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Uzbekistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests

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Summary

Uzbekistan gained independence at the end of 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet Union. The landlocked country is a potential Central Asian regional power by virtue of its population, the largest in the region, its substantial energy and other resources, and its location at the heart of regional trade and transport networks. The existing president, Islam Karimov, retained his post following the country's independence, and was reelected in 2000 and 2007. He has pursued a policy of caution in economic and political reforms, and many observers have criticized Uzbekistan's human rights record.

The United States pursued close ties with Uzbekistan following its independence. After the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, Uzbekistan offered over-flight and basing rights to U.S. and coalition forces. However, U.S. basing rights at Karshi-Khanabad were terminated in 2005 following U.S. criticism and other actions related to the Karimov government's allegedly violent crackdown on unrest in the southern city of Andijon. Since then, the United States has attempted to improve relations, particularly in support of operations in Afghanistan. In 2009, Uzbekistan began to participate in the Northern Distribution Network of land, sea, and air transit routes from Europe through Eurasia for U.S. and NATO military supplies entering and exiting Afghanistan.

Cumulative U.S. assistance budgeted for Uzbekistan in FY1992-FY2010 was $971.36 million (all agencies and programs). Of this aid, about two-fifths was budgeted for combating weapons of mass destruction (including Comprehensive Threat Reduction aid), Foreign Military Financing, counter-narcotics, Partnership for Peace, and anti-crime support. Food, health, and other social welfare and humanitarian aid accounted for nearly one-fourth, and democratization aid accounted for nearly one-fifth. Budgeted assistance was $11.3 million in FY2011 and $16.7 million in FY2012, and the Administration has requested $11.6 million for FY2014 (these latter amounts include foreign assistance listed in the *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*, and exclude Defense and Energy Department funding; country data for FY2013 are not yet available).

In FY2003 foreign operations appropriations (P.L. 108-7) and thereafter, Congress prohibited foreign assistance to the government of Uzbekistan unless the Secretary of State determined and reported that Uzbekistan was making substantial progress in meeting commitments to respect human rights; establish a multiparty system; and ensure free and fair elections, freedom of expression, and the independence of the media. In FY2008, Congress added a provision blocking Uzbek government officials from entering the United States if they were deemed to have been responsible for events in Andijon or to have violated other human rights. Consolidated Appropriations for FY2012 (P.L. 112-74) provides for the Secretary of State to waive conditions on assistance to Uzbekistan for a period of not more than six months and every six months thereafter until September 30, 2013, on national security grounds and as necessary to facilitate U.S. access to and from Afghanistan. Such waivers have been issued.

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Political Background

Uzbekistan gained independence at the end of 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet Union. The landlocked country is the largest in Central Asia in terms of population and the third-largest in territory (behind Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan; see box and **Figure 1**). The existing president, Islam Karimov, retained his post following the country's independence, and was reelected in 2000 and 2007. He has pursued a policy of cautiously opening the country to global economic and other influences.

In January 2002, Karimov orchestrated a referendum on a new constitution that created a bicameral legislature. A constitutional provision extended the presidential term to seven years. The legislature (termed the *Oliy Majlis* or Supreme Assembly) consists of a 120-member (later expanded, see below), directly elected lower chamber, the Legislative Chamber, and a 100-member upper chamber, the Senate. The Senate is composed of 16 members appointed by the president, with the rest selected by local legislatures. The Legislative Chamber has formal responsibility for drafting laws. Constitutional amendments approved in April 2003 established that—after the presidential election at the end of 2007—the prime minister would exercise greater power. In January 2005, Karimov explained that he aimed to create three powerful branches of government, to correct a situation where "everything now depends on me."

Uzbekistan Basic Facts

Area and Population: Land area is 172,742 sq. mi., slightly larger than California. The population is 28.7 million (World Factbook, July 2013 est.). Administrative subdivisions include the Karakalpak Republic.

Ethnicity and Religion: 80% are Uzbek, 5.5% Russian, 5% Tajik, 3% Kazakh, 2.5% Karakalpak, 1.5% Tatar, and others (World Factbook, 1996 est.). More than 1.2 million Uzbeks reside in Afghanistan, 1 million in Tajikistan, and 500,000 in Kyrgyzstan. Most Uzbeks follow Sunni Islam of the Hanafi school, although Sufiism is influential.

Gross Domestic Product: $106.4 billion; per capita GDP is about $3,600 (World Factbook, 2012 est., purchasing power parity).

Political Leaders: President: Islam Karimov; Prime Minister: Shavkat Mirziyoyev; Speaker of the Legislative Chamber: Diloram Tashmukhamedova; Speaker of the Senate: Ilgizar Sobirov; Foreign Minister: Abdulaziz Komilov; Defense Minister: Major-General Qobil Berdiyev.

Biography: Karimov, born in 1938, worked in Uzbek state planning and finance for much of his early career. In 1989, he became First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party. In 1990, the Uzbek Supreme Soviet elected him to the newly created post of president, and he also became a member of the Soviet Communist Party Politburo. In December 1991, he was popularly elected president of Uