentially make local markets 'China dependent.'" <sup>33</sup>

Coordination is more likely to occur under the auspices of the Asian Development Bank. The ADB's Central Asian Economic Cooperation initiative aims to tie Central Asian states more closely to each other and with the rest of Asia.<sup>34</sup> Central Asia's trade with China has jumped 50-fold since 1990, while South Korean electronic and resource companies have made investments in Uzbekistan.<sup>35 36</sup>

### **Security Mandate Analyses**

Critical analyses of the SCO's security mandate tend to fall on a continuum between ideological considerations that emphasize the organization's tacit promotion of authoritarian norms and rhetorical opposition, to democratic movements to structural considerations that focus on the organization's elite-driven role in addressing regional non-traditional security threats. Both ideological and structural approaches emphasize the respective motivations of the organization's two largest countries, Russia and China, in creating a regional security apparatus.

---

<sup>31</sup> SCO - Suppression Coordination Organization? *NED Democracy Digest*. September 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Oresman, Mark. March, 2003. Judging the Future Success of the SCO. *China Eurasia Forum Monthly*.

<sup>33</sup> Lo, Bobo. 2008. *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing and the New Geopolitics*. Baltimore: Brookings Institute Press: 111.

<sup>34</sup> The ADB's Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation [CAREC] forum includes China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

<sup>35</sup> Go West, Young Man: China's economic explosion is rippling out to Central Asia. *The Economist*. 4 January, 2007.

<sup>36</sup> In The Strongman's Shadow. *The Economist*. 20 May, 2010.

However, several structural accounts accentuate the role of smaller Caucasus states in pressing for regime stability.<sup>37</sup>

The most common ideological charge against the SCO is that aims to be a mechanism through which regional authoritarian governments may utilize multilateral cooperation to defend themselves against regional or global democratic trends. In Central Asia, these “democratic trends” have come in the form of “color revolutions,” related mass protests against perceived illegitimate governments or election results in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan that all took on a specific color (or flower) as their respective symbol. Thomas Ambrosio argues that the SCO’s reaction to these color revolutions reveals a formal opposition to political upheaval, especially if the catalyst for agitation comes from SCO-identified terrorist, separatist, or extremists groups.

This characterization of the SCO is predicated upon a belief that authoritarian regional powers have an interest in being surrounded by other autocratic regimes because they benefit from similar incentive systems.<sup>38</sup> Bader et al. argue that from a rational choice theoretical framework, an autocracy’s primary political interest in its neighbors is the preservation of political stability, so long as relations between the governments do not breed conflict.<sup>39</sup> Such an approach presumes that authoritarian regimes offer both a greater capacity for security enforcement and a willingness to work with neighboring states on border and extradition issues. Application of this theory to the SCO’s ‘three evils’ derived security mandate would suggest that Russia and China are compelled to “protect themselves” from not only extremists and separatists, but also regional democratic trends.<sup>40</sup>

The process through which authoritarian regimes come under increasing pressure from the proliferation of democracies within their geographic proximity is known of “diffusion” or “democratic-wave theory.” The most cited example of this is Eastern Europe in 1989, where the fall of Poland’s communist government precipitated a region-wide push for democracy that fell neighboring communist states.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. A new model of Asian regionalism: does the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation have more potential than ASEAN? *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, 3: 451-467.

<sup>38</sup> Bader, Julia , et al. 2010. Do autocracies promote autocracy? A political economy perspective on regime-type export in regional neighbourhood. *Contemporary Politics* 16, 1: 96.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ambrosio, 2008. p. 1321.

<sup>41</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas. 2009. *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the former Soviet Union*. Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company: 12



Exporting authoritarianism is a step beyond merely resisting democratic promotion efforts. But some observers believe Russia transitioned from defense to attack following color revolutions in Serbia, Ukraine, and Georgia, which some observers perceived as products of United States-led interference.<sup>42</sup> Ambrosio views the language in the SCO's founding documents as the "embodiment of a new set of values and norms governing the development of Central Asia."<sup>43</sup> He believes regional powers acting under the legality of these formalized policy positions will discourage meaningful political change in Central Asia through the delegitimization (via multilateral regulation and military force) of anti-regime activities and democracy promotion. Any perceived repression or anti-democratic activity will then be justified under the rubric of preserving stability and honoring regime 'diversity.'

Stephen Aris counters that the organizational framework adopted by the SCO, including its commitment to preserving "stability", is appropriate for both the region and respective less-developed Central Asian governments struggling with sovereignty challengers. Aris and others argue that the SCO's security mandate isn't driven by Russia or China but by their less developed Central Asian neighbors. Regional elites in Caucasus states face a dilemma between two often conflicting objectives: domestic stability and regime continuity on the one hand, conformance to international democracy norms and facilitation of mass political participation on the other. The two goals are not mutually exclusive, but democratic legitimacy via fair and open elections is only possible after territorial political authority is established. From this perspective, the use of a regional security mechanism such as the SCO to address cross-border security dilemmas and the intrusion of external dynamics into domestic politics seems less nefarious than practical.

The SCO model, like the Association of South East Asian Nations model, enables active cooperation between actors who do not wish to cede their authority to a UN-style regional organization. Aris argues that the combination of elite-identified security concerns and nonbinding multilateral cooperation has been the primary driving force behind the development of the SCO thus far. This formulation does not suggest that the SCO is anti-Western or anti-democratic, but simply pro-stability.

---

<sup>42</sup> Burnell, Peter. 2010. Is there a new autocracy promotion? FRIDE Working Paper 96: 4.

<sup>43</sup> Ambrosio. 2008. p. 1322.

Tsung-Yen Chen uses a game-theoretic model that he labels “stag hunt theory” to explain the cooperative behaviors under SCO multilateralism, especially China’s participation. All six founding SCO members face similar domestic security challenges, violent separatists, and Islamic extremists who threatened to topple the government or seek independent status. Some of these Islamic groups collaborated across borders and supported the independence-seeking Muslim Uighurs in China’s Xinjiang province. China had legitimate reason to fear that if the Central Asian countries fell to subversive forces, chaos could spread across into china and boost the Uighurs’ aspirations. But China alone could not effectively contain regional moving targets.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, a region-wide framework of cooperation was necessary to effectively counter such threats. Individual governments acting alone could only chase “rabbits” [individual cells], but if the countries acted together they could hunt “stags” [larger coordinated movements]. Mutual cooperation was/is necessary to eliminate external support for such extremist groups. This formulation seems to complement the analysis of Aris.

### **Geopolitical Considerations**

Like most international organizations, the stated goals of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization should be contrasted with the realpolitik goals of regional players. One of the core dynamics of the ‘Spirit of Shanghai’ is the divergence and consolidation of Russian and Chinese interests. ‘Three evils’ related security concerns would seem to be the strongest area of agreement. As detailed earlier, security cooperation related to both cross-border activity and international terrorism have been a focus for the SCO since its inception. Yet even this “mandate” must be considered within the larger context of geopolitical control of the region.

For nearly two centuries, Russia has enjoyed a hegemonic position in Central Asia. China has been more than willing to recognize Russia’s primacy in the region as a historical and geographic fact, and has been happy to recognize the regional status quo so long as Russia in turn provided regional stability. This was especially true in the 1990s, when Moscow’s aversion to separatist elements in Chechnya and the Russian Far East mirrored Beijing’s concern with Uighur, Tibetan, and other independence movements. This confluence was eventually enshrined in the SCO’s commitment to fighting the “three evils.”<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Chen, Tsung-Yen. Eradicating separatism: China’s intentions in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Stanford University.

<sup>45</sup> Lo. 2008. p. 91-92.

However, the burgeoning Sino/Russia bond was unceremoniously pushed to the background by the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> Bush/Putin relationship. Russia hoped to benefit from positive relations with the United States by endorsing the US-led military action in Afghanistan and providing military and intelligence assistance. For Russian President Putin, the pluses of security cooperation outweighed the minuses of allowing the United States to become a player in Central Asia. Russia and the United States—like Russia and China—shared the perception that Islamic extremism was the chief threat to regional stability. But whereas the Russian/Chinese security arrangement reasserted Russia's regional primacy, the presence of the United States in Central Asia would challenge that, although Russia believed only temporarily.<sup>46</sup>

China was surprised by Putin's initial consent for the deployment of US troops in the Russia's sphere of influence. The absence of any advanced warning of an embrace of the US provided a key lesson: China could not depend on Russia to support their interests in the region, except on a purely coincidental basis. Chinese analysts came to believe that it was better to pursue a flexible policy towards Central Asia that engaged all states in the region.<sup>47</sup>

The defeat of the Taliban by American and coalition forces did not bring greater stability to Central Asia. Instead, what was once a relatively predictable region under an acknowledged hegemonic power quickly transitioned into a disparate environment that was increasing, rather than containing, security challenges. Furthermore, the ongoing presence of the United States creates a multi-polar competitive strategic environment.<sup>48</sup>

Bobo Lo refers to the reemergence of a regional geopolitics as a new “great game,” referencing the term used to describe the 19<sup>th</sup> century strategic rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. He argues that great power tensions in the region are at their most acute since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Russia still wants to hold sway over Central Asia by “right” and via control of energy resources. Washington rejects this position, and continues to promote democracy rhetorically via the “Bush Doctrine,” and covertly via the perceived Western influence in color revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. Beijing is also not willing to concede Russia's regional dominance, at least not in the long term. China is ready to use political, economic, strategic, and cultural means to expand its interests in the region, though in a less overt manner than Russia and the United

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 92-96

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 96

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 96-98.

States. This approach involves much more soft power manipulation under the rubric of “prosperous neighborhood,” which includes the establishment of “Confucian Centers,” endowment of educational scholarships, and ample energy assistance.<sup>49</sup>

This new dynamic is evident in Russia and China’s distinct approaches to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China's engagement is perceived to be part of a wider multilateral strategy, whereas Russia's interest seems part of a small-minded plan to reassert influence over its former satellites, to minimal economic benefit and maximum diplomatic cost.<sup>50</sup>

The big winners in this struggle have been Central Asian states, which are no longer passive participants in the ‘great game,’ but active players in their own right. In the SCO, the presence of two great powers rather than a single hegemonic leader allows Central Asian states to maximize their interests by maneuvering between the two sides. Regionally, the continued presence of the United States and US military bases provides further leverage for regional actors.<sup>51</sup>

### **Regional Organizations**

Many SCO member states share memberships in other regional organizations.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established in 1966 under the auspices of the UN to promote economic and social growth for Asian and Pacific countries. Assistance to member countries usually comes in the form of loans and equity investments for development projects, technical assistance, formal advice, or grants. The ADB has grown from 31 members at its inception to 69 members, including countries outside the Asian/Pacific region.<sup>52</sup> Regionally, analysts often cite the ADB’s influence in the development a new “Silk Road.” The organization’s Central Asian Economic Cooperation initiative aims to tie Central Asian states more closely to each other and with the rest of Asia. The ADB’s Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) forum includes China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. China's trade with the other CAREC members surged from \$1 billion in 1997 to \$9.8 billion in 2006.<sup>53 54</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. p. 98-104.

<sup>50</sup> Poor study: Russia may be learning the wrong lessons from China. *China Economic Review*. Nov. 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Lo. 2008. p. 107.

<sup>52</sup> About Asian Development Bank. 2010. Asian Development Bank Website. < <http://www.adb.org/About/>>

<sup>53</sup> *The Economist*. 2007.

<sup>54</sup> *The Economist*. 2010.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was the successor to the USSR in the 1990s. The CIS is a loose affiliation of former Soviet satellite states (including all SCO countries except China). Like the SCO, the CIS is primarily a security apparatus but also coordinates in trade, finance, and lawmaking. Unlike the SCO, it has been widely dismissed as ineffective. The organization signed off on hundreds of deals in the 1990s, none of which were ever implemented.<sup>55</sup>

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), also known as the Tashkent Treaty, is a mutual defense agreement between 10 countries including all members of the SCO except China. The organization started as an extension of the CIS but has grown into an autonomous operation. The CSTO covers much of the same ground as the SCO, combating “new security threats and challenges” such as terrorism, Islamic extremism, drug trafficking, and international crime. It also features “Spirit of Shanghai” themed anti Western rhetoric. The most important distinction between the SCO and CSTO is the absence of China, which guarantees Russian pre-eminence with the organization. Unlike the SCO, the CSTO has military forces of its own, including a Rapid Response Force with 10 battalions and 4000 troops.<sup>56</sup> In 2008 the CSTO held its first large scale military exercise in Armenia with troops from Armenia, Russia and Tajikistan.<sup>57</sup>

The Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) was founded to assist with regulation of the newly formed customs space between CIS members. The EAEC includes all members of the SCO except China and Uzbekistan.<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusions

Criticisms of the SCO’s ambiguous democratic credentials (both in membership and rhetoric) ostensibly challenge its legitimacy as a multinational institution. Much analysis of regionalism contains an implicit assumption that regional cooperation is only meaningful between liberal democracies similar to those in Western Europe.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 106

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 112.

<sup>57</sup> Partnership for Peace Information Management System. Rubezh 2008: the first large-scale CSTO military exercise <http://www.pims.org/news/2008/08/06/rubezh-2008-the-first-large-scale-csto-military-exercise>

<sup>58</sup> *Rianovosti* Russian News Database. Uzbekistan suspends Eurasec membership, Moscow unruffled. 11 Dec, 2008. RIANOVOSTI Online. <http://en.rian.ru/world/20081112/118264022.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. A new model of Asian regionalism: does the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation have more potential than ASEAN? *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, 3: 451-467.

The norms epitomized in the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ are deliberately different from Western international institutions. The SCO’s declared principles of non-interference and respect for diversity fulfill a dual function—inwardly providing a basis for members to work together while outwardly challenging the perceived “threat” of both strategic and philosophical uni-polarity of Western dominated international relations.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Bailes, et. al. 2007. p. 6.

## SCO Regime Perspectives

### **The SCO: A Precarious Balancing Act**

Because of both the pressure amongst SCO member states to maintain the current balance of power within the SCO and the private nature of this organization regarding its policies, it is difficult to identify a specific, cohesive regime perspective for the SCO by its members. The maintenance of a precarious balance of power often drives SCO member state action, such that SCO member states China and Russia often seem diametrically opposed to various SCO actions. For example, at a recent SCO summit Russian President Dmitri Medvedev pushed the SCO to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, China expressed disapproval of a recognition of this nature (possibly because such a recognition would violate the SCO norm of non-interference, which we know that China adheres to more closely than Russia) and as a result the SCO's Central Asian member states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) stood up to the Kremlin; a move that they would likely not have made had Chinese support not been so explicit.<sup>61</sup>

The historical context of the issue of the balance of power between China and Russia in the SCO begins with the break-up of the Soviet Union. Vladimir Putin described this break-up as “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.”<sup>62</sup> While, it gave the weaker Central Asian states that now hold membership in the SCO independence from the Soviet Union, it has not necessarily removed them from the sphere of Russian influence. From China's standpoint, the Soviet collapse served as an unimaginable strategic opportunity, and the Soviet empire that had encroached upon Chinese territories for centuries had suddenly been substantially diminished. This was an epic turn of events in international politics, and it served as a precursor to a current dynamic in the SCO has been best described by S. Frederick Starr, Chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and a professor at Johns Hopkins University,

---

<sup>61</sup> 2009. China's Stability Doctrine. The Korea Times. June 10.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

who suggests that the "fundamental asymmetry" of the SCO is that "China recognizes the right of Central Asian states to make their own decisions ... Russia does not."<sup>63</sup>

### **Interstate Relations: Lesser- Known Faces of the SCO**

We have already alluded to the bi-polar dynamic between the two great powers of the SCO, Russia and China, but we find it important to provide a brief background of Central Asian states that exercise less power within the organization. While information in this section will be discussed more in depth in other categories of the full report, here we provide a brief overview of certain events that have had a direct influence on the relations between SCO member-states. The main purpose of this section is to distinguish the factors that have undermined relationships between SCO member states from those that have enhanced the relationships between SCO member states.

#### *Tajikistan*

Many of the historical disputes between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan took shape in the 1980's, prior to the fall of the Soviet Union. These discrepancies arose over water, arable land, and scarcity of resources and typically led to competing claims to small parcels of land, which occasionally become violent.<sup>64</sup> However, these competing land claims were not limited to the smaller member states. The Eastern Gorno-Badakhshan region has long been a point of contention between Tajikistan and China, although, due to shared interest in repressing political reformist groups, it is less so today.<sup>65</sup>

As we mentioned in the history and causes section of this report, the shared interest in resolving land claims has motivated SCO membership and subsequent deliberations. Through the SCO, regime stability has become a regional norm and it has been a real problem for Tajikistan in the post-Soviet world. In the early 1990s, in particular, Tajikistan experience much political instability and unrest. Many SCO neighbors lent their support to help the Tajiks achieve some sense of stability. For example, Uzbekistan gave military support to the prevailing regime in Tajikistan's civil war and closed its border with Tajikistan in 1992 to prevent opposition

---

<sup>63</sup> Scheineson, Andrew. 2009. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Council on Foreign Relations/ Background. March 24.

<sup>64</sup> The Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. Country Studies. Tajikistan. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.



refugees from fleeing to Uzbekistan. Additionally, Russia has played a major role in the post civil war government of Tajikistan by both providing a military presence in the region and by placing many of its own citizens in Tajik government positions.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan has had competing land claims with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and China. Border disputes with China have primarily been worked out through shared economic interests, and some Chinese investment in this resource rich region.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, Uzbekistan is still very leery of the threat China may pose to them. Because Uzbekistan has a large Russian population, and has been closely tied to the Russian economy it often finds itself susceptible to Russian pressure and influence.<sup>68</sup> Uzbek President, Islam Karimov has been a vocal advocate in the formation of the SCO, presumably because it can mitigate Russian influence in Uzbekistan.

#### *Kazakhstan*

With the largest land-mass out of any of the smaller SCO member-states, Kazakhstan has strived to become a major player on the global scene by advertising its country as a pivotal bridge between East and West. It has sought to increase economic relations with the U.S., Western Europe, Turkey, and China. However, China has recently become a more prolific trade and investment partner with Kazakhstan. Under Kazakh President Nazerbayev's regime, the government has exercised strict regulation over privatization of land in this oil rich region.<sup>69</sup>

#### *Kyrgyzstan*

Regime stability in this country has been very susceptible to abrupt disruptions such as the 2005 Tulip Revolution and the more recent revolution in April of 2010 both of which led to regime change. Kyrgyzstan has had a heavy dependence on Russia in part because of its inability to become an economically viable state. Because of Bakiyev's relationship with the U.S., many

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> The Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. Country Studies. Uzbekistan.  
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/>

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*

suspect that Russia played an influential behind the scenes role in the most recent revolution, and that in turn the new regime will be more pro-Russian in its policies.<sup>70</sup>

### **Small Power vs. Great Power**

States classified as new nation-states are more occupied with domestic or “internal” stability than others, and Aris suggests that “although internal security may dominate the thinking of elites in less developed nation-states, their internal weakness as states at an early stage of development also leaves them vulnerable to the impact of dynamics from regional and global levels. Such states do not possess the significant capacity to isolate themselves from the intrusion of external dynamics.”<sup>71</sup>

This should help us better understand why a cooperative security agreement with the SCO may be of significant importance to states like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Many of the political realities well developed states take for granted such as clearly defined borders, and a government that has the capacity to function without collapse, can be more frequently subject to drastic change for the smaller Central Asian states. An organization like the SCO can give these countries a sense of security that may be welcomed as external protection so governing elites can put more interest in domestic concerns.<sup>72</sup> For many of the rulers in these weaker nation states the survival of the state cannot be separated from the survival of their regime. The SCO’s capacity to operate as an intergovernmental organization can be viewed by the ruling elites of weaker Central Asian states as “enhancing” the sovereignty of these states by stabilizing the geopolitical atmosphere.<sup>73</sup> A stance of “non-interference” by the SCO in domestic security affairs has allowed weaker Central Asian states to feel as if they have the liberty to govern independently.

### **Shaping the Future of the SCO**

---

<sup>70</sup> U.S. Russian Ties tested in Kyrgyzstan Revolution. <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-04-14/u-s-russian-ties-tested-in-kyrgyzstan-revolution-update1-.html>

<sup>71</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. 'The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: 'Tackling the Three Evils'. A Regional Response to Non-traditional Security Challenges or an Anti-Western Bloc?', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61: 3, 457 — 482

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. 'A New Model of Asian Regionalism: Does the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Have More Potential Than ASEAN?', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 22: 3, 451 — 467

The actions taken by the SCO regarding membership expansion may be our best indicator for the future direction of this organization. Bobo Lo has poignantly observed that, “Paradoxically, the more the SCO grows in importance, the greater potential for a Sino-Russian rivalry to emerge.”<sup>74</sup> It is not a stretch to see the formation of the SCO as a *reactive* measure on Russia’s behalf to protect long established Soviet influence in Central Asia. In addition, its formation was also a reaction to a *proactive* initiative on China’s part to expand its influence in a post-Soviet world.

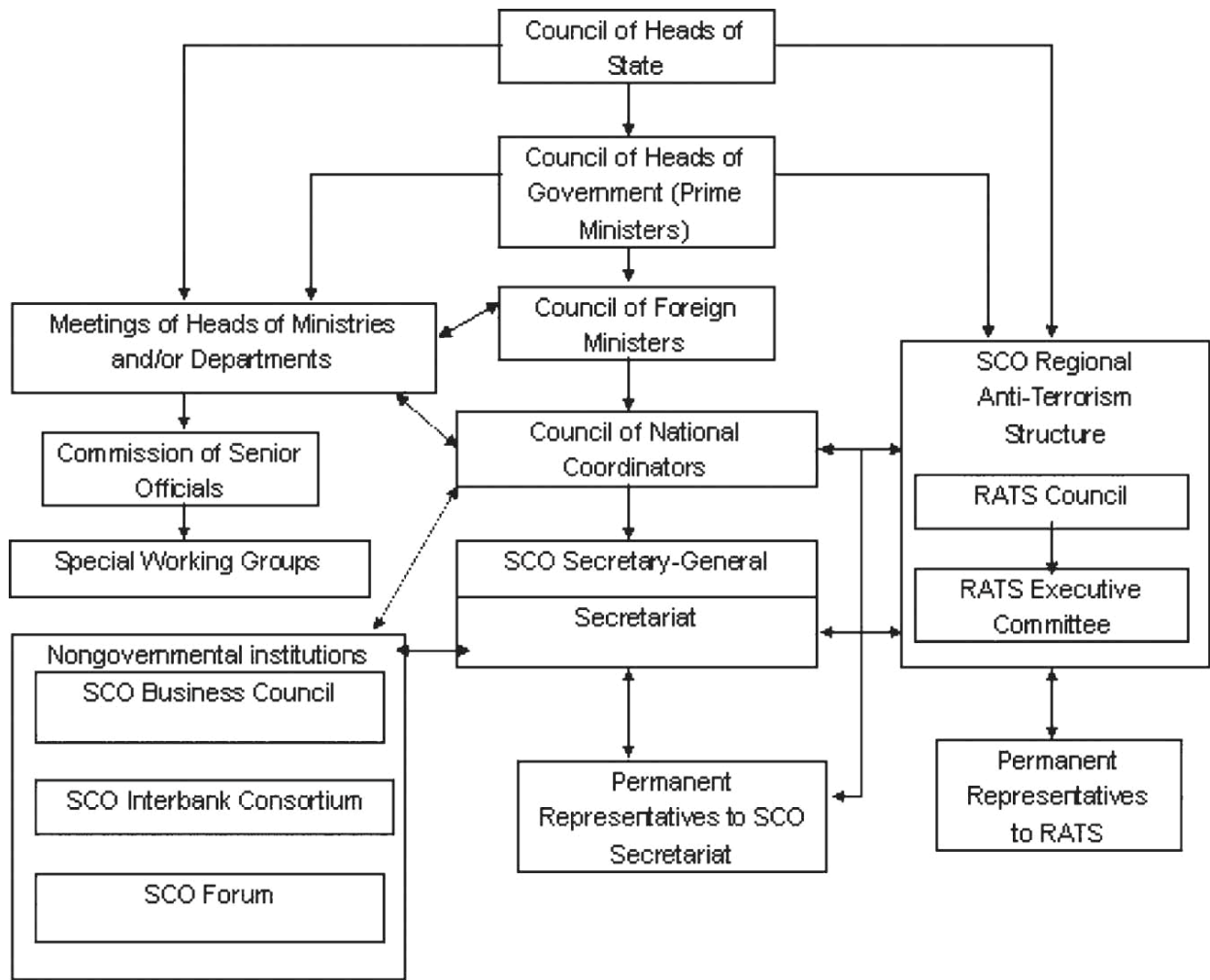
However, Lo has also written that, “China has little interest in becoming a regional hegemon”.<sup>75</sup> While there may be serious divisions in culture, language, and ethnicity, which prevent China from seriously pursuing regional dominance in the more immediate future; there is no reason to believe that this is not an important long-term objective. The assertiveness of China’s foreign policy often directly correlates to its economic standing in a particular area. With all of these competing interests amongst the member states of SCO it should be clear as to why thus far the SCO is an amalgam of regime perspectives, patched over by an ideology that is as vague as it is hollow.

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

## The SCO Secretariat



76

### Introduction

In our examination of the Secretariat of the SCO we were interested in understanding several pressing issues. We were interested in exploring the level of institutionalization of the organization, as well as what the duties of the Secretariat are. But, perhaps even more importantly we wanted to understand what the capacity of the Secretariat is; in other words to what extent is the SCO Secretariat autonomous vis-a-vis the SCO member states? Here we present the institutionalization of the Secretariat of the SCO by identifying its membership criteria and its duties. Then, we examine the issue of capacity by identifying who the Secretariat

<sup>76</sup> Aris, Stephen (2009) 'The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Tackling the "Three Evils". A Regional Response to Non-traditional Security Challenges or an Anti-Western Bloc?', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61:3 pp. 457-482.

members are. Specifically, we look to see if SCO member governments send their junior representatives to serve on the Secretariat or whether they send high-level, senior officials. Finally, we present a summary of the last ten meetings of the SCO Secretariat and the full biographies of each Deputy General in Appendices B and C at the end of the report.<sup>77</sup>

### **Membership Criteria**

The SCO has set up expert panels to establish principles and standards for incorporating new members. "One important principle is that the new member should be good for SCO's growth and unification, not the other way round. Enlarging membership is an important task for SCO at present and for a long time in the future. We will continue to enhance cooperation within the SCO framework," SCO Secretary-General Muratbek Sansyzbayevich Imanaliev.<sup>78</sup>

### **The Duties of the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has many formal duties, they are outlined below:

1. Coordinates and provides informational, analytical, legal, organizational and technical support of the activity of the Organization, in conjunction with the SCO RCTS formulates proposals concerning the development of cooperation in the SCO framework and external ties of the Organization, oversees the fulfillment of decisions adopted by the SCO bodies.
2. In interaction with Permanent Representatives composes draft documents based on proposals of the member states and with the consent of the Council of National Coordinators circulates them among the member states for further consideration by the SCO institutions, including draft agendas of forthcoming meetings and/or sessions of the SCO institutions, as well as necessary materials; agrees dates and venues of meetings and/or sessions of the SCO institutions. Materials and documents mentioned in the given paragraph are forwarded to the member states not later than 20 days before the start of meetings and/or sessions of the SCO institutions, if no other date is specified.
3. In interaction with the Council of National Coordinators arranges consultations of experts of the member states on draft documents submitted to meetings and/or sessions of the SCO institutions for their consideration.
4. Provides organizational and technical support of meetings and/or sessions of the SCO institutions in accordance with the relevant regulations and in interaction with the state hosting

---

<sup>77</sup> See Appendix A for a Summary of Secretariat Summits

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-02/04/content\\_9425076.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-02/04/content_9425076.htm)

such meeting.

5. Carries out the duty of a depositary of documents adopted in the SCO framework, certifies and forwards to the member states certified copies of such documents, as well as to the SCO RCTS (if the latter concerns it). Certified copies of documents adopted in the SCO framework are handed out to Permanent Representatives within 7 days after the Secretariat has received original documents.

6. Prepares and publishes Secretariat information catalogues, manages the website of the Secretariat and coordinates its contents with that of the website of the SCO RCTS and the SCO Regional Economic Cooperation website. Holds regular briefings for representatives of print and internet media.

7. Carries out preliminary legal and financial assessment of draft treaties and regulations drawn up in the SCO framework.

8. In conjunction with the SCO RCTS composes a general plan of the Organization's activities for the following six months.

9. Has the right to request the member states to provide reference books and other open materials for working needs of the SCO institutions.

10. Ensures protocol support of the Secretary-General's activity.

11. In interaction with the SCO RCTS conducts contacts with states and international organizations with regard to issues of the Organization's activity, and with the consent of the member states concludes respective documents to that end.

12. With the consent of the Council of National Coordinators and in interaction with the SCO RCTS coordinates the Organization's cooperation with observers and dialogue partners in line with the legal documents of the SCO.

13. Interacts with non-governmental structures in the SCO framework in accordance with the legal documents regulating their activity and the Secretariat Regulations.

14. With the consent of the member states and within budgetary limits recruits experts on the basis of single term contract for conducting a research activity on issues of specific concern to the SCO, as well as organizes workshops and conferences.

15. Arranges and coordinates the activity of the SCO Observer Mission in accordance with the

Regulations on SCO Observer Mission in presidential and/or parliamentary elections, as well as referendums.<sup>79</sup>

### **Members of the SCO Secretariat**

Members of the SCO Secretary General make up the membership to the SCO Secretariat. There are five members of the SCO Secretary General; Muratbek Sansyzbayevich Imanaliev from Kyrgyzstan, Mikhail Alekseyevich Konarovskiy from Russia, Anvar Djamaletdinovich Nasyrov from Uzbekistan, Juyin Hong from China and Parviz Davlatkhodjayevich Dodov from Tajikistan.<sup>80</sup>

All of these members have extensive biographies that suggest they are high-ranking officials in the governments that they represent. Many of them have also served in a diplomatic capacity as ambassadors to other Central Asian States. For example, the Deputy General from Kyrgyzstan served as the ambassador to the People's Republic of China, the Deputy General from Russia served as an ambassador to Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Croatia, and the Deputy General from China served as an ambassador to Kyrgyzstan and Estonia. Also, many of these members have extensive academic backgrounds; the Tajik Deputy General has a Law degree, the Uzbek Deputy General has an International Law degree, and the Russian and Kyrgyz Deputy Generals both have PhD's in history.

In order to see how independent these SCO Secretariat members were from their respective states, we did a simple Internet search in order to gauge their activity. The assumption here is that representatives with more autonomy from the state should be more active and, therefore have more "hits" on an Internet search.<sup>81</sup> We base this assumption on the fact that many of the powerful leaders of these states are often in the news and are easily searchable on the Internet. The only search results for both the Uzbek and Tajik Deputy Generals were their respective mentions on the SCO Secretariat webpage. The Chinese Deputy General received multiple hits, but many of these were cases of mistaken identity-other people with his name who happened to be in the news and on the Internet. The name of the Russian Deputy General generated lots of results, many of which were related to both his position within the SCO and his

---

<sup>79</sup>Secretary General information obtained on the SCO website; <http://www.secsco.org/EN/secretary.asp>

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Each Deputy General's name was entered into the Google Search Engine and then the Internet was searched for results matching his name.

capacity as an ambassador. Finally, the Kyrgyz Deputy General also generated many results, most of which were related to his position in the SCO Secretariat as the new Secretary General.

Although they are clearly tenured members of their respective governments, it is not clear that these officials give the SCO Secretariat autonomy from its member states. Whereas in a regionally integrated institution like the EU, members of the administrative structure are required to act on behalf of the EU rather than on behalf of their respective states, in an organization like the SCO with a norm of non-intervention, we would expect the administrative representatives to be fully committed to serving on behalf of their member state rather than serving on behalf of their organization. When we turn to examine the institutional flow chart of the SCO, we see that our expectations are confirmed. Representation in the SCO is largely tied to the member state and the roles of state leaders are institutionalized in its structural framework.

Further, even though all of the members of the Secretariat are long-standing members of their respective governments, it is unclear as to whether or not they are really power players. The results of our simple search of SCO Secretariat member activity would seem to suggest that an appointment to the SCO Secretariat is a reward for senior officials, but is not a place where powerful players are stationed.



## **Public Opinion**

Understandably, a great deal of the work analyzing the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ and the SCO focuses much of its attention on how the emergence of these factors in recent years has shaped the leadership of Central Asian states. However, of equal, if not at times greater importance, is what effect it has had on the general populations of these countries. To fully understand to what degree the anti-democratic rhetoric of authoritarian regimes has had an effect in the region, the perception of democracy in the general populous must be considered. Overtly oppressive tactics are rarely, if ever, the sole method employed by regimes in eliminating competition or democratic movements that pose a threat. A generally more effective approach is to shape the public’s perspective on what is needed and acceptable in their governing bodies. The public opinion surveys available from this region indicate that the authoritarian regimes at the head of SCO member states have been successful in utilizing the malleable nature of their citizen’s views on democracy. In general the people of Central Asia do not express negativity towards democracy; however, their expectations of a system labeled as such does appear to have been affected by the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ following the fall communism in Central Asia.

This review of public opinion will focus on the SCO member states and former Soviet territories of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. These states prove of great interest in the area of democracy perception due to the possibly tenuous grip of leadership in a state like Kyrgyzstan, or Uzbekistan in 2005, and the often distorted views of democracy that grow from isolation and the norm adjustment of authoritarian regimes. This is certainly not to imply that public opinion is unimportant in Russia and China, or that it cannot shift. For example, the fall of the Soviet Union and the turbulence that followed in Russia is essentially very recent history, and the Tiananmen Square uprising occurred only a little over twenty years ago. However, Putin’s United Russia Party is currently in clear control of the country and this is backed up by a general support among Russian citizens. The CCP enjoys an even more overwhelming dominance in Chinese public opinion. The clear, often uncontested support enjoyed by the leadership in these two states is no doubt in large part due to an institutionalized coercion and suppression of democratic wants and needs amongst the populous. Still, the leadership in smaller states is relatively more vulnerable and their citizens often have a view of democracy less attributable to their own perceptions. Thus, the enigmatic qualities of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan provide for an interesting discussion of

democracy in Central Asia. The surveys utilized in this section span a number of years, and questions between countries often vary, but the totality of the information should provide a satisfactory pastiche of how people in Central Asia view democracy and its relationship to their respective governments.

It is of note that the general unavailability of data coming from Central Asian states regarding views on democracy makes direct statistical assessments of public opinion on the subject a fairly elusive proposition, particularly in the case of the SCO member states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The inability to acquire data and conduct surveys along such lines itself sheds light on the undemocratic nature of these societies. Being isolated in such a manner implies that information flowing in or out of the country is largely controlled by regimes. As a result, it is generally less likely that citizens have a well rounded understanding of democracy, as their leaders are free to demonize outside democratic forces or distort democratic norms by associating democracy with their authority. What data is available is primarily from the 1990's in the initial years following the fall of the Soviet Union.

### **Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan**

A report from 1995 from the United States Institute of Peace found that the percentage of respondents in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan wishing for the institution of a western styled democracy landed in the teens and was basically on par with the percentage of those supporting socialism or communism. Tellingly, respondents overwhelmingly supported any governmental form that would provide stability or order.<sup>82</sup> This, of course, was in large part due to the lack of stability in the region following the fall of the Soviet Union. It also serves as some indication of why authoritarian regimes have proven successful in maintaining their dominance over the last fifteen years.

The majority of respondents in this survey expressed positive views toward democracy as a general concept and supported a “fairness and a need for decency” in their politics<sup>83</sup> This need can still be seen in a 2006 Gallup survey that found 43 percent of Kazakhstanis feeling that the elections in 2006 were dishonest;<sup>84</sup> numbers that show some level of dissatisfaction with how democratic their country actually is. However, this does not necessarily indicate a strong

---

<sup>82</sup> Lubin, Nancy. 1995. Central Asians take stock: reform, corruption, and identity. Report from *United States Institute of Peace*: 4.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>84</sup> Gallup survey conducted in 2006. Found at [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com).

understanding, or support, of democracy, and this survey still displays a fairly small percentage of the public being critical, especially when considering the blatantly coercive nature of the government in a state with consistently undemocratic Freedom House ratings.<sup>85</sup>

An understanding of democracy shaped by an authoritarian history was indicated in the 1995 survey of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, where fewer than half of respondents in both countries supported the need for more specific democratic concepts such as free speech, a free press, and political pluralism.<sup>86</sup> This implies that while many in Central Asia may abstractly idealize certain notions of democracy there is still some dissonance when the prospect of applying it is confronted. It provides further evidence that in Central Asian states much of the population does not view democracy as an effective set of institutions that facilitate their influence, but democracy is instead the modern face, replacing that of communism, that is used to justify authoritarian leadership and deference to the state.<sup>87</sup> As a result, “when we speak of supporting democratic principles, we are not necessarily speaking the same language as most Central Asians.”<sup>88</sup>

A further illustration of this idea is found in a recent survey conducted by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in Tajikistan leading up to 2010 elections, seen below. This survey indicates that democratic norms, or the specifics of democratic systems, are often interpreted in Central Asian states in a manner incongruent with common western perceptions. The table shows that citizens in Tajikistan obviously have a high regard for some abstract concepts of freedom such as human rights, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech. Tellingly, though, the more direct elements of a society often needed to support such goals are rated at a much lower level. For instance, without an independent press and the ability to associate, it is difficult to imagine that freedom of speech will be effectively exercised or insured. If corruption is high and law enforcement uneven, the freedom to cast a ballot in an election becomes a somewhat empty privilege. Also, without any checks and balances or fair enforcement of laws, it proves difficult to ensure that a state will honor a commitment to this survey’s top rated freedoms or human rights.

---

<sup>85</sup> Found at [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org).

<sup>86</sup> Lubin. 1995. p. 4.

<sup>87</sup> Roberts, Sean. 2009. Saving democracy promotion from short-term U.S. policy interests in Central Asia. *A Century Foundation Report*: 9.

<sup>88</sup> Lubin. 1995. p. 4.

**Table 1.1 Survey Conducted by International Foundation for Electoral Systems**

Meaning of Democracy	% of cases
Human rights	61%
Freedom of religion	55%
Freedom of speech	53%
Freedom to vote	38%
Everyone has work	37%
State support of pensioners	32%
No official corruption	29%
State support of those unable to work	28%
Freedom of association	26%
Fair and consistent enforcement of laws	24%
Equal access to education	17%
Freedom of press	14%
System of checks and balances between govt. branches	13%

*"Listed on this card are several statements. Please pick any statement or statements that you think accurately define what it means for a country to be a democracy. You can choose up to five responses." (n=1,500)*

Obviously, these results do not imply that the people of Tajikistan have no appreciation for many of the important concepts associated with democracy, but it does example a lack of understanding or appreciation for the institutions of democracy. To further reinforce these curious perceptions, survey respondents felt that their government was most effectively meeting the standards ranked highest on their democratic meaning list. Perhaps the most clear indication of dissonance between the supposedly democratic nature of the Tajikistani government and the reality can be found in the fact that 83 percent of those surveyed feel that Tajikistan is a democracy. The authoritarian regime in Tajikistan has thus been incredibly successful in reframing democracy as this number has risen from 39 percent in 1996. At the same time, Tajikistan's Freedom House score has remained decidedly in the not free category with only a few insignificant variations over that same span of time.

### **Russian and Western Support**

When respondents were asked in 1995 in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan which states should be turned to for assistance, the broad category of 'European countries' received the most positive reaction, with the United States and Russia both landing at about thirty percent in Uzbekistan and fifteen percent in Kazakhstan.<sup>89</sup> In recent years Gallup data on all four former soviet territory SCO member states shows that public opinion has moved toward a more positive view of Russian influence in the region. Strikingly small percentages in all four states see a relationship

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

with the United States as taking precedence at the risk of alienating Russia. Whereas, a sacrifice of U.S. relations in order to maintain close ties to Russia is seen as acceptable by at least 40 percent of respondents in all four of the smaller SCO countries, reaching a high of 63 percent in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>90</sup> Since the mid-nineties, Russia has been increasingly successful in asserting its influence in the region. The ability to do so is no doubt propelled by the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ and an organization like the SCO. Perhaps most importantly, it appears that a regional unity benefiting Russia has affected the Central Asian populous as well as its leaders, which most likely aids in blocking the understanding and support for democratic norms in the region.

**Table 1.2 Relations With Russia vs. United States: Which of these two comes Closer to your view?**

	More important to have a close relationship with the USA even if it might hurt relationships with Russia	More important to have a close relationship with Russia even if it might hurt relationships with USA	Important to have close relationships with both USA and Russia
Kyrgyzstan	3%	63%	22%
Uzbekistan	2%	53%	22%

## Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan enjoyed the status as the great democratic hope of Central Asia following the fall of the Soviet Union. It has intermittingly retained this status since, while usually backsliding into what is often categorized as ‘soft authoritarianism.’ Such categorization is used as a means to set it apart from the other more decidedly authoritarian states mentioned in this section.<sup>91</sup> As a result of its uniqueness, public opinion data from Kyrgyzstan is easier to come by. At least this is true in relation to the other small SCO member states. As mentioned above, Kyrgyzstanis favor ties with Russia at a larger percentage than any of the other former territories. Displaying favoritism toward Russia in and of itself does not necessarily imply a weak support of democratic concepts and institutions. However, comparing survey data from 1996 to that from 2008 shows that enthusiasm for democratic institutions might be waning in Kyrgyzstan. Since a

<sup>90</sup> Gallup Survey conducted in 2008 and 2009. Found at [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com).

<sup>91</sup> Shatz, Edward. 2006. Legitimacy claims and democracy promotion in authoritarian Central Asia. *International Political Science Review* 27, 3: 263-284.

general impression of democracy can be a somewhat difficult to define statistically in the region due to rampant misperceptions, being able to zero in on one particular element is of value. For instance, despite the frequent political shifts and failed elections of the last fifteen years, surveys from 1996 and 2008 show that a comparable amount of Kyrgyzstanis felt that they were living under a democratic system and that it was functioning satisfactorily. This perhaps reinforces the notion that democracy is viewed as merely a loose ideological framework that can be applied to a number of undemocratic actions and results. More tellingly, in 1996, when asked what the ideal number of political parties was, 57 percent of respondents felt that two or more was appropriate, and the importance of political parties was expressed by 58 percent of those surveyed. In 2008 there appeared to be a decrease in the number of those surveyed that felt political opposition was important, with only 13 percent viewing it as very important and 31 percent as somewhat important.<sup>92</sup>

Such figures might be considered a surprise, since two recent revolutions have both been framed as a popular response to corruption. In such circumstances one would expect the need for coherent political opposition to be a priority. Therefore, this is perhaps an indication that, despite the relative success of democratic institutions or movements in Kyrgyzstan, it has remained far from a vigorous democracy, and that dissatisfaction amongst the populous has not been articulated through a stronger civil society or a focus on healthier institutions. It comes as little surprise, then, that the democratic nature of the most recent revolution is still very much to be determined and somewhat in doubt.

### **Nationalism instead of Liberal Democracy**

Central Asian regimes employing a nationalist appeal post-communism is a factor that has helped shape public acceptance of authoritarian leadership, and stifled the application of liberal democracy. Thus, it is worth at least briefly mentioning in this section. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, much of Central Asia entered a state of flux both geographically and socio-politically. It was inevitable that the people in this region would be encountering somewhat foreign ideologies and political concepts due to the fall of communism. A vacuum was created due to the changing nature of governments and politics in Central Asia. It was largely filled by a move towards unity through nationalism and this managed to override genuine

---

<sup>92</sup> Survey conducted by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Found at [www.ifes.org](http://www.ifes.org).  
Gallup Survey conducted in 2008. Found at [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com).

democracy in most of the region. Focusing on the four smaller SCO member states, Binghol argues that these nations provide examples that contradict the frequently held prediction that liberal democracy would replace communism. More specifically, “ethnic nationalism has been at the core of Central Asian politics. It has become both the main ideology of the successor states and the main means to legitimize the policies of the ruling elites of Central Asian countries in the post-Soviet era.”<sup>93</sup> By aligning themselves with the dominant ethnic segment of their societies, Central Asian regimes framed their rule by emphasizing this form of unity at the expense of strong democratic institutions. Such an approach to public appeal can help to effectively drown out opposition, which is often strongest in minority groups. Nationalism can also serve to distract supporters from a lack of freedoms or actual democratic institutions, since the majority often feels it is being represented even if they do not participate greatly in shaping their representation.

## **Conclusion**

Public opinion or general views among the people of Central Asia toward democracy are, naturally, of utmost importance to the prospect of democracy taking root. It is essential that the citizens of the states in this region favorably view democratic concepts or norms if they are to flourish, and democratic institutions are to become self-sustaining and legitimate. If we are to view public perception as the ground from which democracy will largely sprout, this ground can be accurately described as relatively shaky. It seems clear that democratic cultivation throughout Central Asian societies is a project requiring a great deal of work and perhaps most importantly, re-framing. As Roberts argues, anti-democratic sentiment does not lie solely within the halls of power controlled by the many authoritarian leaders; the “the mindset of the people in the region poses a much more troubling barrier to the success of U.S. programs promoting democracy.”<sup>94</sup> Distrust or misperception regarding democracy does not imply that its application in Central Asia is completely untenable. However, as was shown in the Tajikistan survey, an understanding of the importance of strong institutions is lacking. As a result, attempts to establish such institutions have and will likely continue to encounter a swift deterioration if the public opinion in these SCO member states does not shift.<sup>95</sup> Such a shift remains a difficult proposition in the face of the authoritarian consolidation that the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ and the SCO represent.

---

<sup>93</sup> Binghol, Yimaz. 2004. Nationalism and democracy in post-communist central Asia. *Asian Ethnicity* 5, 1: 44.

<sup>94</sup> Roberts. 2009. p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Chenoy, Anuradha M. 2007. Democracy development and discourse in Central Asia. *Development* 50, 1: 62-67.  
Blank, Stephen. 2004. Democratic prospects in Central Asia. *World Affairs* 166, 3: 133-147.

## **Ideology of the SCO and Content Analysis**

Due to the relative youth of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it is not entirely surprising that some assessment regarding the SCO thus far has been done by relating it to existing international organizations. Doing this can help in garnering a sense of how functional and ultimately influential the SCO is or will be in relation to its member states individually, nations outside its sphere, and these more established multilateral bodies. The most natural comparisons to be drawn to the SCO, at least from an ideological standpoint, can be found in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, particularly in relation to the early years of ASEAN. Similarities between these two organizations can be found both in their basic charters, their current relationship, and in existing literature on the SCO.<sup>96</sup> It seems quite logical that it has been popular to parallel the ‘ASEAN Way’ with the ‘Shanghai Spirit.’

However, while this section will focus primarily on the SCO to ASEAN parallel, drawing comparisons to the international organization most similar to the SCO is not the only analysis of value, particularly if the SCO is to actualize many of its stated goals and become a more effective organization than ASEAN. Therefore, this section will briefly explore the initial character of the Organization of African Unity and its evolution resulting in the African Union and what this might tell us regarding the future of the SCO. It is also relevant to look at how the SCO is similar to and interacts with western democratic norm-based international bodies such as the EU, NATO, and the OSCE. This can provide a means of dissecting rhetorical and ideological differences to garner a better understanding of how and what exactly the SCO often appears to counter. Also, despite the lack of ideological similarity between these international bodies and the SCO, comparing them will perhaps create greater context for what kind of strength the SCO enjoys in transforming rhetoric into concrete steps. If it is to continue growing as a force in Central Asia and internationally, then looking at the SCO in light of many different multinational bodies is of import and can be greatly illuminating.

---

<sup>96</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. A new modal of Asian regionalism: does the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation have more potential than ASEAN? *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, 3: 451-467.

Ambrosio, Thomas. 2008. Catching the ‘Shanghai Spirit’: how the Shanghai Cooperation Organization promotes authoritarian norms in central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, 8: 1321-1344.

Horta, Loro. 2008. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): an Asian NATO? *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* 8, 1: 30-36.



## The SCO and ASEAN

As Ambrosio points out, the rhetorical devices advanced by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the ideological norms these imply, are in many ways similar to the posturing of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Therefore, “it should come as no surprise...that the SCO has explicitly seen ASEAN, or the ‘ASEAN way,’ as a model on which to build its own norms and values.”<sup>97</sup> Essentially, the ‘ASEAN way’ has served as an established guide to the SCO, at least in some basic terms of ideology or foundational approach. A review of both organizations’ goals and aims reveal an emphasis on stability, growth, and perhaps most importantly, the domestic authority of individual member states. This is further reinforced in a rhetorical context by the SCO through its consistent emphasis on ‘diversity.’<sup>98</sup> Such a heavy focus on the concept of individual state autonomy is evidenced by the lack of legal framework binding SCO activities. Unlike a body such as the EU, ASEAN and the SCO were similarly formed and exist with many stated, but informal understandings. Both organizations have coalesced around the sharing of common norms, and regard with importance the ideals of ‘sovereignty’ and the ‘non-interference in the internal affairs’ of other member states.<sup>99</sup> This commonality can be viewed in large part as being based in the highly authoritarian membership of these two organizations at their inception. Naturally, being legally bound to uphold certain domestic standards based on collective ideologies or norms is not going to appeal to authoritarian leaders. It is much more attractive to join a body that explicitly upholds a head of state’s jurisdiction over their domestic affairs, and backs that philosophy up with very little real means of interconnected legal enforcement. This authoritarian friendly structure is ideal for the SCO and many ASEAN member states where “national elites in both regions are highly protective of their national sovereignty, and in many cases retain historical suspicion of their neighbors.”<sup>100</sup> This is in stark contrast to an international body like the EU which retains a framework that can provide it with legal jurisdiction “at the expense of its member states’ governments.”<sup>101</sup>

Before moving on, it is worth keeping in mind that there are important ideological differences between ASEAN and the SCO. Perhaps the most striking being their relative

---

<sup>97</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas. 2009. *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing. p. 162.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> ASEAN “Fundamental Principles” found at [http://www.aseansec.org/about\\_ASEAN.html](http://www.aseansec.org/about_ASEAN.html)  
SCO Charter Article 2 “Principles”

<sup>100</sup> Aris. 2009. p. 457

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, p. 458.

perspectives regarding western powers and their conceptions of organizational focus. From its origins in 1967, ASEAN was positioned as a western friendly anti-communist association of states. This was the case despite a larger amount of authoritarian membership in its initial years. Essentially, regardless of authoritarian elements being present, particularly in its first two decades, but still throughout its existence, ASEAN has intermingled directly with democratic influences to a much larger extent than the SCO. An example of how this difference has manifested can be found in many ASEAN member states actually establishing democratic institutions (in particular Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand), even if they have at times not been entirely robust. It is also of note that as of 2007, ASEAN adopted in its charter a commitment to “principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”<sup>102</sup> Certainly, this passage could be described as vague, and does not guarantee an adherence to democracy promotion, especially in light of Burma’s membership and how the term ‘good governance’ has been wielded in a generally relativistic fashion by Southeast Asian leaders.<sup>103</sup> However, this is different than the SCO primarily referencing democracy in relation to worldwide financial and political equality<sup>104</sup>, or in a manner that seeks to muddle the democratic concepts, or remove them from the context of western democratic norms.<sup>105</sup>

Still, the current ideological differences between the SCO and ASEAN do not completely obscure their telling similarities. The lack of thoroughly binding agreements and the ideology of complete non-interference shared by both the SCO and ASEAN could possibly indicate difficulties in institutional advancements for the SCO going forward. The informal nature of ASEAN and its emphasis on the sovereignty of its member states can justifiably be viewed as a main cause of its relative ineffectiveness on an institutional level. ASEAN and its offshoots, the most notable being ASEAN + 3, lack a centralized structure to “enforce agreements...monitor domestic events in member states...or anticipate emerging problems.”<sup>106</sup> Basically, ASEAN has served mainly as a rhetorical base for the autonomy of its members, and has done little to foster

---

<sup>102</sup> 2007 ASEAN Charter.

<sup>103</sup> Thompson, Mark R. 2004. Pacific Asia after ‘Asian values’: authoritarianism, democracy, and ‘good governance.’ *Third World Quarterly* 25, 6: 1079-1095.

<sup>104</sup> SCO Charter.

<sup>105</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas. 2008. Catching the ‘Shanghai Spirit’: how the Shanghai Cooperation Organization promotes authoritarian norms in central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, 8: 1321-1344.

<sup>106</sup> Simon, Sheldon. 2008. ASEAN and Multilateralism: The Long, Bumpy Road to Community. *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 30, 2: 264-292.

actual coordination amongst Southeast Asian nations. As Simon notes, the organizations' 'ASEAN way,' "at bottom is moral suasion- the belief (or hope) that member states will do the right thing so as not to embarrass the collectivity."<sup>107</sup> After its founding, which involved a document two pages in length that contained five articles, it took nearly ten years to form the first ASEAN summit. Treaties forged by ASEAN were also exceedingly rare. In fact there were only two possibly legally binding agreements in the first twenty years of ASEAN.<sup>108</sup> Most countries still maintain only bilateral agreements, and their focus on respecting sovereignty has made them on most levels uninvolved in each others' affairs. ASEAN summits have resulted in talks about creating what has been characterized as something of a Southeast Asian EU, but it has not been backed up to any large extent. Jetschke and Ruland find that "members of ASEAN continuously engage in cooperation rhetoric and devise cooperation projects because they emulate the European integration project," but that projects have never been actualized due the lack of legal or formal framework, and especially in its early years, authoritarian conceptions of power.<sup>109</sup>

Ultimately, what can be extracted from the experience and ideology of ASEAN that will aid an assessment of the SCO and the 'Shanghai Spirit?' Perhaps the most telling comparison to be drawn is the first ten to fifteen years of ASEAN to the present realities of the SCO. The possibility arises that the characteristics of informality and authoritarian sovereignty, which are shared by the SCO and early ASEAN, could result in a similar path to that of ASEAN for the relatively young and unproven Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Thus far, the ideological, rhetorical, and theoretical elements of the SCO have been displayed, while the institutional follow through has in many ways lagged behind. It is not unrealistic, then, to think that the SCO and the 'Shanghai Spirit' may continue serving primarily as a regional rhetorical tool for the justification of authoritarian regimes. This could especially be the case if more formal arrangements are not increased, and SCO rhetoric continues to "greatly outstrip achievement."<sup>110</sup> However, if ASEAN can be used as indication, maybe an emphasis on state sovereignty should

---

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, p. 267.

<sup>108</sup> The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (1976), and the Protocol Amending the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of Southeast Asian Nations (1987). Found at [www.aseansec.org](http://www.aseansec.org).

<sup>109</sup> Jetschke, Anja and Ruland, Jurgen. 2009. Decoupling rhetoric and practice: the cultural limits of ASEAN. *The Pacific Review* 22, 2: 179-203.

<sup>110</sup> Lo, Bobo. 2008. *Axis of convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the new geopolitics*. London: Chatham House; Brookings Institution Press.

be viewed as the most important aspect of the ‘Shanghai Spirit.’ As the SCO moves forward, it may be honored regardless of whether or not a regime or state is authoritarian.

This certainly has proven to be the case with ASEAN in recent decades. The first treaty signed by ASEAN in 1976 contained the signatures of such authoritarian luminaries as Suharto and Marcos.<sup>111</sup> The character of government in Indonesia and the Philippines has, of course, changed over the years, but this has seemingly created little conflict with their ability to share the space of ASEAN with regimes that have remained authoritarian. Regional cohesion, despite many regime variations, has been referenced by those within the association as vindication of the ‘ASEAN Way,’ and the viability of approaching regional organization in a manner that is not dictated by foreign or western norms.<sup>112</sup> The ability to cooperate in the face of notable differences has certainly been helped along by having a lack of legal framework and informal understandings, along with placing stability and sovereignty as the cornerstones of the ‘ASEAN Way.’ Since the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ emphasizes similar ideological priorities, the modern makeup of ASEAN could give clues as to what the SCO might look like in the coming years. It raises the possibility that regimes diverging from the current authoritarian norm could still share enough along the lines of ideological similarities and commitment to non-interference to remain members of the SCO. While it is very speculative at this point, examples such as the observer status of a democracy like Mongolia, and the ousting of an authoritarian leader in Kyrgyzstan, seemingly with the approval of Russia, provide indications that the SCO could look more like ASEAN years from now. Essentially, ASEAN and the SCO share a practical streak that is regionally specific, and view stability and sovereignty as ideal over any particular type of government or regime. Therefore, it is not completely unrealistic to theorize that the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ may appear less authoritarian over time.

### **The SCO and the OAU**

In a similar vein, the progression of the Organization of African Unity and its evolution resulting in the African Union is worth viewing. The charter adopted by this anti-colonial organization in 1963 contained many declarations similar to those later included in the founding documents of ASEAN and the SCO. The principles listed in Article III of the OAU charter

---

<sup>111</sup> The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (1976). Found at [www.aseansec.org](http://www.aseansec.org).

<sup>112</sup> Address by Rodolfo C. Severino, Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, International Law Conference on ASEAN Legal Systems and Regional Integration, Kuala Lumpur, September 3, 2001.

placed at numbers two and three respectively, “non- interference in the internal affairs of States” and “respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence.”<sup>113</sup> The requirement of adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was included, but there was no mention of democratic principles or institutions. The OAU used the U.N. charter as a framework for its own, but differed importantly in a strong emphasis on territorial integrity. These ideals were tested by conflicts such as the Nigerian Civil War of the late 60’s and early 70’s. During this conflict the OAU supported the ruling government and asked that all member states maintain an approach that did not negatively impact the “peace, unity, and territorial integrity” of Nigeria.<sup>114</sup> Essentially, the OAU, much like the SCO, was establishing a general position that would aid in the defeat of opposition groups. The maintenance of the existing regimes and their authority was seen as a priority in order to ensure stability for the collective member states in the post-colonial years. Similarities to the objectives of the SCO and its member state’s regimes following the fall of communism are clearly evident.

Notably, the OAU tendency to sometimes give the appearance of support for authoritarian regimes was more of a default resulting from the prominence of sovereignty and non-interference goals than it was a fully conscience objective on par with that of the SCO. The sort of positioning seen in the Nigerian Civil War was primarily the result of their principle of maintaining the integrity of existing territorial boundaries. In this respect, the OAU could be considered somewhat effective, and the organization helped sustain many tenuous borders established arbitrarily by colonial powers. However, the ability of the OAU to reduce violence on the continent or manage and reduce conflict was restrained by these same principles regarding territorial integrity, since the majority of conflicts involved internal issues.<sup>115</sup> Also hindering the OAU, and similar to both ASEAN and the SCO, was a lack of legal framework that would hold member states accountable to mandates or resolutions. Over time, conflicts like those in Rwanda and Somalia in the 1990’s made the OAU appear impotent and greatly marginalized the

---

<sup>113</sup> OAU Charter Article III

<sup>114</sup> Fechner, Jonathan D. 2006. From the OAU to the AU: A Normative Shift with Implications for Peacekeeping and Conflict Management, or Just a Name Change? *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 39, 2: 550.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, p. 556-558.

organization in the minds of the continent's member states and population who viewed the OAU as a benefit for the region's heads of state.<sup>116</sup>

In 2000, The Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted, turning the OAU into the African Union, which was essentially a reformation of the already existing body. The most notable differences in the AU charter can be found in Article IV, principle (h), "the right of the Union to intervene if a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity," Principle (j) "the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security," and objective (g), the wish to "promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance."<sup>117</sup> This last shift in objectives resembles change that ASEAN has adopted in recent years. However, the Constitutive Act of the AU has established avenues of intervention that ASEAN has avoided for decades and that the SCO presently seems starkly opposed to, at least in actions thus taken, if not entirely in the rhetoric used by the SCO. Thus far, the results of these institutional changes have been mixed, but the African Union does wield noticeably more sway in the area of internal conflicts. This has been most clearly exemplified in the role the AU has played in Darfur.<sup>118</sup>

Changes along the lines of those adopted by the OAU at the end of the twentieth century remain a very remote possibility for the SCO and its member states. The 'Shanghai Spirit' embodies a normative standard that strengthens sovereignty and the support of established authoritarian regimes on a level far beyond that of the OAU of the past. If something is to be taken away from a comparison of the organizations, it can perhaps be found in the area of stability. The massive internal conflicts in many African countries became too great at a certain point to be ignored in the name of sovereignty and territorial integrity by a regional organization like the OAU. With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, the Central Asian states of the SCO have remained very stable. If this reality were to change and member states more frequently encountered internal turmoil it would be interesting to see if the SCO would in fact shift its ideological commitment to stability towards actual intervention. However, as the lack of involvement in Kyrgyzstan shows, such a testing ground would require a high level of instability that the region is not likely to enter into anytime soon.

---

<sup>116</sup> OAU to create conflict mechanism. 2006. *Africa Report* 38, 5.

<sup>117</sup> The Constitutive Act of the African Union.

<sup>118</sup> Fechner. 2006. p. 572-573.

## **The SCO as a European Styled Organization?**

In many respects, the SCO has already shown signs that it possesses a much greater ability to turn its ideologies and intentions into a more functional and less impotent organization than at least ASEAN. Already, the SCO has displayed a greater frequency of summits, meetings, official statements, and simply general activity than ASEAN has historically partaken in. This is especially true if comparing their respective early years. However, does this indicate that the SCO is on the verge of turning rhetoric and ideology into the formation of a Central Asian EU, OSCE, or NATO or is such a comparison “obviously absurd?”<sup>119</sup>

The “obviously absurd” assessment by Bobo Lo, while perhaps worded more harshly than some, expresses what appears to be the predominant consensus. This is especially the case when attempting to parallel the SCO and the EU. Most analysts feel that the basis for the success of European integration is primarily based on the shared liberal democratic nature of its member states. This is then backed up by the ‘depth and strength of its legal parameters.’<sup>120</sup> As was noted extensively in the previous section, these are two elements that the SCO has not developed, and in some ways is starkly opposed to. Membership in the European Union comes only when legal norms and standards are met. There is also a level of economic and security integration that the SCO is nowhere near approaching. The EU still employs or invokes some similar rhetorical elements as those of the SCO. For instance, the EU places value on the sovereignty of its members, but this by no means is an indication that member states can wield their central authority however they see fit. Basically, a mere cursory glance at the structure of the European Union, and the many ways in which it has concretely integrated the relation of the 27 nations it is comprised of, shows an organization that is in a completely different realm than the SCO. This does not mean that the SCO is not functional in some ways and cannot grow in its capacity and influence. Rather, it does seem unrealistic to predict that it does or even will resemble the EU in many respects other than the fact that it is a regional organization.

## **The SCO, NATO, and the OSCE**

Due to the ideological emphasis and security, stability, and the tackling of the ‘three evils’ (terrorism, extremism, and separatism), speculation has arisen as to whether the SCO might grow as a security organization on par with NATO. Despite the use of rhetoric implying

---

<sup>119</sup> Lo, 2008. p. 106.

<sup>120</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: ‘tackling the three evils.’ A regional response to non-traditional security challenges or an Anti-western bloc? *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, 3: 457-482.

that perhaps SCO member states would seek to utilize joint military efforts to combat internal and external threats, the capacity to do so does not seem to be developing. It is no doubt been stalled by the emphasis the organization has placed on non-interference since its founding. Due to the importance of state sovereignty, the military exercises conducted under the SCO banner have been aimed towards addressing and intimidating perceived internal terrorist threats. Combating such movements would likely not require a large or conventional military response. Ultimately, the SCO has not established “dedicated military forces, an integrated command structure, or even a combined planning staff,” that places its security strength and capabilities anywhere near that of NATO.<sup>121</sup>

In this same area of security it is worth discussing the OSCE. From its inception the SCO has had a relationship with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the SCO has been invited to various OSCE activities, particularly meetings related to the areas of combating terrorism and upholding human rights.<sup>122</sup> This relationship is largely due to a number of ways the two organizations overlap. Firstly, five of the SCO member states fall within the immense breadth of the OSCE membership, with the one exception being China. Also, both organizations share a heavy emphasis on security as a basis from which to work. The current chairman of the OSCE is the Kazakhstani politician Kanat Saudabayev, which is the result of a rotating chairmanship between member states. Not surprisingly, Saudabayev has expressed a wish to use his chairmanship to further coordinate the two on security and terrorism concerns.<sup>123</sup> However, in many respects ideological comparisons remain superficial at best. The OSCE has criticized the SCO for its failure to live up to many human rights standards, and the application of ‘terrorism’ employed by the SCO remains much more flexible than it does in the OSCE.<sup>124</sup> It appears that similarities and cooperation between the SCO and the OSCE meet similar conflicts present when placing the SCO beside most any western organization. Essentially, the authoritarian apologist position taken by the SCO makes interaction or comparison to bodies based democratic norms difficult, or not easily reconcilable.

---

<sup>121</sup> Weitz, Richard. May 17, 2010. What happened to the SCO?

<sup>122</sup> de Haas, Marcel. 2007. The Shanghai cooperation and the OSCE: two of a kind? *Helsinki Monitor: Security and Human Rights* 3.

<sup>123</sup> May, 25, 2010. Bi-weekly online publication of *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan* 63.

<sup>124</sup> de Haas. 2007. p. 265.



## **Conclusion**

This section has laid out a comparison that provides a sense of where the Shanghai Cooperation organization stands today and what the development of other organizations might tell us about its future. It is clear that in many ways the SCO is currently unlike any other comparable international body in its ideological character. This is a reality that will be further exemplified in the content analysis that follows this section. A comparison to European organizations yields an impression of an organization that can possibly be viewed as an oppositional force, particularly in relation to competing norms regarding democracy and governance. However, a look at the legal framework and its ability to enforce standards, paints the SCO as an abstract and weak opposition at best.

In relation to organizations with an authoritarian past, a different and perhaps more predictive picture can be drawn. While it shares a deficient legal framework and priority of non-interference with ASEAN, it still maintains an aversion to democratic norms that ASEAN stopped representing years ago. In the areas of intervention and territorial or border integrity, it resembles the OAU of the past, but looks little like the African Union of contemporary times. Still, as was shown, both ASEAN and the AU grew over the last half of the twentieth century from a starting point that was in many respects similar to the SCO. Thus, under the right conditions the SCO could look very different decades from now, despite how far off the possibility appears now.

## **Content Analysis: Traditional Rhetoric of the SCO**

Current research suggests that the SCO has co-opted democratic language to use as rhetoric in their formal statements. Specifically, Ambrosio finds that the SCO uses the words “stability” and “diversity,” two words traditionally associated with democracy, to communicate and institutionalize anti-democratic norms.<sup>125</sup> While traditional notions of stability and diversity are indicative of tolerance and transparency, the SCO takes these words and uses them in a quite different manner.

Regarding stability, Ambrosio finds that it is often used as a justification for brutal crackdowns by Central Asian governments on democracy movements. For example, after the

---

<sup>125</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas. 2009. *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.

2005 revolution in Uzbekistan the SCO issued an official declaration which, “made repeated references to ‘stability’ and openly supported its members’ ‘efforts...aimed at providing peace, security and stability in their territory and in the whole region’. While this may be seen as an innocuous statement, it came on the heels of the brutal crackdown in Uzbekistan.”<sup>126</sup> Rather than refer to strategies of repression explicitly, the SCO makes a point to refer to strategies of repression as necessary for the provision of peace and security in the region.

Regarding the traditionally democratic concept of diversity, Ambrosio suggests, “...like the anti-democratic meaning imbedded in the SCO’s understanding of stability, the principle of diversity also has an anti-democratic foundation...if the diversity of the region’s governing structures is respected by outside states...the authoritarian regimes of the region will be shielded from criticism and democracy promotion, and consequently, the stability of the regimes will be preserved.”<sup>127</sup>

Ultimately, Ambrosio finds that while the SCO may not be committed to the *spread* of autocracy, it is committed to *preservation* of authoritarianism in the region. He does note that, to this end, the use of democratic language in an anti-democratic way has been critical to the construction of, “... a new set of values and norms governing the future development of Central Asia”.<sup>128</sup>

We were interested in exploring whether or not recent statements from the SCO continued to co-opt democratic language in the manner which Ambrosio describes. Additionally, because some scholars suggest that the anti-democratic norms of the SCO are based on the regional or cultural norms of the ‘Asian Way,’<sup>129</sup> we wanted to explore the contemporary language of the SCO and to compare it to the language of another regional organization based on Asian values: ASEAN. Because ASEAN is not committed to authoritarianism in the same way that the SCO is, we expect the language of these two organizations to be different in some significant ways.

Finally, we wanted to compare the rhetoric of the SCO to that of another regional organization that was not steeped in the regional ‘Asian Way’ norms. We decided to compare the contemporary rhetoric of the SCO to the contemporary rhetoric of the African Union (AU) since,

---

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. p. 168.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. p. 172.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. p. 160.

<sup>129</sup> Roberts, Sean. 2009. Saving democracy promotion from short-term U.S. policy interests in Central Asia. A Century Foundation Report, New York, NY: The Century Foundation.

in some ways these organizations are very similar. Both the SCO and the AU are composed of member states that are newly independent, with SCO member states being post-communist and AU states being post-colonialist. Further, many member states in both the SCO and AU are largely underdeveloped nations with a weak capacity for governance. However, the AU was formed in the spirit of democracy rather than in the spirit of authoritarianism. For that reason, we expect that the rhetoric of the AU will be at odds with the rhetoric of the SCO and, therefore, more inclined toward democratic concepts. Next, we present the method we used for the content analysis as well as the content analysis results and an interpretation of these findings.

## **Methodology**

In his own analysis of the rhetoric of the SCO, Ambrosio analyzes SCO statements issued from 2005-2008.<sup>130</sup> However, although he examines statements issued by the SCO and, very effectively reads between the lines to discern the underlying meanings of SCO rhetoric, Ambrosio does not engage in a traditional content analysis. We were interested in seeing, not only the context within which the SCO uses particular words and phrases, but also; (1) how frequently the SCO employs this rhetoric, (2) whether or not contemporary SCO rhetoric has evolved beyond the traditional SCO rhetoric defined by Ambrosio, and (3) how that compares to the rhetoric issued by regionally and structurally similar organizations. Because we wanted to examine the contemporary rhetoric of the SCO, we analyzed all official SCO statements issued for the year 2009, a total of 22 statements<sup>131</sup>. Also, because we were interested in comparing the rhetoric of the SCO to that of ASEAN we examined all 22 official ASEAN statements released in 2010. Finally, because we wanted to see how SCO rhetoric compared to rhetoric of the African Union we analyzed 22 of the most recent statements and speeches from the AU.<sup>132</sup> Therefore, we analyzed a total of 66 statements issued from the SCO, ASEAN and the AU.

Qualitative researchers suggest that one of the most appropriate ways to code data in a content analysis is by first identifying sensitizing concepts and then allowing the code categories to emerge, organically, from the data. Sensitizing concepts are defined as those concepts which

---

<sup>130</sup> Ambrosio. 2009.

<sup>131</sup> This total actually includes one statement from 2010 and two statements from 2008. These are the most recent statements available.

<sup>132</sup> It should be noted that the African Union statements and speeches analyzed for this project were issued between 2002 and 2004. These were the most recent statements and speeches available. Given that the SCO and ASEAN statements analyzed were issued between 2008 and 2010, this is not ideal. However, we do not expect that any major rhetorical shift has occurred in the African Union since these statements were issued and we therefore feel comfortable using these statements for our content analysis here.

make the coder aware of what types of phrases to look for. They serve as the very broad, pre-conceived, categories, with which the researcher approaches the coding exercise.<sup>133</sup>

We were interested to see how both organizations use the critical rhetoric that Ambrosio defines as indicative of the Shanghai spirit; and we identified our sensitizing concepts for traditional SCO rhetoric as diversity and stability. Further, we were interested in exploring how each organization uses more traditional democratic rhetoric, with an emphasis on equality, human rights, and good governance. Our initial list of sensitizing concepts, therefore, included the following phrases: Good Governance, Human Rights, Non-Intervention, Diversity and Stability.

All of the statements from each organization were initially coded with these phrases in mind. After identifying the code categories that emerged out of the dataset, all documents were reviewed and recoded to capture all instances of each code. Eventually, in the interest of parsimony, some code categories were collapsed. For example, the code category cooperation includes coded instances of collaboration, integration, practical cooperation, and economic cooperation. When and where we have collapsed a code category we have footnoted which other phrases are included within it. Below we present a table of our findings as well as our interpretation of them.

---

<sup>133</sup> Marshall, Catherine and Rossman, Gretchen. 2006. *Designing Qualitative Research*. London, UK: Sage Publications.  
Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. London, UK: Sage Publications.

**Table 1.3 Findings from Content Analysis of SCO, ASEAN, and AU official speeches and statements**

PHRASE	SCO	ASEAN	AU
Cooperation <sup>134</sup>	100	147	101
Peace, Security and Stability	32	27	<b>143</b>
Interaction	<b>34</b>	0	3
Joint Activity	<b>27</b>	8	1
Sharing of Information	<b>9</b>	3	0
Sustainable Development/Sustainability	2	<b>55</b>	<b>27</b>
Capacity/Capabilities <sup>135</sup>	12	<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>
Rich Culture/Cultural Heritage	5	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>
Youth/Students	3	<b>28</b>	9
Humanitarian Concerns <sup>136</sup>	3	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>
Livelihoods/Well Being of the people	0	<b>16</b>	5
Good Governance	0	3	<b>18</b>

## Results

First, where there is significant divergence in rhetoric among the regional organizations, the frequency of rhetoric is presented in bold. This table makes very clear, that the type of rhetoric used by the SCO is significantly different than the rhetoric used by ASEAN and the AU. Here we examine the types of contemporary rhetoric used by the SCO and indicate its points of divergence from the traditional rhetoric that the SCO. Then we examine the rhetoric used by ASEAN and the AU and compare it to contemporary SCO rhetoric.

Some of the findings in this content analysis were quite surprising and suggest a marked departure from the traditional rhetoric of the SCO. Contemporary SCO rhetoric retains its emphasis on security and stability in the region. However, it has shifted away from the implicitly non-interventionist rhetoric of diversity which Ambrosio identifies in his earlier analysis. Further, this shift is toward the rhetoric of cooperation, joint activity, and information sharing. This content analysis suggests that there is a clear commitment to cooperation among SCO members, which is directly opposed to one of its core values; non-intervention. Cooperation was

<sup>134</sup> Includes practical and economic cooperation, integration and collaboration.

<sup>135</sup> Includes Community building

<sup>136</sup> Includes Human Rights

mentioned 100 times in only 22 statements and was mentioned almost three times more often than was the goal of stability, security and peace within the region.

The rhetorical shift away from non-intervention and diversity and toward cooperation suggests one of two things; (1) the shifting of norms in the SCO away from a non-interventionist, fully sovereign member state stance toward a more cooperative, integrated organization, or (2) that it is just rhetoric, with no real presumption of actionable objectives. Because these rhetorical phrases are taken out of context here, it is important to remember, that even if the SCO moved toward a more cooperative framework, its goals would still be to cooperate in order to sustain or maintain authoritarianism.

Although we know that the formal institutional capacity of the SCO is rather weak, it should be noted that a shift toward further cooperation in order to sustain authoritarianism could still have profound implications for the citizens of the SCO member states. Even if the SCO is not capable of actually institutionalizing mechanisms of cooperation or structures that facilitate integration, its rhetoric still suggests that its members may be willing to cooperate in a much less formal manner. Therefore, although we tend to associate terms like cooperation and integration with the democratic norms established by the EU, cooperation and integration in the case of the SCO would, perhaps, be toward a more sinister end.

We identified additional rhetorical terms that emerged with lower frequency which support the notion of a shift toward cooperation for sustained authoritarianism. Specifically, formal SCO statements mention the sharing of information 9 times, including 2 mentions of intra-agency information exchange. We know that the SCO uses its fight against the ‘three evils’ of extremism, terrorism and separatism to justify the repression and extradition of opposition movement leaders from one SCO country to another. Further, we know that this fight is used to repress democracy movements within each SCO country’s domestic realm as well. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the information sharing between SCO member states will be focused on ways to repress democracy movements and opposition leaders within SCO member states.

Also, according to our analysis of the United Nations voting patterns by SCO member states<sup>137</sup> we can see that SCO members have recently begun to coordinate their votes on UN referendums regarding human rights. Specifically, the smaller SCO countries, Tajikistan,

---

<sup>137</sup> The analysis of UN voting behavior of SCO member states is presented later in this report.

Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, have begun to coordinate their votes with Russia and China against the yearly UN declarations of human rights aimed at Iran.

However, while this evidence is indicative of increased coordination among SCO member countries, it should be equally noted that this coordination involves little to no long-term commitment of resources. The current costs of foreign policy cooperation and commitment for SCO member states are incredibly low. Coordinating voting strategies in the UN does not require the commitment of resources to any particular objective, nor does it necessarily violate the norm of non-intervention. In fact, by coordinating the vote against declarations of human rights in Iran, the SCO members serve to reinforce the norm of non-intervention; thereby maintaining that the Iranian regime should be able to govern however they want, free of interference by the international community.

The results of our content analysis point to a second possibility, which is that these statements are simply empty rhetoric. There are no clear indicators that the SCO actually means to act on any of the objectives that it outlines in its statements. Further, the foreign policy objectives that the SCO member states are committed to cooperating on are all low cost initiatives and objectives. Additionally, due to the structural and institutional weakness of the SCO it is unlikely that that the SCO would even be able to act on a high-cost foreign policy objective like economic integration. Finally, any attempt at economic or political integration among SCO member countries would be a complete departure from the traditional rhetoric of diversity and stability that the SCO has espoused for the last ten years.

One final benefit of engaging in the exercise of a content analysis is that it allows us to see what it is about the SCO that makes their rhetoric so undemocratic; to examine the kind of rhetoric that is missing from their official statements. A comparison with the rhetoric of ASEAN and the AU is helpful in this exercise. In the ASEAN and AU rhetoric there is also emphasis on cooperation and coordination. But the ends of this cooperation are markedly different that the ends of cooperation and coordination in the SCO. While, coordination and cooperation in the SCO are oriented toward defeating the three evils, coordination and cooperation in ASEAN and the AU seem to be toward different ends.

Cooperation in ASEAN seems to be aimed toward the ends of the celebration of cultural diversity, financial and economic integration and preparedness for natural disaster as a result of climate change. In the ASEAN context there is far less emphasis on security and stability in the

region. Most of the instances of stability in the ASEAN context referred to financial stability in the wake of the global financial crisis and recovery. Further, there is a much broader emphasis on rhetoric that is traditionally democratic in nature, with a focus on sustainability, capacity building, humanitarian needs, youth involvement and diverse culture. Both sustainable development and capacity building are indicators of good governance, and an emphasis on youth involvement is characteristic of democracy promotion assistance and democracy movements.

Cooperation in the AU seems to be aimed at creating peace and security in the newly democratizing states and dealing with the pressing humanitarian issues of overwhelming poverty and disease.<sup>138</sup> The rhetoric of the AU emphasizes issues of capacity and capacity building as well as good governance, humanitarianism and sustainable development. What is notable is that not only was this rhetoric prevalent in the ASEAN and AU documents but that it was almost completely absent from the SCO documents; the only exception being SCO reference to capacities and capabilities.

## **Conclusion**

The rhetoric of the SCO has, indeed, evolved over the last few years and it is clearly much different from the rhetoric of other regional organizations; both those based on similar ‘Asian Values’ and those based on more explicit democratic ideals. What this analysis makes most clear, is that the SCO and its members are, in fact, moving toward a norm of cooperation. However, this is not cooperation in its democratic sense, and it may *never* evolve into a norm of formal cooperation. Rather the norm of cooperation that the SCO is shifting toward is informal, low-cost, foreign policy cooperation. Therefore, we should expect to see SCO member states cooperate in policy areas that require few commitments in terms of resources, and are informal in nature. The next section of our policy report, an analysis of SCO member states’ UNGA voting record, confirms our findings here.

---

<sup>138</sup> Establishing peace and security in Africa was a dominant theme in the statements from the African Union. This is obviously attributable to the level of political turmoil that has historically existed on the continent. It was clear that the context surrounding the establishment of peace and security in the African Union was democratic in nature. In the context of the SCO, however, the establishment of security and stability hints at the maintenance of authoritarian control.



## Policy Affinity Among SCO Member States: Establishing the Authoritarian Internationale

*Analyzing SCO member-state and observer-state voting behavior in the United Nations General Assembly, this task force finds significant increases in bilateral policy coordination and institutional cohesion of the SCO since 2005. Peculiarities in affinity patterns suggest that increases in organizational cohesion depend principally upon changing self-perceptions of regime stability in minor power SCO member states which cause them to trade policy coordination with major powers for diplomatic and economic goods aimed at reinforcing domestic regime stability. We similarly analyze state voting trends on the topic of Democracy and Human Rights in the UNGA and find high levels of policy coordination since, at least, 2003. Qualitatively, we find that while member and observer states make a rhetorical commitment to the promotion of democracy and protection of human rights, where resolutions target rights abuses in Iran, Belarus, Uzbekistan (and to some extent) Myanmar—SCO member countries have repeatedly acted as a staunch opposition bloc, thereby demonstrating the organization's inclination to prioritize norms of sovereignty and non-interference over those of individual human liberties. Thus we conclude that high-levels of policy coordination in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are consistent with the emergence of an authoritarian internationale.*

### Introduction

According to Thomas Ambrosio, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization may be the most recognizable manifestation of what may be referred to as an emerging, “authoritarian internationale.”<sup>139</sup> In response to western preferences for the diffusion of liberal political and economic reforms, and as part of a reaction to the so-called *Color Revolutions* in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, Ambrosio indicates that SCO member states are underwriting a “return to the Westphalian principles of state sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, and sovereign equality among states with different political systems.”<sup>140</sup>

While increasing coordination between global autocrats may quite simply be interpreted in realist or neo-liberal institutional terms—thereby emphasizing the fundamental roles of either national security or collective economic development—Ambrosio provides an alternate interpretation for the increasing, global “policy coordinate;”<sup>141</sup> one that is based predominantly upon the *domestic* concerns of autocratic elites which are fundamentally driven towards maintaining the existing status quo of Central Asian political systems. Ambrosio writes,

“Few in the authoritarian world are discussing the violent overthrow of the international system, the superiority of their political system over others, or the formation of formal

---

<sup>139</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas (2009). *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing (159).

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

military alliances. Instead, this closer cooperation among authoritarian regimes appears to be more defensive in nature, primarily ensuring that the democratic world does not attempt to, in their view, ‘impose’ democracy by supporting regime change. In this way, it is fundamentally oriented toward preserving the status quo.”<sup>142</sup>

Rather than interpreting autocratic cooperation in purely offensive terms, Ambrosio thereby encourages us to consider that such cooperation is both reactionary and functional. Thus we might conceptualize the hypothetical ‘authoritarian internationale’ as a joint-effort by dispersed autocratic states to effect a re-prioritization of existing international norms where principles of both state sovereignty and non-interference are afforded a greater degree of value or importance than are principles of universal human rights and individual political liberties—where states’ rights take precedence over the rights of individuals. Drawing Ambrosio’s argument out to its logical conclusions, we might reasonably conclude that this so-called ‘authoritarian backlash’ is both operative and observable at domestic as well as international levels.

To the extent that a radical re-prioritization of norms is determined to be a general policy response of autocratic elites to the strategic promotion of liberal political values by western governments and institutions, we would therefore expect to find an increasing tendency towards the adoption of illiberal policies both domestically (as part of an effort to insulate regimes from democratizing pressures) as well as internationally. Whereby states begin to cooperate in intergovernmental settings in an effort to promote the re-prioritization of international norms among the wider state community. In both such situations, however, our predominant concern is with the notion of increasing joint cooperation by disparate autocratic elites. While increasingly illiberal politics of isolated autocratic elites are no doubt disturbing situations in and of themselves, the development of an international policy coordinate among SCO members and observer states represents its own unique challenges to the further promotion of democracy and may contain significant implications for the future guarantee of human rights and civil liberties at large.

But how are we to accurately assess whether or not the SCO is underwriting the development of a reactionary authoritarian internationale? The most obvious answer to this question is to determine whether or not policy preferences of SCO members, observers, and dispersed autocratic states are in a state of increasing convergence and, if so, whether or not

---

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

these fluctuations can be associated with both changes in bilateral relations between SCO member states and other autocratic target countries as well as with democracy building projects by western states in those same countries.

While analyzing state preferences is from simple, there is strong support within academic literature for utilizing state voting records in the United Nations General Assembly to determine whether or not state preferences are in a process of convergence or divergence. By analyzing similarities or affinities of state voting behavior in the UNGA, existing research suggest that we can accurately model not only the general level of foreign policy affinity between nations, but also the relative level of cohesion among intergovernmental organizations. To model changes in bilateral policy affinity among SCO members as well as the overall level of organizational cohesion of the SCO itself, we have analyzed member-state voting behavior across nearly 1,200 UN General Assembly resolutions which were held between 1993 and 2008, utilizing coded UNGA voting data provided by Erik A. Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic.<sup>143</sup> While there are a variety of methods one can employ to track levels of affinity or differences in UN Voting patterns<sup>144</sup>, we utilize a simple measure which focuses exclusively upon tracking how often states vote the same on individual resolutions. The results of this measure can therefore be presented either in cross-sections or longitudinally across time.

While tracking general patterns in voting behavior among select dyads as well as between individual states and collective entities (like the Shanghai 5 & SCO) are important to our overall evaluations, also important is the analysis of voting behavior in reference to issue-specific criteria such as support for the international development of democracy and the promotion of global human rights. Far from being merely a forum for determining the similarity of preferences, an analysis of state voting behavior in the United Nations General Assembly will help us to determine whether or not diverse autocratic elites are working to alter existing international norms in service of their own domestic ambitions within an important global forum.

---

<sup>143</sup> Coded United Nations General Assembly voting data is provided by Erik Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic. Erik Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic, "United Nations General Assembly Voting Data", hdl:1902.1/12379 UNF:3:Hpf6qOkDdzvXF9m66yLTg== undata1\_63longarchive.tab [fileDscr/fileName (DDI)] UNF:3:PD4NBUEmzGknPc8tr5QM/g==; available online at [http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?studyId=38311&studyListingIndex=0\\_dee53f12c760141b21c251525332](http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?studyId=38311&studyListingIndex=0_dee53f12c760141b21c251525332)

<sup>144</sup> Most notable among these is Erik A. Gartzke's use of the S-calculation of similarity developed by Signorino & Ritter.

## Methodology: A Discussion of Increasing Policy Coordination in SCO Member States

To accomplish this particular objective we have isolated particular UN General Assembly Resolutions that specifically pertain to the topics of human rights and democracy by employing a subject-specific resolutions search for each year between 2003 and 2010; this search was conducted using the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISNET).<sup>145</sup> While initial interest was to search specifically for resolutions pertaining directly to ‘democracy,’ there are, in fact, very few resolutions specifically coded as in this manner. More profitable, was a direct search using the term ‘HUMAN RIGHTS;’ as this particular criterion creates a dataset of general assembly resolutions that broadly pertain to both human rights and democracy related issues. While we would have liked to capture more years for this particular section, the need to code state voting behavior directly from the UN records has limited our pace and therefore has required us to restrict this particular investigation to the most recent years. For the sake of consistency, we have here re-coded state voting records according to the standard ordinal model used by Erik A. Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic.<sup>146</sup>

In order to model the changes in SCO member countries policy preferences over time we have analyzed state voting behavior across 1,156 UNGA resolutions that were all held between the years of 1993 and 2008. I have chosen to begin with the year 1993 because this was the first year in which there was a consistent record of voting across all future Shanghai 5/SCO member countries. While voting data is available for the year of 2009, I have limited this investigation to 2008 as this represents the most recent year for which *previously coded* data was readily available. In order to mitigate this study’s vulnerability to reliability issues associated with potential irregularities in a single given year, I have divided the overall time period into four successive periods. While restricting our analysis to four periods dramatically reduces the number of cases we are observing at any one time, thereby restricting the statistical significance of our observations, this particular decision is critical for modeling longitudinal changes to state preferences. The four resulting time periods are thus: 1993-1996(Time1); 1997-2000(Time2); 2001-2004(Time3); and 2005-2008(Time4). My determination to subdivide the larger time period in this particular manner is simultaneously the product of a strategic decision to make at least one observation of state affinities prior to the creation of the Shanghai 5 in 1996 (Time1),

---

<sup>145</sup> United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISNET), available online at <http://unbisnet.un.org/>

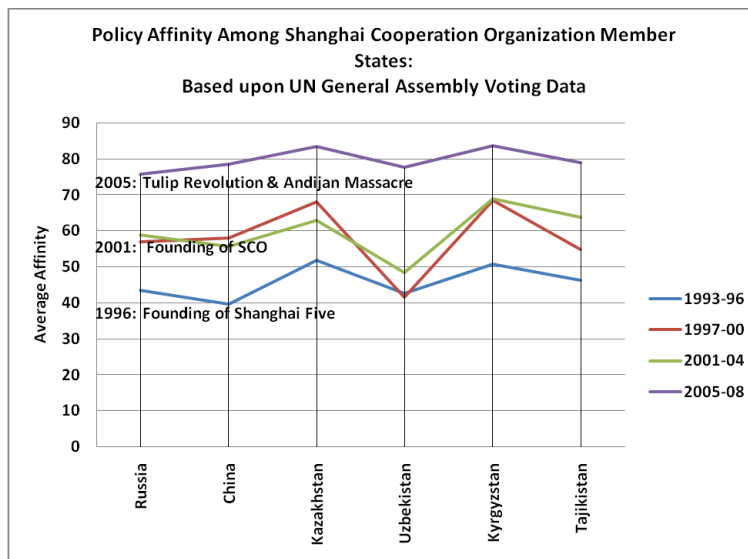
<sup>146</sup> Voeten and Merdzanovic’s system is as follows: 1=Yes; 2=Abstain; 3=No; 8=Absent; 9=Non-member

one observation of the Shanghai 5 prior to the inclusion of Uzbekistan and its reformulation into the SCO (Time2), one observation of the SCO in a period predominantly occurring post 9/11 but contemporary with both the Rose and Orange revolutions(Time3), and a final period that would enable us to model state preferences following the Tulip Revolution and the Andijan massacre in 2005. A final, but important, note on methodology is here important.

While it is often important to track dyadic state affinity specifically, when analyzing the impact of larger organizations on state preferences/policies it is critical to develop a score for a given country that is an expression of its overall affinity with all relevant states. Thus when we model Russian affinity within the context of the SCO, the score provided to Russia will reflect the ‘average’ level of affinity with all other SCO member states. Similarly, if we want to track changes in policy preferences between an observer state and the SCO we will present the observer’s affinity score as the average score of its dyadic affinity with all SCO members. In many cases presenting scores based on averages may function to hide either strong or weak dyadic affinities, where this is the case I will make notations to draw attention to specifically important bilateral changes.

## **Findings**

As demonstrated in Figure 1 (below), policy affinity among SCO all member countries has dramatically increased between Time 1 (1993-96) and the most recent period surveyed, Time 4 (2005-08). Prior to the inception of the Shanghai 5 organization in 1996, average levels of policy affinity between each state and all other potential SCO members ranged between scores of 40-50% consistently, by Time 4 this level of average affinity had increased significantly to a range of between 75-83%. While the large-scale increase in overall policy coordination among SCO members across the entire time period is consistent with expectations by neo-liberal institutional and constructivist models that would suggest the important role of institutions in altering state preferences over time—insofar as institutional settings are thought to increase transparency and communication while also raising the associated costs of defection—it is important to note the uneven rate of increasing policy coordination that is clearly evident in **Figure1**. This may indicate that increasing policy coordination is not due to merely institutional consequences but may be the result of specific domestic and internationally-determined events.



**Figure 1: Policy Affinity Among SCO Member States. Based upon author's calculations utilizing coded UNGA roll-call voting data provided by Erik A. Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic, *United Nations General Assembly Voting Data 1946-2008*.**

Neo-liberal institutional and Constructivist (i.e. theories of state socialization) may be supported by the overall increase in policy coordination that occurred among SCO member countries between Time1 and Time2, but they do not provide us with a meaningful way to interpret the sporadic path to high policy coordination that is evidenced in the period of Time4. Following the inception of the Shanghai Five in 1996, we see a significant jump in overall levels of affinity of all countries with the exception of Uzbekistan (which did not initially join the ranks of the Shanghai Five). This may be read as being consistent with the notion that common participation in intergovernmental institutions has a socializing effect. Where state affinity levels had ranged from between 39-50% during Time1, in the following period (Time2), there is a noticeable increase in policy coordination with a range of state affinity scores for Shanghai Five member states now hovering between 54-68%. And yet, following Uzbekistan's inclusion in the SCO in 2001 we find only a marginal increase of 6.794 percentage points in its state policy affinity score moving from 41.594 to 48.388%. This particular lack of increasing Uzbek policy affinity upon its entrance into the SCO seems to suggest that state participation in intergovernmental institutions does not necessarily lead to increasing policy coordination among members. While Uzbek affinity was not largely impacted by its initial decision to join the SCO in 2001, we might also note the fact that among all other SCO member states in Time3 (with the exception of Tajikistan-See Figure 2), there was a consistently stable overall level of policy

affinity; that is to say, levels of affinity were generally stable in the transition between Time 2 and Time 3. These results are informative, indeed.

Despite the events of September 11, and the associated increase in U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Central Asia (during the first year of Time3), according to our model, the relative impact of such events on long-term SCO policy coordination appears to have been rather limited. Simultaneously, with concurrent *Color Revolutions* occurring in both Georgia and Ukraine in 2004 we might expect to see some level of increasing affinity among SCO member states that would resemble the coordinated construction of an anti-democratic bulwark rather than the general state of stability that defines the differences between Times2 &3.

While there certainly remains the possibility that there is a lagged impact of external events upon relative levels of policy coordination among states, we believe the use of United Nations voting records mitigates the possibility of such lagged effects. In general, roll-call voting in the United Nations General Assembly principally takes place in either November or December of a given year over the course of a relatively few number of specific days. With a stable interval of 10-12 months between voting cycles and only a limited number of days for states to cast their votes, it seems unlikely that meaningful events which had occurred during the preceding year would not impact state voting behavior until much later sessions. Similarly, Professor Erik A. Gartzke of the University of California San Diego, indicates that as roll-call voting in the UNGA is a largely symbolic act, the relative costs for states choosing to express their true preferences remains much lower than in other institutional environments;<sup>147</sup> thus we might believe that there is little reason to expect that states would not be inclined to make their preferences or grievances known immediately. Thus, while it remains outside the scope of our present effort to determine whether or not such events may, in fact, be having a lagged impact upon increasing the relative cohesion of state policy preferences in the SCO, we believe that our model takes sufficient precautions to preclude the likelihood of a lagged impact owing to the mechanics and nature of UNGA roll-call voting.

Further analysis of the results presented in **Figure 1**, however, clearly indicates that while policy cohesion remained relatively stable between Time 2 and 3, that this was not, in fact, the case between Time 3 and 4. During this transition each member state's affinity with the SCO as

---

<sup>147</sup> Gartzke, Erik (2006). *The Affinity of Nations Index, 1946-2002 Codebook*. Available at [http://dss.ucsd.edu/~egartzke/data/affinity\\_codebook\\_03102006.pdf](http://dss.ucsd.edu/~egartzke/data/affinity_codebook_03102006.pdf)

a whole rose dramatically. Notably, the results indicate a strong degree in increasing policy affinity between Uzbekistan and the SCO with a marked increase of 29.194 percentage points moving the state's prior SCO affinity score from 48.388% (Time3) to 77.582% (Time 4). And while the Uzbek case demonstrates an uncharacteristically high level of increasing policy affinity between any single state and all other SCO members, perhaps most noteworthy of all is the rather uneven increase in policy affinities we observe at the bilateral level among various members.

Analyzing changes to at the bilateral level between Time 3 and Time 4 we find that affinities *between* the SCO's major powers (between Russia, China, and Kazakhstan) did not dramatically increase, but notice that bilateral affinities between these powers and *individual minor* powers (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) each rose dramatically (**See Appendix D—Bilateral SCO Member State Affinity Scores 1993-2008**). Similarly, among the minor powers themselves we find only marginal increases in bilateral affinity when compared to the large-scale increases between individual major and minor powers. To further clarify this idea, we may restate these findings in the following manner.

- Between Time 3 and Time 4 we find significant increases in policy affinity between all SCO member states; significant insofar as they radically outpace the overall increases between Time 2 and Time 3.
- We can account for this overall increase in SCO affinity by analyzing changing *bilateral* levels of policy affinity.
- At the bilateral level we notice two distinct patterns emerging
  1. Between individual major and minor powers there are large-scale increases in affinity; what we will call '**vertical affinity**'<sup>148</sup>
  2. Within groups of major and minor powers, increases in policy affinity are marginal in comparative terms; what we will call '**horizontal affinity**'<sup>149</sup>

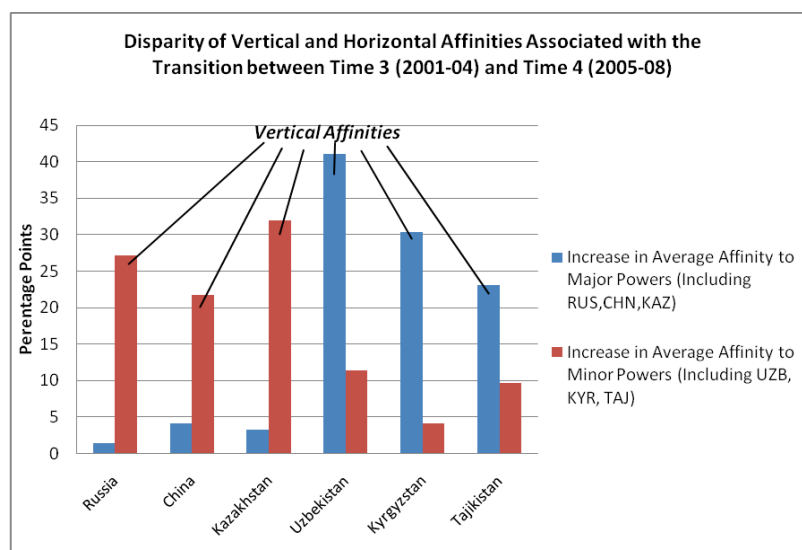
---

<sup>148</sup> Vertical affinity is equivalent to the level of affinity between a major and minor power.

<sup>149</sup> Horizontal affinity refers to the level of affinity between two or more minor powers or between two or more major powers



**Figure 2** (below) graphically represents the disparity between increases in vertical and horizontal affinities that are associated with the transition from Time 3 to Time 4. By presenting each state's average increase in affinity to groups of both minor and major powers we can clearly see that this transition is predominantly associated with large-scale increases in vertical affinity and only marginal increases in horizontal affinity. But what do such results suggest?



**Figure 2:** Calculations made by author utilizing coded UN General Assembly voting data. Data Source: Erik Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic, *United Nations General Assembly Voting Data 1946-2008*.

While answers to this question will remain speculative, we might suggest that increases of vertical affinity represent a fundamental reordering of relations between major and minor powers in the

wake of the 2005 events surrounding the Tulip Revolution and the Andijan Massacre in Uzbekistan. That horizontal affinities were not impacted by these same events would suggest a changing functional relationship between major powers and minor powers rather than a purely generic ideological reaction by all member states to the regional promotion of democracy. To the extent that this may be the case we would be inclined to disagree with the idea that democratic developments in Central Asia have functioned to broadly, or generically, increase the level of consolidated authoritarian policy coordination. While such increasing vertical coordination *may* be explained as a reaction to the notable events of 2005, defining the particular quality of this reaction is important insofar as it may steer us away from notions that the promotion of regional democracy will necessarily lead to a an overall strengthening of SCO policy consolidation around principals of authoritarianism. While the differences are subtle, it is our belief that increasing vertical policy affinities in Time 4 can be best explained primarily as the outcomes of domestic regime insecurity in the organization's minor states, rather than as part

of a larger movement by SCO major powers to either defend the region against the development of democracy or to actively promote authoritarianism.<sup>150</sup>

In a 2009 article concerning the nature and function of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Stephen Aris describes the SCO as an intergovernmental organization dedicated primarily to countering non-traditional domestic and regional security concerns. Rather than interpreting the SCO as an organization tasked with balancing Western regional interests (i.e.- traditional security concerns), Aris urges western analysts and policy-makers to acknowledge the very real domestic and regional threats to enduring regime legitimacy among the presently ‘weak’ and ‘less developed’ states of Central Asia, and to understand the role of these concerns in the formulation and activation of highly utilitarian international policies.<sup>151</sup> Crediting the work of Mohammed Ayooob, Aris writes:

[I]n order to understand the SCO, an appreciation of the political systems of the states involved is required, as it is vitally important to understand how the political elites are approaching the situation. Ayooob’s approach is based on the centrality of the ruling elites in developing states, whereby ‘security considerations (their own regime’s security in the eyes of the ruling elites) dominate domestic as well as the foreign policies of Third World states’ (Ayooob 1995, p.191)...Thus for the elites of Central Asia, the survival of the state is inseparable from the survival of their regime, as without this focal point they believe the state will implode. To this end, the SCO is a cooperative vehicle judged by the region’s elites primarily on its ability to contribute to the main security concerns as they perceive them: internal challenges to their regime security.<sup>152</sup>

If we accept Aris’ model, that SCO cooperation is premised largely upon the natural insecurities of regimes in ‘weak’ and ‘less developed’ states, we might understand the increasing vertical affinities observed previously in Time 4 as part of a largely utilitarian calculation made by minor state powers that aims to improve regime security through engaging in more intense bilateral cooperation with major powers who can provide otherwise lacking goods and resources. The implication of this assessment is that much of the cooperation undergirding SCO member states may derive not simply from some sort of inherent ideological opposition to the regional promotion of democracy but rather from the pervasive sense of regime insecurity that is

---

<sup>150</sup> A number of authors have specifically challenged the legitimate basis for notions of intentional and strategic autocracy promotion as part of an ideological imperative. In particular see: Burnell, Peter (2010). “Is There a New Autocracy Promotion,” *FRIDE Working Paper Series* 96 (March, 2010). Available online at: <http://www.fride.org/publication/748/working-paper>; Bader, Julia, Jorn Gravinghold, and Antje Kastner (2010).

“Would autocracies promote autocracy? A political economy perspective on regime-type export in regional neighborhoods.” *Contemporary Politics* 16(1).

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 459-462.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 461-462.

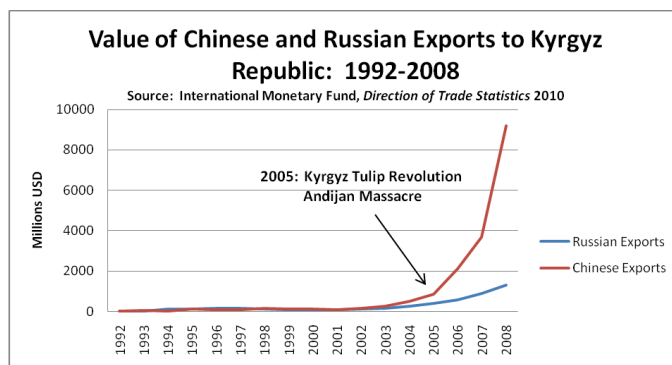
commonly associated with developing states, and where low levels of political capacity and legitimacy are accompanied by significant opposition forces who have little efficacy in existing state institutions.

Again, while the differences here are subtle, the peculiar lack of increasing horizontal affinities seems to suggest that democratic uprisings in the region have not led to a general state of increasing policy cohesion among all SCO regimes. While there is some indication that increasing policy coordination among SCO members is a reaction to democratic uprisings in 2005, we would note the importance of the fact that such events are associated with increasing vertical affinities rather than horizontal affinities. Thus democratic events may have tended to reinforce the relationships between autocrats, but they do not appear to have reinforced the relationship among *all* SCO autocrats. Given the highly unidirectional nature of this reactionary increase in affinity, we are inclined to believe that 2005 events encouraged minor power regimes to improve bilateral relationships with the states that '*mattered most*,' i.e.- those states that could provide increasing levels of economic and political assistance which could otherwise serve to insulate these regimes from extant threats to their security. And yet, we would here caution against making the type of exclusionary interpretation that sees increasing SCO cooperation solely as a response to Western incursions into the region. While the promotion of western values in Central Asia is likely to have had an impact upon state policies, we must also be willing to acknowledge that the domestic regime insecurity common among weak and developing nations is just as likely to have influenced the strategic policy decisions of minor power SCO member states. *Thus, we would hypothesize that both the region-specific democratic developments of 2005 as well as a pervasive domestic sense of regime insecurity in fragile minor power states has functioned to increase support for bilateral relationships among those SCO states that 'matter most.'* Insofar as these relationships were founded on the need for increasing domestic regime security, we might simply acknowledge that there is no purely ideological basis for renewed cooperation but that such cooperation has been highly opportunistic, strategic, utilitarian, and rational. The case of the Kyrgyz republic proves illuminating.

In an article which discusses autocratic dyadic cooperation as a function of predominantly utilitarian interests Bader, Gravingholt, and Kastner (2010) discuss the particular nature of the Russo-Kyrgyz cooperation in the post-2005 era, prior to this the Kyrgyz political revolution of 2010. They write:

Following the Tulip Revolution, Kurmanbak Bakiev was victorious in the freest and fairest presidential elections Central Asia had ever seen. But initial hopes for a more democratic political course made way for more autocratic practices (Radnitz 2006). Bakiev rebuilt his coalition by redistributing power from the governors of the Kyrgyz regions to economic elites from the South of the country and interior forces around his prime minister. In the light of strong public protests, Bakiev failed to consolidate his power and took on a stronger pro-Russian stance as a source for legitimacy and stability (Marat 2009)...The subsequent rise in Russian engagement in the country's domestic affairs enabled the government to consolidate its power and to strengthen authoritarian institutions.<sup>153</sup>

While Bader et al, dismiss the idea that major autocratic powers are likely to engage in explicit autocracy promotion for purely ideological purposes, they do indicate that “all else equal, autocratic regional powers have strong incentives to favor similar political systems in nearby states, but that this interest must be weighted against an overarching interest in political stability.”<sup>154</sup> In the case of Kyrgyzstan, Bader et al indicate “Russian interest in Kyrgyzstan as a political and strategic partner in the region was reinforced with the rise in the oil price and the spread of Islamic extremism. Furthermore, Russian business elites profit from the willingness of the incumbent leadership to trade stakes in profitable Kyrgyz enterprises for political support.”<sup>155</sup>



Thus we might understand increasing vertical affinities associated with Time 4 as a result of *quid pro quo* politics whereby minor state powers interested in improving domestic regime

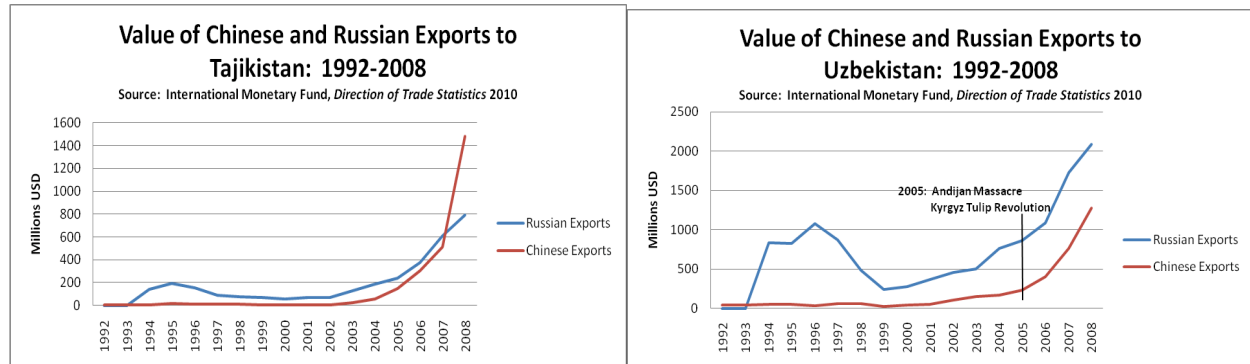
security reach out to neighboring major powers that either have, or come to develop, similar interest for continued regime stability in their significantly less stable neighbors. An analysis of bilateral trade-related data between Central Asian SCO member states and both China and Russia similarly reveals a substantial improvement in interstate relations circa 2005, further supporting the idea that events in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan led to a fundamental shift in major/minor power relations within the SCO (see export data graphs). In this context, Russia's

<sup>153</sup> Bader, Julia, Jorn Gravingholt, and Antje Kastner (2010). “Would autocracies promote autocracy? A political economy perspective on regime-type export in regional neighborhoods” *Contemporary Politics* 16(1): 95.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 95.

recent decision to publicly support and assist the revolutionary government in Kyrgyzstan following the 2010 political revolution may be best understood as the result of a diminishing Russian utility for the former Bakiev regime in the wake of failed Kremlin attempts to convince the Kyrgyz government to oust the U.S. military presence at Manas.<sup>156</sup>

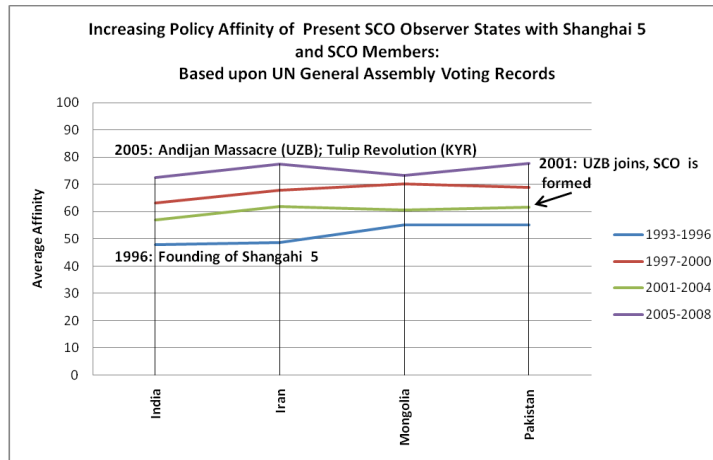


### Policy Coordination and Observer States

The particular patterns of increasing policy coordination that we observed between SCO member states in the prior section are largely repeated when we expand our analysis to include the four states (Mongolia, India, Pakistan, and Iran) that gained official observer status in the SCO between 2004 and 2005. In order to determine the level of the observer state's affinity with the SCO (or Shanghai Five in years prior to official observer status), we simply calculate the average level of dyadic affinity between the observer and each member in the organization for the time frame under observation. Thus, for the period of Time 2 (1997-00) the future SCO observer state's affinity was calculated using all members of the Shanghai Five, but did not include Uzbekistan, which would only join the organization later in 2001. Following the creation of the SCO in 2001 each observer state's score then reflects the incorporation of Uzbekistan into the organization.

<sup>156</sup> Feifer, Gregory (April 9, 2010). "Russian Moves in Kyrgyzstan Raise Questions Over U.S. Base," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*.  
[http://www.rferl.org/content/Russian\\_Moves\\_In\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Raise\\_Questions\\_Over\\_US\\_Base/2007784.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Russian_Moves_In_Kyrgyzstan_Raise_Questions_Over_US_Base/2007784.html)

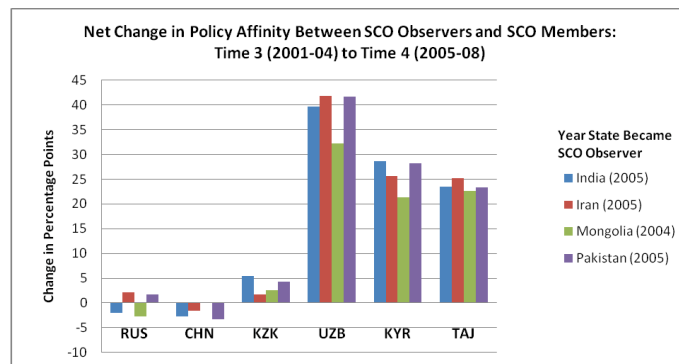
**Figure 3: Author's calculations utilizing Erik A. Voeten and Adis Merdzanovic's *United Nations General Assembly Voting Data 1946-2008* dataset**



The results of our analysis are presented in **Figure 3**. As is clearly demonstrated in the graph, the transition between Time 1 and Time 2 represents a significant increase in general policy coordination between all future SCO observer states and the former Shanghai Five. While this increase in general affinity may be due

to the founding of the Shanghai Five in 1996 (the last year in our Time 1 block), such conclusions are far from certain. The transition from Time 2 to Time 3, however, reveals a significant diminishing of policy affinity. In like manner to what we observed in the preceding section we find a significant increase in overall affinity again in the transition from Time 3 to Time 4.

**Figure 4**



Just as we found previously, this large scale increase can be credited to increasing affinities of minor Central Asian powers to the observer states almost exclusively (See **Figure 4**). While we might expect to see a large-scale increase in general policy

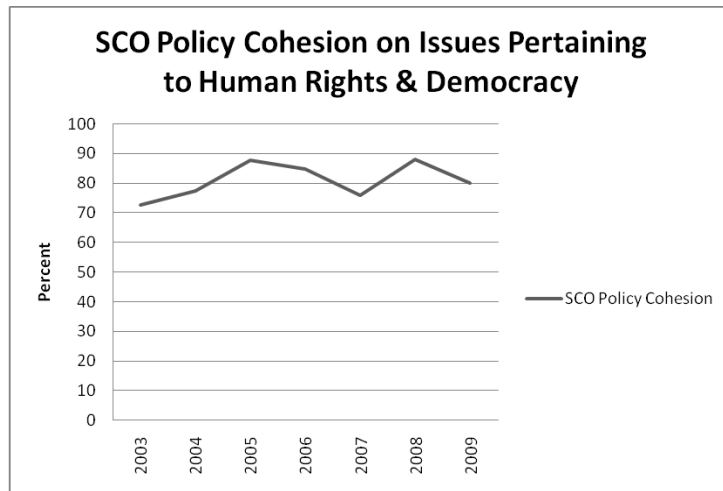
coordination between all observer states and all SCO members following the acquisition of official status in 2005 (Mongolia became an observer in 2004), it is telling for our present analysis that affinity only increases between these states and the minor SCO powers. Considering also the presence of the Tulip Revolution and Andijan events during this same period, it is tempting to conclude that formal entrance into the SCO did *not* effect a change in the general policy orientation of the new observer states, but that, again, it was the fragile regimes in minor power SCO states that began to proactively court the assistance of larger regional powers in the face of domestic crises of legitimacy and fears of color revolutions.

### **Policy Affinity Pertaining Specifically to Issues of Human Rights & Democracy**

As we indicated at the beginning of this section, we have also attempted to model policy coordination among SCO states specifically upon the topic of Human Rights and Democracy by isolating state voting behavior on those resolutions that have been coded under the HUMAN RIGHTS subject heading in the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISNET); as mentioned previously, resolutions dealing specifically with the promotion of democracy or support for democratic ideals falls under this particular subject heading in most cases. Owing to the short time frame of this project, we were able only to create a dataset pertaining specifically to the years of 2003 to 2009, but in line with our previous findings it is reasonable to suspect that significant changes in policy coordination over this topic would be found during this particular stretch of time. While our prior analysis of general policy affinity allowed us to survey large numbers of resolutions during blocks of years, thereby reassuring us of the accuracy of our results, the relatively few number of resolutions that pertain directly to the subject of Human Rights & Democracy each year (about 20-25 on average) and the time constraint which has limited the range of data we were able to collect, require us to admit that this section of our analysis is more susceptible to reliability issues associated with atypical annual shocks to data. Nevertheless, the overall consistency of our results on this topic leads us to believe that we have developed a fairly reliable indicator.

Our findings lead us to conclude that on issues pertaining to Human Rights and Democracy, SCO member states have generally demonstrated fairly robust and consistent overall levels of policy coordination stretching back to the first year of our investigation (2003). While fluctuations in this consistency have been detected, as in the case of a moderate increase in overall policy coordination occurring between 2003 and 2005, and then again during 2008, on balance we would suggest that such spikes are best interpreted as only slight deviations from what is an otherwise high-level of steady policy coordination. That such spikes may be responses to color revolutions and regional democratic moments, seems likely, but it is important to note that the otherwise overall high-level of policy coordination on this subject predates the specific events in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 2005 and so cannot be reasonably explained as an outcome of them. **Figure 5 (below)** presents SCO policy cohesion on Human Rights and Democracy in a single annual score (calculated by averaging out each state's average dyadic

affinity with all other member states). General policy coordination on issues pertaining to democracy and human rights appears consistently high, fluctuating above and below a standard



threshold of about 80%. As mentioned, however, there are two noticeable spikes between 2003 and 2009.

**Figure 5: SCO Policy Cohesion on Human Rights & Democracy. Based upon author's calculations. Source: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISNET).**

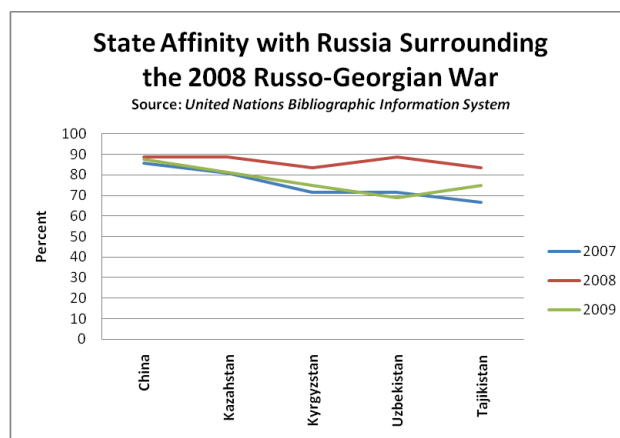
In the first instance we see SCO policy cohesion incline between 2003

and 2005, an event which could reflect organizational reactions to the Georgian Rose Revolution in 2003, the Ukrainian Orange Revolution in 2004, as well as the Kyrgyz Tulip Revolution and Andijan Massacre in 2005. Interestingly, however, following 2005 we discern a two year trend of decreasing SCO policy cohesion on Human Rights & Democracy. Stressing the need to recognize that policy cohesion generally fluctuates around the 80% threshold, we may hypothesize that while the aforementioned democratic events do appear to have impacted policy cohesion on democracy and human rights issues, that the overall impact of these events may only only have been temporary in their duration. Analyzing policy cohesion during previous years will be necessary to truly determine whether or not these events have effected a lasting and significant policy change among SCO member states. But, what remains undeniable at this point in our investigation is that in the immediate wake of those events leading up to 2005 there was a noticeable decrease in policy coordination on this particular topic. Thus we are inclined to understand high-profile democratic moments in Central Asia, and abroad, has having a rather limited impact upon actual normative coordination around issues pertaining to human rights and democracy.



**Figure 6: Author's calculations, based upon UNBISNET data.**

The spike in policy coordination in 2008 is harder to explain. To the extent that SCO member states often use Human Rights and Democracy resolutions to express their preferences for norms of non-interference and state sovereignty (by voting specifically *against* international

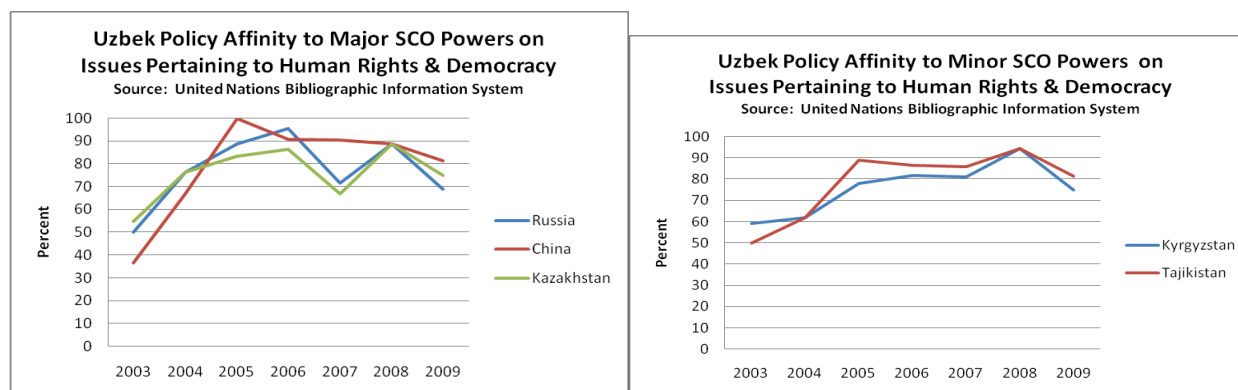


condemnations of civil and political rights abuses in European, Middle Eastern, and Asian states), we might expect 2008 to reflect a divergence of preferences among SCO members in response to Russia's militarized support of long-standing separatist movements in South Ossetia and Abkhazia as evidenced in the September 2008, Russo-Georgian War—understood as fundamental violation of state's rights. While Mark N. Katz in his article "Moscow and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Moscow's Lonely Road from Bishkek to Dushanbe,"<sup>157</sup> indicates that SCO members did not, in fact, provide public support for Russia at this critical moment, a further analysis of bilateral state voting behavior in 2008 (**Figure 6 above**) indicates *increasing bilateral policy coordination among all states and Russia* within the sub-category of Human Rights and Democracy during this year (again, recall that this subset often serves as a forum for expressing preferences for norms of non-interference and state's rights among SCO member countries).

It is worth reminding here that the bulk of UNGA roll-call voting occurs in December of each year and so should lead us to expect SCO dissatisfaction with Russia's participation in the September 2008 war to be demonstrated in the following December cycle. In fact, what we find is that 2008 represented a spike in state affinity with Russia that surpassed affinity in either 2007 or 2008. *Thus, to the extent that SCO states may have publicly expressed dissatisfaction for Russia's interventionist policies we do not see these states reflecting this level of dissatisfaction in a forum which traditionally encourages SCO members to signal their position on support for state's rights and non-interference*; while SCO members may have been challenged by Russian actions, neither Russia nor SCO member states allowed this mutual dissatisfaction to impact their

<sup>157</sup> Katz, Mark N. (2008). "Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Moscow's Lonely Road from Bishkek to Dushanbe," *Asian Perspective* 32(3): 186.

overall coordination in the UN General Assembly on this particular sub-set of issue-specific voting. This finding leads us to conclude that not only has SCO policy cohesion been increased since 2005, but that increasing levels of coordination are fairly robust even in the midst of diplomatic adversity.



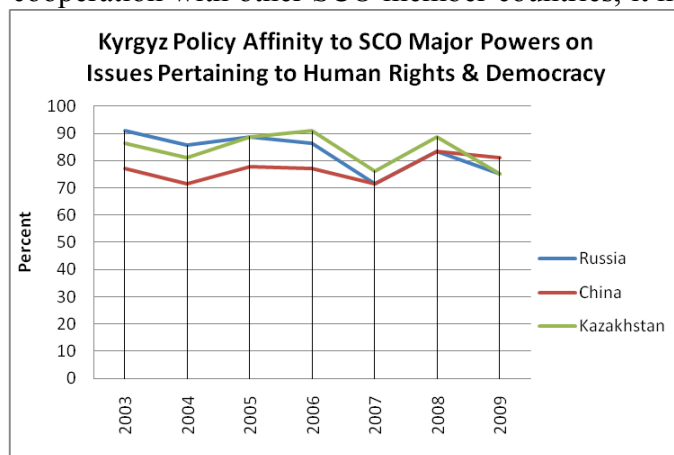
**Figure 7: Based upon author's calculations, utilizing UNBISNET data.**

While our general analysis of SCO coordination on the topic of Human Rights and Democracy, reveals only slight fluctuations around a rather consistent trend of high levels of overall coordination, one case, in particular, merits specific attention—Uzbekistan. When we analyze changes in bilateral policy affinity between Uzbekistan and all SCO member states on the subject of Democracy and Human Rights we find a radical alteration of Uzbek voting behavior that is both dramatic and sustained (**Figure 7 above**). The graphs above demonstrate that since 2003, Uzbekistan has fundamentally altered its voting behavior on issues pertaining to Human Rights and Democracy in the United Nations General Assembly, such that it now can be said to be actually participating in an SCO voting bloc. This evidence is perhaps the strongest we have yet found in support of Thomas Ambrosio's discussion of the emerging authoritarian internationale among Central Asian countries.

*While other SCO states' democracy and human rights voting behavior demonstrates only mild fluctuations between 2003 and 2009 (see graph on Kyrgyzstan below), there can be no mistaking the significant changes in Uzbek policy preferences. Again, to the extent that we understand this sub-set of UNGA resolutions as providing states with an efficient forum for expressing SCO preferences for norms of non-interference and states' rights, we must concede that in the wake of events between 2003 and 2005, Uzbekistan has fundamentally reordered its*

*preferences to reflect those of the SCO; that this will continue to create an effective rift in U.S.-Uzbek relations in the near term appears assured.*

Regarding the prospects of future democracy assistance projects in Uzbekistan, our analysis indicates that significant state resistance to external democracy assistance will only likely continue as the Karimov regime has fundamentally reordered its domestic and international priorities in the wake of prior events. In this atmosphere, we can only urge the U.S. government to increase efforts at promoting positive public diplomacy between the United States and Uzbekistan. Insofar as the Karimov regime was once willing to defect from general cooperation with other SCO member countries, it may be reasonable to expect that a rebalancing



of U.S.-Uzbek relations is, in fact, possible.

Before closing this section, a few words on the qualitative voting behavior of SCO member and observer states are in order. While the variety of resolutions concerning Human Rights and Democracy is substantial, our analysis has revealed a

pattern of organizational behavior surrounding particular UN general assembly resolutions that encourage us to believe that the SCO is actively promoting a re-prioritization of international norms which place states' rights of sovereignty and non-interference over individual human liberties.

While SCO member and observer countries can generally be expected to vote in support of generic resolutions which call for international support for the protection of human rights and individual political liberties (See section Appendix C), where resolutions specifically target rights abuses in Iran, Belarus, Uzbekistan, and (to some extent Myanmar), SCO member and observers alike tend to vote in strict unison as a staunch opposition bloc (See section Appendix- for SCO voting on Iran, Belarus, Uzbekistan, and Myanmar). **Figure 8** below singles out the organization's voting behavior each year between 2003 and 2009 on annual resolutions condemning human rights abuses in Iran. The extreme level of coordination on this topic is reinforced by the fact that all present SCO member and observer states, with but one exception, have voted against international condemnations of rights abuses in the Islamic Republic of Iran

since 2003. The only deviation from this obvious organizational trend is Uzbekistan who was officially listed as ‘absent’ from voting twice in seven years on this issue—2003 and 2009.

UN Resolution	Date	Subject	CHN	RUS	KAZ	KYR	UZB	TAJ	IND	IRN	PAK
A/RES/64/176	20091218	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	Absent	No	No	No	No
A/RES/63/191	20081218	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/62/168	20071218	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/61/176	20061219	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/60/171	20051216	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/59/205	20041220	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/58/195	20031222	Human Rights-Iran	No	No	No	No	Absent	No	No	No	No

**Figure 8: SCO member and observer voting records on resolutions condemning Human Rights Abuses in Iran-2003-2009. Source: UNBISNET.**

A similar trend has also been found in reference to SCO voting behavior surrounding Belarus during these same years, with all states on two voting occasions (2006 & 2007) voting staunchly against condemnations of domestic rights abuses (See Figure 9 below). Heightened cooperation between the SCO and Belarus has only been further bolstered in recent weeks by the SCO’s April 28, 2010 decision to officially incorporate Belarus into the SCO as a dialogue partner, as indicated on *The National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus*.<sup>158</sup> *To the extent that advance policy coordination/support between SCO members and peripheral states in the United Nations General Assembly may have some predictive capacity for determining future alterations to the existing organizational status-quo, we recommend undertaking a more extensive analysis of changes in SCO voting affinity toward peripheral regional and extra-regional state actors in an effort to create responsive and effective democracy assistance projects in those states at increasing risk for diffusion of SCO policies and practices.*

UN Resolution	Date	DESCRIPTION	CHN	RUS	KAZ	KYR	UZB	TAJ	IND	IRN	PAK
A/RES/62/169	20071218	Human Rights in Belarus	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/61/175	20061219	Human Rights in Belarus	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
A/RES/64/238	20091224	Human Rights in Myanmar	No	No	Yes	Abstain	Absent	Abstain	No	Absent	Abstain
A/RES/62/222	20071222	Human Rights in Myanmar	No	No	Yes	Abstain	No	Absent	No	No	No
A/RES/61/232	20061222	Human Rights in Myanmar	No	No	Yes	Abstain	No	Absent	No	No	No

**Figure 9: SCO member and observer voting records on resolutions condemning Human Rights Abuses in Belarus and Myanmar. Source: UNBISNET.**

While SCO coordination appears consolidated over issues pertaining to Belarus, in relation to Myanmar, there is less organizational cohesion—suggesting that the SCO’s progress

<sup>158</sup>*The National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus* (April, 28, 2010). “Belarus gains SCO dialogue partner status.” Available at <http://law.by/work/englportal.nsf/0/A46C8CFFD85B1323C22577130051E52F?OpenDocument>

towards Myanmar will likely be more moderate (See Figure 9 above). While both China and Russia have consistently voted (2006, 2007, and 2009) *against* resolutions condemning rights abuses in Myanmar, Kazakhstan has acted in strict opposition by *voting in support* of the resolutions. In contrast, the minor power Central Asian member-states have generally voted to abstain or were officially listed as ‘absent’ from voting, a tactic which only suggests the layer of complex politics within the SCO surrounding the issue of Myanmar which forces minor power states to avoid committing themselves publicly to either a Russian-Chinese or Kazakh approach.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the events of September 11, and the associated increase in U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Central Asia in 2001, our analysis has revealed that the relative impact of these events on bilateral member affinity and organizational cohesion has been limited. In contrast to this we do, however, find that SCO organizational cohesion increased more dramatically during the period of 2005 to 2008 than in any previous period, suggesting that organizational integrity was greatly enhanced as a response to the 2005 democratic revolution in Kyrgyzstan, as well as western condemnations of human rights abuses in Uzbekistan over the events at Andijan that same year.

Analysis of changes in *bilateral* affinities during this same time period suggests that increasing policy coordination among SCO members was not evenly distributed but rather reflected enhanced vertical relations between the organization’s major and minor powers only. This imbalance in changing affinity leads us to conclude that increasing policy coordination largely reflects the strategic interests of fragile regimes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan which have increasingly engaged in cooperative diplomacy with Russia, China, and Kazakhstan as a means for enhancing domestic regime security. Thus, we find recent changes in SCO policy coordination to be largely utilitarian in nature.

Our analysis of member-state voting behavior on UN resolutions pertaining specifically to the topic of Democracy and Human Rights reveals that most SCO members have maintained a high-level of consistent policy coordination since, at least, 2003. While SCO member states will rhetorically support the promotion of democratic norms and the protection of human rights in the General Assembly, where resolutions specifically target rights abuses in Iran, Belarus, and Uzbekistan (and to some extent) Myanmar—SCO members countries have repeatedly acted in

strict unison as a staunch opposition bloc, thereby demonstrating the organization's inclination to prioritize norms of sovereignty and non-interference over those individual human liberties. Significantly our analysis reveals that following the Andijan massacre and Tulip revolution in 2005, Uzbekistan has demonstrated a radical increase in policy affinity with *all* SCO members over these same issues, suggesting that the Karimov regime will continue to be an instrumental supporter of SCO policies and practices in the coming years.

In conclusion, we believe that the increase in SCO policy cohesion, which began in 2005, will have prolonged negative implications for the future of democracy and human rights in Central Asia as minor powers continue to trade policy cooperation/collaboration for domestic regime security in a general politics of *quid pro quo*; that such coordination is fundamentally underwriting the emergence of an authoritarian internationale in both policy and practice may, in fact, be harder to contest than to admit.

## **Borders**

Border disputes among central Asian states were the initial impetus to the formation of the SCO. The existing borders between SCO member states have historically been an issue of contention and instability, especially since the breakup of the Soviet Union. While many border disputes have been resolved, others still remain. Most of these remaining border disputes can be categorized as revolving around one of two points of contention, either (1) natural resource issues or (2) political issues. Here we present some examples of on-going general border disputes of each type and identify the ways that SCO member states have used the cross border flow of goods and people to either advance or undermine existing SCO norms that embody the spirit of Shanghai.

### **Border Disputes over Natural Resources**

Tajikistan's recent plans to build a hydro-power station have strained the tenuous border relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. While most of the energy used in Tajikistan is supplied by Turkmenistan, because these two countries do not share a border, power is transferred to Tajikistan via Uzbekistan's power grid. A new hydro-power station in Tajikistan would serve to give Tajikistan some level of energy independence. However, Uzbekistan has repeatedly stated that the new hydro plant would disrupt the flow of water to Uzbekistan, hurting their cotton field production<sup>159</sup>. Uzbekistan's stance against the Tajik development of an independent energy resource is an outgrowth of their aspirations to become the sole source of power in the region.<sup>160</sup>

When, despite Uzbek objections, Tajikistan refused to stop construction of the hydro-power station, Uzbekistan turned to Russia to shut the development down. The Uzbek government submitted a request to the leadership of the Russian Aluminum Company to bring down the height for the project<sup>161</sup>, the goal of which, the Tajiks allege, was to delay construction of the Roghun hydro-plant. The dispute has still not been settled and the struggle for more power continues in the region. Although the region tends to take the rhetorical position of good neighborliness, each nation continues to fight to become a larger power in the region.

---

<sup>159</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit (2009) "Tajikistan economy: Power-deprived", December. Views wire [http://viewswire.eiu.com/index.asp?layout=VWPrintVW3&article\\_id=1295092714](http://viewswire.eiu.com/index.asp?layout=VWPrintVW3&article_id=1295092714)

<sup>160</sup> Najot. "Tajik paper says Uzbek ambition to be sole power behind strained ties" BBC Monitoring. 20 April 2010. Web <http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=127223>

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

This fight over natural resources and the willingness of Uzbekistan to turn to a critical SCO actor in order to settle the border dispute, suggests that in some ways the SCO members use the borders to undermine the norm of non-intervention that has been created by the SCO. So, while traditional SCO rhetoric (based on the norms of non-intervention and diversity) would lead us to expect that Tajikistan would be left to do what it wished regarding its energy policy; the reality of the situation suggests otherwise. This specific incident suggests that when natural resources or geopolitical interests are involved, Russia is ready at the wait to receive calls from distressed, minor SCO members and is prepared to exert substantial influence in the region.

However, in another incident involving a dispute between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan over issues of land and water, we see minor SCO members engaging in policy acts that serve to reinforce SCO norms of diversity and non-intervention. Tajik and Kyrgyz officials have been negotiating rights to precious water reserves for many years. Recently, Tajik and Kyrgyz officials announced an agreement to fairly divide water from the river Isfara. They also agreed on the fate of some small land territories that have been the subject of disputes.<sup>162</sup> Resolution to this dispute suggests that both countries have the capacity to adhere to the regional norm of non-intervention.

### **Politically Oriented Border Disputes**

Border disputes that emerge as a result of political upheaval also provide evidence of SCO member countries adhering to and diverging from the regional non-intervention norm. Here, we present the SCO member reactions to the Andijan uprising in Uzbekistan, Russian reactions to an influx of Tajik refugees, and the more recent events in Kyrgyzstan to demonstrate such behavior.

#### *Andijan: The Justification for Uzbek Extraditions*

In May of 2005, in the wake of the arrests of 23 entrepreneurs that were members of a banned religious group, thousands of people took to the streets in Uzbekistan. In addition to protesting the arrests of the entrepreneurs, protesters were also upset over the creation of new registration requirements that shut down trade and force thousands of people out of work. On May 12-13, thousands of protesters gathered to attack the prison where the arrested were being held, ultimately freeing over 2,000 prisoners and eventually establishing temporary control over

---

<sup>162</sup> Annan, Grace (2008) "Kyrgyz and Tajik Officials Claim Resolution of Border Problems" Global Insight. 1 December



the town. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, Uzbek soldiers surrounded a crowd of about 10,000 that had gathered in the center of the town. Uzbek authorities stated that negotiations with the protesters had failed and the soldiers opened fire on the crowd. One protester stated that soldiers were firing from rooftops and even following the protesters down the alleyways. Russia and Uzbek officials claimed that the unrest was due to terrorist groups like the Taliban and Hizb ut-Tahrir and their attempt to masterfully overthrow the government<sup>163</sup>. After the massacre, many people fled Uzbekistan and were granted asylum status in neighboring countries

Rafik Rakhmonov fled Uzbekistan in 2005 in the aftermath of the Andijan unrest. On April 9, 2008, Rakhmonov applied for refugee status at the UNHCR and on April 10, was registered as an asylum seeker. He had been legally living in Kazakhstan and registered with the Kazakh migration authorities. But, on April 17, 2008, Rakhmonov was arrested by Kazakh police due to an extradition request that had been issued by Uzbek authorities. This was not the first extradition of its kind. According to Human Rights Watch, in 2005 nine Uzbek refugees were forcibly returned from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan<sup>164</sup>. Further, the head of the Initiative Group of Independent Human Rights Defenders of Uzbekistan, Surat Ikramov, says that in 2006 two Uzbeks were illegally extradited from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan<sup>165</sup>. We examine some of these extraditions here.

In May of 2005, four Uzbek Asylum seekers went missing in southern Kyrgyzstan. The four men were seeking refuge after the Andijan unrest. At least two of the men were immediately sent back to Uzbekistan. The other two men are still missing, although Uzbekistan denies having them in custody. In July of 2006, Isroil Holdorov, and exiled Uzbek activist for the opposition party Erk, disappeared while in the Osh region of Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan's ombudsman accused the Kyrgyz government of allowing Uzbek authority's free reign to operate in the Osh region, home to many former Andijan residents<sup>166</sup>.

Haiatjon Juraboev was an Uzbek national, who studied Islam in Syria and later taught in Russia. His father had been convicted of religious extremism charges in Uzbekistan in the early 1990s. While teaching in Russia in 2007, Juraboev was extradited to Uzbekistan where he was

---

<sup>163</sup> Hamm, Nathan. "Andijan and After: what future for Uzbekistan?" Open Democracy. 16 May 2005.

[http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions\\_government/article\\_2511.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions_government/article_2511.jsp)

<sup>164</sup> Cartner, Holly. "Letter to Kazakh Government against Extradition of Asylum Seeker." Human Rights Watch. 6 May 2008. <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/05/06/letter-kazakh-government-against-extradition-asylum-seeker>

<sup>165</sup> Ikramov, Surat. "Uzbekistan Jails Two Allegedly Extradited by Kazakhstan" 12 April 2006 Web <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1067612.html>

<sup>166</sup> Jean-Christophe Peuch. "Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan Under Fire Over Missing Uzbek Asylum Seekers."

arrested. He was later released without charge but fled to Kyrgyzstan where he applied to be an asylum seeker and was recognized as a refugee by the UNHRC in 2008. In September of 2008, Haiatjon Juraboev was approached by a man who claimed to be a Kyrgyz National Security Service officer while he was entering a mosque in Kyrgyzstan. Juraboev disappeared after September and his whereabouts remained unknown until January of 2009 when his mother found out he was being detained in a Tashkent prison in Uzbekistan. He was charged with religious extremism and illegal border crossing<sup>167</sup>

While some of many of these extraditions took place immediately after the events of Andijan, they are still very common today and participation in the Andijan events is still used to justify these extraditions. As recently as June 14, 2009, at the request of the Uzbek government, several ethnic Uzbeks were arrested in the Russian City of Ivanovo. The Uzbeks were charged with participating in the Andijan uprising. All but one were extradited to Uzbekistan<sup>168</sup>

By 2007, over 250 political and religious refugees of Uzbekistan had applied for asylum with UNHCR in Kazakhstan. Thanks to UNHRC (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) many have been saved from extradition. However, in late November of 2005, 9 men were forcibly returned to Uzbekistan by Kazakhstan, four of whom had previously registered with UNHRC. They were presumably kidnapped by Kazakh agents and secretly returned to Uzbekistan. They were all tried in Uzbekistan on various charges including religious extremism and in connection to the Andijan uprising.<sup>169</sup>

It is clear that the government of Uzbekistan is comfortable manipulating the flow of people across its borders in the interest of repression of the opposition. While this is generally consistent with the ‘Spirit of Shanghai’, it does serve to undermine the regional SCO norm of non-intervention.

### *The Case of Tajik Refugees in Russia*

Russia has often been willing to extradite refugees to Tajikistan as well as Uzbekistan. As early as 1997 a Tajik refugee living in Moscow, named Akhmajon Saidov, was arrested in

---

<sup>167</sup> Cartner, Holly (2009). “Uzbekistan: Abducted Refugee on Trial.” Human Rights Watch. 5 February <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/02/05/uzbekistan-abducted-refugee-trial>

<sup>168</sup> Bigg, Claire (2005). “Russia: Rights Groups Say Muslims Are Unfairly Targeted in Fight Against Terrorism” Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty. 31 October 2005

<sup>169</sup> Cartner, Holly. “Saving its Secrets: Government Repression in Andijan.” Human Rights Watch. May 2008 Issue 1-56432-318-8. <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2008/05/11/saving-its-secrets>

Moscow. According to Saidov, the Tajik government had accused him of forming the National Revival Movement (NRM), which was supposed to be a part of the peace process in Tajikistan. His home was searched, he was charged with possession of illegal narcotics, and he was extradited to Tajikistan.<sup>170</sup>

Additionally, another Tajik refugee, Dodojon Avotullov, was living in exile in Russia. He was the founder of Charogi Ruz, an opposition newspaper which he created while living in exile, and he was also the leader of the Tajik opposition group Vatandor. Avotullov was facing charges of sedition, libel and slander against the president of Tajikistan. Fearing his extradition to Tajikistan from Russia, Avotullov fled Russia to Paris.<sup>171</sup> Finally, as recently as 2008, Russia tried to extradite a group of Uzbek refugees to Uzbekistan. On April 24, the European Court of Human Rights prohibited Russia from extraditing the refugees to Uzbekistan<sup>172</sup>.

### **Kyrgyzstan: An Opportunity to Strengthen or Undermine the Regional Non-Intervention Norm**

The recent events in Kyrgyzstan have shed light onto what SCO member states reactions would be to government uprisings in neighboring nations. Specifically, by examining member state reactions to the Kyrgyz revolution, we can explore the different ways that each state manipulates their borders in order to either reinforce or weaken the SCO norms of stability, diversity, and non-intervention. We can use the case of Kyrgyzstan to see how one of the major SCO members, Russia, might have manipulated the flow of goods or services to destabilize a regime that they didn't agree with, thereby violating the regional norm of non-intervention. While, the other major SCO member state, China, did not even comment on the events, thereby reinforcing the SCO norm of non-intervention and diversity. Further we can examine the reactions of some of the minor SCO member states (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) to see how their reactions to the Kyrgyz revolution and their subsequent border management served to reinforce or undermine these regional norms. We start by examining the responses of the minor SCO member states and then we examine Russia's response to the Kyrgyz crisis.

---

<sup>170</sup> Marie Struthers (1998) "Tajikistan; Leninabad: Crackdown in the North" Human Rights Watch. Vol. 10, No 2. <http://www.hrw.org/archive/reports/1998/tajikistan/index2.html>

<sup>171</sup> Human Rights Watch (2009) "Tajikistan; Country Summary." 13 January, <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report/2009/tajikistan>

<sup>172</sup> Human Rights Watch (2008) "Russia Blocked from Extraditing Uzbek Nationals to Risk of Torture." 9 May, Web <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/05/09/russia-blocked-extraditing-uzbek-nationals-risk-torture>

### *The Kazakh Response*

Upon hearing the news of the revolution, the Kazakhstani President, Nursultan Nazarbaev, sent a pilot to Kyrgyzstan to pick up Bakiyev and his family and bring them to Kazakhstan. Nazarbaev stated that the departure of Bakiyev from Kyrgyzstan helped to “prevent bloodshed in Kyrgyzstan<sup>173</sup>.” Following the unrest, the Kazak government stepped up security efforts on the borders with Kyrgyzstan in order to prevent the events from spilling over into Kazakhstan. The Kazaks originally stated they would reopen the borders on May 5; however this pledge has still not been fulfilled. Kazakhstan has relatively remained quiet about the uprising but has called for stability and peace in Kyrgyzstan. This is a clear example of the Kazak commitment to the norm of stability, and it suggests that, in the face of instability, Kazakhstan is willing to modify their border policy to strengthen SCO regional norms.

### *The Uzbek Response*

Unlike, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan became heavily involved in undermining the Bakiyev regime’s stability early in the year. According to a Tajik political analyst, in February and March of 2010 Uzbekistan blocked the movement of trains carrying fuel from Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan<sup>174</sup>. The implications of this blockade were that the cost of fuel in Kyrgyzstan skyrocketed. The rising fuel costs in Kyrgyzstan helped the opposition movement to gain more support for the uprising. It’s very possible that this Uzbek blockade was a favor to Russia in response to Russia’s support for Uzbekistan during their energy dispute with Tajikistan. Further, this suggests that Uzbekistan was willing to undermine the regional norm of non-intervention in order to thank Russia for their previous support.

### *The Russian Response*

In an unlikely response to the uprising, a day after the unrest on April 7, 2010, Russia immediately backed the Interim Kyrgyz government. According to the BBC, on April 8<sup>th</sup>, Roza Otunbayeva, the head of the Interim government, spoke with Vladimir Putin via a telephone call, during which Putin pledged full Russian support for the republic<sup>175</sup>. The historical context of

---

<sup>173</sup> Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty (2010) “Kazakh President Awards Pilot For Flying Ousted Kyrgyz Leader” 7 May 2010, retrieved online at

[http://www.rferl.org/content/Kazakh\\_President\\_Awards\\_Pilot\\_For\\_Flying\\_Ousted\\_Kyrgyz\\_Leader/2035766.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Kazakh_President_Awards_Pilot_For_Flying_Ousted_Kyrgyz_Leader/2035766.html)

<sup>174</sup> Komil, Muhammad (2010). “Tajik pundit alleges Russia, Uzbekistan behind regional instability.” Tajik newspaper SSSR. 15 April 2010.

<sup>175</sup> Gazprom (2010). “Head of Kyrgyz interim government talks to Russian premier on phone” BBC Monitoring. 8 April, retrieved online at

<http://www.lexisnexis.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true>

the relationship between the Kyrgyz and Russian government suggests that it is highly likely that Russia manipulated the flow of goods across the Kyrgyz border in order to destabilize the Bakiyev regime; a regime with which it no longer agreed.

Last July the Bakiyev government negotiated a deal with Russia to close the US air base in Kyrgyzstan and to receive some \$450 million in aid from Russia for doing so<sup>176</sup>. However, later that month, Bakiyev negotiated a deal with the US to keep the air base open and to receive even more financial assistance and aid. This “double-cross” as it were, undoubtedly upset the Russian government. According to Aleksandr A Kynazov, then director of a Russian backed NGO, after the deal was done Kyrgyz opposition leaders began to get audiences with the leaders of Moscow.<sup>177</sup>

Before the uprising, new Internet websites accused the Bakiyev family of skimming money from the public coffers. In March, Russian state television helped to step up publication of incriminating stories of the Bakiyev government. The authorities responded by blocking Web sites on local servers. In an unlikely move, the Russian Foreign Ministry denounced the blocking of the websites. The Russian Embassy in Bishkek issued a statement saying that they were concerned about the online censorship of Russian Internet sites.<sup>178</sup> On April 1, Russia raised the tariffs for refined petroleum products exported to Kyrgyzstan, which helped to cause a spike in gasoline prices that helped to further the dissent.<sup>179</sup> Following the unrest, the Russians detained and expelled a former Kyrgyz minister that vanished during the uprising<sup>180</sup>. This was after a request from the Kyrgyz interim government for his extradition back to the country. It is clear that the Russian government preferred a government that would be more closely allied with them than the US.

Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and China have all called for stability in Kyrgyzstan but have remained faithful to the pillar of non-interference in this instance. Uzbekistan, however, has played a minor role in what could perhaps be seen as an attempt to encourage an uprising. And,

---

<sup>176</sup> Kramer, Andrew E (2010). “Unlikely ally in Kyrgyz Uprising: Russia; in this ‘color revolution,’ Kremlin gave full support to government opponents.” The International Herald Tribune, April, 20, Pg 4.

<sup>177</sup> Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty (2010) “Kazakh President Awards Pilot For Flying Ousted Kyrgyz Leader” 7 May retrieved online at [http://www.rferl.org/content/Kazakh\\_President\\_Awards\\_Pilot\\_For\\_Flying\\_Ousted\\_Kyrgyz\\_Leader/2035766.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Kazakh_President_Awards_Pilot_For_Flying_Ousted_Kyrgyz_Leader/2035766.html)

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty. “Russia Detains, Expels Kyrgyz Ex-Minister” Last updated 26 April 2010. [http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia\\_Detains\\_Expels\\_Kyrgyz\\_ExMinister/2024515.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Detains_Expels_Kyrgyz_ExMinister/2024515.html)

only Russia has explicitly supported the new change. All of these examples of extraditions suggest that SCO member states are more than willing to break the norm of non-intervention to extradite activists in the name of “terrorism”. Not only that, but it is apparent that some SCO member states also allow other member states secretly come to their country and take dissidents away under the radar. Many people often disappear for months, only to reemerge in a prison in their home countries. Most dissidents are charged with religious extremism, drug trafficking, or slander of the government. And, many of these charges have little evidence to back them up. Few people ever receive a trial and those that do, are often given an unfair trial resulting in their prosecution.

We have presented evidence here, which suggests that the Central Asian member states of the SCO are often willing to violate the norm of non-intervention in order to deal with geopolitical border disputes. While this section of the report suggests that Russia is often a critical player in these boundary manipulations, thus far, reports we have seen show little evidence of the Chinese role in border manipulations. This is not to say that China does not engage in this practice, on the contrary it is very active in the manipulation of its own borders in an effort to control the Uighur population of the Xinjiang province. It is to that issue that we turn to next.

### **Chinese Borders: The Uighur Conflict**

The Chinese government has long been concerned with ethnic Uighur Muslims since the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, neighboring countries similarly have their own concerns. To relegate the Uighur unrest to mere domestic Chinese politics negates its impact on foreign policy between SCO member states.

China has controlled the Uighur population to ensure its own economic viability in the Central Asia region; Uighurs are most concentrated in the Xinjiang province. But significant populations also reside in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. The evidence of extraditions between neighboring states shows an increase in cross-border cooperation to exercise control over ethnic minority Uighurs.

This suggests that, although we often assume the Chinese to be staunch supporters of the norm of non-intervention, even they are willing to manipulate the cross border flow of people and goods when it serves their own intentions. By consistently ordering the extradition of Uighurs from neighboring states, China is serving to undermine the established norm of non-

intervention in the region. In this section we present the geographic distribution of the Uighur population, present the historical context to the Uighur conflict, and examine how the Uighurs came to be labeled as terrorists by Chinese authorities. Then we examine the history of the extradition of Uighurs and point to this as evidence of China's willingness to undermine the regional norm of non-intervention. A more extensive timeline of the history of the Uighur conflict as well as the history of Uighur extraditions is presented in Appendix D.

### **Geographic Distribution of the Population**

Uighurs are a Turkish-speaking Sunni Muslim population, heavily concentrated in Xinjiang. Xinjiang province makes up one-sixth of China's total land area; 5,600 kilometers of which borders Afghanistan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia and Tajikistan. There are approximately 500,000 Uighurs, of which 300,000 reside in Kazakhstan and 50,000 in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, Uighurs are the fourth largest nationality in Guantanamo Bay, after Afghans, Pakistanis and Saudis. "Only a minority have been clearly associated with military activity," which calls into question the authenticity of any claim on China's behalf that Uighurs are terrorists.<sup>181</sup>

### **Historical context**

Uighur emigration from China to Central Asia dates back to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, and two major phases of emigration can be identified. The first major Uighur migration occurred between 1954 and 1963; when many Uighurs fled from Xinjiang province to the former USSR. In this time period, many Uighur communities were established in the USSR and in other parts of Central Asia. William Clark and Ablet Kamalov suggest that a second phase of emigration occurred after the border opened in the mid 1980s. They argue that the border opening facilitated a significant increase in cross-border migration, and a re-unification of sorts between the Chinese Uighur community and the Russian Uighur community. With many new Uigher migrants visiting families in Russia and others engaging in regional trade. Clark and Kamalov note that the "interaction between the two communities of Uighurs... [helped them shape] a common Uighur identity on both sides of the border."<sup>182</sup>

---

<sup>181</sup> Kerr, David and Swinton, Laura C. "China, XinJiang, and the Transnational Security of Central Asia." *Critical Asian Studies*. Vol. 40, Issue 1. 2008. 89-112.

<sup>182</sup> Clark, William and Kamalov, Albet. "Uighur migration across Central Asian frontiers." *Central Asian Survey*. Vol. 23, Issue 2. June 2004. 167-182.

The collapse of the Soviet Union had tremendous implications on Chinese policy regarding Uighurs. The Chinese government has been concerned about “the impact of ethnic nationalism and militant Islam...[and the] potential for these destabilizing influences to transverse China’s borders and threaten its control”<sup>183</sup> in a region which is dubbed China’s “gateway” to Central Asia. It is clear that a strong cross-border community of Uighurs is perceived as a threat to Chinese stability and control by Chinese authorities.

### **Chinese Identification of Uighurs as “terrorists”**

Chinese authorities have emphasized the ETIM, or East Turkistan Islamic Movement, in its efforts to portray Uighurs as terrorists. This obscure militant group is only known to a few Uighurs, but because members have been linked to previous training with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Uighurs continue to be synonymous with terrorism. It is worth noting that there has been apparently “little ETIM activity since... October 2003.”<sup>184</sup>

Interestingly, of the four Uighur organizations that China designates as terrorist status, the ETIM is the only one internationally recognized—in 2007, the United States assigned ETIM terrorist status. In 2002, two ETIM members were arrested for plotting an attack on a U.S. Embassy and were deported from Kyrgystan to China. Despite little ETIM activity, McGregor posits its association with terrorism has greatly hurt efforts by Uighurs to gain U.S. support for a “Muslim Tibet.”

In December 2003, Minister Zhou Yongkang (China’s Minister of Public Security) first issued a list identifying “Eastern Turkistan” organizations, which included 11 group members.

*People’s Daily* continues:

“The identified “Eastern Turkistan” terrorist organizations are: the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), the Eastern Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO), the World Uighur Youth Congress (WUYC) and the Eastern Turkistan Information Center (ETIC).

The 11 identified “Eastern Turkistan” terrorists are: Hasan Mahsum, Muhanmetemin Hazret, Dolqun Isa, Abudujelili Kalakash, Abudukadir Yapuquan, Abudumijit Muhammadkelim, Abudula Kariaji, Abulimit Turxun, Huadaberdi Haxerbik, Yasen Muhammad, and Atahan Abuduhani.”<sup>185</sup>

---

<sup>183</sup> Clarke, Michael. “Xinjiang and China’s Relations with Central Asia, 1991-2001: Across the ‘Domestic-Foreign Frontier’?” *Asian Ethnicity*. Volume 4, Number 2. June 2003.

<sup>184</sup> McGregor, Andrew. “Chinese Counter-Terrorist Strike in XinJiang.” *CACI Analyst*. 2007.

<sup>185</sup> “Combating terrorism, we have no choice.” *People’s Daily*. December 2003.



The Chinese are clearly interested in using the label of “terrorist” to control the movement of the Uighur population across its borders. In doing so, the Chinese serve to severely undermine the regional norm of non-intervention which they seem to uphold in so many other situations. This is particularly interesting because in its capacity as an SCO member, China has often served as a role model, of sorts. Its economic prowess shows other members that democracy is not a prerequisite for economic growth. In this case however, the Chinese model demonstrates that members can generally show respect for the norm of non-intervention, but that they can also undermine this norm when it suits their needs; as long as those needs are identified as being related to the control of terrorism, or national security.

### **Evidence of extraditions**

A much more extensive timeline of Uighur extraditions is presented in Appendix E, but here we present just a few cases of extraditions involving Uighurs and neighboring states. This evidence shows that China is requesting Uighur extradition from *all* of its neighbors; not just its SCO member states.

In April 2009, Pakistan extradited as many as nine Uighurs to China, accusing them of terrorist activity involvement.<sup>186</sup> In November 2009, a group of Uighurs fled to Cambodia, having been previously issued “Prisoners of Concern” letters by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Alarming, Cambodia forcibly returned the Uighurs in mid-December 2009, in violation of international law.<sup>187</sup>

Most recently, in January 2010, reports have surfaced that 17 Uighurs were deported from Burma.<sup>188</sup>

### **Neighboring countries**

The increase in cross-border extradition cooperation since 9/11 indicates that the Uighur issue is no longer just a domestic policy issue for China. It has become part of their foreign policy focus as the international profile of Uighur activity in neighboring states has increased. Recently, several separatist movements have moved from Kazakhstan to Turkey, and in

---

<sup>186</sup> “Freedom House Condemns Pakistan, China for Uighur Extraditions.” Freedom House. May 7, 2009.

In response, Jennifer Windsor, FH executive director, cites Pakistan’s latest extradition as further evidence of China’s “skillful” manipulation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to control its ethnic minorities, and proof of how China exerts pressure on surrounding countries to acquiesce to its policies regarding Uighurs.

<sup>187</sup> “China: Forcibly Returned Uighur Asylum Seekers At Risk.” Human Rights Watch. December 22, 2009.

<sup>188</sup> “China: Account for Uighur Refugees Forcibly Repatriated to China.” Human Rights Watch. January 28, 2010

Kyrgyzstan the organization of an ethnic Uighur political party was shut down.”<sup>189</sup> Additionally, in May 2009, Freedom House condemned Pakistan’s decision to “hand over a group of Uighur exiles to the Chinese authorities,”<sup>190</sup> at once a violation of international law and reinforcement of Pakistan’s observer status in the SCO.

Violation of the principle of non-refoulement continues in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, according to a 2009 investigative report by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). The report further details the exploitation of migrant workers and documents specific occurrences wherein protection has been denied to asylum seekers and refugees, including Uighurs. Other sources state that security services from refugees’ countries of origin operate within Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to identify and track refugees.

Kazakh and Kyrgyz authorities justify their refusal to grant refugee status on the grounds of non-intervention in internal affairs of neighboring states. They cite the potential economic risks of retaliation from other countries should they grant entrance. Under the guise of fighting “terrorism” and judicial agreements meant to justify extraditions, this clearly explicit cooperation is in keeping with the “Shanghai Spirit.”<sup>191</sup>

---

<sup>189</sup> Hyer, Eric. “China’s Policy towards Uighur Nationalism.” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*. Volume 26, No 1. 2006. p. 81.

<sup>190</sup> Freedom House. “Freedom House Condemns Pakistan, China for Uighur Extraditions.” May 7, 2009. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=815>

<sup>191</sup> “Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan: Exploitation of migrant workers, protection denied to asylum seekers and refugees.” International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). July 23, 2009.

## Repression: Constitution Sharing and Soft Power

### SCO Member State Constitutions

We know that member states of the SCO sustain a norm of non-intervention and yet cooperate on many issues. Specifically, we know that they vote as a bloc regarding United Nations declarations of human rights<sup>192</sup>, we know that they employ similar means of repressing NGOs, that they exhibit similar attitudes about the repression of human rights, and that they engage in the sharing of information regarding “terrorists” and the three evils<sup>193</sup>. Further, we know that institutions of repression that are used in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have, “...involved the security apparatus, the military and the police, all of which retain vestiges of their Soviet origin...[and that]...At the outset of independence there remained in each republic ‘the KGB and Interior Ministry’, using long established methods and tactics devised by the Communist Party to withstand challenges to its monopoly of power”<sup>194</sup>.

But we also wanted to see if the SCO member states shared similar construction of political institutions. Specifically, we wanted to see if there was any explicit sharing of constitutional institutions. We examined the constitutions of each of the SCO member states and identified several similarities amongst them. It is clearly difficult to establish explicit institution sharing among these states. But, the similarity of SCO member state constitutions certainly points to a broader, shared, influence among them.

Here, we don’t present the Russian Constitution. This is due, mainly, to the fact that it is blatantly disregarded in the Russian context. It is widely acknowledged that Russian political institutions are characterized by highly centralized power in the hands of the Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin. Further, we exclude the Chinese constitution from our analysis, as we expect the influence of China on constitution building among the smaller post-Soviet Central Asian states to be minimal.

---

<sup>192</sup> See Ideology section of this report

<sup>193</sup> Official SCO Statement (2009), ‘Plan of Action of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on combating terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime’ issued 3/27/09. Official SCO Statement, ‘The Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism’ issued 5/7/09. Official SCO Statement (2009), ‘Joint Statement on Fighting against infectious diseases in the region of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization’ issued 10/14/09. All official SCO statements obtained online at [www.sectSCO.org](http://www.sectSCO.org).

<sup>194</sup> Trisko, Jessica (2005) ‘Coping with the Islamist Threat: analyzing repression in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan’ in *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 4. pp. 373-389.

The history of constitutionalism in the post-Soviet Central Asian countries clearly makes them susceptible to Russian influence. Russia has been the foremost proponent of hollow constitutionalism, which has flourished in the post-Soviet era. This is because constitutionalism initially offered accountability, but due to widespread corruption, it was easily undermined in the Post-Soviet era. The Russians were pioneers in creating a system that looked like it upheld constitutionalism, but ultimately allowed for authoritarian rule. As leaders of newly “democratic” central Asian states saw the foundations of constitutionalism eroding, and power slipping from their grasps, they undoubtedly turned to Russia to learn how to uphold the façade of constitutionalism while practicing authoritarianism. Therefore, here, we examine the constitutions of the post-Soviet, SCO member states, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan to see how they are similar to one another and to identify points of Russian influence. Specifically, we examine how a formal constitution has given way to de-facto Presidentialism and authoritarianism in each of the post-Soviet Central Asian countries.

#### *China*

We expect that the Chinese influence on the constitutions of the Central Asian states will be minimal for several reasons. First, China is still a communist country, whereas Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan are all post-communist countries. The post-Soviet Central Asian states share more political history with Russia than they do with China. This, coupled with the fact that Russia clearly views the Central Asian states as its own backyard, suggests that Chinese influence on state and constitution-building among smaller SCO states should be minimal.

Second, China seems to be wholly committed to an agenda of non-intervention and non-interference. It seems to be much less willing to get muddled up in the affairs of the smaller central Asian states for two reasons. This is because in some ways it must balance its relationship with the West and so to get involved in the minor affairs of the authoritarian regimes of Central Asia is counter-productive. Also, China has to a large extent, played a much smaller role in the politics of Central Asia than Russia. Recently, China took no sides in the Kyrgyz revolution, where Russia has supported the new government there. And, historically, China has refrained from explicit commentary on the color revolutions of the region. For these reasons, we expect the influence of Russian politics to be far more pervasive in the Constitutions of newly independent Central Asian states.

## *Tajikistan*

Tajikistan adopted its first independent constitution in 1994 and set 1997 as the date for the adoption of a new constitution that guaranteed free and open elections. However, Tajikistan has yet to hold free elections and has not yet adopted a new constitution. Rather, its very first president Imamali Rakhmonov, initially ‘elected’ in 1992, has found a way to consolidate his power and to remain president. In June 2003, a constitutional amendment was adopted which allowed Rakhmonov to serve two additional seven year terms after his then current term expired in 2006. This served to keep Rakhmonov in power through the year 2020.<sup>195</sup>

According to the International Constitutional Law database, the role of the parliament in Tajikistan is very limited; the Prime Minister, Council of Ministers, and Supreme Court judges are all appointed by the President. The President’s appointments are then approved by the Supreme Assembly; a body that presumably serves as a rubber stamp. There seems to be no doubt that Rakhmonov would have the support of Russia, he was born in the USSR, served in the Soviet armed forces and is identified as a, “Soviet-era leader”<sup>196</sup> Further, Rakhmonov’s ability to retain office is strikingly similar to Putin’s consolidation of power and his extended tenure as the Prime Minister in Russia.

While the case of Tajikistan doesn’t provide us with explicit evidence of institution sharing, it does point to an authoritarian political system, possibly modeled on Russia’s. Both the Tajik and Russian political systems are based on centralized and unchecked political power. The institutions of Tajikistan not only resemble Russian political institutions, but they also resemble the political institutions of their other SCO member states. We turn to Uzbekistan next to explore more of these similarities.

## *Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan adopted its constitution in 1992. The constitution of established a national parliament, called the Supreme Assembly; a name that is shared by the assembly in Tajikistan. The President serves five-year terms, but there are no limits on the number of terms that he can serve. Like Tajikistan, the President that was ‘elected’ upon the adoption of the constitution, Islam Karimov, remains in power today. According to the Uzbek Constitution, “...Upon the expiration of presidential term, the president becomes a member of the Constitutional Court for

---

<sup>195</sup> International Constitutional Law Database, retrieved online at <http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/index.html>

<sup>196</sup> Olcott, Martha Brill (2005) ‘After September 11, An Unexpected Chance’, in *Central Asia’s Second Chance*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

the term of his life”<sup>197</sup>. Further, the constitution identifies the authorities of the President as “extensive”. Karimov is also identified as being a soviet style leader, in fact, “the Republic of Uzbekistan...is strongly dominated by Soviet-era politicians and Islamic leadership”<sup>198</sup>. Not only that, but in 2008 Karimov secured a third Presidential term, even though, “constitutional rules barred his reelection”<sup>199</sup>.

Again, while institution sharing is not explicit, the construction of the SCO member states constitutions was undoubtedly influenced by their powerful neighbor; Russia. Both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have constitutions that allow for powerful, stable, Presidentialist, authoritarian regimes to exist. The similarities to the Kazakhstani constitution are striking, and that is where we turn our attention to next.

### *Kazakhstan*

Kazakhstan adopted its constitution in 1995 and, like Tajikistan, its President serves seven-year terms. Like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the President appoints a Prime Minister and his appointment is confirmed by Parliament.<sup>200</sup> There is no section addressing the powers of the Prime Minister in the Kazakhstani constitution, which suggests that the PM isn’t accorded any substantial power. And just like in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the current president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has been in power since Kazakhstan won its independence in 1990. This indicates that Kazakhstan, like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is a centralized, Presidentialist system.

As recently as 2007, the Kazakh President, Nazarbayev, was able to engineer the passage of constitutional amendments that removed his own term limits and produced a, “single-party legislature, with deputies from the ruling pro-presidential Nur Otan party now constitutionally obligated to vote along party lines or face expulsion”<sup>201</sup>. Further, where the opposition party once held one seat in the Parliament, it lost that seat in the resultant election, meaning that as of 2007, the opposition party had no representation in Parliament.

### *Kyrgyzstan*

The Kyrgyz case provides the most historical and contemporary evidence for Russian influence in constitution building among all of the smaller SCO members. According to a 2008

---

<sup>197</sup> Uzbek Constitution. Retrieved online at <http://www.uzbekistan.org/uzbekistan/political/>

<sup>198</sup> International Constitutional Law Database

<sup>199</sup> Freedom House (2008), ‘Freedom in the World Report: Uzbekistan’.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Freedom House (2008) ‘Freedom in the World Report: Kazakhstan’.

Freedom House report, in October 2007, “a referendum [was] approved that would increase presidential power at the parliament’s expense...[and] Kyrgyzstan’s foreign policy tilted away from Europe and the United States and toward the regional “authoritarian bloc” led by Russia”.<sup>202</sup> According to Freedom House, this referendum created, “a parliament dominated by presidential party and devoid of opposition representation”.<sup>203</sup> That Kyrgyzstan changed its foreign policy stance to align more clearly with Russia reflects its receptivity to Russian influence regarding hollow constitutionalism.

There is even more contemporary evidence that suggests that Russian influence is prevalent in the case of Kyrgyz constitutionalism. With the recent revolution in Kyrgyzstan, an Interim government has been appointed to create a new Constitution for Kyrgyzstan. Members of the Interim government in Kyrgyzstan include activists, former parliament members, and the acting Justice Minister<sup>204</sup>. And among these members of the Interim government there seems to be a commitment to the creation of a strong new Constitution for Kyrgyzstan, one that, “...stipulates swapping the hitherto hop-heavy presidential system with a parliamentary democracy, in which the prime minister is more powerful than the head of state. It would also limit presidents to a single-five year term, whereas most neighboring presidents have been in power since the Soviet era”<sup>205</sup>

However, there is also widespread skepticism about how far the new Interim government will be able to distance the Kyrgyz constitution from Russian influences. Specifically, because it is widely suspected that Russia was behind the April 7<sup>th</sup> overthrow of Bakiyev, it is possible that, “... Russia will have more say with the new rulers than it did over Bakiyev”. Alexaner Knyazev, a member of the Institute for the Commonwealth of Independent States, told the Moscow Times that, “The new government will be more susceptible to outside influence”<sup>206</sup>

If the Interim and future governments of Kyrgyzstan can create, implement, and sustain a fully functioning parliamentary democracy in Kyrgyzstan, it will likely be the first of its kind in Central Asia in the post-Soviet era. Further, such a feat would be indicative of diminished

---

<sup>202</sup> Freedom House (2008), ‘Freedom in the World Report: Kyrgyzstan’.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Von Twickel, Nikolaus (2010) ‘With Bishkek Calm, Kyrgyz Leaders Draft New Constitution’ The Moscow Times. Retrieved online at <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/with-bishkek-calm-kyrgyz-leaders-draft-new-constitution/405473.html>

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

influence of Russia, a critical actor in the SCO, who clearly has an interest in maintaining authoritarianism in the region.

### *Conclusions about SCO Constitutions*

The influence of Russia on Central Asian constitutionalism is clear in that all of the post-Soviet, SCO member states have engaged in the same constitutional reforms. These reforms serve to (1) increase the executive power of the state and (2) decrease any substantial horizontal or vertical checks on power. Essentially, these reforms help to create the hollow constitutionalism that is characteristic of the Russian state. The case of contemporary constitutionalism in Kyrgyzstan is a litmus test of sorts. It will give international observers a glimpse into the reaches of Russian influence as it stands today. Should the new Kyrgyz constitution exhibit centralized authority in the hands of a powerful President, with a weak Parliament, it would be no coincidence. Such constitutional construction would be reflective of pervasive and profound Russian influence in post-Soviet Central Asia.

### **Russian and Chinese Extension of Soft Power**

Literature suggests that China and Russia are the critical actors of the SCO.<sup>207</sup> Here we begin to describe their various uses of soft power to enhance the institutions that repress democracy in Central Asia. Here, we present the tools and objectives of soft power used by both Russia and China. We find that both of the critical actors of the SCO are engaged in shaping their Central Asian neighbors in their own image.

The goals of Chinese soft power are, in some ways, very different from the goals of Russian soft power. While the Chinese are clearly committed to exerting their influences, in subtle ways, around the region, Popescu argues that the tools of Russian soft power have more explicit and interventionist ends. He suggests that these tools of Russian soft power should not be ignored, because they are not benign strategies. Rather, he argues, they are, “designed to create an intellectual milieu of sophisticated, though tricked, ideological support of the current Russian authorities....It is the new face of ‘smart authoritarianism’ that speaks the language of Western norms and is very flexible but has very little to do with the values of democracy, Eastern- or Western-style.”<sup>208</sup>

---

<sup>207</sup> Ambrosio, Thomas (2009) *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.

<sup>208</sup> Popescu, Nicu (2006) ‘*Russia’s Soft Power Ambitions*’, in CEPS Policy Brief, No. 115.



It is clear that Russia and China are deepening their cooperation in areas of, business and international finance. They recently reached deals on a cooperative energy strategy and developing a, “joint stance on cooperation with international financial controlling agencies”.<sup>209</sup> Even more recently, Chinese state development bank head met with Russian officials to discuss issues of investment activity.<sup>210</sup> But, perhaps even more importantly, they are also looking to extend their influence into the region independently of one another; by exercising tools of culture and tools of economy.

### *Cultural Soft Power Tools*

Kurlantzick suggests that the Chinese have launched an offensive of sorts in order to shape its struggling neighbors in its own image. He argues that China has two major tools of soft power; the tools of culture and the tools of business. In terms of the tools of culture, Kurlantzick points to Chinese hosted summits, the exportation of Chinese teachers to teach Chinese abroad, the development of a younger, less ideologically driven diplomatic corps, and the promotion of Chinese culture and language.<sup>211</sup> Regarding Chinese tools of culture in the SCO countries, Kurlantzick points to the presence of The Confucius Institutes in Uzbekistan. These institutes are Chinese-language and culture schools, designed to facilitate an affinity toward the Chinese culture. In addition to the Confucius Institute in Uzbekistan, there are two in Kazakhstan, one in Afghanistan, and one in Pakistan, and eight in Russia.<sup>212</sup> The establishment of these Confucius Institutes marks an explicit attempt by China to have a soft power presence in small Central Asian states.

### *Sharing Educational Institutions*

The Confucius Institutes are similar in scope to the SCO University idea, which also aims to educate students and to some extent, indoctrinate advanced students with SCO norms and business practices. Russia is spearheading the movement to educate advanced students according to the norms established by the SCO and values of the SCO member states. According to Itar-Tass reports, Moscow State University held a conference as early as May 2009

---

<sup>209</sup> Russia & CIS Military Weekly (2008) ‘*Russian, Chinese audit agencies sign cooperation program-Stepashin*’, in Russia & CIS Military Weekly, Oct. 24.

<sup>210</sup> Economic News (2009) ‘*China State Development Bank Heads Visited Vnesheconombank*’, in Economic News, July 16.

<sup>211</sup> Kurlantzick, Joshua (2007) *Charm Offensive: How China’s Soft Power is Transforming the World*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.

<sup>212</sup> Confucius Institute Statistics obtained from Chinese Language Council International, <http://english.hanban.org>

regarding the formation of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization University Network<sup>213</sup>. SCO University would not be located in any one of the SCO countries but each SCO member and observer country would be able to identify a leading education institution that would become a member of the network and would offer classes in Russian and Chinese, the main languages of the SCO University network. In a display of diplomatic cooperation the Chiefs of the education departments of all SCO member states attended the conference.

Additionally, reports from February 2010 suggest that the SCO has actually created a branch of SCO University in Yakaterinburg, Russia. Of the 16 branches within the SCO university network, this is the only one that has become fully operational so far. The Yakaterinburg branch offers courses in world politics, international relations and cooperation of the SCO. Graduates of the SCO University will receive a double degree with a, “Master’s Degree in their home university and a Master’s Degree in one of the universities of SCO countries”.<sup>214</sup> Further, the SCO has created an accessible job market for these graduates. Graduates will be qualified to work in the offices of SCO member states, “in trade and financial companies that operate with SCO countires, as well as in administrative structures”.<sup>215</sup>

#### *Economic Tools of Soft Power*

China has also used tools of business to promote its own cultural norms and values among the countries within its sphere of influence. The Chinese government has promoted investment abroad as a way to, “develop its relationship with the global economy beyond a simple export-driven model...[it] has the dual purpose of building China’s political capital and influence around the world”.<sup>216</sup> The Chinese have been slow to invest in South America and Latin America, but have been much more generous with their geographically closer neighbors of Southeast Asia and Africa. Kurlantzick suggests that this investment will eventually provide, “...Beijing with the goodwill that accrues from being the economic locomotive, the engine that lifts millions of people’s incomes”.<sup>217</sup> We should expect that the manifestation of diplomacy of in this nature will breed political loyalty for the years to come.

---

<sup>213</sup> Itar-Tass (2010) ‘Foreigners to be admitted to SCO University in Yekaterinburg’, in Itar-Tass February 1.

<sup>214</sup> Itar-Tass, 2010. Foreigners to be admitted to SCO University in Yekaterinburg, in Itar-Tass February 1.

<sup>215</sup> Itar-Tass, 2010. Foreigners to be admitted to SCO University in Yekaterinburg, in Itar-Tass February 1.

<sup>216</sup> Kurlantzick, Joshua, 2007.

<sup>217</sup> Kurlantzick, Joshua, 2007.

In addition to engaging in economic investment in neighboring countries, the economic success of China alone serves as a tool of soft power. China's success with an open economic system but closed political system demonstrates to its neighbors that a democracy is not a prerequisite for economic growth. By serving as the proverbial poster child for economic success under non-democratic rule, China acts as model for other Central Asian States to emulate and simultaneously exercises a substantial mechanism of soft power.

#### *Russian and Chinese Influence over Institutions*

However, we are primarily interested in finding evidence that Russia and China are affecting the legal institutions that repress democracy in Central Asia. Again, we are looking to actions and programs instituted by these critical actors because, as the critical actors, they have the best capacity for sharing institutions of repression with their less-capable SCO member counterparts. Berkofsky suggests that, "China's political leaders are planning on shaping world events in as many areas and contents as possible".<sup>218</sup> Further Berkofsky suggests that the Chinese attempts to promote the "Beijing consensus" will be fruitful because, "it does not link economic and financial aid to preconditions such as good governance, democracy, transparency, rule of law, respect for human rights and other "annoying" issues to dictatorships".<sup>219</sup> This suggests that not only is China deploying diplomatic soft power initiatives, but that perhaps they are also engaging in some more sinister applications of soft power.

A recent CRS report indicates that China is the leading economic power in the region and that its influence within the region is expansive.<sup>220</sup> However, it is critical to note that most of this influence is focused on smaller nations in Southeast Asia rather than the SCO member countries of Central Asia. This points to a critical issue with most of the literature on the use of soft power by China; it is predominately focused on China's relationships with other countries in Southeast Asia. There is a clear lack of information regarding China's current relationships with SCO members. We know that China and Russia are sharing the secrets of successful maintenance of authoritarian regimes with their SCO partners, but we must search even more carefully to find and expose instances of explicit institution sharing.

---

<sup>218</sup> Berkofsky, Axel (2007) 'The Hard Facts on 'Soft Power' published in Asia Times Online, May 25.

<sup>219</sup> Berkofsky, Axel (2007) 'The Hard Facts on 'Soft Power' published in Asia Times Online, May 25.

<sup>220</sup> Lum, Thomas, Morrison, Wayne, and Vaughn, Bruce, (2008) 'China's Soft Power in Southeast Asia.' CRS Report for Congress, January 4.

## **Repression: NGOs, Human Rights and Media**

According to Reporters without Borders, a non-profit monitoring global media repression, all of the countries within the SCO are repressing journal and limiting freedoms of speech and of the press. A regional trend seems to be forming of limiting what reporters may publish in newspapers, which remain popular due to lower level of economic development in the smaller states.

China and Russia continue to assert their authority throughout the region by offering their television and radio stations on smaller states in the region. Further there is discussion of the establishment of Russian radio stations in the “near abroad” countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova in order to promote Russian culture, values and notions of ‘sovereign democracy’. As Chinese and Russian media become more dominant in SCO member states the ability to control public opinion within these authoritarian states increases. Yet the ability to combat new forms of social media is growing more tedious as a means to suppress public opinion and forms of organizing. According to the Times of India, the last days of Bakiyev’s failed Kyrgyz government spent resources not only fighting protestors in the streets but also blocking and dismantling opposition websites and access to social media outlets even though only 2% of Kyrgyz have the resources available to afford a personal computer.<sup>221</sup>

An April 2, 2009 report states that Kyrgyzstan has agreed to allow China to broadcast their TV and radio channels in Kyrgyzstan in return for the help China offered in setting up digital television. Opinions vary on the impact and importance of this move. Topchubek Turgunaliyev, Director of the Institute of Human Rights and Freedoms claims, “We have lost the information war.” Others claim this allows Kyrgyzstan to better understand their neighbor and partner in the SCO. Miroslav Niyazov, former Security Council secretary stated, “We must be realistic. If we do not let China into our information area, its influence on Kyrgyzstan will not decrease.” This statement seems in line with China’s general diplomatic approach in the region to engage in “behind the scenes” diplomacy. The debate remains open on the influence China can assert over the Kyrgyz population. One worrisome study cited how the abundance of Uzbekistan television in Kyrgyzstan has led to many school children confusing their president with the head of state of Uzbekistan.<sup>222</sup>

---

<sup>221</sup><http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/The-Power-Of-Information/articleshow/5821989.cms>

<sup>222</sup> Delo No website, Bishkek. March 18, 2009. BBC Monitoring Central Asia. *BBC*.

It is well known that China limits and interferes with information shared through the internet. The American company, Google, recently brought this issue to light with its resistance to the Chinese firewall. The SCO released a statement in October of 2009 that confirmed the commitment of SCO members to data-sharing regarding counter terrorism, separatism and extremism.<sup>223</sup> It is clear that the SCO is not using the internet to publicize the organization very much. Links for “Mass Media” and “Interviews” appear on SCO website, yet have no information. Their “Current News” section of SCO website focuses on diplomatic events such as meetings between prime ministers.<sup>224</sup>

Within its borders, Russia remains committed to limiting free speech. In his article about Russian co-option of the internet, Solash tells the story of Sergei Kuzenstov, founder of one of Russia’s first blogs. Recently Kuzenstov was approached by a “company” that was “associated” with the Kremlin that offered him millions of Rubels to use his website for “public relations” in the world of Russian Blogs. Solash says that while this is not the Kremlin’s typical approach to limiting content on the internet, “Kuzenstov’s situation is not unique in today’s Russian internet”.<sup>225</sup> The Kremlin has begun to co-opt popular independent internet sites and to use them to manage their image on the internet. Recently, it has been, “co-opting prominent bloggers and leaders of online-based political movements” in order to gain indirect control over the internet.<sup>226</sup> This allows the Kremlin to control the flow of free information without actually looking like it is doing so.

Recently, however, prior to the recent uprising in Kyrgyzstan, Russia criticized former Kyrgyz President Bakiyev for blocking opposition websites.<sup>227</sup> This suggests that although Russia is still limiting freedom of the press in their domestic affairs, they are willing to advocate for freedom of the press in this particular instance in order to support a new leader who would be willing to work more closely with them in the future. Kramer suggests, “Backing freedom of expression-in this case to oppose a leader with whom it was unhappy-was just one element of a wider, behind-the-scenes role in the uprising that may help Russia win influence in the new

---

<sup>223</sup> Central Asia General Newswire, 2009. *Russia Enacts SCO documents on anti-terror drills, data protection*, in Central Asia General Newswire, October 27.

<sup>224</sup> <http://www.sectsc.org/EN/>

<sup>225</sup> Solash, Richard, 2008. *Kremlin ‘Soft Power’ Keeping Participatory Internet in Check*, in Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, Oct 25.

<sup>226</sup> Solash, Richard, 2008. *Kremlin ‘Soft Power’ Keeping Participatory Internet in Check*, in Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, Oct 25.

<sup>227</sup> Kramer, Andrew, 2010. *Before Kyrgyz Uprising, Dose of Russian Soft Power*, in New York Times, April 18.

government”.<sup>228</sup> Furthermore, this means that the Russians may be more committed to promoting their self interests than the stated goals of the SCO.

The SCO has been referred to as a tool to implement propaganda, yet this has grown into a multi-billion regional project to influence neighboring states and SCO members. According to a January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Wall Street Journal article, China has had plans in the works to introduce a worldwide extension of their state run media networks, and has additional plans to implement an English language media network based off of CNN.<sup>229</sup> There are two views of these recent efforts. 1) That this will further enhance China’s image abroad and as a direct result help improve the mass worldwide public opinion related to China’s political and economic agenda. Or 2) that international competition in the media market will force a gradual de-censorship of state controlled media in order for it to appear legitimate. This is not to say that the state run media and the global version will be one in the same. This in conjunction with the expansion of print media from the state owned Xinhua news agency that are planning to expand their overseas bureaus from 100 to 186 and beyond shows a distinct effort upon the Chinese state to globalize the “China Brand.”

Clearly, China and Russia are exerting their influence over smaller SCO member states within Central Asia through the use of media repression. These techniques are commonly used authoritarian tools, which tell us less about the spread of the “Spirit of Shanghai” and more about the spread of authoritarian norms. However, the specific instances noted above of the Chinese or Russians directly interfering with the media use in other SCO member states does point to an increased cohesion between these states.

### **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) with a Political Focus**

#### *NGOs and State Relationships in Central Asia*

Many observers tie international (and often US government financed) NGOs to the "rose revolution" in Georgia, the "orange revolution" in Ukraine and the "tulip revolution" in Kyrgyzstan. Some argue that without the intervention of these US-sponsored NGOs in domestic politics, the political landscapes in these countries would not have been “repainted in new colors.”<sup>230</sup>

---

<sup>228</sup> Kramer, Andrew, 2010. *Before Kyrgyz Uprising, Dose of Russian Soft Power*, in New York Times, April 18.

<sup>229</sup> Bequelin, Nicholas <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123326012456829891.html>

<sup>230</sup> See Chaulia, Sreeram. “Democratisation, NGOs and ‘Colour Revolutions.’” Open Democracy Online.

It is widely recognized that the roles of NGO's are quite restricted in many Central Asian countries. Russia and China are both known for their penchant to limit the development, scope, and capacity of NGOs operating within their borders. This trend, of constraining the development and capacity of NGOs, seems to be spreading throughout the region, and has become institutionalized as an element of the "Spirit of Shanghai". While this research does not assume comprehensive knowledge of NGO limitations in the region beyond the SCO, its focus remains on the limits placed on NGO's that exist with SCO member countries.

#### *NGOs in Ukraine*

In his work, Wilson examines the role of NGOs in the Ukraine during the Orange Revolution.. He argues that US-financed NGOs were primarily engaged in election monitoring, not electioneering. None-the-less, he acknowledges that NGOs were effective in activating dormant local protest populations when questionable election results were publicized. Wilson argues, "Ukrainian NGOs played a sufficiently important role in the 2004 election to produce a notable backlash against the 'Western-funded' third sector in more nervously authoritarian post-Soviet states... most in Kazakhstan and Belarus (in the run-up to elections due in 2006) and in Russia (with its next election cycle due in 2007–8)."<sup>231</sup>

#### *NGOs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan*

Analysts have linked the restrictive NGO-related legislation in Central Asian countries to broad government efforts to keep from getting caught up in the wave of so-called "color" revolutions that swept across the Commonwealth of Independent States. Kazakhstanian authorities believe(d) foreign-supported NGOs played pivotal roles in the revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan<sup>232</sup>. According to Wilson, as of 2005, Kazakhstan attempted to severely limit the autonomy of its NGOs, "In March 2005, Kazakhstan amended its election law to ban demonstrations between the end of voting...specifically to try and exclude the pattern of protest seen in Georgia in 2003 and in Ukraine in 2004. [Then] in June, Kazakhstan also changed its law on NGOs to make their independent action virtually impossible; the new law would permit

---

<sup>231</sup> Wilson, Andrew () 'Ukraine's Orange Revolution, NGOs and the Role of the West', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*

<sup>232</sup> Flynn, Erica. "Kazakhstan's Constitutional Council Due to Rule on NGO-Related Legislation. Eurasia Insight. 11 August, 2005.

financing of local or foreign NGOs only with the consent of the authorities.”<sup>233</sup> Fortunately, the Constitutional Council declared these laws unconstitutional. However, had the law been passed and gone into effect, it would have been necessary to notify the authorities of every proposed event, including round-table discussions or press conferences, at least 10 days in advance of them being held. Additionally, all budgets would have required the tacit approval, not only of the tax authorities but also of both city and provincial officials as well<sup>234</sup>.

The picture isn't completely bleak; NGO's continue to make slight gains in the region. More than 5,000 NGOs are registered in Kazakhstan with population of over 15 ml people.<sup>235</sup> More recently, however, reports from USAID indicate that Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are rated as having the highest levels of NGO sector development within Central Asian states. The same report also states that Russia and Kazakhstan developed new resource centers that linked local governments with resources for NGOs. These resources tend to be more for government use, yet are also available for non-governmental use. In 2008 Kazakhstan more than doubled the amount of governmental spending they give to NGO's.<sup>236</sup> During an interview with a Kyrgyzstani student, he reported that before the current revolution, there were numerous NGO's and finding a job at one was considered a “good job”.<sup>237</sup> But NGO development is not out of the woods in this region yet; recently the new government in Kyrgyzstan withdrew some of the laws limiting NGOs. And, unfortunately, Freedom House predicts that these amendments will be replaced by even more non-democratic changes that would limit civil society even further.<sup>238</sup>

#### *NGOs in China*

Regional NGO linkage to the color revolutions of the early 2000s has fueled the tenuous relationships that they have with the member states of the SCO. And, regarding their existence in China, evidence suggests that Chinese Communist Party is very concerned about NGOs, their links to the color revolutions, and the implications of the color revolutions as they relate to Chinese stability and CCP rule. According to a prominent Chinese think-tank, there is a prevalent perception in China that Western-backed NGOs “disseminate propaganda about

---

<sup>233</sup> Wilson, Andrew () ‘Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, NGOs and the Role of the West’, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*

<sup>234</sup> “Constitutional Council Rules NGO Laws Unconstituional.” Legislation Online. 8 August, 2005.)(“

<sup>235</sup> “Kazakhstan: Civil Society Welcomes Ruling on NGO Laws.” Irin Asia. 31 August, 2005

<sup>236</sup> Ehmann, Claire. 2008. *The 2008 NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Easter Europe and Eurasia*. USAID Bureau for Europe and Eurasia Office of Democracy, Governance and Social Transition.

<sup>237</sup> Popov, Dimitri, interview conducted April 16, 2010.

<sup>238</sup> Freedom House. <http://www.freedomhouse.org>



democracy and freedom, so as to foster pro-Western political forces and train the backbones for anti-government activities,” as well as to “take advantage of their experiences from subversive activities abroad to provide guidance from formulation of policies to schemes of specific action plans ... All that the NGOs have done have played a crucial role in both the start and final success of the ‘Color Revolutions.’”<sup>239</sup> Regarding the capacity of NGOs to cause instability, Vladimir Putin is quoted to have said to Chinese President Hu Jintao, ““If you don’t get a grip on them [NGOs], you too will have a color revolution!”<sup>240</sup>

The Soros Foundation, an NGO associated with the Open Society Institute, is specifically accused of instigating such revolutions. They are considered one of the main reasons that China is wary of NGO’s and seeks to limit them.<sup>241</sup> The Soros Foundation are admittedly interested in supporting movements to promote good governance and democracy according to their website. Found on their website, they state “On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media.”<sup>242</sup>

In a news report August 6, 2005, Lin Yuguo reports that Chinese government officials are drafting legislation to limit NGO’s in China, “However, worried that the passage of such legislation could lead to international censure, the government has started a media campaign to publicize the issue and test national and international response.”<sup>243</sup>

NGOs that are primarily responsible for promotion of democracy are typically funded in states that have thrown off their dictators and authoritarian structures. As such, less than 50% of the US funding for democracy promotion is targeted at countries with dictatorships. However, Palmer identifies democracy promotion in authoritarian and dictator-led states to be critical in the fight for global democracy. In addition to the funding of NGOs that engage in an agenda of democracy promotion, he has also proposed a Global Internet Freedom Project. This project would help NGOs to find ways around China’s firewalls in order to connect democracy and human rights advocates with one another all over the country. (*This was a few years ago, I still need to look into what happened with this idea.*) Along with freeing the internet, he believes that NGOs should devote more of their energies towards the development of independent media (radio, television, etc). Finally, he argues that more funding and training is needed for students

---

<sup>239</sup> Qi Zhi, "What a Warning Signal Given by 'Color Revolution'!" International Strategic Studies, no. 3 (2005): 30

<sup>240</sup> Shambaugh, David (2008) China’s Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation

<sup>241</sup> Yuguo, Lin. August 6, 2005.

<sup>242</sup> <http://www.soros.org/about>

<sup>243</sup> Yuguo, Lin. August 6, 2005.

and young people in organizations attempting to promote democracy. Considering that most of the democratic revolutions that have taken place in the areas surrounding SCO countries were predominantly acted out by younger people this could be a benefit for NGOs to have on their side.<sup>244</sup>

#### *NGOs in Russia*

There are over 220,000 NGOs in the Russian Federation. It is clear that NGOs play a strong role in society, however not in democracy promotion. In January 2006, presumably as a response to the Color Revolutions in Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, and Ukraine, Vladimir Putin signed a law requiring NGOs are to disclose all activity on all projects to the government. Russian authorities have the right to deny official registration to non-governmental organizations as they see fit, therefore the compelled disclosure of an agenda of democracy promotion by NGOs in Russia to Russian authorities clearly endangers these organizations. Any organizations with ideals at odds with the Russian Federation's constitution, any organization that would threaten their sovereignty, or any organization that fails to file appropriate paper work can be denied its status as a recognized organization. Not only that, the Russian government also has the ability to look through NGO finances, decisions, and other documents. And, they may send representatives to NGO meetings and events to supervise decisions. There are even stricter laws governing who may start or join NGOs (this excludes any stateless or non-RF national people who are deemed to be "undesirable"). Finally, Russia also has a specific list of citizens that are allowed to make tax deductible donations to NGOs.<sup>245</sup>

#### *NGOs in Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan also has fairly limiting laws for NGOs and Civil Societies. In 2005 all NGOs were required to go through a registration process that forced many of them out of the country. The registration process involved necessary documentation of the group, a fee, and a lengthy time between registration and approval. Overall the conditions for organizations joining are fairly vague which prohibits many NGOs from being approved. As of now the estimated amount of registered NGOs in the area is 415. Needless to say, NGOs do not play a huge role in Uzbekistan. Even for registered NGOs the government must be notified ahead of time of any

---

<sup>244</sup> Ambassador Mark Palmer, June 8, 2006

<sup>245</sup> The International Center for Not-For Profit Law. [www.icnl.org](http://www.icnl.org)

events being planned. They may also send officials to monitor the events and meetings of the groups.<sup>246</sup>

### **SCO Response to Human Rights Movements**

SCO States have actively barred outside assistance to human rights and civil society activists. As stated in Article Two of the SCO charter, “mutual respect for states’ sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, the sanctity of borders, non aggression, noninterference in internal affairs, the non-use of force or the threat of force in international relations, and the renunciation of unilateral military superiority in contiguous areas.”

Undemocratic regimes are also maintained in Russia by inhibiting the election monitoring and human rights work of the OSCE. Russia is also a member of the OSCE and Kazakhstan has garnered support to chair that organization from several European countries. According to Freedom House, these standards isolate human rights and civil society organizations from their natural allies in the international community:

“Terrorism, separatism and extremism, the “three evils” described by SCO members, are not distinct terms according to a globally accepted definition, but are instead defined by individual SCO member states, according to respective challenges before them. Within this configuration, SCO member states can claim international legitimacy for their efforts to suppress disagreeable movements within their borders. Under these circumstances, the definition of an extremist organization could range from a serious armed insurgent or terrorist group to a civil society NGO promoting human rights.”<sup>247</sup>

The issue that the SCO serves as a conduit for the exchange of information on dissidents and other political activists is a concern for democracy and human rights groups. There is also a concern for their subsequent incarceration and deportation. For example, Uighur-Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil was detained by Uzbek authorities when he tried to renew his visa in March, 2006. Celil was repatriated to China in June, 2006 to face charges arising from political activities he engaged in while in Xinjiang. Charged with engaging in “terrorist activities” and “plotting to split the country” he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

---

<sup>246</sup> The International Center for Not-For Profit Law. [www.icnl.org](http://www.icnl.org)

<sup>247</sup> Murphy, Damian. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Threatening Human Rights or Providing Regional Cooperation and Stability?" Freedom House. Available from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/DMSCOtestimony.pdf>. Internet; accessed 31 May 2010.

The West's enthusiasm for democracy and reform is shared by none of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization countries. US officials recently conceded, are "often seen as a direct threat to existing structures and political interests." Yet, reform is not an alien imposition but consistent with the region's own development plans. Evan Feifenbaum, US Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs says promoting the rule of law is not solely an agenda to "assure better governance and democratic development [but] a fundamental part of building the more attractive economic and investment climate that all six SCO members hope to create."<sup>248</sup>

Human rights have been restricted by security measures implemented by members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In particular, preparations for the SCO summits by the Kyrgyz government in Bishkek. A ban on protests was announced along with limited access to Bishkek. Demonstrations by opposition supporters, political parties and public organizations were banned. The leader of a Uighur rights organization, Tursun Islam, and his son were detained after planning to promote democracy and human rights outside of the US Embassy. In an effort to clear the streets of undesirables, 356 people were detained for being homeless. The homes of some Muslim families suspected of being involved with Hizb ut-Tahrir, an Islamic organization, were raided and excessive force was used.

SCO campaigns against terrorism and extremism violate human rights. According to Holly Cartner, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch, "SCO member states have a long record of returning people wanted on terrorism or extremism charges to other SCO countries where they face torture, incommunicado detention and unfair trials."

Uzbekistan has "fought terrorism" by imprisoning Muslims whose practices are non-violent and some reported being tortured in custody. Their religious affiliations and beliefs are accused of being terrorism and religious fundamentalism. People are deported or extradited to countries with high probability of torture awaiting them. The SCO compiled a list of religious organizations deemed "extremist" and banned them but did not make the full list public nor specify the criteria for extremism. Such lists are criticized because they serve as justification for repression in the SCO countries. "The SCO should state publicly which organizations are on the

---

<sup>248</sup> Transatlantic Democracy Network. "SCO - Suppression Coordination Organization?" Democracy Digest. Available from <http://demdigest.net/issues/sept07.html#10>. Internet; accessed 31 May 2010.

“extremist” list and why,” said Cartner. “Governments in the region have used overbroad definitions of ‘extremist’ to silence peaceful dissent.”<sup>249</sup>

## **Election Monitors**

Following the February 28, 2010 parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, both the CIS and SCO rosily reported “free and open” elections. In sharp contrast, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe reported “disappointment” and other Western observers noted improvement, but a continued lack of democratic principles.<sup>250</sup>

Tajiki opposition leader, Muhiddin Kabiri of the Islamic Rebirth Party of Tajikistan claimed that he felt “robbed of the victory”.<sup>251</sup> Kabiri criticized election monitors from the SCO and CIS, calling them “International guest actors”. He cites that they only arrive two days before the election and then release statements that praise the elections and sound very similar from country to country.<sup>252</sup> He tells a story of a young woman who noticed a “breach in the polling station”. When she went to share this information with election monitors they insulted and humiliated her and then threw packs of rep-arranged ballot papers into the ballot box.<sup>253</sup>

These tactics point to a clear need for improved capacity of SCO election monitors. These election monitors are obviously being used by the SCO in order to improve their international appearance and legitimize the authoritarian regimes in power. One of the problems with election monitoring in Tajikistan is the lack of a unified process or standards. The situation is further complicated by some groups, a Ukranian group noted in particular, who is paid for their election reporting. Although the amount paid to these monitors was not reported, it sounds as though they may be paid to report results that improve the state’s image, rather than be independent. Furthermore, Popescu points to Russian involvement in CIS election monitoring as evidence of the institutionalization of their ability to monitor election outcomes.

---

<sup>249</sup> Human Rights Watch. "SCO Summit: Crackdown Highlights Failings on Human Rights ." [hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org). Available from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/08/15/sco-summit-crackdown-highlights-failings-human-rights>. Internet; accessed 31 May 2010.

<sup>250</sup> BBC Monitoring Central Asia. March 17, 2010. Tajik Parliamentary Polls: Islamic Party Leader Says Victory Robbed from Them.

<sup>251</sup> BBC Monitoring Central Asia. March 17, 2010.

<sup>252</sup> BBC Monitoring Central Asia

<sup>253</sup> BBC Monitoring Central Asia

## **Party-to-Party Cooperation: Training between the Chinese Communist Party and United Russia**

In addition to recent cooperation agreements and commercial deals between the Chinese and Russian governments,<sup>254</sup> there is evidence of increasing ties between the Chinese Communist Party and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's party, United Russia. Many observers believe UR would like to emulate CCP's model of strong economic growth and one-party government. These was perhaps most apparent in spring 2009, when a high-level United Russia delegation visited Beijing and announced that it would open a party office in Beijing for its research arm. President-turned-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin followed in October with his own delegation. That visit resulted in a dozen high value commercial deals.<sup>255</sup>

The two parties have sponsored a series of closed-door conferences over the past few years where economists and political analysts were invited to exchange their experiences in building regulated democracies.<sup>256</sup> An October 2009 special meeting between United Russia leaders and senior Chinese Communist Party officials was accorded much attention from political observers and the international press. The formal focus of the two-day forum was cooperation between the two countries' borderline region. But the real agenda behind closed doors was providing an opportunity for United Russian party officials to study firsthand their Chinese counterparts' experience in building a political system dominated by one political party.<sup>257</sup>

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping recently visited Russia as part of a world tour and met personally with Prime Minister Putin.<sup>258</sup> Putin was quoted as hoping that future collaborations between the two countries could "facilitate the establishment of a multipolar world and democratization of international relations." The Russian PM went on to call China the country's

---

<sup>254</sup> Most of these cooperation deals covered economic and technology issues. Prior to the ministerial talks, deals valued at about \$4 billion were signed by Chinese and Russian business people who attended a China-Russia economic forum in Beijing. See: Yu, Bin. 2010. "Mr. Putin Goes to China: Ten Years After." *Comparative Connections*. Volume 11, No. 4: 1.

<sup>255</sup> Levy, Clifford J. "Russia's Rulers See China as Template for Ruling." *New York Times*. 17 Oct. 2009.

<sup>256</sup> Rianovosti Russian News Database. "China's, Russia's Parties in Power share Anti-crisis Experience." *Kommersant*. 10 Sept, 2010. Accessed 10, May 2010.

<sup>257</sup> *ibid*

<sup>258</sup> Xi Jinping is being groomed to take over the Chinese presidency in 2012-13, while many observers believe Putin may return to the Kremlin as president in 2012.

"strategic partner in the full sense of this word," offering Moscow's support for China's position on Taiwan.<sup>259</sup>

The Kremlin's increasingly authoritarian approach to one-party rule was apparent in recent regional elections, where United Russian lieutenants and government officials used strong-arm tactics to intimidate opposition parties. Some analysts believe that several points made by Hu Jintao in his speech at the 17th CPC congress were later reflected in the Russian government's formal Strategy until 2020 plan, and formed the foundation of United Russia's parliamentary campaign in December 2007.<sup>260</sup>

Russia and China are indeed facing some similar social problems due to the economic downturn. Both countries have many single-industry towns, which developed around major industrial facilities currently unprofitable. As in Russia, Beijing began by issuing state loans to such companies, but social unrest continued.<sup>261</sup> Russian officials are concerned that their economy is highly dependent on oil, gas, and other natural resources, while China excels at manufacturing products sought by the world. Russia has been "watching Beijing's growing economic and political might with a mixture of awe and uneasiness and wants to diversify its energy client base to Asia."<sup>262</sup>

Presented here are some of the reasons for Russian and Chinese party cooperation. However, this type of cooperation must not be overstated. There are still many instances where this cooperation does not exist. Therefore we are only able to note that cooperation between these two major powers within the SCO is occurring between parties in some instances. This type of coordination alludes to a deepening of the "Spirit of Shanghai". However, there is a lack of instances where this type of cooperation and coordination is occurring elsewhere within the SCO and therefore this is an area that should continue to be monitored.

---

<sup>259</sup> "Putin, China's Xi vow 'strategic' support in first meeting." *Agence France-Presse (AFP)*. 23 Mar, 2010.

<sup>260</sup> Rianovosti, "China's, Russia's Parties."

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Levy.

## **Military Cooperation**

Few aspects of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization have caused as much of a stir as its potential for joint military activity. The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Russian Federation (RF), two of the six SCO member states and without a doubt the most influential, have drawn much attention in the west with their rapprochement, the progress of which is watched carefully by those who fear a return to previous combativeness (on both sides). Such wariness though, is the natural handmaiden of alarmism and demagoguery, therefore to accurately explore the potential of the SCO's ability to promote the 'Shanghai Spirit', an empirical eye must be used to examine the SCO's record of military coordination among its members.

This section will attempt to lay out a chronology of events in the sphere of joint military exercises between the SCO member states so that they may be placed in a normative context, so as to investigate their potential impact on the 'Shanghai Spirit'. Several theories have been proposed that can help prospective policy makers to predict the likely future actions of the SCO and plan accordingly. It is important to note that China appears to be the prime mover of SCO military coordination, since the Russian Federation operates also within the framework of other organizations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) rather than the SCO<sup>263</sup>.

Since its founding on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001 there have been six joint operations under the auspices of the SCO. The first such instance of military cooperation under the SCO was held from October 10-11, 2002 between Kyrgyzstan and China. This exercise, which was held in the near the shared border of the two countries, was the first bilateral exercise the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) had undertaken<sup>264</sup>.

From August 6-12, 2003 the SCO conducted its first multilateral exercise within its framework. Labeled "Cooperation 2003", the joint exercise included one thousand troops each

---

<sup>263</sup> The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst. "RUSSIA ATTEMPTS TO LIMIT CHINESE INFLUENCE BY PROMOTING CSTO-SCO COOPERATION." The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst. <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4716> (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>264</sup> McDermott, Roger N. The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007. (The Jamestown Foundation, 2007), <http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Jamestown-McDermottRisingDragon.pdf>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)



from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan<sup>265</sup>. Cooperation 2003 began in Ucharal, Kazakhstan and finished its operations in China<sup>266</sup>.

The SCO held its third major joint exercise from August 19-25<sup>267</sup>, a month and a half after the organization's headline-grabbing 2005 Astana Summit in which the member states issued a joint statement calling for the withdrawal of foreign bases and personnel from within the SCO member states<sup>268</sup>, which created significant drama around the event. This exercise, titled "Peace Mission 2005", utilized roughly 10,000 personnel from China and 1,800 from Russia<sup>269</sup> and is noteworthy as the first bilateral military cooperation between the two countries. This exercise commenced initially in Vladivostok, which lies just north of Chinese territory on the Sea of Japan, and then moved to China's Shandong Peninsula on its northeast coast<sup>270</sup>.

Continuing its pattern as the driving force behind SCO military engagement the PLA joined with forces from Tajikistan in an operation they called "Cooperation 2006" that was held in Hatlon Prefecture, Tajikistan from Sept. 22-23, 2006<sup>271</sup>. Like the other joint exercises Cooperation 2006 was lauded as being commenced for counter-terrorism activities.

The SCO's anti-terrorism activities reached high international profile in 2007, which saw a large joint anti-terrorism exercise dubbed "Peace Mission 2007" which, for the first time included all of the SCO member states in the same exercise<sup>272</sup>. Peace Mission 2007, which included more than 6,500 (including 1,600 from China and 2,000 from Russia) from personnel and 2,000 pieces of military hardware, was held in Chelyabinsk a city in Russia's Volga-Urals

---

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> PLA Daily. "PLA-foreign military exercises since 2000." PLA Daily. [http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/special-reports/2008-02/13/content\\_1122067.htm](http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/special-reports/2008-02/13/content_1122067.htm). (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>268</sup> SECTSCO.org. "Declaration of Heads of Member States of SCO." SECTSCO.org. [http://english.scosummit2006.org/en\\_bjzl/2006-04/21/content\\_145.htm](http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_bjzl/2006-04/21/content_145.htm). (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>269</sup> McDermott, Roger N. The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007. (The Jamestown Foundation, 2007), <http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Jamestown-McDermottRisingDragon.pdf>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>270</sup> Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. "China's National Defense in 2006." Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> McDermott, Roger N. The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007. (The Jamestown Foundation, 2007), <http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Jamestown-McDermottRisingDragon.pdf>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

Military District and Urumqi, capital of China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region from August 8-17, 2007<sup>273</sup>.

The high international profile of Peace Mission 2007 created a stir within the observer community, causing Russian President Vladimir Putin to attempt to put western fears of a looming military alliance to rest saying “The SCO has begun broadening its boundaries; it attends to political and economic matters. As for the military component, it is not properly a military, but an anti terrorist component.”<sup>274</sup> Those same sentiments were echoed by Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui of the PRC, who, a press briefing on August 09, 2007 told reporters “The well-prepared joint anti-terror drill is not directed against any country or organization, which fulfills the SCO's tenet that are non-aligned, non-confrontational and not directed against any third party.”<sup>275</sup>

The most recent manifestation of the cooperative security spirit of the SCO was on display at “Peace Mission 2009” which included troops from the Russian Federation and China's People's Liberation, continuing the SCO's trend as a vehicle mainly for China-Russia rapprochement. The five day exercise, which ran from July 22 to July 26, 2009, included 2,600 personnel (1,300 each from the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation with the other SCO states sending observers), a significant drop from previous years.<sup>276</sup> Chinese Major General Wang Haiyun, speaking to China Daily attempted to give context to the exercise by citing the July 5, 2009 riot in Urumqi, Xinjiang Province, China, that killed at least 197 people and injured more than 1,700. He went on to say “To some extent, the July 5 Xinjiang riot pushed forward anti-terrorism cooperation between China and Russia.” Major General Wang, a former military attache to Russia and expert in international strategy praised the SCO's direction. “SCO applies the '3 no' principle: no alliance, no confrontation and not against a third party. In the new

---

<sup>273</sup> Weitz, Richard. CHINA-RUSSIA SECURITY RELATIONS: STRATEGIC PARALLELISM WITHOUT PARTNERSHIP OR PASSION?. Strategic Studies Institute, 2008.

<sup>274</sup> www.chinaview.cn. “Putin: SCO different from NATO.” www.chinaview.cn. [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-08/18/content\\_6555462.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-08/18/content_6555462.htm). (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>275</sup> People's Daily Online. “SCO military drill “not directed against any country or organization”: Chinese FM.” People's Daily Online. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/6235985.html>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>276</sup> Sina English. “China, Russia kick off joint anti-terror exercise.” Sina English. <http://english.sina.com/china/p/2009/0721/257432.html>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

era of cooperation rather than confrontation, alliances are not helpful for peaceful development,” he said.<sup>277</sup>

The SCO's commitment to military coordination is ongoing, with a prospective 'Peace Mission 2010' planned to be held in Kazakhstan in 2010, according to Anatoly Serdyukov, Defense Minister of the Russian Federation. Minister Serdyukov asserted the nature of the future and past missions as being of a 'counter-terrorism nature'.<sup>278</sup>

### **Security Threats**

At first glance, we see SCO member states in military alliance, nearly all of which have severely or partially authoritarian forms of government, conducting coordinated military “war games”. This would seem to be a threat to democracy, if not the security of the world as a whole. A deeper look reveals that several nation states, though diplomatically committed to perform these tasks with some cohesion, that have little to do with one another. These states may share borders and some ideology, but they are far from being a unified front, willing or able to use military might to neutralize democracy or its institutions.

### *RATS*

The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), was recently renamed the Regional Counter-Terrorist Structure (RCTS). Its mission was to be the long arm of the cooperative law within the SCO member states. It was supposed to deal with just such problems as border crossing terrorist groups, but thus far, there is little evidence to support that it exists anywhere.

In the first weeks of April, 2010 the SCO held a meeting to discuss the restructuring of RATS (or RCTS) following the bombings of a Russian subway station that killed at least 51 people. The SCO blamed extremist Muslim group Hizb ut-Tahrir and stated they would be focusing on stepping up counter-terrorist measures on a cooperative scale<sup>279</sup>. It is likely that this will follow history and amount to a strengthened posture internally for Russia, but not much in the way of inter-SCO cooperation.

---

<sup>277</sup> Xin, Zhang. "Joint military exercise targets spread of terrorism." China Daily. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-07/20/content\\_8446817.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-07/20/content_8446817.htm). (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>278</sup> RIA Novosti. "SCO military exercises to be held in 2010 in Kazakhstan - Russia." RIA Novosti. <http://en.rian.ru/world/20090429/121367596.html>. (Accessed May 9, 2010)

<sup>279</sup> No author, "SCO to Discuss Joint Anti-Terrorism Efforts", Turkish Weekly, April 2, 2010, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/print.asp?type=1&id=100743>, accessed: April 15, 2010.

### *Organized Crime, Drug Trafficking, and Extremist Groups*

The two types of governments that allow the most organized criminal activity are the authoritarian and the incredibly unstable of any type. Since the majority of the SCO states are either authoritarian or unstable, a few being both, organized crime has flourished<sup>280</sup>.

The SCO nations have a rhetorically clear objective to stop extremism, terrorism and separatism. Even so, organized crime is so rampant within the Central Asian states as to be well established and transnational<sup>281</sup>. Given the SCO's apparent willingness to strictly control their borders concerning cases like the Uighurs, it seems unusual that Central Asia should be such rich ground for the various activities associated with organized crime. The activities often undertaken by these criminal elements vary according to the size of the group, but mostly they concern themselves with arms and drug trafficking, prostitution and various other illicit activities: cattle rustling, control of oil and banking industries, car theft, poaching. Some countries are more affected by these activities more directly than others.

Due to its long border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan is the country most affected by organized crime, particularly interested in drugs and arms trading across the border. After a civil war left the country impoverished, organized crime cemented its foothold<sup>282</sup>. Though the SCO has made repeated claims to their willingness to suppress these problems from Afghanistan, namely the unabated flow of drugs, the effect has been minimal and arms and drugs continue to come across the border of these two states.<sup>283</sup>

Another problem with the rhetoric of the SCO is its inability to suppress extremist Islamic groups like the Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan (IMU). They have either been linked to the May 25-26, 2009 bombings of police checkpoints on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border, various attacks in Uzbekistan itself, including the Andijan violence and the incursions into Kyrgyzstan in the late 1990's<sup>284</sup>. There is some reasonable doubt as to the level of IMU's activity.

---

<sup>280</sup>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "An Assessment of Transnational Organized Crime in Central Asia", 2007. This document was meant to draw attention to the problems of organized crime and mentions that is not a "definitive" (p. 8) analysis, as it is the first attempt by the UNODC to do so.

<sup>281</sup> UNODC, op. cit. The lack of real border security is a large factor in the ability of criminal elements to move with moderate freedom. Central Asia has a most porous border system.

<sup>282</sup> Jim Nichol, "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests", Congressional Research Service, November 20, 2009.

<sup>283</sup> UNODC, op. cit. Estimates put Afghanistan contribution to the heroin trade between 70 and 85%. Most of this comes through Tajikistan as raw goods. Tajik processing of the drug has increased in recent years.

<sup>284</sup> Jim Nichol, op. cit. Though the culpability of the IMU may be in question, the attacks were carried out successfully each time.

Regardless, the SCO has been unwilling or unable to stop them. This points to the idea that the SCO is making more of a rhetorical commitment to the promotion of regional stability and are less willing to actually combat this type of extremist group without the expressed need from one of their member states.

While there have been some instances of arms control and anti-smuggling coordination between the SCO states, it has not had much effect. Not unusual, but certainly a problem, is the lack of coordination by those nations that can do something about the problems at their borders and those that cannot<sup>285</sup>. While China seems to have good control over their borders thanks to a large and well trained military, other states like Tajikistan do not and cannot control the flow of weapons and drugs<sup>286</sup>.

#### **Drug seizures in the Central Asian region, 2005-2006**

	<i>Opium</i>		<i>Heroin</i>		<i>Cannabis herb</i>		<i>Cannabis resin</i>	
	<i>Kilograms</i>							
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
Kazakhstan	668	636	625	554	21,732	22,868	284	305
Kyrgyzstan	261	302	259	260	1,983	2,399	131	153
Tajikistan	1,104	1,386	2,344	2097	1,164	1,305		
Turkmenistan	748	2,655	180	201	135	154	18	206
Uzbekistan	107	759	466	537	444	428	9	5

*Source: UNODC Delta Database*

The above data shows that there is no shortage of drugs, and we may assume no shortage of smuggling infrastructure, in the Central Asian countries. A closer look at the numbers gives a good idea that, if these are the quantities of drugs seized, we can safely assess that more was produced and distributed.

Given the lack of ability to stop the flow of drug traffic, what may we assume about these countries ability to stop persons? Consider the most well traveled drug route from the Afghan-Tajik border town of Khorog to the Kyrgyz city Osh. It is a web of small footpaths and minor roads, hardly patrolled and rarely in contact with major highways.<sup>287</sup> The sheer remoteness

<sup>285</sup> UNDOC, op. cit. p. 21. This is not unlike the US-Mexico border and its own drug smuggling woes.

<sup>286</sup> UNDOC, op. cit. p. 36. See table.

<sup>287</sup> UNDOC, op. cit. pp. 33-34. This route may have been abandoned in favor of others since the Kyrgyz "Tulip II" coup. On the other hand, chaos is a friend to traffickers. Estimates by the Kyrgyz government for 1997-8 put the numbers of illegal immigrants at 50,000; that was before the color revolutions, when the government was virulently authoritarian.

would be daunting to any government, but with the recent happenings in Kyrgyzstan, it is doubtful that there is anyone maintaining this border.

Despite the cooperative operations of 2005, 2007 and 2009, the counter-terrorist part of the SCO has lacked any show of its usefulness, or use at all. This begs the question: if the SCO can successfully conduct joint military operations and since the larger countries, China and Russia, are able to control the “problem groups” within their own borders, why is nothing being done to stop the various activities mentioned previously? If it is just posturing, then the smaller countries will be left to their own devices in dealing with these problems. Also, against whom are they posturing?

The first question may be answered simply: the smaller countries of the SCO do not have the same capabilities as China and Russia. Furthermore, there is the problem of competing interests between China and Russia. During the Russia-Georgia crisis, Russia at first attempted to gain military support from the SCO. However, tense relations with China prohibited the SCO from supporting Russia in these efforts. China, with its own problems in the Xinjian and Tibet provinces, reportedly put the kibosh on Russia’s request<sup>288</sup>. This suggests that though the SCO is torn between the two giants, China and Russia take whatever positions and the rest of the SCO keeps to themselves.

The SCO may no longer be a blatantly, militarily anti-democratic coalition and though its military cohesion, outside of a few war games, is at best notional, its actions have done a fairly good job of limiting the democratizing influence of the United States. Despite the heavy Western presence in Afghanistan, the authoritarian governments block the inroads to Central Asia as much as they are the completing influence of both China and Russia. While each state is willing to accept money from the US and others outside the local coalition, it is clear that the minor states of the SCO prefer to stick together. Though they may feel the pull of their two regional superpowers, the minor powers still feel it is better to have a bear and a dragon in your corner than to need an eagle.

#### *US Military Presence*

While weapons of mass destruction are not a topic of much discussion these days, there is some concern about the residual nuclear materials left in Kazakhstan after the dissolution of the

---

<sup>288</sup> Elizabeth Wishnick, op. cit. pp. 1-2.

USSR<sup>289</sup>. With minimal security and established criminal elements feeding a burgeoning black market, it is not unlikely, that some of this was lost in the chaos. The US has signed accords of reduction and provided money to secure those sites, so the likelihood is low that a global security threat could arise from these.

Something that should be taken into consideration by Western powers, in particular the US, is that the current instability in the Central Asian region is often and easily portrayed as the fault of Western or pro-Western influence<sup>290</sup>. The rhetoric from the SCO has been almost direct in pointing the finger at the US, laying blame for the disruption of the Afghan War squarely at Washington's door. The role of the US in Afghanistan will be covered in more depth later in this report however it would be remiss to ignore its presence here.

---

<sup>289</sup> Jim Nichol. op. cit. After the USSR went the way of the stegosaurus, Kazakhstan was considered a nuclear power even though it was really just the vessel for Russian yellow cake and other uranium outputs. Kazakhstan was also the USSR site for chemical and biological weapon research. Probably development, too.

<sup>290</sup> Elizabeth Wishnick. "Russia, China and the United States in Central Asia: Prospects for Great Power Competition and Cooperation in the Shadow of the Georgian Crisis", Strategic Studies Institute, February 2009, (accessed May 1, 2010).

## SCO Military Intervention

Those who concern themselves with the affairs of nations are obliged to have a long memory, oft warned of the duplicability of history's harsh teachings. Such long sight, when turned to the SCO member-states, tests the modern, nascent, 'Shanghai Spirit' against the ghost of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which many of the SCO's Member States were once part. In the west there is an uneasiness around the 'Shanghai Spirit', partially due to the possible authoritarian norms that it represents, the purpose that this document explicitly attempts to answer, but also in the potential for the 'Spirit' to be enforced by intervention of the SCO's twin global powers, China and Russia, in the internal affairs of their fellow Member States. In order to investigate fully the potential of the SCO, one must first inform themselves of past precedents and measure them against present incidents, most notably Kyrgyzstan's color revolution(s) and the 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia.

In the spring and summer of 1968, Czechoslovakia, then a part of the USSR, began enacting liberalizing reforms under Alexander Dubček, head of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party. The Dubček reforms, which loosened press censorship, allowed for the condemnation of repression and crimes committed in the 1950's by the communist regimes of that era and flirtation with other political parties<sup>291</sup>, posed a challenge to the Moscow-centered status quo. This liberalization is referred to as the “Prague Spring” and lasted until August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1968, when Moscow sent a massive invasion to force an end to the reforms. This intervention is notable studies of authoritarian intervention because of the precedent it set.

Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, opposed the liberalization regime instituted by Dubček and, after repeated attempts to coerce the errant Czechoslovakian leader into reversing his position, decided to intervene militarily. With the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev laid the groundwork for what later became the 'Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty’, more colloquially known as the “Brezhnev Doctrine” which was enunciated in a September 1968 *Pravda* article entitled “Sovereignty and the International Obligations of Socialist Countries.” The article asserted that “the sovereignty of individual socialist countries cannot be set against the interests of world socialism and the world

---

291 Kramer, Mark. 2009. "The Kremlin, the Prague Spring, and the Brezhnev Doctrine." <http://www.foia.cia.gov/CzechInvasion/7-Miscellaneous/2009-09-01.pdf>.



revolutionary movement,”<sup>292</sup> in effect appropriating to Moscow the authority to intervene on behalf of 'world socialism' whether other nations invited the intervention or not. This doctrine of keeping socialist countries in line had wide ramifications for the USSR and its satellites according to Mark Kramer, who has worked extensively on the Prague Spring of 1968 and the Soviet invasion. In his work “The Kremlin, the Prague Spring, and the Brezhnev Doctrine” he sums up the Soviet intervention and its effects, saying: “Moscow's unwillingness to tolerate those reforms ensured that, from then on, stability in the Eastern bloc could be preserved only by the threat of another Soviet invasion.”<sup>293</sup>

It is in this long shadow then that the SCO finds itself, questioned by a cautious west about its intentions and feeling a need to reassure its neighbors about the modesty of its ambitions. The Brezhnev Doctrine is instructive about the mechanisms utilized by authoritarian blocs to maintain control and discipline among their members. The lessons for a policy maker contending with the potential 'authoritarianism promotion' aspect of the 'Shanghai Spirit' are obvious, since the paradigms of intervention that it promotes between its members can be used to predict its reaction to liberalization internally. The question that must be asked then, is what the track record of the SCO states, especially the stronger states like Russia and China, is regarding intervention into their neighbor's affairs. The military intervention model, which defined the Brezhnev Doctrine, has not played out within the SCO framework, either because of the gap between its capability and probable western mechanism of response vis-a-vis NATO (or the US acting unilaterally under the Bush Doctrine), or the bipolar nature of the SCO, split between two proud, nuclear powers whose interests quite often conflict. The SCO is not free from intervention, however, it simply takes a form of smooth diplomatic riposte rather than sudden, decisive military action.

The intervention narrative of the SCO encompasses the rhetorical support given to SCO member states when they are in accordance with the 'Shanghai Spirit' and conversely the silence of the organization when they are not. Put more concisely, the question before us is what actions receive explicit SCO endorsement and are there patterns in those statements that can inform future policy decisions. There are three substantial cases that will be used to discern such

---

292 Navrátil, Jaromír. 1998. *The Prague spring 1968: a national security archive documents reader*. Budapest: Central European University Press.

293 Kramer, Mark. 2009. "The Kremlin, the Prague Spring, and the Brezhnev Doctrine." <http://www.foia.cia.gov/CzechInvasion/7-Miscellaneous/2009-09-01.pdf>.

patterns, including the Tulip Revolution that occurred in 2005 in Kyrgyzstan, the most recent crisis in Kyrgyzstan, and the intervention in Georgia by the Russian Federation in 2008.

The overthrow of the Akeyev Government in Kyrgyzstan in Spring of 2005 posed a real test for the SCO, a challenge to its bold rhetoric. The contemporaneous Secretary-General of the SCO, Zhang Deguang warned against future 'color revolutions' saying that any such events in the future would “result in extremely dangerous political consequences, seriously affecting the whole region.”<sup>294</sup> At a press conference during the SCO's 2006 Shanghai Summit, Secretary-General Zhang hinted that the SCO members were working on “some kind of legal procedure for joint operations to combat the sources of instability.”<sup>295</sup> This institutionalization of intervention, while seeming to be an imminent reality on 2006, has not materialized since, especially when faced with a recurrence of instability within Kyrgyzstan.

The most recent change of government in Bishkek provides a great amount of insight into how such a shakeup would be handled by the present SCO. The organization, which invests much effort into condemning the 'three evils' of 'terrorism, extremism and separatism', has had a muted response to the April 7<sup>th</sup> events, quite different from the tone that the organization had previously taken. Two days after Kurmanbek Bakiyev's ouster the SCO expressed concern for the situation and sympathy for those who had lost their lives, a cautious response to the situation couched in the tepid language of diplomacy<sup>296</sup>. Interim Chairperson Rosa Otunbayeva met with the SCO's Secretary-General Muratbek Imanaliyev on Monday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, two weeks after the tumultuous events, to brief him on the events in the country and assure him Kyrgyzstan would continue to meet its international obligations<sup>297</sup>. The mild response reveals well the character of the SCO's regional goals, to maintain a stable region above all else, rather than delve into the domestic affairs of its members.

Extra-territorial disputes, however, receive a far different level of support. One need not look any farther than the drama surrounding the 2008 Dushambe Summit, coming as it did on the heels of the Russian invasion of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two breakaway regions of Georgia that the Russian Federation sought to recognize as independent states. The incursion,

---

294 Ambrosio, Thomas. 2008. Catching the 'Shanghai Spirit': How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Promotes Authoritarian Norms in Central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 60, No. 8: 1321-1344.

295 Ibid.

296 ITAR-TASS news agency. 2010. Shanghai bloc concerned over Kyrgyz riots. *ITAR-TASS news agency*. April 9, 2010.

297 Kyrgyz Television 1. 2010. Kyrgyz interim government's head meets Shanghai bloc chief, UN official. *Kyrgyz Television 1*. April 19, 2010.

which Russia justified as a defensive action in support of its citizens living abroad, became a large international issue, and it was to the SCO that Russian Federation President Medvedev turned to for support and solidarity. The SCO adopted a neutral stance on the matter which frustrated Russia, who tried to put a positive spin on the meeting<sup>298</sup>. The joint Declaration issued from the summit on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 read:

The member states of the SCO express their deep concern in connection with the recent tension around the issue of South Ossetia, and call on the relevant parties to resolve existing problems in a peaceful way through dialogue, to make efforts for reconciliation and facilitation of negotiations.<sup>299</sup>

Such advocacy of negotiation can be seen as a rebuke of the Russian actions in the conflict, and a strong indication of the SCO's commitment to the principle of territorial integrity above all else.

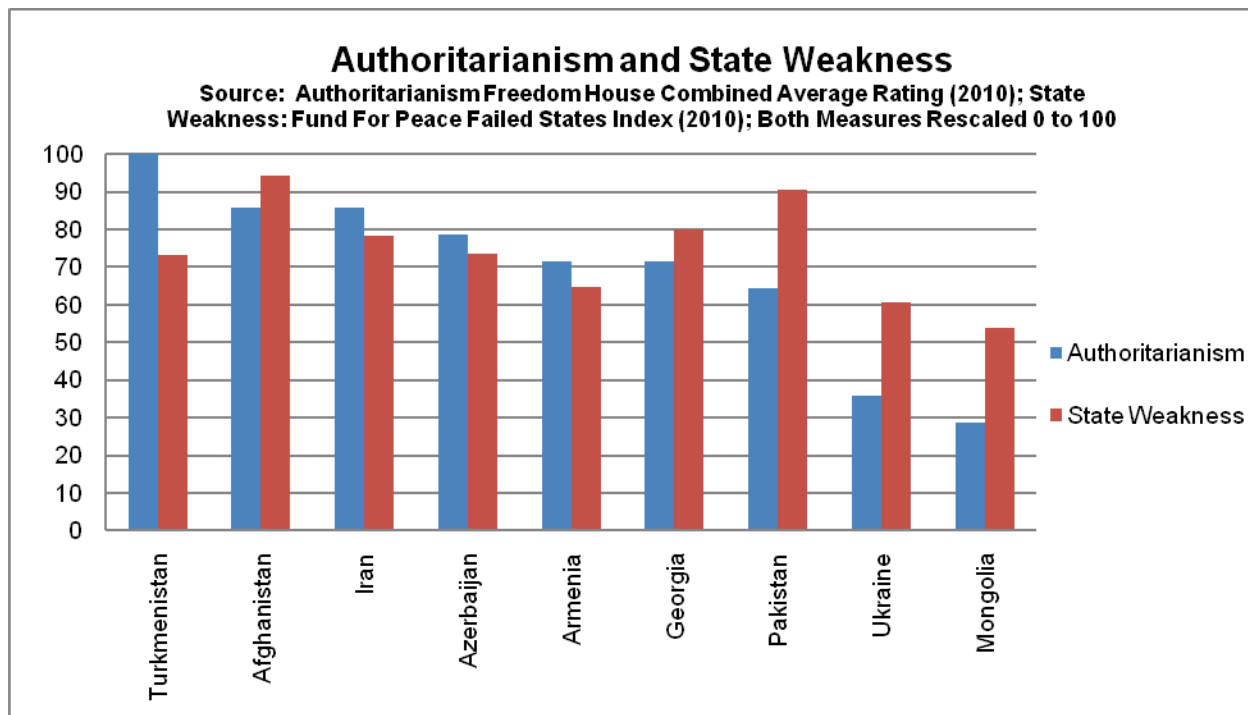
The SCO does not appear to have the internal disciplining mechanism necessary for effective centralized promotions of authoritarian values. Instead the preeminent focus of the organization appears to be status quo maintenance from a pragmatic perspective, something that on the surface does not seem wholly incompatible with liberalization. From a policy perspective there are opportunities to expand the role of democratization that would not violate the SCO's norms in favor of stability. The difficulty from a US perspective is to disassociate hegemonic goals, which are an inherent threat to any status quo due to the progressive nature of hegemony, and ideological goals whose pursuit can be pursued independent of strict national gain. What this entails is an approach that does not see democratic gains as losses for the powers in the regions but rather to make US influence an independent factor that can ebb or flow without precondition. Not an easy path to be sure, but with the SCO's past behavior as a guide one can see the promise of harnessing the institution's drive for stability above all else.

---

298 Stern, David L. 2008. Regional Security Group Takes a Neutral Stance on Russia's Actions in Georgia. *New York Times*, August 29, Section A, Late Edition - Final.

299 The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Dushanbe Declaration of the Heads of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. <http://www.sectSCO.org/EN/show.asp?id=90>.

## Peripheral States

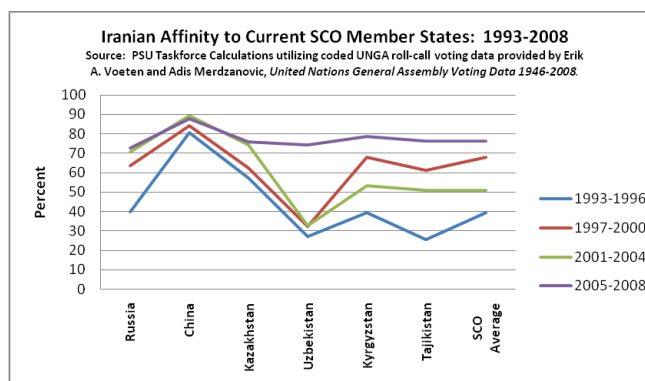


### Introduction

In this section we examine a series of Eurasian states that are deemed particularly relevant to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In each of these cases we explore both the impact of the SCO upon local democratic outcomes as well as the impact that these respective countries may have had upon the extended diffusion of the *Spirit of Shanghai*. While not all Eurasian actors are here represented, we have selected those cases—including SCO observers and others—that seem particularly relevant to recounting the historical contingencies which have enhanced cooperation within the SCO or that have facilitated a wider diffusion of anti-democratic norms and practices throughout the region. It is our hope that this analysis will provide policy-makers with the relevant historical information on which to compose a responsive and timely policy platform to address the negative implications that enhanced SCO cooperation will pose for the further development of democracy in both Central Asia and its near-abroad.

## The Islamic Republic of Iran and the “Shanghai Spirit”

Iran was granted observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, along with India and Pakistan, in 2005. In the following years no observing state has been more enthusiastic about the possibility of gaining full membership than Iran.<sup>300</sup> Not surprisingly, the inclusion of Iran and their possible membership has drawn a great deal of scrutiny from Europe and the United States. However, while Iran may perhaps represent the most extreme form of anti-western ideology in the world, it is certainly not out of step with the SCO and the “Shanghai Spirit” in these respects.



This is particularly true as it relates to the notion of regional strength and autonomy from western democratic and human rights norms. In fact, it does not seem a stretch to assume that when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad attends SCO summits and denounces the United States’ invasive Eurasian policies that he is speaking to an empathetic audience. At recent summits, Iran has employed SCO inspired rhetoric when offering to help combat extremism and terrorism emanating from Afghanistan, which SCO members understandably feel is a threat to the rest of central Asia.<sup>301</sup> Certainly most anything said by Ahmadinejad is more extreme than the rhetoric directly coming from the SCO. Still, from a basic ideological standpoint, the SCO and the “Shanghai Spirit” provide a forum conducive to the positions of Iran and its anti-western posturing. At least, that is, a forum far more conducive than that provided by any other multi-national organization.

The observer status of Iran and its possible membership appears to encounter some ideological dissonance in relation to a least two of the ‘three evils’ (terrorism, extremism, and separatism) the SCO seeks to confront. At first glance, Iran’s speculated association with terrorist groups<sup>302</sup> and extremism would put it at odds with the stated goals of the SCO. It would seem a further complication that Iran is an Islamic republic, since the groups often labeled by

<sup>300</sup> Wietz, Richard. August 19, 2009. The SCO’s Iran Problem. *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Byman, Danial. 2008. Iran, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31: 169-181.

Bahgat, Gawdat. 1999. Iran and terrorism: the transatlantic responses. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 22: 141-152.

SCO member states as extremist or terrorist are in nature Islamic. However, the ‘three evils’ can justifiably be considered fairly loose terms, and clearly defining which groups embody these terms is not necessary. The ‘three evils’ primarily serve to justify the suppression of any groups opposed to the dominant regimes of SCO member states,<sup>303</sup> ultimately the religious background or even the tactics of opposition is not of primary importance. Therefore, short of directly sponsoring the actions of ‘terrorist’ groups in SCO member states, Iranian associations in parts of the world currently outside the scope of the SCO would likely be of little concern.

Another essential element of the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ is coordination between member states on the issues of security and how they can collaborate to help combat the ‘three evils.’ As this report establishes, there is little joint military action, and intervention between states seems unlikely, as it conflicts with the SCO emphasis on state sovereignty and border integrity. Due to this, extradition has become perhaps the most readily available means of interaction between states that aids in regime security and thus regional authoritarian stability. Iran appears to have adopted this aspect of the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ by reaching extradition agreements with some SCO member states. In 2000 a treaty on extradition was reached with Uzbekistan that entered into force in mid-2003.<sup>304</sup> In early January of 2010, President Ahmadinejad visited Tajikistan, largely considered Iran’s closest ally amongst the SCO members, in order to shore up similar agreements between the two countries. When asked about an agreement signed by the nation’s leaders, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Consular, Parliamentary, and Expatriates’ Affairs Hassan Qashqavi emphasized that it addressed extradition between the two countries.<sup>305</sup> It is of note that on this same trip Ahmadinejad visited Turkmenistan, its most immediate neighbor and largest trading partner, to speak of similar matters, although an agreement on extradition already exists between the two states.<sup>306</sup> The reasons for Iran wanting to secure such agreements with neighboring states are similar to the motivations of full SCO members in seeking extradition coordination, these being the elimination of opposition anywhere in the region. Most likely, the need on the part of Iranian to ensure the ability to track down and

---

<sup>303</sup> Aris, Stephen. 2009. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: ‘tackling the three evils.’ A regional response to non-traditional security challenges or anti-western bloc? *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, 3: 457-482.

<sup>304</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

<sup>305</sup> *Fars News Agency*. May 8, 2010.

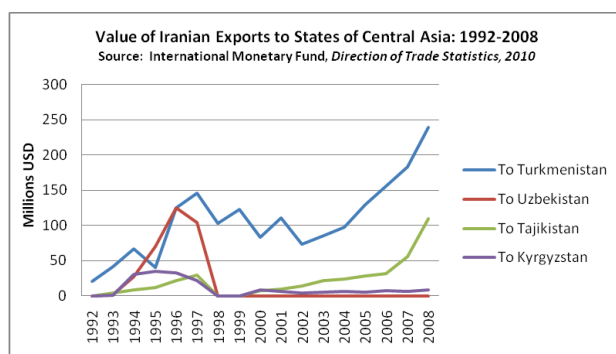
Sinkaya-Orsam, Bayram. January, 22, 2010. The Iranian president Ahmadinejad’s visits to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Found at [www.yenisafak.com.tr](http://www.yenisafak.com.tr)

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

marginalize opposition throughout Central Asia was heightened by the Green Revolt following the elections of 2009.

### *Benefits of Membership*

Beyond an ideological alignment, the basic motivations for Iran seeking full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are fairly clear and in large part straightforward. Joining the SCO would help to compensate for the international isolation Iran currently experiences at the hands of primarily western forces. This is, of course, mainly the result of Iran's nuclear ambitions in recent years. While gaining entrance into the SCO would not guarantee an end to United States, European, and Israeli pressure regarding Iran's nuclear programs, it would provide further obstacles to effective sanctioning. The support of other member states coupled with the SCO emphasis on sovereignty in the name of stability would provide greater cover for Iran than they currently enjoy in isolation. It would immediately create stronger ties to other central Asian nations. Most importantly SCO membership would indicate implicit support from China and Russia, which would provide legitimization from two of the strongest nations in the non-western world. Both Russia and China have interacted with Iran on a level unlike other powerful nations, particularly post-Khomeini, but they have been very careful in how openly they condone Iranian actions.<sup>307</sup>



Membership in the SCO would also help ensure that Iran can maintain and expand an already existent economic influence in the region. This influence is primarily felt in the smaller member states, most notably Tajikistan, where Iran has been involved in the construction of power plants, the

development of resources, and the construction of a railroad connecting Iran, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan. Iran has also been attempting to expand this kind of involvement into the markets of Turkmenistan, where it already interacts to a large degree, and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>308</sup> Projects along these lines speak directly to two areas that Iran wishes to be a part of in general, or help facilitate

<sup>307</sup> Norling, Nicklas, and Swanstrom, Niklas. 2007. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, trade, and the roles of Iran, India, and Pakistan. *Central Asian Survey* 26, 3: 429-444.

<sup>308</sup> Goncharov, Pyotr. March 26, 2008. Iran wants full SCO membership. *Rian Novosti*. Found at <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20080326/102299498.html>

through SCO and in central Asia. These two areas were referenced by Ahmadinejad at the SCO Summit last June in Yekaterinburg, Russia when he called for the creation of a central Asian “energy club,” as well as joint infrastructure and transportation projects with Iran serving as a territorial gateway to the region.<sup>309</sup> The energy reserves made more readily available through Iran’s membership represents perhaps the greatest enticement, especially from the Chinese and Russian perspectives. If Iran were to join, the member states of the SCO would account for “approximately half of the world’s proven oil reserves.”<sup>310</sup> Indeed, particularly in the case of the incredibly energy needy China, having organizational sway over such a large amount of energy resources would ensure greater security and stability in the coming years. Security and stability are, of course, two of the major stated goals of the SCO.<sup>311</sup> At this point China is already Iran’s top oil export market. However, SCO membership would allow China and the other member states to take more complete advantage of what are already increasingly entwined interests with Iran.<sup>312</sup> Ultimately, full membership for Iran could more or less hinge on their resources (both in oil and gas) and the leverage they can employ as a result.

---

<sup>309</sup> Wietz. August 19, 2009.

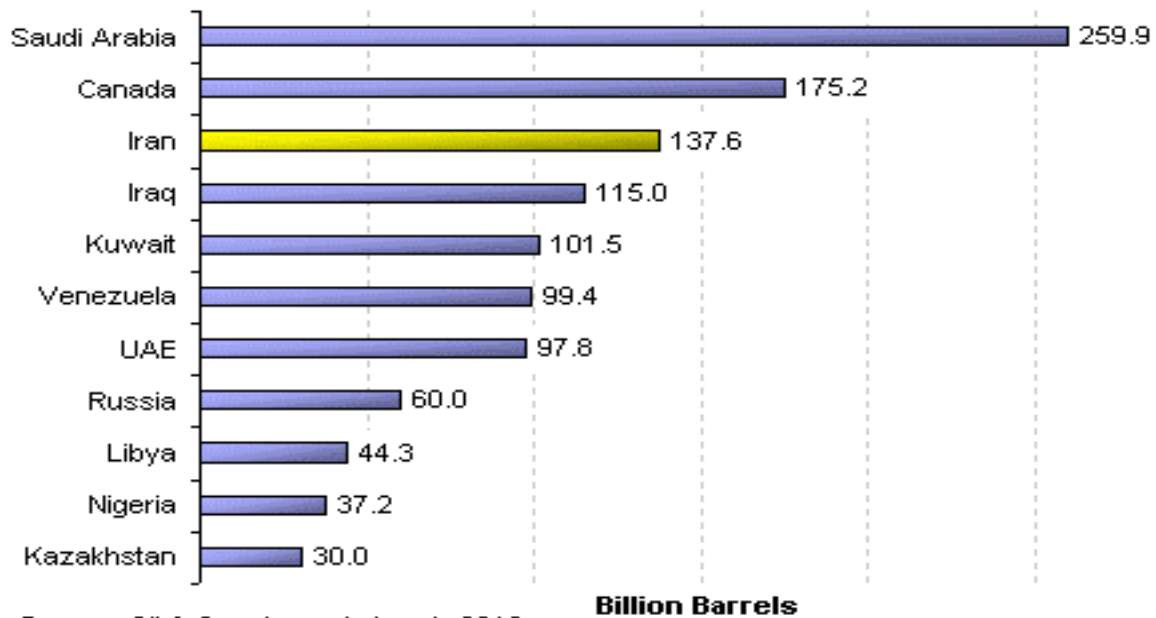
<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> SCO Charter.

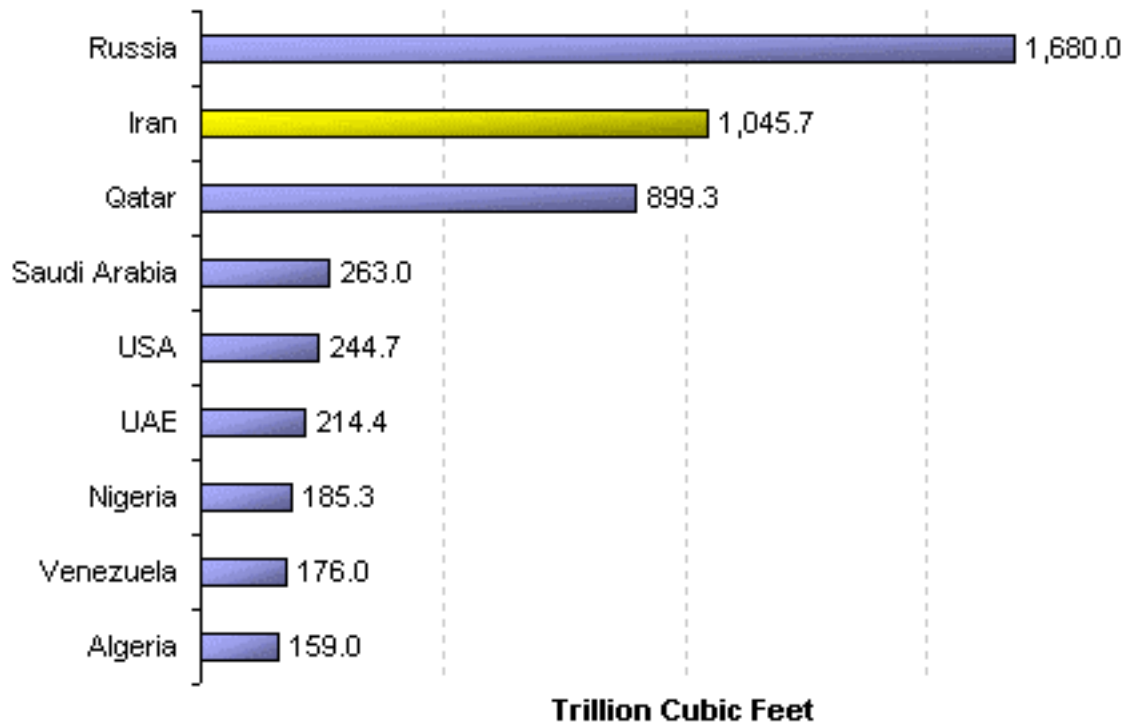
<sup>312</sup> Brummer, Matthew. 2007. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Iran: a power-full union. *Journal of International Affairs* 60, 2: 185-198.



### Top Proven World Oil Reserves, January 1, 2010



### World Natural Gas Reserves by Country, January 1, 2010



### *Membership Obstacles*

Despite Iran's obvious enthusiasm for membership in the SCO, the organization has not yet allowed their entrance and it has been two years since they first petitioned. At first glance, the amount of time thus far put towards deliberation does not seem very long, but there are clear signs that Iran's entrance has not come much closer to being a reality. However, it is not just Iran that faces an uphill battle in becoming a full-fledged member, as no states have seemingly come very close since Uzbekistan's inclusion in 2001. The standard reason given for the lack of new member states being added to the SCO in recent years has focused on the need to develop a legal framework for expansion. The inability to create such a framework is likely fueled by existing logistical problems that would seemingly only grow worse with new members. With its existing makeup the SCO already has to account for differences in economic and military strength, as well as geographic and population disparities. These elements have made it often difficult to create standards and coordinate in a meaningful and effective way.<sup>313</sup> Adding any country, but especially one as large and dynamic as Iran would surely add to these difficulties. It is of note that the two countries most enthusiastic about gaining entrance to the SCO (Pakistan and Iran), are in many ways viewed as the least desirable candidates of the observing and surrounding states.<sup>314</sup> Understandably, this might be cause for the organization to drag its feet when reviewing possible new membership. It would perhaps not be the case if either of the perspective favored candidates, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, were the states chopping at the bit to gain full entrance.

The benefits provided to current member states in allowing Iran to join are balanced by many theoretical problems. In relation to the possibility of new members, particularly Iran and Pakistan, being part of the SCO, current Secretary-General Imanaliev has stated that "one important principle is that the new member should be good for SCO's growth and unification, not the other way around."<sup>315</sup> Such a statement seems to imply that a clear roadblock for Iran is the possibility that it will see almost nothing but advantages in being an SCO member, while their presence could create burdens or complications for the organization that may outweigh any

---

<sup>313</sup> Wietz, Richard. September 19, 2007. SCO fails to solve its expansion dilemma. *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> Cheng Guangjin and Yang Xue. February 4, 2010. SCO appraises membership of Iran, Pakistan. *China Daily*. Found at <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-02/04/>

benefits. Currently the SCO is not viewed as a western friendly organization, but it still has not necessarily been presented as an oppositional force to the west and has clearly avoided that kind of open confrontation. Officially, the stance taken by the SCO has been that it has “nothing to do with the division of countries according to bloc, ideological or other confrontational characteristics.”<sup>316</sup>

Therefore, if Iran is made a member, the SCO risks being subsequently viewed as openly anti-western and anti-American, as it is clear Iran has no problem bluntly displaying such rhetoric. Due to the needs of maintaining a delicate balance between the support of regional authoritarianism and domestic stability, and relationships with western democracies, China is considered the least likely to support Iran’s membership. Although, it has been noted that neither Russia nor China wish to embrace open hostility on par with the kind coming from Iran, even if they are indirectly associated with it through an organization.<sup>317</sup> In 2009, during the Russian presidency of the SCO, Iran was hopeful that it might be able to gain full membership. However, although this seemed to Iran like a clear opportunity, it was never realized, and was likely never that close to becoming a reality. Despite the high hopes of Iranian officials, Russian authorities within the SCO were quick to express the view that observer status was sufficient for utilizing and expanding Iran’s role in regard to energy or security.<sup>318</sup>

As stated before, one of the central reasons for Iran wishing to attain full membership is the added legitimacy and belonging that would greatly counterbalance the isolation it has felt from the west. The main reason for this isolation in recent years is, of course, Iran’s nuclear ambitions and support of terrorist organizations throughout Asia. While China and Russia have been less adamant than many western powers in their condemnation of Iran’s nuclear program, they have still kept a distance and have officially supported the general international consensus condemning Iran’s actions.<sup>319</sup> Again, beyond the obvious security concerns and many SCO regimes aversion to ‘extremist’ movements, Iranian links to terrorism pose a significant image issue for the SCO and its current member states. Since the main drive philosophically of the SCO security framework is centered on the battling of terrorism, it would perhaps appear a bit incongruous if Iran were to be allowed to join. In such a scenario it would be much easier for the

---

<sup>316</sup> Interview with former Secretary-General Bolat Nurgaliev. Found at <http://www.novinite.com/>

<sup>317</sup> Najibullah, Farangis. March 3, 2008. Russia, China unlikely to welcome Iran into the SCO. *Payvand Iran News*. Found at <http://payvand.com/news/08/mar/1309.html>.

<sup>318</sup> Russia shatters Iran SCO membership hopes. February 21, 2009. Found at <http://www.presstv.ir/>

<sup>319</sup> Wietz. August 19, 2009.

SCO to be accused of disingenuously framing the suppression of opposition to ruling elites as a form of fighting terrorism or extremism.

It is also possible that the political turmoil caused by protests surrounding the most recent elections in Iran might have created a further point of complication. It likely brings into question Iran's stability moving forward, which may prove unattractive to the SCO, despite such turmoil increasing Iran's wish to increase stability and legitimacy through the support of a regional organization.<sup>320</sup> If, in the near future, it is facing a growing anti-authoritarian driven movement that could alter its political nature, SCO states might want to assess the fallout before committing to working with Iran.

## **Conclusion**

It has been made clear once again from statements by the Secretary-General that consideration of new members will be on the SCO agenda this year.<sup>321</sup> However, as this has been the standard response to questions regarding new membership for a number of years, it is no clear indication that the SCO is actually any closer to adding states. It does not remain a complete impossibility, especially in light of current cooperation, but Iran's full membership will probably remain tabled until it can resolve issues surrounding its international reputation and isolation. The most recent sanctions proposed through the UN Security Council, as a response to Iran's nuclear ambitions, are supported by both Russia and China.<sup>322</sup> The inability or unwillingness for either major power in the SCO to explicitly support Iran on numerous occasions is significant, and indicates that full membership, and thus, a full embrace is highly unlikely. However, condemnation coming from China and Russia, the latter of which referred to the Iranian elections of 2009 as an "exercise in democracy,"<sup>323</sup> is often slow in coming and seemingly superficial in nature. Also, a look at broader UN voting shows an affinity between Iran and SCO member states that is increasing,<sup>324</sup> even in the case of the two countries that are often officially condemning Iran through the Security Council. Therefore, if Iran continues to be set to the periphery of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and China and Russia must publically scold Iran, it should not be viewed as a rejection of its regime's tactics and policies.

---

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Cheng and Yang. February 4, 2010.

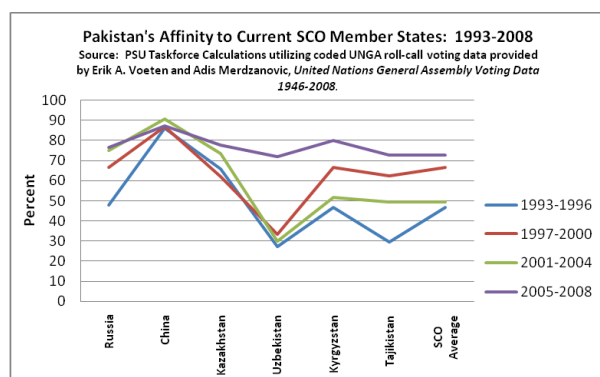
<sup>322</sup> Brazil and Turkey urge UN Security Council against Iran sanctions. May 20, 2010. Found at [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk).

<sup>323</sup> Blank, Stephen. August 19, 2009. Iran, Xinjiang, and democratization in Eurasia: the impact of recent upheavals. *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*.

<sup>324</sup> See policy affinity data presented in this report.

As was previously shown, Iran has increasingly made inroads amongst member states, has an undeniable influence in the region, and embodies much of the ‘Shanghai Spirit,’ full membership or not.

## Pakistan



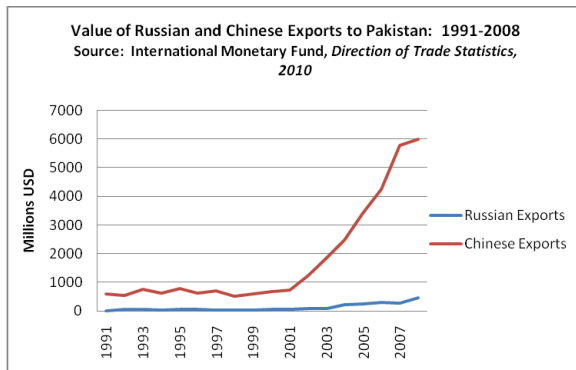
Pakistan is increasingly gaining support by member states of the SCO and the SCO organization for full membership. The Secretary General of the SCO, Bolat Nurgaliyev, said on December 9, 2009 that the organization wanted to have a strong partnership in the areas of trade, transport, energy, agriculture, innovation technology and culture.<sup>325</sup> The Secretary General also expressed the SCO's concerns about the scale of the threats of terrorism, separatism and extremism not diminishing in the region. Nurgaliyev expressed that to the SCO “the sphere of security is a top priority.”<sup>326</sup> He later expressed his hopes that ties between Pakistan and the SCO will grow further in the coming future.

Full member ship in the SCO does not seem far off for Pakistan. On December 8, 2008 in Islamabad, the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari called for full membership into the SCO to strengthen engagement to promote peace and development in the region<sup>327</sup>. Due to the prevailing militancy and extremism, Pakistan believes that they should be given full membership. Since the SCO has made counter-terrorism its top priority, they have assumed responsibility in bringing about regional security and would benefit greatly by sharing intelligence and experiences in counter-terrorism with the observer states. Although Pakistan is calling for closer relations with the SCO organization as a whole, they have already been begun to work with a few member states on trade and security.

<sup>325</sup> Associated Press of Pakistan “SCO for Strong Ties with Pakistan in Trade, Transport, Energy Sectors” BBC Worldwide Monitoring. (2009) Web. 24 April 2009

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> Associated Press of Pakistan “President Urges full Shanghai Cooperation Organization Membership for Pakistan” BBC Monitoring (2009) Web. 24 April 2009



For many years, China and Pakistan have increased their cooperation on regional security and economic aid. In 2006, China proposed to speed up their joint five year plan for economic aid and cooperation<sup>328</sup>. The aid is planned to help build schools, hospitals, highways and other projects throughout Pakistan. In August of

2009, Pakistan's President traveled to China in a series of visits since he has taken office. His present visit is to sign over six MoUs (Memorandum of Understandings), directed towards cooperation in education, fisheries, agriculture, hydro dams, and investments<sup>329</sup>. One MoU is to build a hydro dam in the Astore District of the Northern areas at Bunji. This will be the largest source of electricity in the country. The entire capital will be made by Chinese entrepreneurs. China has also been supportive of Pakistan's thermal, solar, and nuclear energy projects. In addition, China is investing in a deep-sea port in Gwadar Pakistan to increase China's influence on trade in the region<sup>6</sup>.

China has also been in contact with Pakistan regarding terrorism, separatism, and extremism. In 2008, the two countries signed an extradition treaty to help cooperate in preventing and suppressing crime in the region<sup>330</sup>. However, one of the groups targeted by the treaty included Uighurs. In 2009, nine Uighurs were extradited to China on accusations of being terrorists.<sup>331</sup> Past extraditions have led to unfair trials, torture, and executions. China's close ties to Pakistan have helped to bring Pakistan as an observer state to the SCO. Other SCO members have also had close relations with Pakistan over the years.

Russia has over 60 years of bilateral relations with Pakistan. On April 30, 2009, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmud Qureshi, praised the relationship that the two

<sup>328</sup> Xinhua. "China and Pakistan Vow to Strengthen Ties" June 16, 2006. SCO Official website.

[http://english.scosummit2006.org/en\\_zxbb/2006-06/16/content\\_807.htm](http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_zxbb/2006-06/16/content_807.htm)

<sup>329</sup> Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik. "Pakistan/ China Economy: Countries Working towards Boosting Trade Ties" Pakistani newspaper The Nation. 27 August 2009.

<sup>330</sup> Daily Times, Lahore, 12 December 2007, web edn. -

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\12\12\story\\_12-12-2007\\_pg\\_7\\_17](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\12\12\story_12-12-2007_pg_7_17)

<sup>331</sup> Press release, Uighur American Association. 28 April 2009, email

countries had saying they had common views and perceptions on many world issues<sup>332</sup>. In the last five years their economic relations have grown tremendously. Trade has grown from about 100m dollars in 2002 to over 500m in 2007.<sup>7</sup> Russia was also very supportive of Pakistan in gaining observer status in 2005. The Pakistan Foreign Minister also stated that the two countries have manifested in the exchanges defense relations; exchanges at the command lever, defense purchases, and defense training<sup>7</sup>. These dialogues cover such areas as strategic matters and cooperation against terrorism. Russia has even created a Parliamentary Friendship Group for Pakistan in the state Duma<sup>7</sup>.

The SCO has taken an increasing interest in Pakistan over the years. In 2008, the Tajik MP said “if Pakistan wanted the SCO could contribute to the settlement of political situation and the creation of conditions for economic development<sup>333</sup>.” He believes that the SCO, as a regional organization, has the ability to provide assistance to Pakistan. He even goes as far as to state that China and Russia have huge free financial resources to help solve the economic issue in Pakistan. In recent years, Pakistan has become more vocal in their call for full membership. Pakistan’s President said that they are keen to be SCO’s Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure based in Tashkent<sup>2</sup>. The SCO has still been unable to decide on the requirements to be admitted as a full member state. Alesksey Lukin, a Russian Foreign Minister, said that the SCO was setting up a group that is to develop the criteria for adopting new membership<sup>334</sup>. He said it is to be adopted in the forthcoming summit for the SCO. He also mentioned the most likely, states under UN sanctions cannot be a member of the SCO<sup>9</sup>. Pakistan would not fall under this category, so it is safe to say that if and when the SCO comes up with criteria for membership, Pakistan will be first in line for acquiring membership.

#### *Media and the Press*

The press in Pakistan has been limited in certain areas of the country since 2008. The region to the north of Islamabad has been in chaos since 2007 due to the increase in Taliban activity in the region. In May of 2009, the Pakistan military launched Operation Rah-e-Rast to

---

<sup>332</sup> Associated Press of Pakistan. : Pakistan, Russia Ties Improving- Foreign Minister. BBC Monitoring 30 April 2008

<sup>333</sup> Tajik Avesta website. “Shangai bloc can contribute to stable situation in Pakistan- Tajik MP. BBC Monitoring 19 August 2008

<sup>334</sup> Kyrgyz Television. Countries under UN Sanction Cannot be Member of Shanghai Body- Kyrgyz TV. BBC Monitoring 19 May 2009

take control of the northern regions from the Taliban<sup>335</sup>. During this time 2 million people, including most journalists, were forced to flee the area due to violent clashes<sup>10</sup>. During this time, a curfew was set in the region enabling the reporters from investigating progress of the operation. In September, the Pakistan government regained control of the region. Since then, journalists have been able to return to the valley and continue their investigative journalism. Curfew limitations have been lifted enabling local newspapers to begin publishing after months of being closed<sup>10</sup>. The question now is how will the media fair in the aftermath?

The media has been worried since their return on the stability in the region. Will the Taliban still pose a threat to journalist and whether the army that has since been placed in charge accept criticism by the media? During the unrest, journalists were unable to get permits from the government to investigate the actions of the military in the valley<sup>10</sup>. Local media has even been threatened by soldiers while the media has been pressured not to cover the allegations of extra-judicial executions by the army<sup>10</sup>.

However, according to Reporters Without Borders, cable television and newspapers have been more accessible since the Pakistan government has regained control of the area from the Taliban. Several Swat journalists have told Reporters Without Borders that the Taliban were extremely hard to argue with and most were threatened from reporting anything that is anti-taliban<sup>10</sup>. According to a Mingora-based journalist, if there is a problem with the military it is easier to sort out because the military is more understanding<sup>10</sup>. Since September, Reporters Without Borders has not found any incidence of journalist being denied entry into the region or being refused interviews by the military. Unlike other regions in the SCO, there has not been evidence of media suppression by Pakistan. The only media suppression in Pakistan was carried out by the Taliban. According to Toygonbek Kalmatov, a Kyrgyz government agency, the SCO representatives held closed door meetings in 2007 to discuss a list of banned extremist groups. One of the groups on the list was the Taliban, suggesting that the SCO would more likely back a Pakistan government as it is now than the Taliban.

While Pakistan may not engage in the same scale of repressive tactics as some of its SCO counterparts, neither is it is a consolidated democracy with full respect for human rights and

---

<sup>335</sup> Iqbal Khattak. "Report on fact-finding visit: press freedom after the Taliban defeat." Reporters Without Borders. 1 February 2010. <http://en.rsf.org/pakistan-report-on-fact-finding-visit-press-01-02-2010,36255.html>



political liberties. In 2009, a march was scheduled on Islamabad by many members of the opposition. The organizers hoped that the march would attract tens of thousands of people. However, President Zardari ordered the detention of several senior opposition politicians and hundreds of political workers in an attempt to stop the nationwide rally<sup>336</sup>. Zardari even banned protests in two of the countries four provinces, Punjab and Sind. The marchers' intent was to restore a former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, who had been sacked by Gen Musharraf, former military ruler, before Zardari took power.<sup>11</sup> Zardari's reluctance is because Chaudhry opposed amnesty for the President that absolved him of charges relating to embezzlement during his wife's tenures as prime minister. Zardari moved against Nawaz Sharif, leader of the opposition movement, and his brother whom is the Punjab province's governor, from holding office<sup>11</sup>. Zardari then imposed his own rule in the province. This however did not suppress the protests from continuing. Zardari eventually offered an olive branch to have the Supreme Court review its decision to ban Sharif and his brother from public office but the opposition said they would still protest until the groups of deposed senior judges were restored<sup>337</sup>.

Zardari's direct rule in Punjab did not last long as pressure from the opposition mounted. On March 28, 2009, the President said he will begin the process of transferring power back to his prime minister Yusuf Gilani. The Supreme Court even lifted the ban on Mr. Sharif that removed him and his brother from power in the Punjab province<sup>338</sup>. On March 16, 2009, the Pakistan government bowed to pressure by reinstating the former chief justice of the Supreme Court and other deposed judges<sup>339</sup>.

In 2010, President Zardari would go even further in restoring democracy in Pakistan. The President unveiled sweeping constitutional reforms in bill that would overturn changes made by the former military general Musharraf that gave the President the power to dismiss elected governments and band Prime Ministers form serving more that two terms<sup>340</sup>. According to his bill, the Prime Minister, the head of the executive backed parliament, would be the most

---

<sup>336</sup> Wilkinson, Isambard. "Pakistan's Long March dissidents rounded up by Zardari." The Daily Telegraph, London. 12 March 2009.

<sup>337</sup> Constable, Pamela. "As Pakistan Roils, Protesters Set to March on Capital." The Washington Post. 15 March 2009.

<sup>338</sup> Wilnsion, Isambard. "Zardari forced to lift direct rule in Punjab." The Sunday Telegraph, London. 29 March 2009.

<sup>339</sup> Constable, Pamela. "Pakistani Leader Bows to Pressure; Judges Reinstated After Protests, in Sign of Zardari's Weakening Grip." The Washington Post. A section; pg A01. 16 March 2009

<sup>340</sup> Siddiq, Javed. Pakistan president plans to give away his powers." The Daily Telegraph, London. Pg 16. 22 March 2010.

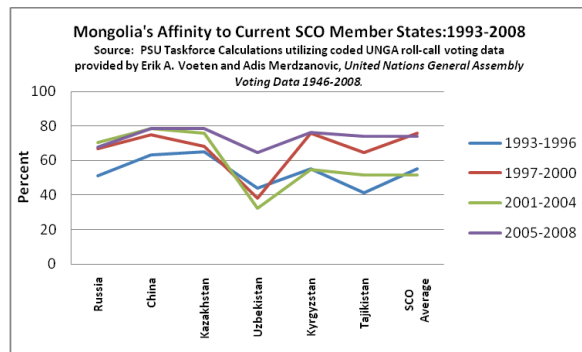
powerful figure in government<sup>15</sup>. The sweeping reforms would also grant extra powers to the provinces, relinquishing more control that the President had over the regions.

Pakistan has had a history of military rule in the country and has often resulted to authoritarian tactics to keep power. The recent events suggest Pakistan is heading in a more democratic direction, however not all in the opposition are as happy with the recent decisions. Some members fear that some of the new reforms would fuel ethnic nationalism and in turn weaken the country. Pakistan still has a long way to stability but in working with the opposition, is on a better path towards stabilization.

Pakistan is still an observer state to the SCO and believes that the SCO can help to further stabilize Pakistan and its economy. As we have seen, Pakistan has worked closely with some of the member states to further economic development. Pakistan has also worked with some of the states in regards to terrorism by extraditing people that their governments consider ‘terrorists.’ Pakistan is in a strategic position to help further the growth of the SCO nations as a connecting point to the Middle East. However, it may still be a while before the SCO admits Pakistan but they are already working with Pakistan to further their regional development.

While democratic progress has been improved under the Zardari Administration, looming state security concerns and economic opportunities certainly provide the necessary pretext for enhanced cooperation between Pakistan and SCO member countries—that such enhanced cooperation could further jeopardize democratic progress seems assured in light of recent extradition cooperation. With a full-membership bid in the SCO a realistic possibility in the future, it will become all the more important in the near-term for the United States Government to work directly with the Zardari Administration in an effort to sustain its more recent commitments to the development of democracy.

## Mongolia



Mongolia may appear to be the anomaly among its fellow authoritarian peripheral states—it was the first country to ascertain observer status in the SCO in 2004—but there are still important implications to consider, including its geopolitical location, relatively new infrastructure, and additional energy resources.

However, Mongolia does not appear to be actively engaging in the Spirit of Shanghai; rather, it appears to be, in its nascent phases, exercising tremendous independence in its decision-making and foreign policy, despite visible pressure from Russia and China.

The communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) ruled Mongolia for nearly 70 years, during which time both China and the Soviet Union contributed substantial financial assistance.<sup>341</sup> In 1990, public demonstrations forced the resignation of the MPRP, resulting in a “democratic transformation” as Mongolia transitioned to a parliamentary democracy.<sup>342</sup> Mongolia has since sought to broaden its foreign policy; it participates in the Asian Development Bank, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the International Atomic Energy Association, as well as the Pacific Economic Cooperative Council. It has recently taken a more active role in the United Nations. Despite these transitions toward a more democratic future, Mongolia remains undeveloped and weak, and potentially vulnerable.

More specifically, Mongolia's legal and financial institutions still struggle; its legislative processes “remain in their infancy,” and throughout the past few decades, government corruption increased as the now non-Communist MPRP attempted to regain control in contentious elections.<sup>343</sup> In 1996, the Democratic Coalition achieved a strong victory over the MPRP. Over the course of the next ten years, Mongolia's elections underwent political turmoil; it was not until August 2008 that the current parliament was sworn in, and then in September 2008, that MPRP member Sanjaaglin Bayar was elected prime minister. Democratic Party candidate

<sup>341</sup> Dumbaugh, Kerry; Morrison, Wayne M. “Mongolia and U.S. Policy: Political and Economic Relations.” Congressional Research Service. June 18, 2009. pg. 1.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

Tsakhagiin Elbegdorj was declared victor of the May 2009 presidential elections. In sum, Mongolia has undergone a series of contested, heated elections, and is still a new democracy.

Mongolia's economy is relatively poor, despite its large mineral deposits. Nearly one-third of its population lives in poverty.<sup>344</sup> The collapse of the Soviet Union negatively affected its economy. In 2003, Mongolia agreed to pay Russia \$250 million in an effort to resolve debt obligations and reform its economy. Additionally, the recent global economic crisis has affected Mongolia significantly.

In 2007, Mongolia's largest export partner was China (74.2%), followed by Canada (11.4%), and thirdly, the United States (3.4%), whom it refers to as its "third neighbor."<sup>345</sup> The top three exports included copper, gold, and animal hairs. It is perhaps due to its strategic geopolitical location that Mongolia has been able to assert its independence, buttressed between rivaling China, but Russia has taken an increasingly visible interest in Mongolia; in March 2009, it extended a \$300 million loan to assist Mongolia's agriculture. This same meeting between Prime Ministers Putin and Bayar produced a joint Russian-Mongolian railway venture.<sup>346</sup>

Even still, trade with Russia and China does not appear to affect its foreign policy, and Mongolia, though weak, strives to assert its independence through various projects. Mongolia actively pursues an open and non-aligned foreign policy. For example, in 2008, reports surfaced that Mongolia was contemplating a highway project linking Mongolia and Kazakhstan.<sup>347</sup>

As part of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) aid program, in which developing nations are rewarded for liberalizing political and economic systems, Mongolia was designated \$188 million in U.S. funding, specifically targeted to modernize its rail system.<sup>348</sup> However, Russia pressured Mongolia to refuse the U.S. funds, and Mongolia acquiesced, requesting that the U.S. redirect the funds to alternative projects. Batbold Sukhbaatar, Mongolia's minister for foreign affairs and trade cited previous commitments to Russia to undergo the 50-50 railway venture as underlying reasons.

In conclusion, despite Russia's explicit investment, Mongolia appears to mediate its independence in foreign policy. It is a new, weak democracy in some ways, but Mongolia has not acquiesced fully to the Spirit of Shanghai. It has cooperated with SCO members and non-

---

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Blagov, Sergei. "Mongolia: The Kremlin Extends Agricultural Aid to Ulaanbaatar." Eurasianet. March 18, 2009.

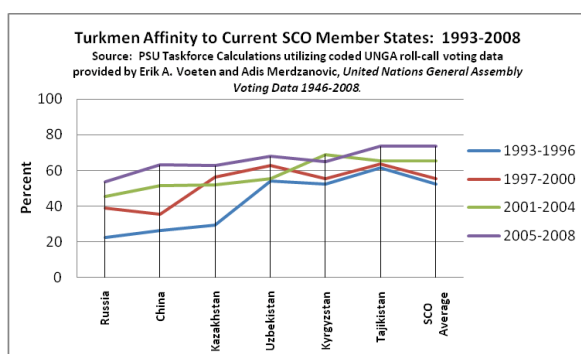
<sup>347</sup> "Mongolia: The Kremlin Takes Aim at Mongolia's Uranium Reserves." Eurasianet. May 17, 2009.

<sup>348</sup> Kucera, Joshua. "Mongolia: Russia Nixes US Development Funds for Ulaanbaatar." June 8, 2009.

members alike. It will be interesting to see whether Russia's influence will influence its foreign policy substantially.

### Turkmenistan: An Unlikely New SCO Member

There are no reports that Turkmenistan has made any inquiries into joining the SCO and it seems unlikely they would be interested in joining within the current political context. However, they share significant traits in common with the SCO, including tactics for media repression. Their shared practices with SCO member states furthers our theory that it is not so



much the SCO itself that should concern US policy makers, but rather regional norms against democracy and US involvement.

Turkmenistan officially declared its independence from the Soviet Union on October 27, 1991. In 1992 the new constituted declared itself to be a democracy, however it functions more like an authoritarian regime with power concentrated in the executive branch.<sup>349</sup> In 2007 Turkmenistan held multi-party elections following the passing of long term “President for Life” Saparmurat Niyazov. Berdymukhammedov won the election with an overwhelming 89.2% of the vote.<sup>350</sup> Political opposition parties continue to be outlawed and many of these groups are living in exile.<sup>351</sup> Regional specialist from the US Strategic Studies Institute, Stephen Blank, expected Berdymukhammedov to fall under pressure to join regional organizations, including the SCO. Of course, we haven’t seen this, in part due to Turkmenistan’s preference for stability over change, as quoted by Dr. Murat Esenov of the Swedish *Journal of Central Asia and the Caucasus*.<sup>352</sup> This preference is clear since many policies have remained in-tact from Niyazov to Berdymukhammedov.

Freedom House gives Turkmenistan a rating of 7 on both political rights and civil liberties, labeling them “Not Free.”<sup>353</sup> The former government under President Niyazov was known for “isolationist and frequently bizarre policies” including closing all hospitals outside of

<sup>349</sup> Nozar, Alaolmolki. 2001. *Life After the Soviet Union*. Albany, New York: State University of New York.

<sup>350</sup> CIA World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tx.html>

<sup>351</sup> CIA World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tx.html>

<sup>352</sup> Blank, Stephen J. September 2007. “Turkmenistan and Central Asia after Niyazov”. *Strategic Studies Institute*.

<sup>353</sup> Freedom House 2010 Report on Freedom Around the World

the capital and multiple elections where he ran unopposed.<sup>354</sup> Furthermore, the former government under President Niyazov severely restricted freedom of speech and press, religion, and other civil and social liberties. His human rights track record was similarly dismal including torture, mistreatment of detainees, and arbitrary arrest.<sup>355</sup> Since these restrictions have been in place for many years, it seems unlikely that the SCO's influence could be responsible for this behavior. Rather, this reinforces our hypothesis that the SCO is more dangerous for the regional norms it is helping to legitimize. Current President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov has made "token improvements" to ameliorate these issues; however there have been no significant strides towards systematic change.<sup>356</sup> In August 2008, a new constitution was approved without public discourse that broadened the president's powers.

Turkmenistan is currently ranked number 59 on the 2009 Fund for Peace Failed State Index that uses twelve measures of social, political, and economic indicators.<sup>357</sup> Notable from this report is that it gives Turkmenistan a high score of 7/10 for mounting geographic pressures. Of these geographic pressures, struggles with Russia over exportation of natural gas and concerns over neighboring Afghanistan are important. As Turkmenistan is loosening up on its former isolationist foreign policy, they are choosing to make strategic alliances with super powers such as NATO, the US, and China on their own. Many smaller Central Asian states appear to rely on the SCO to bolster their foreign policy ties. Turkmenistan's strong authoritarian regime seems unlikely to need this same type of cooperation and support from the SCO.

As with other SCO member states Reporters without Borders harshly criticizes Turkmenistan's journalistic repression. A 2009 article states "Dependent on its income from the export of gas, Turkmenistan is actively trying to diversity its outlets and improve its international image."<sup>358</sup> The article also dismisses any hopes that the new government will radically change repressive policies from the previous one despite the dismissal of two important government censorship officials in early 2009. It is currently ranked number 171 out of 173 on their press freedom index. Their media continues to not allow any criticism of the government, opposition

---

<sup>354</sup> Freedom House 2006 Report on Freedom Around the World.

<sup>355</sup> The Fund for Peace. 2007. 2006 Turkmenistan Overview. [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org)

<sup>356</sup> Freedom House 2010 Report on Freedom Around the World.

<sup>357</sup> Fund for Peace 2009 Failed State Index.

[http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140)

<sup>358</sup> Reporters without Borders. September 16, 2009. Gas Contracts but no Press Freedom.

websites are blocked, email is monitored, and visiting alternative websites is apparently dangerous. Journalists and students are also not allowed to go abroad.<sup>359</sup>

Although we see many similarities linking Turkmenistan with SCO member states, there are significant differences as well. On February 29, 2009 Berdymukhammedov offered support to US military operations in Afghanistan by allowing use of its airspace.<sup>360</sup> On May 7, 2007 the UN sent a mandate to the Security Council requesting the development of a UN Regional Centre for Preventative Diplomacy to be housed in Turkmenistan. One of the functions of this organization specifically addressed in its mandate is: “To maintain contact with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and other regional organizations, encourage their peacemaking efforts and initiatives, and facilitate coordination and information exchange with due regard to their specific mandates.”<sup>361</sup> The center was officially opened on December 10, 2007. This organization aims to accomplish many of the same goals as the SCO, including regional security. Most recently, on April 21-22, 2010 they held a seminar to advance the dialog and facilitate exchange of information affecting stability and sustainable development in Central Asia.<sup>362</sup> No official reports to the UN Security Council have been published yet for this Centre. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon thanked Turkmen President Berdimuhamedov for Turkmenistan’s “action contribution to building long-term, fruitful cooperation with the United Nations”.<sup>363</sup> The statement, presented on the Turkmenistan embassy’s website continues to praise Turkmenistan for making progress towards “fundamental reforms”. This statement also mentions that Turkmenistan has played an important role in peace keeping with Afghanistan, its neighbor.

### *Competition over Natural Resources*

According to the Turkmen government they have estimated reserves of over 20 trillion cubic meters of natural gas and 12 billion barrels of oil. The CIA World Factbook rates them as #43 for oil reserves.<sup>364</sup> Turkmenistan is the second largest natural gas producer and exporter within the CIS following Russia. Turkmenistan has relied upon their resources and the strict authoritarian control of them in order to build a more stable regime. A large majority of these gas

---

<sup>359</sup> Reporters without Borders. September 16, 2009. Gas Contracts but no Press Freedom.

<sup>360</sup> United News of India, 2009

<sup>361</sup> Ban Ki-Moon. May 16, 2007. Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council.

<sup>362</sup> UN Regional Centre for Preventative Diplomacy for Central Asia. April 20, 2010. Press Release.

<sup>363</sup> Turkmenistan Embassy Official Website. [www.turkmenistanembassy.org](http://www.turkmenistanembassy.org)

<sup>364</sup> CIA World Factbook <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tx.html>

exports go to post-Soviet states, with a small amount going to Iran and now they are expanding their markets to China.<sup>365</sup> This abundance of natural resources makes Turkmenistan important geopolitically to Russia, China, and even the US. Current president Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov has opened relations with SCO member states, mainly for the purpose of exporting its natural gas resources.

Ever since declaring its independence from the Soviet Union, Turkmenistan has had tense relations with Russia over the export of its natural gas. Disputes throughout the 1990's resulted in continuous shut downs of the supply of natural gas flowing between the two countries.<sup>366</sup> Russia seemed pleased at first with the new leadership, however old tensions seem to have passed on. On April 9, 2009 an explosion occurred on one of the natural gas pipelines supplying gas from Turkmenistan to Russia. The Turkmenistan government immediately released statements accusing Russia for the incident, citing that Russia had given them insufficient time to adjust to a reduced need for gas. Turkmenistan claimed that this broke their agreements on the pipeline. The following day, Berydymukhamedov speaking at a CIS conference, addressed a need for improved energy cooperation in the region to avoid future incidents like this.<sup>367</sup>

Recently in late 2009, Berydymukhamedov was welcomed by the SCO Secretary-General Bolat Nurgalijev at a high level conference involving the other large international organizations in the region including the UN, OSCE, and CIS. Nurgalijev reinforced the SCO's commitment to regional stability. In response, Berydymukhamedov said they respect the SCO and its values, noting that regional cooperation is critical to stability and security, especially with regards to energy transfer.<sup>368</sup> On December 22, 2009 the presidents of Russia and Turkmenistan signed a new energy agreement that adjusts the price of the gas.<sup>369</sup>

---

<sup>365</sup> Pirani, Simon. 2009. *Russian and CIS Gas Markets and Their Impact on Europe*. New York: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies.

<sup>366</sup> Nozar, Alaolmolki. 2001. *Life After the Soviet Union*. Albany, New York: State University of New York.

<sup>367</sup> Daly, John C.K. April 13, 2009. Pipeline Explosion Reveals Turkmenistan-Gazprom Rift. [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/)

<sup>368</sup> President of Turkmenistan met with SCO Secretary General. April 28, 2009. <http://infoshos.ru/en/?idn=4102>

<sup>369</sup> Blagov, Sergie. January 13, 2010. Russia Mends Ties with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[swords\]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx\\_ttnews\[any\\_of\\_the\\_words\]=sergei%20blagov&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35904&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=8e56e6b5cc\)Turkmenistan--Russian%20Gas%20pipeline%20explosion:http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/Turkmenistan%20pipeline%20explosion%20last%20year.http://www.rferl.org/content/Pipeline\\_Explosion\\_Stokes\\_Tensions\\_Between\\_Turkmenistan\\_Russia/1608633.htmlprevious%20%20nextClose%20this%20window](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[swords]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews[any_of_the_words]=sergei%20blagov&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35904&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=8e56e6b5cc)Turkmenistan--Russian%20Gas%20pipeline%20explosion:http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/Turkmenistan%20pipeline%20explosion%20last%20year.http://www.rferl.org/content/Pipeline_Explosion_Stokes_Tensions_Between_Turkmenistan_Russia/1608633.htmlprevious%20%20nextClose%20this%20window)



Turkmenistan is actively pursuing routes to export these resources besides the pipelines previously set up by the Soviet Union.<sup>370</sup> They are also allegedly very interested in joining the European Union's proposed Nabucco pipeline.<sup>371</sup> This is in direct conflict with Russia's interest in exporting natural gas from its former satellite states to European states. The new pipeline would essentially undermine Russia's efforts to control natural gas to Europe.

In August 2007 a natural gas pipeline was built that runs from Turkmenistan to China through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan<sup>372</sup>. This is another signal from Turkmenistan that they prefer to export their natural gas with other trading partners besides Russia. In a press release on the SCO website, Chinese President Hu mentioned numerous times how he hopes this pipeline will foster increased cooperation between the countries involved. "Hu said China places great importance on developing friendly cooperation with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Hu expressed the wish that the four nations be good neighbors, friends and partners forever." Turkmen President Berydymukhamedov said that the "gas pipeline is an embodiment of true partnership".<sup>373</sup> On the Turkmenistan Embassy's website, there was a speech by Turkmen President Berydymukhamedov that continued to express the importance of regional cooperation. This type of cooperation could be a reason for them to join the SCO, if the SCO is indeed interested in economic stability. But since they have made no public inquiries, it seems more likely that this is an example of geopolitics.

#### *Speculating on the Impact of Enhanced Turkmen-SCO Cooperation*

While Turkmenistan has long been known for its fundamentally unique policy orientation in Central Asia, the lesson of a radical sea-change in the policy priorities of Uzbekistan in the wake of 2005 events should serve to remind us that substantial policy rifts between Central Asian states and the SCO can be quickly overcome in the case of either crisis or opportunity. An analysis of annual exports to Turkmenistan from Russia and China reveals a particularly notable increase in trade volume beginning in 2006 (see figure below). Whether such enhanced relations will lead to further intergovernmental cooperation between Turkmenistan and the SCO is

---

<sup>370</sup> CIA World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tx.html>

<sup>371</sup> Reporters without Borders. September 16, 2009. Gas Contracts but no Press Freedom.

<sup>372</sup> Turkmenistan embassy press release from December 14, 2009 and SCO website

<sup>373</sup> SCO Official Website. <http://www.setco.org/EN/show.asp?id=168>

presently unknown, but such developments should not be excluded from the considerations of policy-makers in the wake of recently completed long-term joint energy distribution systems.<sup>374</sup>



While enhanced cooperation between Turkmenistan and the SCO would likely have marginal impact upon Turkmenistan's already well-entrenched autocratic form of government, a greater immediate concern would likely surround the potential for increasing practical cooperation between Turkmenistan and SCO

member/observer states in areas such as illegal extraditions as we have seen in the cases of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan; that such forms of assistance could further hamper U.S. efforts to promote democracy throughout the region seems assured. With low-levels of democracy assistance funding slated for Turkmenistan, we urge policy-makers to consider increasing existing budgets and to develop a program of diplomatic engagement that could serve to mitigate the potential for increasing intergovernmental cooperation between Turkmenistan and the SCO in the event of either crises or expanding economic opportunities.

## Afghanistan

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has exerted only minor formal influence on Afghanistan's reconstruction and national policy. Afghanistan's internal instability has, in turn, precluded it from major involvement in regional affairs. The SCO's primary concern with the country—as documented in the history/ causes and border sections—centers on curbing drug tracking and other cross-border criminal activity. These actions are likely to increase as the US draws down its presence in the country. There is also evidence of increasing bilateral ties between Afghanistan and China—including numerous business and investment agreements. These will be detailed near the end of the section, along with possible US policy proposals.

A formal SCO Afghanistan Action Plan was introduced at the organization's 2009 convention in Russia outlining further SCO-member state collaboration in addressing counterterrorism and drug trafficking. These proposals were in keeping with existing by NATO

<sup>374</sup> Pannier, Bruce (December 14, 2009). "New Turkmen-China Pipeline Breaks Russia's Hold Over Central Asian Gas," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*.  
[http://www.rferl.org/content/TurkmenistanChina\\_Gas\\_Pipeline\\_To\\_Open/1903108.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/TurkmenistanChina_Gas_Pipeline_To_Open/1903108.html)

border and security policies.<sup>375</sup> Some observers believe the SCO's rhetoric reveals ambitions beyond securing the border, and point towards the militarization of Afghanistan's energy reserves. By this interpretation, any SCO-military intervention in Afghanistan would represent intimidation of NATO and the flexing of SCO military muscle.

Another SCO meeting in March 2009 struck the same notes of developing a stronger presence in the country from SCO members—a plan endorsed by the US envoy to that conference. Officials at a UN summit held shortly thereafter seemed to endorse further SCO-involvement in securing Afghanistan's border and targeting drug trafficking.<sup>376</sup>

Afghanistan may prove to be an interesting and demonstrative test case for the power—overt or implicit—of the SCO to influence nations in its regional sphere. As the US presence diminishes and the Afghans exert further sovereignty, the resultant domestic political order may be closer in line with the SCO's "authoritarian internationale" than Bush-era ambitions for freedom and democracy. If Afghanistan does not smoothly transition into democratic statehood per the US blueprint, an authoritarian strongman may be the likely alternative. In either event, what remains true at this juncture is that the country is fractious and divided in a way that is only demographically hinted at by the other Central Asian nations.

While Afghanistan may be wary of extensive Russian involvement—via SCO military actions—in its domestic affairs, it may be far more receptive to the type of development programs China is pressing in nearby Kyrgyzstan.<sup>377</sup> Insofar as Afghanistan will require large-scale infrastructure and investment projects in the coming years, it may be reasonable to suspect that Afghanistan will become increasingly attracted to Chinese infrastructure investment projects that have been popular in developing nations throughout the world.

As mentioned above, there is increasing evidence of China's growing interest in Afghanistan's natural resources. This was manifest in Beijing's \$3.5 billion investment in Afghanistan's Aynak copper field in 2007—the largest foreign direct investment in

---

<sup>375</sup> Lin, Christina Y, "NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: New Energy Geopolitics for the Transatlantic Alliance", *AICGS Transatlantic Perspectives* August 2009

<sup>376</sup> Radyuhin, Vladimir, "SCO: towards a high-profile in Afghanistan", *The Hindu*, <http://www.thehindu.com/2009/03/31/stories/2009033152430800.htm>, 03/31/2009

<sup>377</sup> Mirgul Akimova, "Kyrgyz Wary of Chinese Bearing Gifts", Institute for War & Peace Reporting, November 3, 2008, <http://www.iwpr.net/report-news/kyrgyz-wary-chinese-bearing-gifts>. The Chinese government stirred quite a debate between politicians by stipulating that only Chinese Communist TV could be shown if the Kyrgyz were to accept the telecom infrastructure offered by China, since most of the Kyrgyz stations are Russian dominated. The recent regime change will, no doubt, be offered the same choice.

Afghanistan's history. The investment bid details the construction of a \$500 million electric plant and a railway from Tajikistan to Pakistan to support exploration. More Chinese investments aimed towards Afghanistan's unexplored reserves of oil and natural gas may be on the way. A number of reports have identified the development of these untapped resources as a potential engine in Afghanistan's state-building efforts.<sup>378</sup>

As detailed elsewhere in this report, the general diffusion of the Spirit of Shanghai and related cooperative practices (such as cooperation in the matter of illegal extraditions) from the dynamic relations between minor Central Asian States and China/ Russia. According to our analysis, curbing the diffusion of characteristic SCO policies and practices into Afghanistan will require the United States government to increasingly focus upon developing a balanced portfolio of democracy assistance which supports civil society initiatives and capacity-building in institutions. While SCO influence in Afghanistan will likely increase in coming years with the expansion of infrastructure projects and a declining U.S. presence, it is important to note that Afghanistan is presently the largest single destination country for United States democracy assistance dollars—a funding scenario that should function to mitigate potential SCO influence in coming years.

According to the Freedom House 2010 report on the Obama Administration's projected budget for Governing Justly & Democratically in 2011, Afghanistan is targeted to receive in excess of 80% of all US DPA expenditures in Central and South Asia; balancing these expenditures and designing them to strategically counter the specific negative externalities of cooperation with SCO member countries should become a priority consideration for designing democracy assistance portfolios in Afghanistan. While robust US DPA expenditures in Afghanistan represent part of a larger historical trend of tying democracy assistance projects to short-term tactical security and economic policy goals (see section on U.S. Democracy Promotion and Assistance in Central Asia), a sustained, but responsive commitment to democracy development in Afghanistan will be likely be required in order to pre-empt the potentially negative impact of SCO cooperation on individual liberties—thereby diminishing the value of prior spending and time.

---

<sup>378</sup> Norling, Nicklas. "The Emerging China-Afghanistan Relationship." *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst*. 14 May, 2008. Available <http://cacianalyst.org>.

## Armenia

Armenia was formally part of the Soviet Union as one of the 15 republics that made up the Soviet Union. It declared its independence on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991. Even though Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize Armenia's independence, relations between the two have historically been strained. This is mainly due to Turkey's continuing denial of the Armenian genocide that happened between 1915 and 1917. Even though Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize Armenia they never had formal political ties. Over the years tension between the two nations grew over various incidents. Turkey's siding with Azerbaijan during the Nagorno-Karabakh War conflict was the biggest strain between the two countries in the 1990s and led to Turkey closing its borders with Armenia. In more recent years relations have markedly improved and on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 the two country's leaders signed an agreement to establish political ties if approved by both country's parliament.<sup>379</sup>

Armenia's relationship with Azerbaijan has been very hostile since the late 1980s. In 1988 conflict broke out between the two Soviet Republics over the Nagorno-Karabakh area. These conflicts over the land prevailed and even worsened after both republics gained their independence. In 1994 the two countries signed a cease fire agreement but tension still remains high between the two countries over this land. Azerbaijan's defense minister, Safar Abiyev, was quoted telling the French Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Gabriel Keller; "For 15 years diplomacy has not achieved any concrete results and Azerbaijan cannot wait another 15 years...Now it's the military's turn and the threat is growing every day."<sup>380</sup>

Historically Russia has been an ally of the Armenians and has been an important security partner since Armenia's independence; the most tangible manifestation of bilateral security cooperation comes in the form of a defense pact in which Russia commits itself to a policy of intervention in the event that Armenia is attacked. Additionally, Russia has been providing Armenia with weapons over the years with experts estimating one of these deliveries to be valued at around 800 million dollars.<sup>381</sup> Thus, the credible threat of war with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute has led to increasing levels of Armenian dependence upon the

---

379 Hurriyet Daily News "Turkey, Armenia to sign diplomatic deal next month, says official"  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-armenia-to-sign-diplomatic-deal-next-month-says-official-2009-09-27>

380 Hurriyet Daily News "Azerbaijan sees 'great war' risk with Armenia"  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=azerbaijan-sees-great-war-risk-with-armenia-2010-02-25>

381 BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit, Ekspress, Baku, in Azeri 12 Jan 09 p 3 in LexisNexis Academic (accessed May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

Russian Federation—a policy scenario made more complicated by Armenia’s simultaneous dependence upon Russia for energy imports. The maintenance of tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan has therefore come to serve as a pretext for the continued presence of 102<sup>nd</sup> Russian military base in northern Armenia.

And while Russia presently maintains a strong degree of influence over Armenia, there are indications that this influence is slowly starting to weaken. Azerbaijan is still a major security risk for Armenia but some experts believe Armenia’s source of security will shift slowly from Russia to NATO in the coming years. Stepan Grigoryan, an Armenian political expert and the head of the Analytical Centre for Globalization and Regional Cooperation has stated that "There will be a transition period and in the long run Armenia will inevitably become a member of NATO. Georgia has practically become one and there is no way we could avoid this."<sup>382</sup> Grigoryan has also stated that the current relationship that Armenia has with Russia as part of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) (an arm of the Commonwealth of Independent States) isn’t working for Armenia. Specifically, he has noted, “When Armenia proposed to include the Nagorno Karabakh issue on the agenda, Russia immediately got bored, distanced itself and even gave up on its efforts of pressing Armenia into recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.”<sup>383</sup> Similarly, Arman Melikyan, former Foreign Minister of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic has indicated that Armenia maintains low-levels of efficacy in the security-related goods which stem from its continued participation in the Russian-led *Collective Security Treaty Organization*, indicating that the alliance would likely not intervene in the outbreak of hostilities over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh province.<sup>384</sup>

It is, however, premature to expect that Armenian cooperation with NATO could expand in the near term, provided Russia’s continued willingness to press for the preservation of its influence in its near abroad as has been effectively demonstrated during the 2008 Russo-Georgian war and the string of gas delivery crises in 2006 and 2009 which plagued bi-lateral relations with Ukraine under the then leadership of a pro-western Viktor Yushchenko who actively sought NATO membership much to the Russian Federation’s chagrin. Simultaneously, tense political relations between Armenia and Turkey over the historical genocide will likely

---

<sup>382</sup> BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit, Arminfo, Yerevan, in Russian 1150 gmt 17 Sep 08; Arminfo, Yerevan, in Russian 1118 gmt 17 Sep 08 in LexisNexis Academic (accessed May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit “Armenian experts on regional military alliance's role in possible Karabakh war” in LexisNexis Academic (accessed May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

continue to underwrite Armenia's reliance upon the Russian Federation for a host of security and economic resources insofar as Turkey is a long-standing NATO member state.

### *Armenian-SCO Relations*

In terms of intergovernmental relations between Armenia and the SCO, our analysis indicates that cooperation has largely been limited to bilateral security relations with Russia (described above) and a host of student exchanges, cultural awareness events, and technology sharing programs between Armenia and China.<sup>385</sup> Similarly, we expect expanded cooperation between Armenia and the SCO to be mitigated by Armenian interests in pursuing enhanced relations with both the European Union and NATO—a scenario which we expect will likely serve to balance diffusion of SCO norms and practices with conditional collaboration with Western intergovernmental organizations.

### **Azerbaijan**

Like Armenia, Azerbaijan was one of the 15 republics that made up the Soviet Union. It completed its independence on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1991 and is formally recognized by 158 countries. It's also part of 38 different international organizations including the Council of Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States. The relationship between Azerbaijan and Armenia has been tense since the late 1980s. Ethnic Armenians living in the Nagorno-Karabakh area of Azerbaijan, fought against the Azerbaijan government with the assistance of the Armenian government.

In 1994 the two countries signed a cease fire agreement but tension between the two remains to this day. Azerbaijan has been a close ally of Turkey and was assisted by Turkey during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. This led to a worsening of relations between Turkey and Armenia. In more recent years relations have been improving between Turkey and Armenia as both governments have consented to reestablishing political relations, a move which has been strongly opposed by Azerbaijan. Reports indicate that improved relations between Turkey and Armenia could potentially carry significant consequences for Turkey's relations with Azerbaijan insofar as Azerbaijani dissatisfaction could impact the status quo of energy relations with Turkey.<sup>386</sup>

---

<sup>385</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific - Political "China's Hu Jintao meets presidents of Mali, Seychelles, Armenia 2 May" in LexisNexis Academic.

<sup>386</sup> Christian Science Monitor "Turkey's talks with Armenia test ties with gas-supplier Azerbaijan" in LexisNexis Academic.

### *Azerbaijan-SCO Relations*

While Azerbaijan initially joined the Collective Security Agreement (the predecessor to the CSTO) on a five year basis with a right to renew the relationship at the end of the term, Azerbaijan made a decisive political statement by not choosing to renew its organizational commitment. Despite such decisions, in more recent years Russia has been pushing for expanded control and influence over Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's newspaper, *Ayna* reports that Russia has a list of items it wants to accomplish with Azerbaijan that include reintegrating Azerbaijan into the CSTO, expanded economic relations, and the restoration of a Russian military presence in Azerbaijan that would serve to strengthen Russia's role in the Trans-Caucasus.<sup>387</sup>

While Azerbaijani relations with the SCO may be strained by bilateral relations with Russia, Azerbaijan still clearly embodies the illiberal principles and practices that are otherwise associated with the *Spirit of Shanghai* which are made manifest in restrictions placed upon the development of an effective civil society and independent media. In a move reminiscent of Central Asia's super-presidential regimes, in March 2009 the Aliyev Administration presided over a national referendum which has eliminated term limits. In a further effort to stem the development of political opposition the Aliyev administration has banned the five leading opposition parties and over 600 independent candidates from participating in Azerbaijan's first parliamentary election.<sup>388</sup>

Even though Azerbaijan does fundamentally embody many of the illiberal practices associated with the *Spirit of Shanghai*, in light of restricted levels of intergovernmental cooperation, such similarities appear to stem more from common Soviet legacies rather than practical contemporary or recent cooperation with the SCO or its individual member states. As in the case of Armenia, Azerbaijan appears more fundamentally oriented towards Western powers and institutions than the SCO itself; having expressed interest in joining both the EU and NATO, their actions demonstrate that they are more focused upon these specific goals than combating the three evils that are at the heart of the *Spirit of Shanghai*.

---

<sup>387</sup> BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit "Russia plans to expand military presence in Azerbaijan " in LexisNexis Academic.

<sup>388</sup> BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit "Russia plans to expand military presence in Azerbaijan " in LexisNexis Academic (accessed May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010)



## Georgia and Ukraine

	2003- 2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GEORGIA	4	3.5	3	3	4	4	4
UKRAINE	4	3.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
KYRGYZSTAN	5.5	5.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5.5
RUSSIA	5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
UZBEKISTAN	6.5	6.5	7	7	7	7	7

**Freedom House Country Ratings. Scale: 1-7 (1 representing consolidated democracy, 7 representing consolidated authoritarianism).**

Sharing direct borders with the Russian Federation, both Georgia and Ukraine are not only susceptible to influence from the Russian Federation, but are also in a position to exert substantial influence upon SCO member-states—as has been the case following the Georgian *Rose Revolution* of 2003 as well as the Ukrainian *Orange Revolution* of 2004. Color revolutions in both states have significantly impacted the development of the *Spirit of Shanghai* which has, in turn, been progressively internalized by Central Asian states as a part of a general defensive response to the possibility of regime change through similar domestic revolutions. Simultaneously, within their own territories, both Georgia and Ukraine are subject to substantial influence from both Russia and the West.

In the last eight years the Freedom House rankings for both Georgia and Ukraine, along with those of the SCO member states demonstrate a consistent set of trends. It would appear that as former Color Revolution states, Georgia, Ukraine, and also Kyrgyzstan have moved closer towards consolidated democracy, with Freedom House classifying each country as “Free;” simultaneously, both Russia and Uzbekistan have moved more closely towards forms of consolidated authoritarianism. It should also be noted that, however, that during these same years there have been no significant changes in the democracy ratings for China, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan; a fact which comes as little surprise as each of these states have continued to be labeled as “Not Free” by Freedom House for the previous eight years.

The Rose revolution occurred in Georgia Towards the end of 2003. Some changes were seen the next year (such as the enactment of ‘free’ and ‘fair’ elections) moving them closer in the direction of democracy. In 2004 Ukraine’s Orange revolution took place also shifting their government closer to democracy. A year later Kyrgyzstan’s Tulip revolution occurred. These revolutions inspired democratic elections and more freedoms granted to the media for at least a

temporary amount of time. As each of the countries were noted to have some improvements, Russia and Uzbekistan both moved in an opposite direction. During this same time period, from 2004 to 2006 nearly all of the SCO member countries began to effectively “consolidate their powers,” by taking direct steps towards both eliminating potential opposition and simultaneously shifting more power to their executive branches. At this time very few members of opposition parties were being elected to parliaments, and in many countries following the *Spirit of Shanghai* the opposition faced attacks and increased pressure from ruling parties.<sup>389</sup> By moving more towards authoritarianism and controlling the power distribution within their own countries the SCO states appear to have taken steps to directly discourage Color Revolutions of their own, thereby enabling a wider diffusion of the *Spirit of Shanghai* as a means to ensure the continuation of the domestic political status quo.

### *Georgia*

While democratic achievements under the *Rose Revolution* in Georgia appeared promising, initially, the country has since experienced significant democratic setbacks when in 2007 a state of emergency was called, banning any non-state run broadcasts and thereby restricting civil liberties. The state of emergency was called after riots broke out over a supposedly Russian-influenced opposition television station had been shut down. Ironically, these anti-democratic measures were undertaken largely in an effort to mitigate the influence of Russian soft power tactics. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili believed that the riots were directly inspired by Moscow and stated, “We cannot let our country become the stage for dirty geo-political escapades by other countries.”<sup>390</sup> The six day protest ended with at least five-hundred wounded and many protesters detained for questionable charges.<sup>391</sup> Also in 2007, a member of a political opposition party was also jailed for “corruption,” and then released shortly thereafter.<sup>392</sup> The restriction of civil liberties and lowered powers of the political opposition continue up through current day.

More recently, protestors have demonstrated against the Saakashvili administration, most notably in a series of public movements that were held between April and June of 2009.

---

<sup>389</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World. Freedom House, Inc.  
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=15>

<sup>390</sup> Harding, Luke. State of emergency in Georgia as street protests turn violent. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

<sup>391</sup> Human Rights Watch. World Report 2008. <http://www.hrw.org/>

<sup>392</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World. Freedom House, Inc.  
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=15>

Georgian officials responded to these demonstrations with a strong use of force against both activists and journalists alike.<sup>393</sup> These harsh reprisals by the Saakashvili administration on opposition movements and legal political protests stand as credible indicators that the democratic progress made in during the 2003 *Rose Revolution* has been seriously weakened; some analysts have even indicated that Georgia has not only experienced a substantial democratic backsliding, but has, in fact, demonstrated greater authoritarian tendencies under the Saakashvili government than under the pre-revolutionary regime.<sup>394</sup>

After years of war, embargoes, and tension with Russia, Georgia left the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This group was created in an attempt to bolster security and stability for its member states. Interestingly enough, this also includes the idea of promoting “democracy” and stability between member states yet includes all of the Shanghai six with the exception of China. Georgia appears to have left this group due to its issues with Russia.<sup>395</sup> And although the 2008 Russo-Georgian War has ended, Russian forces still occupy South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two Georgian territories which have declared their independence.

#### *Ukraine*

In an effort to maintain direct influence over its near-abroad Moscow—during the 2004 Presidential elections—sponsored pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovych. Yanukovich’s attempts to alter the elections in his favor culminated in the events that would eventually become known as the *Orange Revolution*, a series of mass rallies and public protests that successfully contested the initial electoral outcomes and produced a second national election that overturned the previous results, thereby placing pro-Western candidate Viktor Yushchenko into power. That Ukraine’s more staunchly pro-Western foreign policy under the previous Yushchenko administration has stirred the ire of the Kremlin—a policy which has included increasing overtures to both NATO and the European Union, as well as Viktor Yushchenko’s overt support for the Saakashvili Administration in the 2008 Russo-Georgian War—is widely known and has been largely tied to the deteriorating state of relations between the two countries in recent years that have manifested themselves, popularly, in the form of increased Ukrainian energy prices,

---

<sup>393</sup> Human Rights Watch. World Report 2009. <http://www.hrw.org/>

<sup>394</sup> Areshidze, Irakly. 2007. *Democracy and Autocracy in Eurasia. Georgia in Transition*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

<sup>395</sup> Commonwealth of Independent States. CIS Executive Committee. <http://www.cis.minsk.by/>

associated issues of non-payment, and consequent natural gas supply disruptions on two separate occasions in January 2006, and 2009.<sup>396</sup>

In a recent 2010 *Bloomberg* report entitled, “Russian Gas Deal May End Ukraine’s NATO Ambitions,” Pronina Lyubov indicates that Russia has more recently offered to once again lower the price of natural gas deliveries this time, however, in exchange for increasing control over the course of Ukrainian foreign policy.<sup>397</sup> That such offers come immediately on the heels of the 2010 victory of pro-Russian Presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovych and the more recent establishment of a new cabinet that is largely composed of pro-Russian *Party of Regions* elites only further indicates Russia will likely continue to take steps to exert strong influence over the direction of Ukrainian foreign and domestic policy in the coming years; that the Yanukovych Administration may be associated with increasingly negative prospects for the further consolidation of Ukrainian democracy appears likely.

## **Conclusion**

Overall the results of the Color Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine do not appear to be as sustainable as once hoped. Although Georgia has recently slid back towards authoritarianism, it is arguable that Russia is not the sole cause of this shift given the tension between the two states. Legally, Ukraine is moving closer to being a democracy, yet realistically it appears they have some issues to deal with such as improving law enforcement and corruption. On the other hand, Ukraine and Georgia have both strengthened their ties with the European Union. The EU plans to further deepen their association with both states through political and economic agreements while helping them build stronger democracies. To this day, over six million euros have been contributed from the EU to humanitarian aid in Georgia.<sup>398</sup> Further western support has been demonstrated in NATO’s Bucharest Summit declaration which basically states that both states will be admitted into NATO at an unmentioned time.<sup>399</sup> While continued Russian influence in both Georgia and Ukraine in the coming years appears likely, it is the opinion of this taskforce that enhanced engagement by both the United States as well as the European Union

---

<sup>396</sup>Gessen, Keith. The Orange and the Blue (Ukraine’s Election). The New Yorker. 1 March 2010; see also Dujisin, Zoltán. Debate Over Joining NATO Erupts Again. Inter Press Service. 15 Feb 2008.

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=41216>

<sup>397</sup>Pronina, Lyubov. Russian Gas Deal May End Ukraine’s NATO Ambitions. Bloomberg Businessweek. May 7, 2010. <http://www.businessweek.com/>

<sup>398</sup>Europa- European Commission. External Relations. [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/)

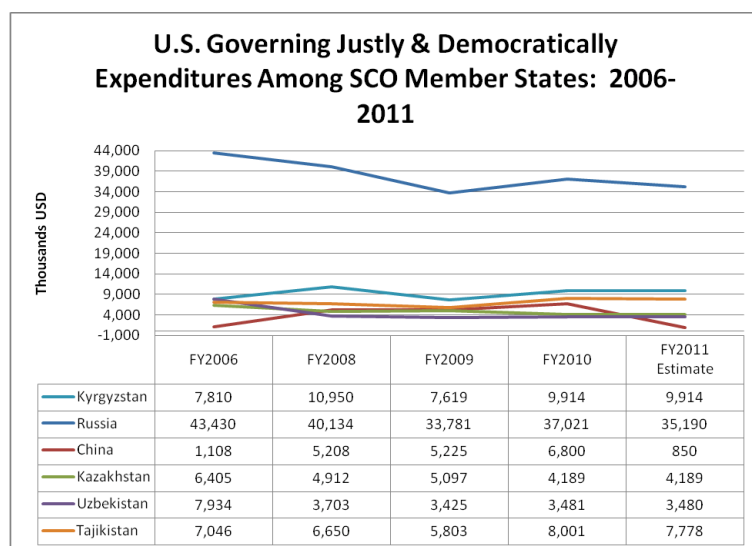
<sup>399</sup>North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Bucharest Treaty Declaration. April 2008.

will become vital to sustaining prior democratic achievements in the face of emerging threats associated with the diffusion of the *Spirit of Shanghai*.

## U.S. Democracy Promotion and Assistance in Central Asia: Challenges & Lessons Learned

### Endemic Challenges to Democracy Promotion and Assistance (DPA)

While available funding levels for U.S. democracy promotion and assistance initiatives within the former Soviet Republics were ramped up in early 1990s with the passing of the U.S. Freedom Support Act of 1992 (FSA) and the Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF) in 1994,<sup>400</sup> annual expenditures dedicated to promoting democracy among current Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states have continued to remain low or are in a state of relative decline, in recent years, despite the regions' increasing tendency towards consolidated



**Figure 10** Data compiled from Freedom House Reports for 2007, 2008, and 2009 which detail budget allocations for the following

authoritarianism (see figure 1).<sup>401</sup>

Thomas Carothers, at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, has indicated that one of the key challenges to effective U.S. democracy promotion in Central Asia (and elsewhere) has been the often overlapping and competitive priorities of U.S. economic and security policy.

While Carothers has often acted as an effective critic of the procedural approaches to implementing democracy assistance projects abroad, his macro-level analysis of short-comings in the U.S. development assistance apparatus are of particular importance for any larger discussion surrounding the history of U.S. democracy promotion efforts in Central Asia.

Writing of the U.S. democracy assistance policy under the Clinton Administration during the 1990s, Carothers indicates:

<sup>400</sup> Yazdani, Enayatollah (2007). "US Democracy Promotion Policy in the Central Asian Republics: Myth or Reality?" *International Studies* 44(2): 142.

<sup>401</sup> Freedom House Reports detailing U.S. GJ&D budget allocations (2007, 2008, 2010): *Freedom House* (2007). "Supporting Freedom's Advocates: An Analysis of the Bush Administration FY2008 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights;" *Freedom House* (2009). "Making its Mark: An Analysis of the Obama Administration FY2010 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights;" *Freedom House* (2010). "Investing in Freedom: An Analysis of the Obama Administration FY2011 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights."

The core strategic approach of U.S. policy under Clinton remains what it has been for decades, a semirealist balancing of sometimes competing and sometimes complementary interests. Where democracy appears to fit in well with U.S. security and economic interests, the United States promotes democracy. Where democracy clashes with other significant interests, it is downplayed or even ignored. And where the United States has few indentifiable economic or security interests of any real consequence...the United States will give some attention to democracy out of a general idealistic impulse but usually not commit major financial or human resources to the task.<sup>402</sup>

A parallel narrative is to be found in his assessment of the Bush Administrations' regional democracy assistance policies leading up to 2004 (the time of writing), in which he describes the U.S.' Central Asia program as largely limited both by increasing economic interests in oil and gas reserves in Kazakhstan, as well as the need to sustain military basing rights in both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan following the initiation of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan in 2001.<sup>403</sup> In both instances Carothers underscores a certain consistency to U.S. policy in regards to Central Asia which may serve to explain the region's typically low-levels of support as a function of competing U.S. policy interests. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Freedom House released its annual report on the Presidential Administration's budgetary request for Democracy and Human Rights Spending for the upcoming year: *Investing in Freedom: An Analysis of the Obama Administration FY 2011 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights*. The findings in this report clearly suggest that under the Obama administration U.S. democracy promotion and assistance funding will continue to be linked to existing security and economic policy priorities thereby continuing what Carothers has identified as a long-standing semi-realist policy approach to the development of democracy.

In particular, Freedom House indicates that while the Obama Administration has increased its overall budgetary request for *Governing Justly & Democratically* (GJ&D) in the world to an all-time high of \$3.3 billion (representing a 25% increase over the year prior) the majority of overall funding and increasing expenditures are reserved specifically for programs in both Afghanistan and Pakistan (see figures 2 and 3), in coordination with existing military operations and national security interests.<sup>404</sup> Freedom House indicates:

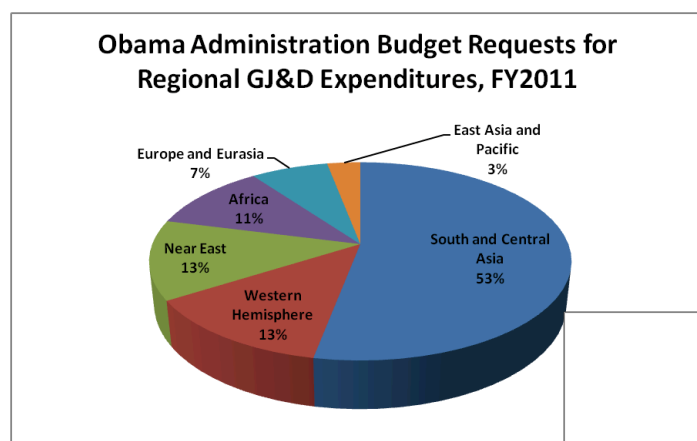
---

<sup>402</sup> Carothers, Thomas (2004). *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., 65.

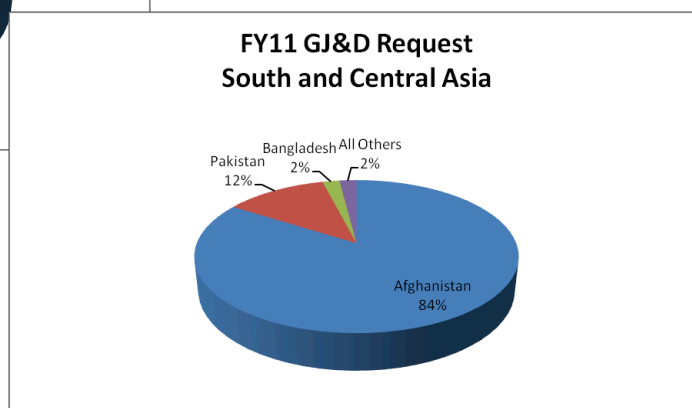
<sup>404</sup> Freedom House (2010). "Investing in Freedom: An Analysis of the Obama Administration FY2011 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights," p.1.

- Of the total request, 47% of all GJ&D funding for FY11 is being directed towards Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is a significant increase from the FY10 request, in which over a third (35%) of all GJ&D funding was directed towards these two countries.
- GJ&D funding for Afghanistan alone is more than GJ&D funding for the Western Hemisphere, Africa, East Asia and Pacific, and Europe and Eurasia combined.<sup>405</sup>



**Figure 11 Graph Courtesy of Freedom House Special Report, *Investing in Freedom* (April, 2010), p. 10.**

Further analysis reveals that while the Obama administration has significantly increased GJ&D expenditures for the South and Central



**Figure 12 Graph Courtesy of Freedom House Special Report, *Investing in Freedom* (April, 2010), p. 21.**

Asia region, *a mere 2% of the United State's total projected budget is slated to be spent on programs operating exclusively in Central Asia states* (Figure 3).

As shown in Figure 1 (above) democracy assistance directed specifically toward SCO member countries will either remain fixed at prior 2010 levels or is expected to be cut in 2011. Of particular importance here is the sizeable decrease in U.S. resources that will be directed toward the development of democracy in China in the forthcoming year. While both Russia and China programs are expected to receive substantially less funding in absolute terms, the budget cut for China remains highly substantial as it is associated with an 88% decrease in projected appropriations.<sup>406</sup> When the funding portrait for SCO member countries is viewed longitudinally between 2006 and 2011 (Figure 1 above), according to *Freedom House* reports only two

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

<sup>406</sup> See *Freedom House* special report for 2011, p. 38.



countries—Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan—demonstrate increasing levels of fiscal commitment over the 6 year term. Looking at the Central Asian funding portrait prior to 2005, Martha Brill Olcott—a senior research associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—indicates that while funding levels had, at that time, been increasing in strictly relative terms, their overall absolute levels were low and inadequate for the task of long-term effective democratic development.<sup>407</sup> She writes:

The funds allocated to these states increased, and these increases were large in relative terms but small in absolute terms. This is particularly true of FSA funds that were allocated for democracy-building programs, which netted the Kyrgyz \$1.16 per person for 2002—and they were the best funded state in the region on a per capita basis.<sup>408</sup>

Placing Freedom House’s projected democracy assistance expenditures for SCO member states in 2011 into per-capita terms is a dramatic, yet efficient, way of demonstrating the actual impact that competitive U.S. security and economic policies are having on levels of investment (See Figure 4). In strictly per-capita terms we find that, on average, democracy building programs in SCO member countries during 2011 will receive approximately \$0.59 cents of related spending per person. Similar to what Olcott noted in 2005, Kyrgyzstan will continue to receive the largest per capita level of assistance at \$1.82 per person, and is also listed as the second largest funding recipient in absolute dollar terms.

	GJ&D FY2011 Request 2010 USD	Population	Per Capita Expenditure in 2010 USD
China	850,000	1,338,612,968	0.000634986
Kazakhstan	4,189,000	15,399,437	0.272022932
Kyrgyzstan	9,914,000	5,431,747	1.825195467
Russia	35,190,000	140,041,247	0.251283109
Tajikistan	7,778,000	7,349,145	1.058354407
Uzbekistan	3,480,000	27,606,007	0.12605952
		Average=	0.58892507

**Figure 13: Per Capita GJ&D Expenditures in SCO Member Countries for 2011.** Population data based upon 2009 estimates, *CIA World Factbook* ([www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)). Projected GJ&D Expenditures taken from Freedom House's 2010 special report, *Investing in Freedom: An Analysis of the Obama Administration FY2011 Budget Request for Democracy and Human Rights* (<http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/FY2011BudgetAnalysis.pdf>)

While Olcott agrees with the position taken by Thomas Carothers—that competing security and economic priorities are largely responsible for the inadequate levels of democracy spending within Central Asia—she also identifies the negative impact that such competing policy

<sup>407</sup> Olcott, Martha Brill (2005). *Central Asia's Second Chance*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 127-128.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 127.

priorities are having on the U.S. ability to substantially leverage its demands for increasing democratic development among the regions autocratic elites.<sup>409</sup> She writes,

[I]t did not take long for President Karimov, as well as the other Central Asian leaders, to realize that U.S. officials had limited, and very focused, interest in their countries. Washington, at least at the highest levels, was not going to deeply concern itself in their internal affairs, as long as their Central Asian partners proved dependable in the areas of shared concern.<sup>410</sup>

As such, with a diminished capacity to effectively leverage demands for increasing liberal political development within Central Asia, the United State's competing policy priorities are thought to have effectively mitigated one of the United State's most inexpensive and effective democracy promotion tools—public diplomacy and conditional support. In a recent report entitled “Saving Democracy Promotion from Short-Term U.S. Policy Interests in Central Asia,” Sean Roberts, associate professor at George Washington University's Elliot School for International Affairs, has also written of how competing national priorities—as well as the general structure of the U.S. foreign assistance bureaucracy—have functioned to undercut effective U.S. democracy assistance efforts in Central Asia.

Roberts' report calls for increasing investment in long-term policy strategies that function to develop a culture of political participation in a post-Communist region that has traditionally lacked a robust civil society. Yet Roberts, tempers his recommendations by indicating that, at present, one of the chief challenges to the development of effective democracy assistance programs in Central Asia is the fact that the U.S. foreign assistance bureaucracy is not structured in such a way that it is easy for the U.S. to decouple its long-term, strategic development assistance programs from its more short-term, tactical policy goals. He writes:

In order to account for such long-term developmental work, the U.S. government must restructure foreign assistance so that it separates its development strategies from more immediate foreign policy objectives such as national security, national resource access, and U.S. business interests. In my opinion, this necessitates further separating the State Department and the Defense Department from foreign assistance policy decisions rather than further integrating them into these processes as was done in the previous administration.<sup>411</sup>

---

<sup>409</sup> Olcott, Martha Brill (2005). *Central Asia's Second Chance*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 125

<sup>410</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid., 21.

Regional and country-specific challenges notwithstanding, it is clearly the case that the successful development of effective U.S. democracy promotion and assistance strategies for Central Asia, and more specifically for SCO member states, have been contingent upon competing U.S. policy priorities and a domestic bureaucratic assistance infrastructure that is not adequately tasked to sustain the sorts of long-term strategies required for this particular region.

***Central Asian Challenges to Democracy Promotion and Assistance: Communism and Clanism***

Roberts' assessment that U.S. agencies should increase their commitment to long-term development assistance in the region's civil society sector is founded principally upon the general notion that there exists in Central Asian countries a relatively low-level of "demand" for democracy.<sup>412</sup> Roberts identifies the region's characteristically low-levels of demand for robust participation in governance as the result of a path-dependent legacy of socio-political behavior that is founded upon a history of both Communist rule and a clan-based political culture—both of which, he indicates, have provided incentives and natural structures for citizens to utilize alternate or informal systems of representation and dispute resolution centered around kin and social networks.<sup>413</sup>

In reference to path-dependencies associated with former Soviet political rule, Roberts indicates that the experience of an "ineffective and bureaucracy-laden" Soviet system that was largely incapable of providing adequate public goods has functioned to make citizens more accustomed to relying upon informal social networks to fulfill their needs; a process which therefore inclines citizens to place less demands upon formal state bureaucratic structures and which also reduces interest in civic participation.<sup>414</sup> He writes:

As a result, despite Soviet citizens' strong respect for the formal institutions of the state as a source of ultimate power, they tended to circumvent the rules of the state by using informal institutions to "get things done." As a Moldovan intellectual recently told me, this created a "double life," in which formal institutions were respected but were mostly symbolic in nature and could only really operate when navigated through informal relationships.<sup>415</sup>

The notion that the Communist shortage economy forced citizens to develop a strong reliance upon informal institutions (via private agreements among individuals) has been strongly

---

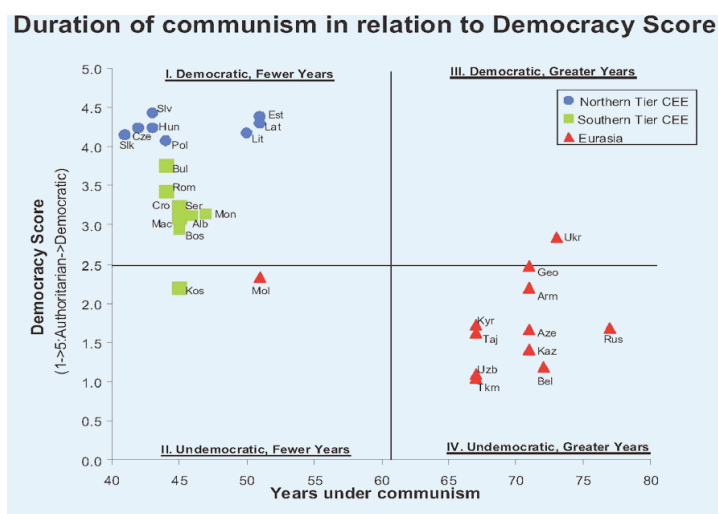
<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid., 6-10.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid. 7

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.,

supported by Katherine Verdery's analysis of Socialism in Central and Eastern European states.<sup>416</sup> Similarly, Marc Marjore Howard, in "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society," has demonstrated a fairly robust relationship between contemporary levels of civic engagement and the duration of time a state persisted under Communist rule, indicating that mandatory participation in state-controlled organizations has functioned to create an aversion in the present post-communist era for participation in public life (figure 5 below).<sup>417</sup> Howard's table—presented below—indicates a negative regression between years spent under communist rule and a country's democracy score (based upon Freedom House country ratings). In particular, Central Asian States persisting under Communism for approximately 70 years are here shown to generally have the lowest overall levels of democracy ratings among all post-communist Eurasian nations.



**Figure 14: Duration of communism in relation to Democracy Score.** Source: Marc Marjore Howard, "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society," (2002).

Roberts also indicates, however, that Central Asian states' overall low-levels of demand for democracy stem not only from the historical experience of Communism but also are the result of reliance on local-level clan-based political systems. He writes:

Local traditions of self-governance, which have often been described exotically as *clanism*, led Central Asians to rely much more heavily in their daily affairs upon local communal structures than upon state institutions...While the Soviet state ran periodic campaigns to obliterate these familial and communal ties, scholars have recently suggested that in reality Moscow largely allowed such traditional social organizations to

<sup>416</sup> Verdery, Katherine (1996). *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

<sup>417</sup> Howard, Marc (2002). "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society," *Journal of Democracy* 13(1): 157-169.

remain in place in the region to ensure stability while minimizing the responsibilities of state officials in Moscow.”<sup>418</sup>

While Roberts’ assessment of low levels of regional demand for democracy are theoretically supported by arguments of path-dependent Soviet and Clan-based legacies, the recent political revolution in Kyrgyzstan forces us to acknowledge the existence—in this country—of a strong political culture with an interest in both state-building and participation in government. As Martha Brill Olcott noted following the Tulip Revolution in 2005, “Kyrgyzstan is the one Central Asian country in which public opinion has been able to force changes in government policy.”<sup>419</sup> Thus, while we recognize the need to continue to sustain opposition capacity in SCO member states through effective civil society development—to adequately address the contemporary effects of legacies of communism and clan-based political culture—we also realize that where effective opposition already exists it will be equally important for the United States government to actively contribute to the development of effective political institutions that are capable of incorporating opposition figures constitutionally prescribed forms of political participation.

### **Historical U.S. Democracy Promotion Assistance Strategies in Central Asia: The Relevance of Lessons Learned**

While this taskforce understands that are a variety of constants functioning to inhibit the development of democratic outcomes in Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states--structural inefficiencies in the U.S. foreign assistance bureaucracy, regional historical contingencies, and a series of weak regimes fearful of external intervention since 2005—we do believe that the United States’ extensive history of democracy assistance within Central Asia provide contemporary policy-makers with a wealth of experience upon which to draw from when formulating project portfolios that can adequately address the negative externalities of increasing cooperation among SCO members and observers alike.

In this section we provide a brief review of U.S. democracy assistance strategies in Central Asia, drawing upon the work of Sean Roberts’ 2009 *Century Foundation* report entitled, “Saving Democracy Promotion from Short-Term U.S. Policy Interests in Central Asia.”<sup>420</sup>

---

<sup>418</sup> Roberts, “Saving Democracy Promotion in Central Asia,” p. 8.

<sup>419</sup> Olcott, Martha (2005). *Central Asia’s Second Chance*, p. 134.

<sup>420</sup> Roberts, Sean (2009). “Saving Democracy Promotion from Short-Term U.S. Policy Interests in Central Asia.” *The Century Foundation*. [www.tcf.org](http://www.tcf.org)

Through a critical review of historical U.S. assistance strategies in the region we hope to reiterate the valuable lessons that have been learned along the way, understanding that this information will be critical to further honing the effectiveness of contemporary U.S. democracy assistance efforts.

Roberts' article indicates that U.S. democracy assistance strategies in Central Asia can largely be broken down into a series of three distinct, historical stages which demonstrate substantial efforts by the U.S. assistance community to improve upon its prior general program models.<sup>421</sup> Roberts' consecutive stages extend directly from the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s to the final years of the Bush Administration. Presently, under the Obama administration there appears to be a fourth phase well underway. While Roberts does not refer to this fourth stage, there exist both new plans and a new budget for democracy promotion in Central Asia.<sup>422</sup> Looking at the progression of U.S. DPA in the region not only shows what happened and why, but more importantly, where today's challenges have come from and why the United States must pay greater care and attention to the region if plans for democracy are to successfully take root.

When the first wave of USAID contractors arrived in Central Asia in the early 1990s, the main goal was to

Establish formal institutions defined by democratically informed laws, which could be adopted quickly by the local populations to help replace Soviet Communism's centralized governance with a decentralized balance of powers that was accountable to citizens. When U.S. democracy assistance initially arrived in Central Asia, however, those implementing it on the ground were almost immediately aware that such a plan would bear little fruit. In short, it had become apparent that the "transition" to democracy from the Soviet system, particularly in Central Asia, would require more than providing new models to be adopted; it would require a significant change in the way that people thought about their role in political life and the role of the state in their personal lives.<sup>423</sup>

It was soon discovered that this first approach was becoming temporary patchwork with the intent of quickly solving the problems of instability and a lack of democratic governance.<sup>424</sup> Qualitative analysis showed that many U.S. democracy promoters were finding many of their

---

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.* 10-18

<sup>422</sup> See Figure 2 in section titled, "U.S. Democracy Promotion and Assistance in Central Asia" on p. 26

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.* 11, emphasis added.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.* 10-12

tasks to be impractical for the kind of environment that they were working in.<sup>425</sup> The transition out of Soviet-style government in this region was going to take more than replacing the government and the institutions alone—the people themselves, Roberts argues, would need to adapt to a new way of thinking about government and being involved in the processes of governance.<sup>426</sup>

The second phase of DPA in Central Asia, while appearing hopeful at first, did not prove to have a significant change in tactics, even though it was noted in the previous wave that a longer-term strategy was needed. This was partly due to the fact that the approach taken by the U.S. was meant for the larger region of the former-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as opposed to Central Asia in particular.<sup>427</sup> By focusing on a broader area, the effectiveness of democracy promotion proved even more difficult and its implementation began losing precedence with the U.S. trying to stretch its efforts too thin over a larger area. The strategies used at the time for Central Asia resembled the models being implemented in all of the former Soviet Union as well as Eastern Europe.<sup>428</sup>

Roberts argues that reform strategies during this second wave—which sought largely to balance the power of super-presidential systems through the development of NGOs, media outlets, and increasingly independent judiciaries and parliaments—were functionally “subverted by informal systems used to navigate daily life.”<sup>429</sup> He writes, “While host governments would often humor USAID and the local U.S. embassies by passing appropriate laws, these acts could easily remain nothing more than words as long as the systems of enforcement and implementation were circumvented by informal relationships.”<sup>430</sup> Thus, even though initial plans for a complete overhaul of the existing systems in Central Asia seemed to be the most logical step to take in promoting and cultivating a new democratic regime, they were bound to fall short of their initial expectations due to persistent behaviors and trends that had been inherited from local legacies forged under seventy years of Soviet rule, tempered further still by peculiarities of local and regional culture.

---

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.* 10-13

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.* 5-6, 10-12

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.* 13

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.* 13-15

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*

Another contributing factor to the shortcomings of democracy promotion in its second phase was distrust for democracy, which was furthered by the limited success in U.S. democracy projects.<sup>431</sup> By the end of the 1990s, the deficiencies of past projects forced USAID to rethink its strategies towards cultivating democracy in Central Asia.<sup>432</sup> They realized that major barriers to democracy, such as the massive amounts of corruption and a lack of transparency of government systems within the region needed to be taken care of first. These were the kinds of factors, along with previous failure to both understand the context of the region, as well as make progress in creating a stable and functioning government system that contributed to the growing distrust of democracy within the region. Further adding to the distrust were the events of the Russian financial crisis in 1998, which was seen as a result of President Yeltsin's experimentation with democracy, along with the elections of 1999 being fraught with corruption in the region.<sup>433</sup>

The new strategy needed to provide a more balanced distribution of resources between DPA and economic programs. The quick attempts to overhaul the economy in Central Asia was, along with trying to create laws that could be rapidly adopted, not in accordance with what was really needed, which was a long-term strategy focused on changing civil society and creating a grassroots demand as well as trust, from the bottom up, for democracy. Other issues, however, arose from the top-down aspects of government, and models attempting to pass laws through existing autocratic governments were not going to work.<sup>434</sup> The national governments merely went along with the democracy promoters' programs because they knew they would not have a lasting effect on the people of the region.<sup>435</sup> This was mostly due to the governments themselves lacking control and involvement within their own nations, opening up opportunities for revolution, such as the Color Revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

However, just as U.S. democracy promoters realized their shortcomings, and now had a clearer view of the context of the region, a new mission was created to be used for the long haul—one that would “build popular knowledge, demand and political will for pluralistic economic and political change within government, business and professional sectors, and among the citizenry” the events of September 11, 2001 as well as the war in Afghanistan, changed democracy promotion policy into a more aggressive approach in order to avoid accusations about

---

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid.* 13-15

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.* 13-15

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.* 13-15

<sup>434</sup> *Ibid.* 13, 14

<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.* 5, 7, 11, 13-15, 19-23



the United States working with autocratic regimes.<sup>436</sup> Institutional work, Roberts argues, such as election assistance, became just as important as human rights works and political party cultivation.<sup>437</sup> These aggressive approaches, however, encouraged Russia as well as China to discredit democracy promotion efforts. As Roberts argues, democracy promotion in Central Asia was seen as, “[J]ust a softer version of its regime-change policy in Iraq. With little alternative explanations available, this analysis of the Color Revolutions was all too convincing to Central Asians.”<sup>438</sup> He writes:

Eventually, these increased suspicions of U.S. democracy projects led Uzbekistan to kick most of the international NGOs doing democracy work out of the country in 2005, prompted Kazakhstan to prohibit USAID projects from working with political parties in 2006, and fostered consistent pressure on democracy projects elsewhere in the region. Unfortunately, all of these events served only to alienate Central Asians from embracing democracy when USAID had just proposed undertaking a more appropriate long-term approach to increasing local understanding of and demand for democracy.<sup>439</sup>

Now, as the United States enters its fourth phase of democracy promotion projects, while many great challenges have been realized, more lie ahead. Though proponents for civil society reform, such as Roberts, put up a strong argument, others, such as Ambassador Mark Palmer stand for stronger institutional reform<sup>440</sup>, and others still, such as Thomas Carothers point out the United States’ conflicting economic and security interests.<sup>441</sup> All of these arguments together reveal one simple fact—the region needs a more balanced and straightforward portfolio of expenditures for projects within the region. Spending that is heavily concentrated in only one or a few areas of democracy promotion and assistance will bear little fruit to the goals set in the first place. Expenditures that encourage conflicting goals will contradict each other and hinder progress. As there are many diverse aspects to U.S. democracy, it will be so with developing democracies as well. In the United States, while elections and civil society are vital to a functioning democracy, many other characteristics, such as media capacity and security for example, equally help to firmly root democracy and stability. As the U.S. continues through its

---

<sup>436</sup> *Ibid.* 16

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.* 14, 17, 23

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.* 17

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>440</sup> Palmer, Mark (2003). *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil: How to Oust the World’s Last Dictators by 2025*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>441</sup> Carothers, Thomas (2004). *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

fourth generation of DPA within Central Asia, it must be realized that there needs to be a balanced set of funding for a diverse set of programs that can be cultivated to allow democracy to firmly take root in the region. If this is not realized soon enough, however, the challenges to democracy, such as the ‘Shanghai Spirit’ will grow stronger, and their efforts will be even more difficult to counter.

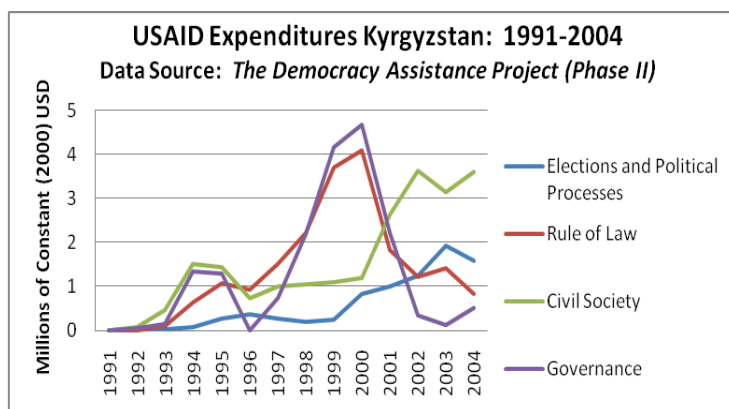
### **Balancing Out Project Portfolios: Cultivating Demand and Building Capacity**

While Roberts’ assessment ultimately calls for increasingly long-term U.S. projects that are primarily dedicated to cultivating a demand for regional democracy through civil society building projects, rather than short term high-profile institutional reform programs, it is the opinion of this task force, in light of recent events in the Kyrgyz Republic, that the U.S. democracy promotion and assistance community must strive to find ways to increasingly balance out its project portfolio, thereby working to support both institutional and civil society programs simultaneously.

An analysis of regional funding levels by USAID projects between 1991 and 2004 demonstrates a strong relative tendency towards an increasing commitment to civil society programs following 2001 (See Appendix F for USAID funding allocations for all relevant countries). While funding patterns prior to September 11 can be shown to have focused more substantially upon institutional development (i.e.-programs of governance, elections, and rule of law), following the U.S.’ increase of its regional presence in 2001, there occurs a substantial re-allocation of USAID spending away from inherently political or ‘top-down’ or ‘capacity-building’ democracy promotion projects to rather increasing levels of civil society or ‘democracy demand’ assistance (see Figure 6 below and Appendix for USAID appropriations to all relevant countries). While cultivating demand is, of course, necessary to supporting widespread democratic participation, it should be noted that without the presence of representative institutional structures, effective political parties, and a commitment to rule of law, there exists an increasing likelihood that opposition figures will be more inclined to advance their political objectives in an extra-legal manner as was recently demonstrated in the Kyrgyz republic.

It is the opinion of this task force that although recent events in Kyrgyzstan speak to the existence of a healthy, underlying political culture, the general low-levels of state capacity and inadequate levels of institutional representation and accountability function to encourage

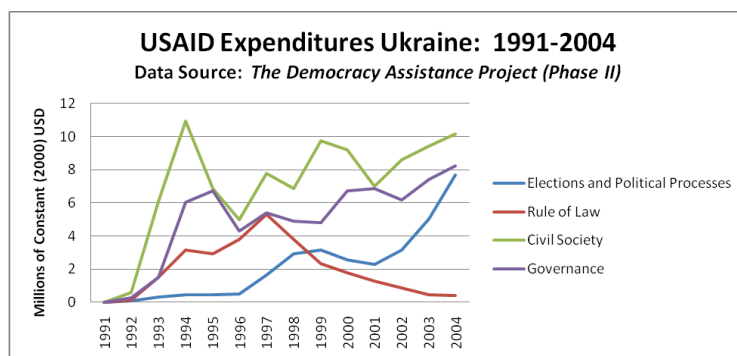
emerging opposition figures to proactively circumvent the existing political structure. While there has been a tendency to view the 2010 political revolution in Kyrgyzstan as a democratic revolution in the tradition of previous Color Revolutions (which were associated with electoral irregularities), the explicit contravention of legal norms by an armed political resistance (more than 6 months after an electoral cycle) indicates only the extent to which democracy in Kyrgyzstan has truly failed and forces us to dismiss the idea that this revolution represents a second ‘color revolution.’



**Figure 15: USAID Expenditures Kyrgyzstan: 1991-2004.** Source: The Democracy Assistance Project (see Appendix for complete citation).

This task force thus understands the recent revolution in Kyrgyzstan as an opportunity for the U.S. democracy promotion and assistance community to proactively rebalance funding allocations in not only the Kyrgyz republic but all Central Asian states as a way to ensure both the development of increasing demand for democracy among citizens but also to strengthen the existing channels of representation in an effort to increase oppositional efficacy in existing institutions.

While overall funding levels will continue to remain beholden to competing security and economic interests in the U.S. foreign policy establishment—thereby limiting the overall amount



of actual democracy assistance dollars available—it is our belief that a balanced allocation of institutional and civil society projects represents the best way to capitalize upon the democracy assistance community’s prior time and investments. To these

ends we recommend U.S. assistance agencies work proactively to build institutional efficacy within opposition groups by effecting a return to committed institutional-reform spending and public diplomacy initiatives.

**Figure 16: USAID expenditure data courtesy of the Democracy Assistance Project (see appendix for complete citation).**

To further make the case that a balanced portfolio is, in fact, a required approach to successful efforts, we would draw attention to the historical funding pattern of democracy assistance projects in Ukraine (See Figure 7 above). While the recent election of pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovych to the Presidency may ultimately function to jeopardize further democratic consolidation in the coming years, the OSCE certified free and fair election, itself, is a testament to the enduring democratic principles that were established during the Orange Revolution of 2004.<sup>442</sup> According to *Polity IV* country scores (democracy score minus autocracy score), the general trend towards democratic backsliding that began in 2000 has, in fact, been halted and has shown marked improvement since 2005 (see Figure 8 below)

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
PolityScore	6	6	5	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7

**Figure 17: Polity IV Country Scores for Ukraine. Scale -10(Consolidated Autocracy) to +10 (Consolidated Democracy). Source: Monty G. Marshall & Keith Jagers, Polity IV Project, *Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2008*. Dataset available online at: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>**

<sup>442</sup> OSCE (March 27, 2006). “Ukrainian elections free and fair, consolidating democratic breakthrough.” Available online at: <http://www.osce.org/item/18498.html>

Analyzing USAID's comparative funding approach to democracy building projects in Ukraine (Figure 6), we find a more balanced portfolio of institutional and civil society commitments alongside more robust levels of actual funding. While Ukraine cannot be said to have fully consolidated democracy and rule of law or elimination of corruption, we believe the case is a generally meaningful comparator for the US' approach to democracy assistance in Central Asia. While we heed the recommendations of Thomas Carothers to not export a single model of democracy assistance to a multiplicity of political cultures, we do believe that a balanced commitment to increasing both demand (bottom-up/civil society) and capacity (top-down/horizontal/institutional) are pre-requisites to preclude the development of further authoritarian backsliding or the development of serial revolutionary transitions.

## Policy Recommendations

### Introduction

In this final section we present to the United States Government a series of policy recommendations which are tailored to specifically to respond to the diffusion of illiberal policies and practices associated with the *Spirit of Shanghai*. It is the general opinion of this task force that the most appropriate steps the United States Government can take to reduce the negative impact of the *Spirit of Shanghai* on the further development of democracy among member, observer, and relevant peripheral states is an increasing level of direct engagement with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as well as each of its individual constituents in matters of diplomacy, economics, and security. Insofar as the illiberal policies and practices that are associated with the *Spirit of Shanghai* stem largely from member-state cooperation on matters relating to regional and domestic security concerns, increased and direct engagement by the United States Government—along with partner governments in the European Union—can become an effective and positive force in curbing the overall demand among minor power Central Asian states for increasing cooperation with both Russia and China—the driving force behind the *Spirit of Shanghai*.

While leveraging cooperative relations with requests for the adoption of a responsible public policy that prioritizes individual human and political rights over and above state sovereignty, is not without its difficulties in an organization that has become suspicious of Western democracy promotion efforts, there is sufficient reason to believe that this strategy can, in fact, work in the Central Asia of today. Although we have demonstrated an increasing tendency towards cooperation between minor and major powers in the SCO in the wake of momentous 2005 regional events, we have also highlighted in this report, the significant amount of tension that accompanies this renewed cooperation, as Central Asian states continue to remain averse to increasing economic dependencies upon China and direct political and military incursions in the case of Russia.

The implicit public support provided by the Kremlin to the revolutionary interim government of the Krygyz Republic this year may, in fact, serve as a basis for renewed engagement with minor power states of Central Asia that are fearful of similar direct interventions and growing Russian political influence, and should be treated as an opportunity in

which to re-invigorate Western relations with SCO members. While the recent Kyrgyz revolution, itself, must be viewed—ultimately—as a challenge to democratic consolidation, it is our belief that this event presents an opportunity to U.S. policy-makers to restore the image of Western democracy assistance which has long-been subject to both scrutiny and attack in SCO soft-power campaigns following the string of Color Revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan in the earlier portion of this decade.

By working to ensure both the stability of state institutions (through increasing accountability and representation) as well as the cultivation of a healthy culture of political opposition which maintains efficacy in the processes of democratic participation, the United States Government can not only aid the Kyrgyz Republic in putting an end to its present revolutionary political cycle, but can also send a positive message to leaders and citizens of SCO member countries about the quality and role of U.S. democracy assistance in the region.

Demonstrating to citizens in SCO member countries the positive role that Western assistance can play in solving existing political and security crises will, of course, require significant increases in the United States' current democracy assistance budget for numerous Eurasian nations. While democracy promotion and assistance funding will likely remain limited by a variety of reasons elsewhere described in this report, it is our opinion that increasing funds to SCO member/observer countries and peripheral states are, in fact, justified on the grounds that these same countries represent a significant portion of the world's population, territory, and strategic resources. Left unattended, democracy among SCO states and relevant peripheral actors will likely continue to decline thereby perpetuating the further diffusion of the *Spirit of Shanghai*. While this contingency will almost certainly carry long-term negative implications for the further consolidation of international norms which both promote and protect human rights and political liberties, such developments will also likely serve to sustain anti-western sentiments that have become 'part and parcel' of SCO public diplomacy; that this would have negative consequences for U.S. and EU Central Asian policies seems also assured.

### **Recommendation 1: Re-balancing of Democracy Assistance Project Portfolios and Renewed Calls for Multi-Lateral Project Design.**

The recent political revolution in Kyrgyzstan highlights the need to develop institutional capacity in weak states. Improving opposition groups' efficacy in the democratic process is a necessary step to both averting future revolutions and simultaneously reducing fears among regional political leaders who, in turn, seek out external sources of regime stability. By rebalancing democracy assistance project portfolios to include both civil society initiatives aimed at cultivating democracy demand, with initiatives geared towards strengthening institutional capacity through party development, rule of law, as well as constitutional reform we believe the United States Government (hereafter referred to as USG) can effectively contribute to the mitigation of those factors that drive minor power SCO member states into *quid pro quo* relationships with Russia and China which attempt to purchase regime security at the expense of responsible public policy.

Recognizing that the SCO has previously sought to frame U.S. efforts to promote good governance and responsible public policy within a larger critique of U.S. hegemonic ambitions in Central Asia, this task force stresses the need to develop a broad-base of multi-regional actors working in service of Central Asian institutional reform and democracy demand. By working through a diverse array of local and extra-local actors with multiple ideal policy vectors, we believe the USG can function to mitigate opportunity for SCO member states to successfully carry out soft power campaigns which seek to equate democracy assistance with narrowly focused U.S. economic and security ambitions.

It is the opinion of this taskforce that SCO-soft power campaigns which rely upon strongly anti-U.S. rhetoric may be one of the most damaging instruments to western democracy assistance projects and so requires a concerted effort by a multilateral coalition to demonstrate broad-based global support for the development of democracy and human rights in Central Asia.

Recent reports from EU democracy assistance organizations have indicated the need to reformulate European regional policy, emphasizing the need for a renewed commitment to developing democracy and human rights as the EU begins to broaden its participation in



economic/security projects with Central Asia.<sup>443</sup> As such, we recommend further developing joint projects with the EU assistance agencies as a way to mitigate the potential detriments of specifically targeted anti-U.S. soft power public campaigns.

**Recommendation 2: Recommendation for the United States Government to develop a policy of increasing engagement with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and individual member states.**

As we have demonstrated throughout this report, security cooperation on issues pertaining to border security such as transnational terrorism and narco-trafficking has been a corner-stone of SCO member-state cooperation, and pre-dates the enhanced cooperation that has followed in the face of color revolutions wherein minor-power SCO members have ramped up diplomatic and economic cooperation with Russia, China, and Kazakhstan in an effort to increase regime security (for more information see report sections on History, Regime Perspectives, Ideology, and the SCO Secretariat).

Instrumental to the general diffusion of the so-called, *Shanghai Spirit* has been this high level of official state-to-state cooperation among SCO members on matters pertaining to the management of general border security. We strongly recommend that the United States government respond to increasing SCO multi-lateral state-to-state cooperation on security matters by entering into genuine dialogue and cooperation with the SCO as well as each of its members on related issues. The United States mission in Afghanistan certainly provides a platform for increasing diplomatic and security cooperation with SCO members as all governments remain interested in curtailing international terrorism as well as the illegal trade in narcotics and trans-national human trafficking. It is the opinion of this task force that practical and diplomatic engagement with the SCO is preferable to a policy of disengagement insofar as increasing cooperation can serve as a basis for renewed diplomatic leverage on issues pertaining to the development of robust domestic political institutions and responsible public policy.

As our report has indicated, we support Stephen Aris' proposition that SCO cooperation is largely driven by regime instability in the minor power Central Asian states.<sup>444</sup> As such

---

<sup>443</sup> FRIDE Seminar Brief (November, 19, 2007). "The EU Strategy for Central Asia: Promoting Democracy and Human Rights." Available online at: <http://www.fride.org/publication/313/the-eu-strategy-for-central-asia:-promoting-democracy-and-human-rights>

identifying the winset of multiple ideal policy vectors of the United States and SCO member countries will be essential to reducing demand among Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan for Russian, Chinese, and Kazakh assistance in improving regime security. Understanding state needs in Central Asia and working directly with them in order encourage the development of responsible policy solutions to common problems is, quite simply, the most important step the United States government can take to minimize the further diffusion and consolidation of illiberal domestic public policy in Central Asia states. By making the U.S. an instrumental player in issues of Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek state security, we believe the U.S. can effectively increase Central Asian utility for cooperative relations with the United States, capitalizing also upon Central Asian elites' desires to balance competing Russian and Chinese influence within the region.

**Recommendation 3: Strategic Election Monitoring and Public Diplomacy Campaign in Kyrgyzstan in Advance of October, 2010 Parliamentary/Presidential Elections: Countering Election Monitoring Efforts of the SCO.**

“[M]ore often than not, international monitoring of a flawed process, with honest, vocal and detailed reporting of why it is not “free and fair,” can be of great use in spotlighting the dictatorship...horribly skewed elections, when brought to the world’s attention, give nascent oppositions some space to organize. Knowing that the democratic world knows they exist can give them the courage to persevere through the continued repression and develop new strategies to unbalance the regime.”—Ambassador Mark Palmer<sup>445</sup>

2010 Elections Cycle Being Endorsed by Kyrgyz Interim Government:

- Referendum on Constitutional Change to be Held June 27, 2010
- Parliamentary/Presidential Election to be Held October, 2010

According to recent a recent Reuters news report detailing the upcoming cycle of elections that are to be held in Kyrgyzstan under the present interim government, Omurbek Tekebaev (a deputy prime minister in charge of constitutional reform) has indicated that, “the [interim] government plans to reduce the power of the president and create a parliamentary

---

<sup>444</sup> See: Aris, Stephen (2009) ‘The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: ‘tackling the three evils.’ A regional response to non-traditional security challenges or an Anti-western bloc?’ *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 61 No. 3, pp. 457-482.

<sup>445</sup> Palmer, Mark (2003). *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil: How to Oust the World’s Last Dictators by 2025*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., p. 66.

republic with strong checks and balances.”<sup>446</sup> We strongly recommend dedicating resources to training local election monitors, and working with governments, IGOs, and world media groups in order to keep public attention strongly focused upon the interim governments’ progress towards these ends. With reason to believe that the recent Kyrgyz revolution was underwritten by Russian public support for opposition forces willing to circumvent traditional political channels, we believe the U.S. must counter the Russian/SCO policy of providing implicit public support for the revolutionary interim government by increasing public scrutiny and attention devoted to covering both the electoral process and the diverse array of political actors who are expected to contest the election. As we have relayed in this report, recent SCO-sponsored election monitoring campaigns have been used in order to lend credibility to electoral contests that have been otherwise deemed neither fair nor free within the Central Asian republics; by sponsoring high-profile coverage and reporting on the upcoming Kyrgyz parliamentary/presidential elections in October, 2010, the United States Government—in cooperation with relevant international organizations like the OSCE, as well as international news media outlets—can take credible steps towards countering anticipated SCO activities. Drawing attention to SCO election monitoring practices may simultaneously serve as an effective means for ‘monitoring’ the SCO monitors, using public scrutiny to encourage the SCO to adhere to a traditional set of best practices.

**Recommendation 4: Development of a program series of *International Visitor Exchange Programs* which specifically target critical issues pertaining to SCO member state cooperation.**

“Among the classic and best tools for opening closed countries are exchanges...Student and young-professional exchanges are particularly important, as the minds of young people are more open and the young are overwhelmingly the ones with enough courage, idealism, and drive for a better life to go into the dictator’s dangerous streets.”  
—Ambassador Mark Palmer<sup>447</sup>

This task force explicitly recommends that the United States Government increasingly work through the U.S. Department of State as well as U.S. embassies in SCO Central Asian

---

<sup>446</sup> Dzyubenko, Olga, Guy Faulconbridge, and Conor Humphries (April 22, 2010). “Kyrgyz to hold election on Oct 10,” *Reuters*, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE63L0FT20100422>

<sup>447</sup> Palmer, Mark. *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil*, 68

member states to develop a series of professional visitor exchange programs that are specifically designed to address the negative externalities of increasing SCO member state cooperation. Recognizing that budgetary restrictions are part and parcel of democracy assistance in Central Asia, we believe this program takes a cost-effective approach to solving a substantially negative externality of SCO cooperation. We envision this program series of visitor exchanges taking place under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State's ongoing *International Visitor & Leadership Program* which has brought thousands of emerging community leaders to the U.S. on professional development programs in recent years. To these ends we suggest the development of three particular program series which specifically address topics pertaining to the SCO which have been elsewhere detailed in this report. They include the following:

Program Series 1: *Rights of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Host Societies.*

Illegal extradition of political refugees among SCO member/observer countries has become increasingly common and demonstrates evidence of an increasing institutionalization of norms and procedures which violate established international law. While SCO member states are bound both by international and bilateral treaties and conventions that explicitly seek to protect the rights of citizens and foreign nationals from state-sponsored, non-criminal persecution, recent reports suggest that SCO members are increasingly utilizing non-criminal, administrative processes to justify the expulsion of citizens to their home countries. By utilizing non-criminal avenues to expel persons seeking political refuge SCO member countries are effectively able to circumvent established conventions governing the extradition of persons and principles of non-refoulement. In such situations administrative expulsions (via revocation of citizenship or official deportations) inevitably result in the delivery of foreign nationals to state security services which then both incarcerate and charge these individuals with crimes against the state. Reports have also demonstrated that Central Asian states are prone to actively avoid granting asylum seekers official refugee status in order to avoid charges that they have violated official principles of non-refoulment. Simultaneously, foreign state security services are often allowed to operate domestically with the express aim of locating, capturing, and repatriating 'wanted' citizens.

This program series would ideally seek to increase local capacity in Eurasian states for protecting the rights of political refugees by engaging Eurasian legal experts, security

professionals, community leaders, journalists, and human rights activists in a program of citizen-to-citizen diplomacy here in the United States. By bringing visiting professionals into contact with local U.S. counterparts who work with refugee populations here in the United States, this program will build not only increasing sensitivity to the importance of issues surrounding refugee rights but will also help to build the necessary legal, bureaucratic, and organizational capacity required to improve the security of displaced persons within the jurisdiction of the SCO.

#### Program Series 2: *New Media*

Recognizing the important role that improving media capacity has played in promoting transparency in governance and providing opposition parties with an effective public platform, we recommend the United States Government work to develop a visitor exchange program that will bring journalists and media-related professionals to the United States to survey the role and applications of new technology in increasing media capacity and effectiveness. The U.S. Department of State has conducted at least one prior program on this topic in 2009 with a series of journalists from Belarus who examined various media outlets' (radio/tv/print) innovative usage of online forums to create communities of dialogue surrounding popular news issues. Under this program journalists from SCO member/observer countries will have the opportunity to observe the role of technology in fostering a sense of civic responsibility, and will benefit through interpersonal contacts that may help to further integrate Central Asian news outlets into the global media network.

#### Program Series 3: *Management of Border-Related Crimes*

Recognizing that cooperation among SCO member states revolves principally around management of issues pertaining to border security, we believe the United States Government should work to develop a program series that will bring security and legal professionals from SCO member/observer states to the U.S. in order to survey U.S. policies and practices pertaining to the management of the cross-border narcotics trade and human-trafficking. While we recognize that state to state cooperation with SCO member countries on the question of security concerns is a sensitive issue, it is our opinion that the United States' commitment to developing democracy and rule of law within Central Asia is best served by engaging SCO members directly as we believe such interactions will be crucial to shaping future dialogue, policy, and practices of

managing sensitive border issues in Central Asia. By focusing upon the established international conventions surrounding management of borders and the *legal* prosecution of individuals engaged in border-related crimes, the United States can effectively interact with the SCO on issues of primary concern to member states, thereby creating a platform of instrumental cooperation that successfully works to defuse anti-Western sentiments in SCO member countries.

Working with SCO member/observer state security professionals, we believe this program will simultaneously function not only to promote positive state to state relations with SCO governments, but will also function to build strategic political capital among SCO security elites. Writing on the importance of working cooperatively with security elites in authoritarian states, Ambassador Palmer writes, “[T]he dictator’s security forces must be exposed to their counter parts from democratic countries. They must see and, where possible, experience other ways of operating, of relating to the people, the law, governance, and local and national security.”<sup>448</sup> It is the opinion of this task force that international visitor programs are cost-effective and efficient mechanisms for creating the sorts of high-level state to state cooperation between security elites that Ambassador Palmer speaks of, recognizing that such opportunities may positively contribute to future democratic outcomes by demonstrating to foreign security professionals their positive and invaluable role in prosecuting law-enforcement strategies that serve the broader public good rather than simply narrow, private interests. Having utilized such program models extensively with visiting Latin American security professionals, the U.S. Department of State and related sending agencies should be able to modify such programs towards SCO member countries with very little added cost in time or resources making this particular program series highly efficient.

#### **Recommendation 5: Establishment of SCO Extradition Monitoring Network/Study Group & Associated Public Diplomacy Campaign**

As we have indicated in the preceding section, our analysis of SCO member states reveals an increasing tendency to use non-criminal proceedings in order to effect administrative expulsions and deportations of persons otherwise seeking political asylum/refuge. Rendering

---

<sup>448</sup> Palmer, Mark. *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil*, p. 70.

political refugees to foreign governments through the use of non-criminal, administrative procedures is a gross violation of international conventions surrounding extraditions and principles of non-refoulement, and is one of the most disconcerting outcomes of SCO cooperation. Fearing that the further institutionalization of these types of practices will only increase their diffusion potential to other states, we believe it is necessary to begin an immediate study of the particular practices used by SCO states to accomplish illegal extraditions via non-criminal domestic avenues that function explicitly to evade international norms and scrutiny.

That such practices will likely diffuse to non-SCO states appears only more likely in the wake of recent events we have detailed in this report. In particular, Cambodia's recent December 2009 decision to extradite a group of Uighur refugees back to China, despite their having been issued "Persons of Concern" letters by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the two months prior, seems to suggest that states are increasingly likely to trade cooperation in illegal extraditions for economic and diplomatic favors of the SCO's two UN Security Council member states.<sup>449</sup>

While this task force makes a contribution to the topic by further raising its awareness and establishing its importance, we recognize that a full investigation of this project far exceeds what we can hope to accomplish in the short time we have been convened. We therefore recommend that the United States Government establish a formal monitoring-network/study group comprised of relevant local and extra-local human rights organizations and legal-affairs organizations to begin careful documentation of state use of non-criminal administrative expulsions and immigration proceedings to achieve illegal extraditions among all SCO member countries. We further recommend that this information be widely disseminated in a public campaign which makes use of all available public channels, thereby drawing increasing public attention to this disturbing trend which highlights the increasing institutionalization of state practices in SCO countries that threaten the integrity of agreed upon international norms and procedures governing the welfare of political refugees. Operating in conjunction with public leaders and human rights organizations in the European Union, as well as the OSCE, and the

---

<sup>449</sup> See: <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/12/22/china-forcibly-returned-ughur-asylum-seekers-risk>; We have also reported on the recent deportations of 17 Uighurs from Burma to China that took place on January 18, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/12/22/china-forcibly-returned-ughur-asylum-seekers-risk>; see also our reporting on Pakistan's return of Uighurs to China, as reported by Freedom House on May 7, 2009, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=815>

<sup>449</sup> <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/12/22/china-forcibly-returned-ughur-asylum-seekers-risk>

Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States Government can spear-head a collaborative effort to stem the wider diffusion of illegal extraditions.

**Important Note: UNHCR budgetary adjustment for Central Asian states in 2010-11**

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the program budget for 2010 and 2011 work pertaining to improving refugee rights in Central Asia will be substantially increased over prior 2009 levels, demonstrating a renewed commitment to the promotion of refugee rights in the wake of positive recent trends in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan.<sup>450</sup> As such, we believe the United States Government should capitalize upon UNHCR budgetary increases in the coming year by increasing its support of projects related to refugees and political prisoners in SCO member states. The development of extradition monitoring programs, and continued support for legal advocacy and human rights programs that protect the rights of refugees, immigrants, internally displaced persons, political dissidents, and political prisoners will continue to be vital to sustaining opposition capacity and limiting state abuses for the foreseeable future. By working closely with the UNHCR as it ramps up spending in the coming year, we expect the United States Government can expand upon its long-tradition of effective human rights advocacy in the region in manner that also increases efficiency.

Country	2009 Revised Budget	Refugee Programme Pillar 1	Stateless Programme Pillar 2	Total 2010	2011
Kazakhstan	2,470,557	3,494,127	626,983	4,121,109	4,250,000
Kyrgyzstan	1,443,473	1,721,411	425,043	2,146,454	2,300,000
Tajikistan	594,480	1,161,748	44,614	1,206,362	1,250,000
Turkmenistan	690,602	279,471	294,693	574,164	600,000
Uzbekistan	155,000	0	0	0	0
Regional Activities	100,000	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,656,757</b>	<b>1,391,332</b>	<b>8,048,089</b>	<b>8,400,000</b>

**Figure 18 UNHCR budget for Central Asia (USD), *UNHCR Global Appeal 2010-2011*, Central Asia Subregional Overview. Available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4b02c9139.pdf>**

While UNHCR funding levels for nearly all Central Asian states will increase in the coming year, this same report indicates that funding allocations for Uzbekistan will be abolished in what appears to be an apparent response to Uzbekistan's sustained lack of commitment to increasing rights for refugees—according to this report, Uzbekistan remains the only Central

<sup>450</sup> UNHCR Global Appeal 2010-2011, Central Asia Subregional Overview. Available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4b02c9139.pdf>



Asian state to have not ratified the *1951 Refugee Convention*.<sup>451</sup> We also draw special attention to the decrease in UNHCR funding towards Uzbek programs in order to engage the United States Government in a thoughtful reconsideration its own policies pertaining to promotion of human rights and political liberties in this highly closed society. As we have indicated throughout this report, Uzbekistan and Russia are presently engaged in a high-level of cooperation over the illegal extradition from Russia of Uzbek political asylum seekers who are fleeing from prosecution pertaining to their involvement in Andijan events in 2005.<sup>452</sup> In addition to the administrative expulsion of Uzbek nationals from the Russian Federation, reports indicate that the Russian Federation has engaged in the falsification of charges against Uzbeks which are used to justify so-called ‘legal’ extraditions to Uzbek authorities.<sup>453</sup> Similarly, a 2010 Human Rights Watch report detailing the Karimov government’s continued persecution Andijan participants five years later indicates that the Uzbek government is using strong-arm tactics with families of citizens who participated in the Andijan events and subsequently fled the country as refugees. Reportedly, the Uzbek government has threatened remaining family members with prison sentences in an effort to lure refugees back home.<sup>454</sup>

In light of such reports and decreased funding levels of UNHCR, we urge the United States Government to strongly evaluate the decision of whether or not U.S. refugee-related funding in Uzbekistan should be increased or curtailed. As we indicated in our previous analysis of foreign policy affinity within the SCO, the case of Uzbekistan is one in which we have documented proof of a true sea-change in state preferences surrounding the issue of democracy and human rights. In light of such changes, we believe it is imperative to treat the Uzbek case with great care.

The following organizations are already engaged in monitoring the use of administrative practices to effect illegal extraditions in SCO member states and may be of assistance to further efforts to track such practices:

- The Memorial Human Rights Center in Moscow: [www.memo.ru](http://www.memo.ru)

---

<sup>451</sup> Ibid. Note: Previous funding levels for Uzbekistan in 2009 were set \$155,000 USD.

<sup>452</sup> For more information on these practices see the *Memorial Human Rights Center* report, “Expelling refugees as a means of imitating the anti-terror campaign,” available online at: <http://www.memo.ru/2007/09/26/3/2609073eng.htm>

<sup>453</sup> Ibid.

<sup>454</sup> Human Rights Watch (May 4, 2010). “Uzbekistan: Stop Persecuting Andijan Refugees’ Families, EU, US Should Condemn Intimidation, Seek Accountability for 2005 Massacre of Protestors.” <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/05/04/uzbekistan-stop-persecuting-andijan-refugees-families>

- Relevant Memorial Report:  
<http://www.memo.ru/2007/09/26/3/2609073eng.htm>
- International Federation for Human Rights: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)
  - Relevant FIDH Report: <http://www.fidh.org/Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Exploitation-of-migrant,6801>

### **Recommendation 6: Expansion of Media Capacity to Counter SCO Efforts to Stifle Cross-Border & Trans-Regional Information Flows and Increasing Protection of Local Journalists and Media Outlets**

While independent media outlets in Central Asian countries are severely limited by political elites, the importance of such avenues of communication cannot be overstated. While restrictive state practices may seek to curtail the development of domestic media outlets, U.S. democracy assistance projects have often relied upon providing explicit support to transnational broadcasters and news outlets as a means to circumventing domestic state pressure. In response to such innovative attempts Chinese authorities have reportedly engaged in jamming campaigns designed to curb BBC World News' Uzbek services which are utilized primarily by listeners in Xinjiang and Uzbekistan.<sup>455</sup>

In 2005, Ambassador Mark Palmer wrote, "In the poorest of the world's dictatorships, a majority of the population does not have access to a television set. In these societies, radio has a broader and more effective reach and needs to be supported...Publicly funded broadcasting services remain very important in a world laden with dictatorships. Their continued operation, including expansion in areas they do not sufficiently cover, will also be a critical factor in efforts by democracies to help those living under tyranny...For these hardest of cases, shortwave and other transmissions from abroad will continue to be vital..."<sup>456</sup> Citing the success of USAID's Office of Transition Initiative's prior funding of Shortwave Radio Africa (SWRA) in Zimbabwe, Palmer indicates "This is precisely the sort of broadcasting assistance needed for closed dictatorships: stations run by professional journalists from the country in question, who know firsthand their audience and the repression they experience."<sup>457</sup>

---

<sup>455</sup> Reporters Without Borders. "Reporters Without Borders criticizes the jamming of foreign radio stations, particularly the BBC's Uzbek service." October 16, 2002. [http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=4056](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=4056)

<sup>456</sup> Palmer, Mark. *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil*, p. 75.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., 76.

In line with such statements, we recommend the United States Government work to further the direct expansion of media sources/outlets in order to counter SCO efforts to restrict cross-border/trans-regional information flows. A diversification of both sources and formats (television, internet, print media, radio, and shortwave broadcasts) of media delivery will not only mitigate the overall impact of media jamming but will also function to increase the costs of such tactics, thereby rendering them less attractive in the long-term.

Similarly, we have reported on the significant, domestic challenges facing journalists and media outlets alike, both of which have become high-profile targets for political elites interested in restricting public debates and delimiting opportunities for opposition leaders to engage the public. The usage of existing libel/slander laws as well as stiff criminal penalties in order to directly restrict media reporting as well as developing traditions of ‘self-censorship’ add to SCO-related countries free-media deficit and represent the sort of practices which stem outward from the *Spirit of Shanghai*. As such, we recommend that the United States Government continue to work to protect media from unlawful state harassment by working with parliaments and political parties to form legislation which functions not to restrict the freedom of expression, but rather to support it. Similarly, we recommend that democracy assistance communities work to more widely publicize the harsh political conditions facing journalists in SCO countries by working to further integrate local journalists and media outlets into larger international media communities and networks of reporters/journalists. While the Russian Federation’s harsh treatment of journalists continues, the extreme amount of international attention to the politically-motivated murder of Anna Politkovskaya has functioned not only to create a flourishing of critical commentary but has also led to additional coverage of the recent criminal trial and led to expanded interest in her own works which were critical of human rights abuses inside the Russian Federation—that such attention raises the overall costs for political intimidation of journalists seems likely and should continue to take a high priority in all democracy assistance program models.

**Recommendation 7: Increasing Engagement with Turkmenistan: The need for preventative diplomacy.**

While Turkmenistan is not an SCO member state and has shown no true inclination to join the organization officially, increasing cooperation with SCO member states in natural gas export projects linking Turkmenistan to China via Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, bring with them

the renewed likelihood that Turkmenistan will continue to further its cooperation with the SCO in coming years. While Turkmenistan has long been known for its fundamentally unique policy orientation in Central Asia, the lesson of Uzbekistan's policy realignment towards the SCO in the wake of 2005 events should serve as a staunch reminder that substantial policy rifts between Central Asian states and the SCO can be quickly overcome in the case of either crisis or opportunity. Additionally, tensions between Turkmenistan and Russia over the development of Turkmen gas export infrastructure which circumvents the Gazprom pipeline monopoly may provide additional impetus to Turkmenistan to curry favor with the SCO or member states in an effort to balance Russian influence in the development of its strategic national industries.<sup>458</sup>

While Turkmenistan has received Freedom House's lowest ratings in both political rights and civil liberties,<sup>459</sup> and can certainly be regarded as a highly closed society due to its harsh domestic policies impacting the development of effective political opposition,<sup>460</sup> and independent media outlets,<sup>461</sup> it is the opinion of this task force that the United States Government should use the increasing leverage made available by Turkmenistan's interest in energy-exploration, production, and distribution projects to both engage the Berdymukhamedov regime directly and to urge the government to adopt increasingly liberal political measures.

In addition to the use of high-level effective public diplomacy to achieve these goals, the U.S. Government should take every precaution to ensure that U.S. multi-national corporations working in Turkmenistan do not further the existing set of problems by rigorously holding these same corporations to the provisions of the *Foreign Corrupt Practices Act*. Similarly, we urge the U.S. government to increase its democracy assistance expenditures in Turkmenistan in anticipation of the fact that Turkmenistan may, in the tradition of Uzbekistan previously, quickly reorient its policy orientation toward the SCO in the event of either significant crises of legitimacy or economic opportunities; proactive engagement and a long-term, non-threatening democracy assistance plans may simply be the best insurance the United States has for ensuring that Turkmenistan does not increase its practical cooperation with the SCO—a contingency that would further enhance the regime's already well-managed

---

<sup>458</sup> Daly, John C.K. April 13, 2009. Pipeline Explosion Reveals Turkmenistan-Gazprom Rift. [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/04/13/Pipeline-explosion-reveals-Turkmenistan-Gazprom-rift/UPI-16101239666679/)

<sup>459</sup> Freedom House 2010 Report on Freedom Around the World

<sup>460</sup> CIA World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tx.html>

<sup>461</sup> Reporters without Borders. September 16, 2009. Gas Contracts but no Press Freedom.

authoritarian behaviors. To this end we recommend the United States Government construct a state-specific democracy assistance plan for Turkmenistan that is based upon Ambassador Mark Palmer's "Stage 1: Initial Steps" model, which specifically provides a less-controversial program template for highly closed authoritarian societies.<sup>462</sup>

**Recommendation 8: Countering SCO educational soft-power initiatives through increasing study-abroad opportunities for citizens in SCO member, observer, and peripheral countries.**

In an effort to counter SCO educational soft-power initiatives, this taskforce recommends that the United States Government and the European Union increase the number of student visas available to citizens in SCO member, observer, and relevant peripheral countries, in an effort to build relations with generations of future SCO leaders, scholars, business professionals, scientists, and artists. We further recommend that policy-makers work to eliminate the related financial difficulties of studying abroad (which place considerable restrictions on the potential pool of applicants) by making available to these applicants educational subsidies, grants, and scholarships which can mitigate both educational expenses and the cost of living. Providing incentives to Western universities interested in developing study-abroad programs in SCO-related countries would simultaneously complement the growing demand created by visa expansion and financial assistance by ensuring an adequate supply of opportunities in host countries.

**Recommendation 9: Increasing Enforcement of U.S. *Foreign Corrupt Practices Act* for U.S. Multi-national Corporations Operating in SCO member and observer states.**

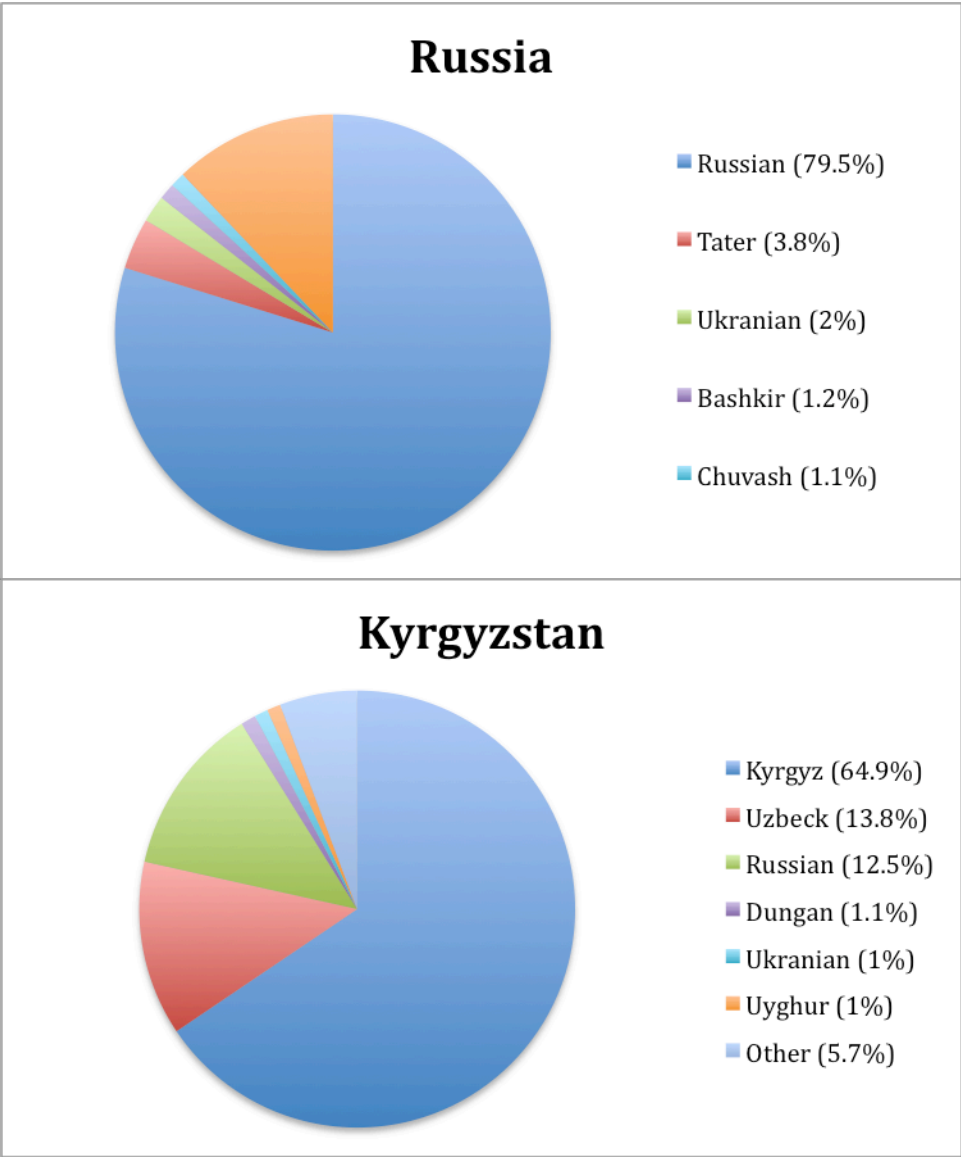
As we have indicated in this report, multinational corporations operating in SCO member countries are increasingly subject to non-traditional business practices which encourage non-transparent deals and illicit cash transfers to host governments and nationalized corporations. While it is difficult to gauge the extent to which these types of transactions negatively impact the development of democracy in SCO member countries, such practices clearly serve to support

---

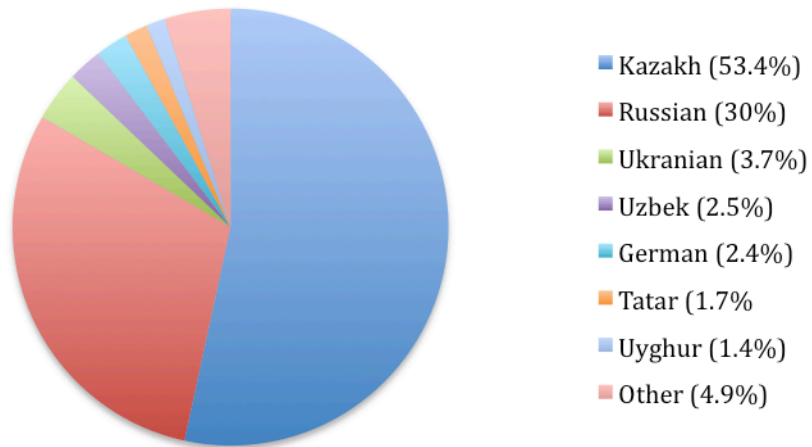
<sup>462</sup> See Ambassador Mark Palmer's *Democracy Development Plans*, in particular, we recommend constructing democracy promotion and assistance programs around Ambassador's "Stage 1: Initial Steps" model. See Palmer, Mark (2003). *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil*, p. 84-85.

paradigms which privilege corruption and so weaken the fundamental rule of law. In order to mitigate the potential negative impact of U.S. multinational corporations on the development of democracy among SCO-related states, this taskforce recommends that the United States Government strenuously enforce the provisions of the *Foreign Corrupt Practices Act*, working simultaneously to ensure that U.S. corporations adhere to sets of best practices when working abroad.

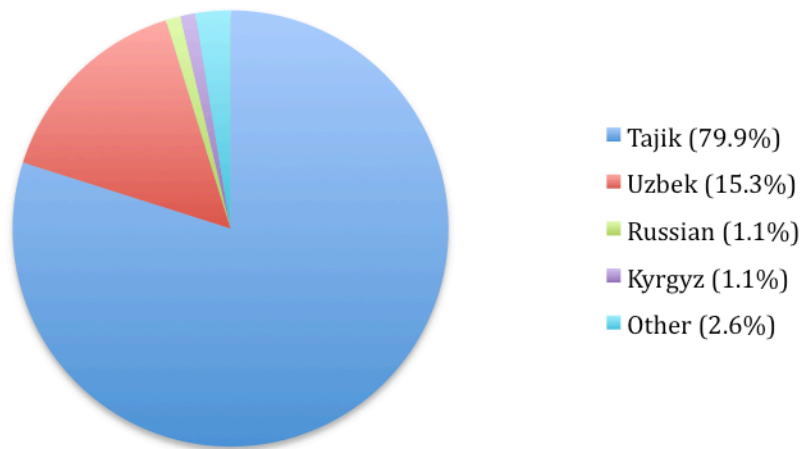
**Appendix A: Graphical Representation of Ethnicity in SCO Member States**



## Kazakhstan

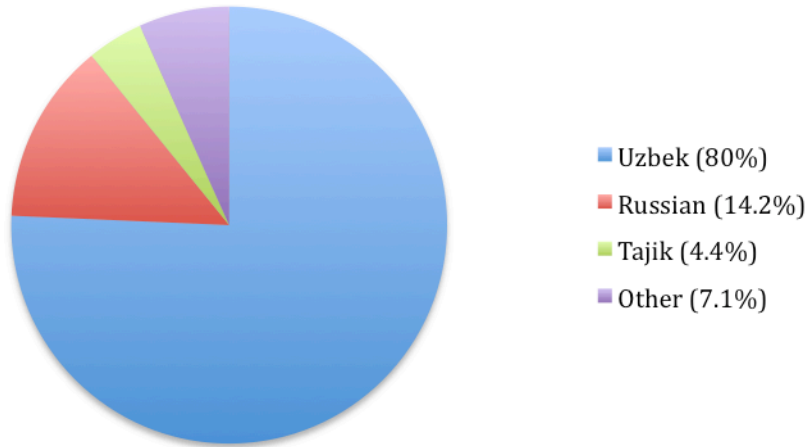


## Tajikistan

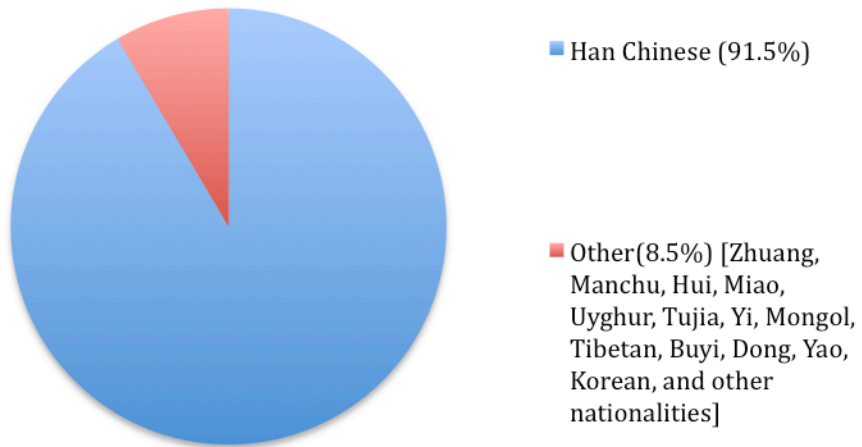




## Uzbekistan



## China



## **Appendix B: SCO Summits**

### **First SCO summit in Shanghai**

June 14-15, 2001 -- The first SCO summit was held by Presidents of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Shanghai, China. A joint statement was issued that announced Uzbekistan's participation, the launch of the SCO and the Shanghai treaty on terrorism, separatism and extremism.

### **Second SCO summit in St. Petersburg**

June 7, 2002 -- The second SCO summit was held in St. Petersburg Russia. The six presidents signed three documents, the Charter of the SCO, an agreement on anti-terrorism agency in the region, and the presidents' declaration, to chart the organization's development goals and to institutionalize the organization.

### **Third SCO summit in Moscow**

May 29, 2003 -- The heads of six SCO member states held their third summit in Moscow. A consensus was reached on the institutionalization of the SCO. A joint declaration was issued in which the leaders vowed to develop a partnership to face new threats and challenges, expressed satisfaction over progress, and recognized the United Nations role in world issues. The leaders also requested global cooperation against terrorism, drugs and other cross-border crimes.

### **Fourth SCO summit in Tashkent**

June 8-18, 2004 -- The fourth summit meeting was held Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent. The Regional Anti-terrorist Structure of the SCO was formally launched by the presidents of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. A joint declaration to cooperate in fighting terrorism as well as strengthening economic and trade ties was also pledged.

### **Fifth SCO summit in Astana**

July 5, 2005 -- The fifth summit was held in Astana, capital of Kazakh. The SCO discussed measures to strengthen unity, economy and security and a declaration was issued on strengthening cooperation within the organization. SCO observer status was granted to India, Iran and Pakistan. Agreements were signed on fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism (three evils) and emergency relief in disasters.<sup>463</sup>

### **Sixth SCO summit in Shanghai**

June 15, 2006 -- The sixth summit meeting was held in China's largest city, Shanghai. Shanghai is the birthplace of the SCO. Leaders from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan attended this summit. At the end of the morning session, the presidents of these six SCO member countries signed documents which included a joint declaration that marked the fifth founding anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.<sup>464</sup>

### **Seventh SCO Summit in Bishkek**

Aug 16, 2007 -- Leaders gathered in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan. The SCO reviewed achievements that had been made since the 2006 Shanghai summit, mapped out future cooperation on security, economy and foreign affairs, and signed a series of documents on economic and humanistic exchanges.

The leaders also signed a treaty. "The treaty will confirm the SCO spirits of pursuing peace and friendship from generation to generation in the form of a legal document, which is of great significance to mutual trust and mutually beneficial cooperation in Central Asia," said Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui.

### **Eighth SCO Summit in Dushanbe**

August 28, 2008 -- Tajikistan's capital of Dushanbe held the eighth summit. A consensus was reached on the development of the SCO, guidelines for cooperation and mutual ties between

---

<sup>463</sup> [http://english.sco summit2006.org/en\\_bjzl/2006-04/21/content\\_156.htm](http://english.sco summit2006.org/en_bjzl/2006-04/21/content_156.htm)

<sup>464</sup> [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/19/content\\_9500621.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/19/content_9500621.htm)

member states, and principles for external relations. Views on major international and regional issues were also exchanged in depth.<sup>465</sup>

### **Ninth SCO Summit in Yekaterinburg**

June 15, 2009 – In attendance were the heads of the SCO member states, observer states and guests of the host state. The president of Afghanistan, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Secretary-General of the Eurasian Economic Community, and Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization also participated in the summit.

Several documents were signed by SCO leaders including the Yekaterinburg Declaration, a Joint Communiqué, and the SCO Counter-Terrorism Convention. Agreements on international information security, training of officers for Counter-Terrorism Agencies, and financial cooperation were also signed by the plenipotentiaries of member states.

Discussions during the summit included the financial crisis and regional efforts to mitigate the impact, economic cooperation expansion, counter terrorism, drug trafficking and trans-national organized crime. Observer countries participated in a restricted meeting with the SCO Head of States Council for the first time.<sup>466</sup>

The 2009 Summit is significant because of emerging security issues in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Af-Pak strategy from the US, Iran's internal crisis, the financial crisis, the request of the Kyrgyz parliament to close the US military base in Manas, and confrontation between the US and Russia over Georgia.

### **Tenth SCO summit in Tashkent**

Uzbekistan has invited observers to attend the tenth SCO summit in June 2010. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan will assist in the organization and participation of the American representatives in Tashkent with the consent of the SCO member states. The first round of the Uzbek-American political consultations took place in Washington in December 2009.<sup>467</sup>

---

<sup>465</sup> [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009sco/2009-06/16/content\\_8289280.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009sco/2009-06/16/content_8289280.htm)

<sup>466</sup> [http://www.idsa.in/strategiccomments/The9thShanghaiCooperationOrganisationSummit\\_MSRoy\\_240609](http://www.idsa.in/strategiccomments/The9thShanghaiCooperationOrganisationSummit_MSRoy_240609)

<sup>467</sup>

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:j4jiiL4nBR8J:www.kabar.kg/en/news/2010/02/03/11167.html+uzbekistan+invites+us+summit+2010&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

## **Special Note on The Kyrgyz Government Summit Preparations**

Summit preparations made by the Kyrgyz government fell under scrutiny when they included security measures that restricted human rights. Demonstrations by political parties, opposition supporters and public organizations were warned against. Tursun Islam, the leader of a Uighur rights organization and his son, Alisher were detained after planning to a demonstration outside the US Embassy to promote democracy and human rights. The capitol's streets were cleared of undesirables as the result of irregularities found in document checks. Practicing Muslims were subjected to security police security sweeps including raids of Muslim family homes. Individuals suspected of involvement in Hizb ut-Tahrir were beaten. According to Human Rights Watch, "On August 8 the Jalalabat City Department of Interior issued an order indefinitely banning access to family members for detainees in main Jalalabat detention facility, noting that the measure was related to the SCO summit."<sup>468</sup>

---

<sup>468</sup> Human Rights Watch. "SCO Summit: Crackdown Highlights Failings on Human Rights ." [hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/08/15/sco-summit-crackdown-highlights-failings-human-rights). Available from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/08/15/sco-summit-crackdown-highlights-failings-human-rights>. Internet; accessed 31 May 2010.

## **Appendix C: Members of the SCO Secretariat**

### **Senior members**

(As listed on the official SCO website)

#### **Secretary General: Muratbek Sansyrbayevich Imanaliev**

Education: 1978 – Institute of Asian and African Studies of Lomonosov Moscow State

University, 1982 – Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, PhD

1982-1991 – Second Secretary, Head of Department, acting Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic

1991-1992 – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

1992-1993 – Counselor of the Embassy of the Russian Federation to the People's Republic of China

1993-1996 – Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the People's Republic of China

1996-1997 – Head of the International Department of the Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic

1997-2002 – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

2002-2007 – Professor of American University of Central Asia

2005-2009 – Director of the Institute for Public Policy

January-October 2009 – Adviser to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic

Diplomatic rank: Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of First Class of the USSR, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic

#### **SCO Deputy Secretary-General, Head of Political Section: Mikhail Alekseyevich**

##### **Konarovskiy**

Education: 1967 – Institute of Oriental Languages (the now Institute of Asian and African Studies) of Lomonosov Moscow State University, 1983 – Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1970-1999 – various positions at the central apparatus of the MFA of the USSR/RF and diplomatic missions overseas

1999-2001 – Deputy Director of the Second Asian Department of the Russian MFA

2001-2002 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the RF to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, from August 2001 – concurrently served as Ambassador of the RF to the Republic of Maldives

2002-2004 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the RF to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

2004-2009 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the RF to the Republic of Croatia

Diplomatic rank: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation; awarded the Order of Honor, Order of Friendship, Badge of Honor as well as a number of decorations of foreign states

**SCO Deputy Secretary-General: Anvar Djamaletdinovich Nasyrov**

Education: 1994 – degree in Uzbek history at Tashkent State University, 1996 – degree in international law at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy

1995-2002 – Attaché, Third Secretary, Second Secretary, Head of International Treaties Section of the Treaty-Law Department of the MFA of the Republic of Uzbekistan

2002-2004 – Second Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the People's Republic of China

2004-2006 - First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the People's Republic of China, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the SCO Secretariat

**SCO Deputy Secretary-General: Juyin Hong**

Received higher education;

1976-1977 – Junior Officer of the Department of the USSR and Eastern European States of the Chinese MFA;

1977-1980 – Embassy of the PRC to the USSR;

1980-1986 – Junior Officer, Third Secretary of the Department of the USSR and Eastern European States of the Chinese MFA;

1986-1989 – consul of the Consulate General of the PRC in Leningrad;

1989-1992 – Second Secretary, First Secretary of the Department of the USSR and Eastern

European States of the Chinese MFA;

1992-1996 – First Secretary, Counsellor of the Embassy of the PRC to Russia;

1996-1997 – Counsellor of the Department of Europe and Central Asia of the Chinese MFA;

1997-1998 – deputy mayor of the city of Luquan, Hebei Province;

1998-1999 – Counsellor of the Department of Europe and Central Asia of the Chinese MFA;

1999-2001 – Consul General of the PRC in Khabarovsk;

2001-2003 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Kyrgyz Republic;

2003-2005 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Republic of Estonia;

2005-2007 – Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China;

2007-2010 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Republic of Armenia;

Since 2010 – SCO Deputy Secretary-General, Head of Information and Analysis Section.

**SCO Deputy Secretary-General: Parviz Davlatkhodjayevich Dodov**

1976-1977 – Junior Officer of the Department of the USSR and Eastern European States of the Chinese MFA

1977-1980 – Embassy of the PRC to the USSR

1980-1986 – Junior Officer, Third Secretary of the Department of the USSR and Eastern European States of the Chinese MFA

1986-1989 – consul of the Consulate General of the PRC in Leningrad

1989-1992 – Second Secretary, First Secretary of the Department of the USSR and Eastern European States of the Chinese MFA

1992-1996 – First Secretary, Counselor of the Embassy of the PRC to Russia

1996-1997 – Counselor of the Department of Europe and Central Asia of the Chinese MFA

1997-1998 – deputy mayor of the city of Luquan, Hebei Province

1998-1999 – Counselor of the Department of Europe and Central Asia of the Chinese MFA

1999-2001 – Consul General of the PRC in Khabarovsk



2001-2003 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Kyrgyz Republic

2003-2005 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Republic of Estonia

2005-2007 – Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

2007-2010 – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Republic of Armenia<sup>469</sup>

---

<sup>469</sup> <http://www.sectsko.org/EN/secretary.asp>

## Appendix D: Establishing the Authoritarian Internationale

### Bi-lateral SCO Member-State Affinity Scores: 1993-2008

<b>Russia</b>	CHN	KZK	UZB	KYR	TAJ	Average
2005-08	77.14	80.31	71.74	78.73	70.79	75.742
2001-04	74.82	79.72	34.96	51.74	53.14	58.876
1997-00	65.66	68.3	30.33	69.63	50.93	56.97
1993-96	46.87	65.97	27.77	36.8	39.93	43.468

<b>China</b>	RUS	KZK	UZB	KYR	TAJ	Average
2005-08	77.14	81.9	<b>75.23</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>76.82</b>	78.598
2001-04	74.82	75.87	<b>28.67</b>	<b>50.34</b>	<b>48.6</b>	55.66
1997-00	65.66	61.5	31.13	67.36	63.96	57.922
1993-96	46.87	58.68	25	38.88	28.47	39.58

<b>Kazakhstan</b>	RUS	CHN	UZB	KYR	TAJ	Average
2005-08	80.31	81.9	<b>80</b>	<b>91.42</b>	<b>83.49</b>	83.424
2001-04	79.72	75.87	<b>40.2</b>	<b>58.74</b>	<b>60.13</b>	62.932
1997-00	68.3	61.5	61.79	80	68.46	68.01
1993-96	65.97	58.68	36.45	55.55	42.7	51.87

<b>Uzbekistan</b>	RUS	CHN	KZK	KYR	TAJ	Average
2005-08	<b>71.74</b>	<b>75.23</b>	<b>80</b>	81.58	79.36	77.582
2001-04	<b>34.96</b>	<b>28.67</b>	<b>40.2</b>	69.58	68.53	48.388
1997-00	30.33	31.13	61.79	59.72	25	41.594
1993-96	27.77	25	36.45	63.19	60.76	42.634

<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	RUS	CHN	KZK	UZB	TAJ	Average
2005-08	<b>78.73</b>	81.9	<b>91.42</b>	81.58	84.76	83.678
2001-04	<b>51.74</b>	75.87	<b>58.74</b>	69.58	88.46	68.878
1997-00	69.63	67.36	80	59.72	65.8	68.502
1993-96	36.8	38.88	55.55	63.19	59.37	50.758

<b>Tajikistan</b>	RUS	CHN	KZK	UZB	KYR	Average
2005-08	<b>70.79</b>	<b>76.82</b>	<b>83.49</b>	79.36	84.76	79.044
2001-04	<b>53.14</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>60.13</b>	68.53	88.46	63.772
1997-00	50.93	63.96	68.46	25	65.8	54.83
1993-96	39.93	28.47	42.7	60.76	59.37	46.246

## Sample of SCO Member/Observer State Voting Practices on Issues Pertaining Specifically to Democracy and Human Rights

UN Resolution	Date	Subject	China	Russia	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan	Tajikistan	India	Iran	Pakistan	Turkmenistan
A/RES/60/174	20051216	HR IN UZBEKISTAN-ANDIJON	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

**Figure 19: SCO member and observer voting record on a resolution pertaining to the Andijan Massacre in 2005 detailing SCO's overt support for Uzbekistan. Source: UNBISNET.**

UN Resolution	Date	Subject	CHN	RUS	KAZ	KYR	UZB	TAJ	IRN	IND	PAK
A/RES/64/157	20091218	Promotion of a democratic order	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/63/189	20081218	Promotion of a democratic order	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/61/160	20061219	Promotion of a democratic order	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/59/193	20041220	Promotion of a democratic order	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/61/166	20061219	Promotion of dialogue on human rights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/60/163	20051216	Promotion of peace for human rights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Yes
A/RES/59/204	20041220	Promotion of human rights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A/RES/58/188	20031222	Promotion of human rights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Figure 20: SCO member and observer voting record on generic resolutions calling for the global promotion of democracy and human rights: 2003**

## Appendix E: Timeline of Uighur Conflict

### Uighur Conflict 2000-Present

The following timeline traces occurrences of violence or controversy involving the Muslim Uighurs from 2000 through present. Though it is difficult to ascertain specific data, the following information exemplifies the increase in repression Uighurs have faced since 9/11. In keeping with the “Spirit of Shanghai,” neighboring states cooperate to maintain and control ethnic minority Muslims.

Date	Description of Event
March 2000	<p>The Urumqi Intermediate Court gives Rebiya Kadeer an eight-year sentence.</p> <p>Previously, in February 2000, the Urumqi City Procuracy officially accused Ms. Kadeer of “ignoring the law of the country and giving information to separatists outside the borders.” While en-route to meet a U.S. Congressional delegation that she was going to disclose information to regarding Xinjiang prisoners, Kadeer was detained August 11, 1999. According to Radio Free Asia, neither Kadeer nor her lawyer was granted speaking privileges at her trial.<sup>470</sup></p>
late 2001	<p>Uighurs are turned over to the U.S. by Pakistan for reportedly large bounties.</p> <p>The Uighurs in question had been residing in a Uighur camp in Afghanistan when the U.S.-led coalition bombing campaign began in October 2001; they fled into the mountains and were promised safety by Arab travelers in Pakistan, but turned over instead to Pakistani authorities whom subsequently turned them over to the U.S. where they remain in custody.<sup>471</sup></p>
August 2002	<p>The Bush Administration designates the East Turkmenistan Islamist Movement (ETIM) as a terrorist organization.</p> <p>Note: The ETIM comprises only a small portion</p>

<sup>470</sup> Human Rights Watch (2000). “China: Eight Year Sentence for Uighur Businesswoman.” March 10, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2000/03/09/china-eight-year-sentence-uighur-businesswoman>

<sup>471</sup> Human Rights Watch (2008) “US: Parole Uighur Detainees Into the United States.” October 6, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/10/06/us-parole-uighur-detainees-united-states>

	of the entire Uighur community.
October 15, 2002	Chinese authorities are reportedly “jamming” BBC World News’ Uzbek services, which are utilized primarily by listeners in Uzbekistan and Xinjiang. <sup>472</sup>
2004	Despite having been granted clearance, legitimate fears concerning China’s potential to torture detainees prevent the release of 17 Uighur detainees from Guantanamo.
March 18, 2005	The Chinese government releases Rebiya Kadeer, advocate for Uighur Muslims in the northwestern province of Xinjiang; she had been detained since 1999 while publicly meeting with US congressional delegation.
May 11-14, 2005	Chinese security agents launch what Human Rights Watch (HRW) calls a “politically motivated crackdown” on Rebiya Kadeer, prominent activist for Uighur community.  Since May 11, 2005, agents have tried to arrest her son, beaten and detained several of her family’s associates, and raided her business offices. <sup>473</sup>
November 2005	A Kashgar court sentences Korash Huseyin, Kashgar Literature Review editor, to three years in prison for publishing an allegorical fable viewed as an explicit reference to the region’s harsh rule. <sup>474</sup>
April 20, 2007	Ablikim Abdiryim, third son of activist Rebiya Kadeer, is sentenced to nine years in jail for supposedly posting “secessionist” articles to the webmaster of the Uighur service of Yahoo.com, despite lack of evidence. <sup>475</sup>
June 24, 2008	Despite its promises to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), China restricts journalistic coverage tracing the trajectory of the Olympic flame through Xinjiang.

<sup>472</sup> Reporters Without Borders (2002) “Reporters Without Borders criticizes the jamming of foreign radio stations, particularly the BBC’s Uzbek service.” October 16, [http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=4056](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=4056)

<sup>473</sup> Human Rights Watch (2005) “China: Uighur Activist’s Family Threatened.” May 14, Kadeer was previously detained in 1999 and served four years before going into exile in the United States. She left behind a multi-million dollar business and remains a strong advocate for Uighur Muslim rights. HRW sees the recent Chinese security moves as a means to threaten any lasting “legacy” Kadeer has.  
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2005/05/13/china-ugur-activist-s-family-threatened>

<sup>474</sup> Reporters Without Borders (2005) “Editor of literary review gets three years in prison.” November 21, According to the article, “Huseyin, who is married and has three children, was convicted for publishing a story last year called “The Wild Pigeon” by Nurmuhemmet Yasin, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison in February for supposedly inciting Uighur separatism.” [http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=15671](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=15671)

<sup>475</sup> Reporters Without Borders (2007) “Member of uighur minority sentenced to nine years in jail for trying to post ‘secessionist’ articles.” April 20.  
[http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=21823](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=21823)

<sup>476</sup> Reporters Without Borders (2008) “Foreign media curbed as Olympic flame passes through Xinjiang and Tibet.” June 24.  
[http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=27597](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=27597)

	The 50 journalists allowed entry into Kashgar, Urumqi, and Lhasa were granted limited physical access and banned from speaking to local people. <sup>476</sup>
June 30, 2008	The U.S. acknowledges that one of the 17 Uighur detainees at Guantanamo, Huzaifa Parhat, was wrongly deemed an “enemy combatant,” and though he was determined eligible for release in 2004, risk of persecution in China as well as alternatives—no country willing to accept him—have prevented his release. <sup>477</sup>
August 2008	A series of attacks leave 22 security officers and one civilian dead; the most violent attack occurs in Kashgar; the NYT cites recent restrictions on religious practice as causing tension. <sup>478</sup>
August 2008	Uighurs are prevented from airplane travel during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. <sup>479</sup>
Feb 18, 2009	HRW reports on federal appeals court ruling ( <i>Kiyemba v. Bush</i> ) preventing the U.S. courts release of 17 Uighur detainees at Guantanamo Bay, despite their “enemy combatant” designation clearance. <sup>480</sup>
April 2009	Pakistan extradites as many as nine Uighurs to China, accusing them of their involvement in “terrorist activities.” <sup>481</sup>
June 12, 2009	Four Uighurs are transferred from Guantanamo to Bermuda.  Although HRW views it is a “positive” step toward closing the prison, it is not a huge

<sup>477</sup> Human Rights Watch (2008) “Uighurs at Guantanamo.” June 30,  
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/06/30/uighurs-guantanamo>

<sup>478</sup> Wong, Edward (2008) “Wary of Islam, China Tightens a Vise of Rules.” New York Times (NYT). October 18. Article discusses recent restrictions imposed by Communist Party on Islamic religious practices, linking publicized rules on web and mosques to attacks and tension in Kashgar.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/19/world/asia/19xinjiang.html>

<sup>479</sup> Freedom House (2009) “Chinese Media Manipulation Feeds Tensions in Xinjiang.” July 8.  
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=1025>

<sup>480</sup> Human Rights Watch (2009) “US: Resettle Guantanamo Uighurs in the United States.” Feb 18. Most of the 17 Uighur detainees were part of the group Pakistan turned over to the U.S. in late 2001; they remained in the prison due to credible fears of Chinese torture should they be returned. The U.S. has apparently tried to “convince” other countries to allow Uighur resettlement. According to the article, “Albania took in five in 2006, but no other country has offered to take in the remaining 17, in part because the United States has failed to resettle any detainees itself.”

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/02/18/us-resettle-guantanamo-uighurs-united-states>

<sup>481</sup> Freedom House (2009) “Freedom House Condemns Pakistan, China for Uighur Extraditions.” May 7.

In response, Jennifer Windsor, FH executive director, cites Pakistan’s latest extradition as further evidence of China’s “skillful” manipulation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to control its ethnic minorities, and proof of how China exerts pressure on surrounding countries to acquiesce to its policies regarding Uighurs.  
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=815>

<sup>482</sup> Human Rights Watch (2009) “US: Transfer of Uighurs to Bermuda a Positive Step Toward Closing Guantanamo.” June 12,

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/06/12/us-transfer-uighurs-bermuda-positive-step-toward-closing-guantanamo>

	improvement on the part of the U.S. in admitting Uighur detainees into its own borders. <sup>482</sup>
June 25, 2009	A brawl breaks out in a toy factory in Shaoguan, 1800 miles from Xinjiang, amidst Uighur and Han workers; 2 Uighur men are killed and 120 injured. <sup>483</sup>
July 5, 2009	A riot breaks out between Uighur and Han students at a protest of the deaths at the Urumqi factory the previous month; an estimated 200 are killed and over 1000 injured.  These protests are presumed to be in response to Uighur belief that Chinese authorities did not adequately look into the factory conflict.
July 6, 2009	Chinese government locks down Urumqi and its surrounding region, imposing curfews, cutting off cell phone and internet usage, as well as dispatching armed police officers into neighborhoods.  A report released by Chinese officials targets Rebiya Kadeer as the source of the riots. <sup>484</sup>
September 2009	Dolkun Isa, a Uighur activist who holds German citizenship, is denied entry into South Korea to take part in a conference on democracy; he is held for two subsequent days without any explanation. <sup>485</sup>
October 2009	The Intermediate People's Court in Urumqi sentences six men to death on charges of murder related to the July 2009 riots; a seventh was given a life sentence for his confession.  According to the New York Times (NYT), all seven have names suggesting Uighur identity. <sup>486</sup>
October 1, 2009	Uighur journalist and former editor of Uighurbiz website, Hailaite Niyazi, is arrested for "endangering national security." <sup>487</sup>

<sup>483</sup> New York Times (2009) "Uighurs." November 10, [http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/u/ighurs\\_chinese\\_ethnic\\_group/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=Uighur&st=cse](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/u/ighurs_chinese_ethnic_group/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=Uighur&st=cse)

<sup>484</sup> Wong, Edward (2009) "China Locks Down Restive Region After Deadly Clashes." New York Times. July 6, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/07/world/asia/07china.html>

<sup>485</sup> Walker, Christopher and Cook, Sarah (2009) Freedom House. "China's Export of Citizenship." Far Eastern Economic Review, October 12.

The authors posit China's position as South Korea's largest trading partner as a key factor for Isa's detention. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=72&release=1085>.

<sup>486</sup> Wong, Edward (2009) "China Executes 9 for Their Roles in Ethnic Riots in July." New York Times, November 9, [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/10/world/asia/10xinjiang.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/10/world/asia/10xinjiang.html?_r=1)

<sup>487</sup> Reporters without Borders (2009) "Survey of blocked Uighur websites shows Xinjiang still cut off from the world." October 29. According to the article, his arrest is linked with a controversial interview in which he discussed the Xinjiang regional government's involvement with the July 2009 riots. [http://en.rsrf.org/spip.php?page=article&id\\_article=34859](http://en.rsrf.org/spip.php?page=article&id_article=34859)

October-November 2009	Uighurs flee to Cambodia, having been issued “Persons of Concern” letters by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
November 2009	Nine people are executed; according to China New Report, these cases had been reviewed by the Supreme People’s Court of China. <sup>488</sup>
December 19, 2009	Uighurs are forcibly returned from Cambodia to China in what Human Rights Watch (HRW) recognizes as a clear violation of international law <sup>489</sup>
January 18, 2010	HRW addresses reports that 17 Uighurs are deported from northern Shan state of Burma at Ruili-Muse border crossing into Yunnan province, by security officials of Shan State Special Region 2, a semi-autonomous border zone controlled by United Wa State Army (that has maintained a cease-fire with Burma since 1989). <sup>490</sup>
April 20, 2010	18-year old Noor-UI-Islam Sherbaz is sentenced to life imprisonment after being held since July 27, 2009, for his alleged involvement in the Urumqi riots previously this year. According to Amnesty International, his trial on this day lasts 13 minutes and he is represented by a lawyer appointed by the Aksu Intermediate People’s Court. <sup>491</sup>
April 24, 2010	Wang Lequan, the ruling official of Xinjiang for past 15 years, is replaced by Zhang Chunxian, party secretary of Hunan Province. According to NYT article, violence in Urumqi summer 2009 contributed to wavering support for Lequan on behalf of Han who demanded he provide more support for them after the July riots. His replacement, Zhang, has little experience in ethnic unrest. <sup>492</sup>

<sup>488</sup> Ibid.

<sup>489</sup> <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/12/22/china-forcibly-returned-ughur-asylum-seekers-risk> Dec 22, 2009

“China: Forcibly Returned Uighur Asylum Seekers At Risk.”

<sup>490</sup> Human Rights Watch (2010) “China: Account for Uighur Refugees Forcibly Repatriated to China.” January 28, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/01/28/china-account-ughur-refugees-forcibly-repatriated-china>

<sup>491</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/017/2010/en>

April 20, 2010. Amnesty International report. “China: Further information: Life sentence for 18-year-old, unfair trial.” According to the AI report, Noor-UI-Islam Sherbaz was “held for the first 8 months in Xishan Detention Centre in Urumqi, but was then transferred to a detention centre in Aksu in western XUAR, approximately 1000 km from Urumqi for the trial. He was 17 years old at the time of the July 2009 unrest and turned 18 on 16 January in detention.”

<sup>492</sup> Wong, Edward and Ansfield, Jonathan (2010) “China Replaces Leader of the Restive Xinjiang Region.” New York Times, April 24, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/25/world/asia/25xinjiang.html?scp=2&sq=Uighur&st=cse>



## APPENDIX F: USAID Expenditures

### USAID Expenditures Among SCO Members, Observers, and Peripheral States: 1991-2004

Source: Finkel, Steven E., Anibal Perez-Linan, Mitchell A. Seligson, and C. Neal Tate, *The Democracy Assistance Project, Phase II: 1990-2004*. Project dataset available online at: <http://www.pitt.edu/~politics/democracy/democracy.html>

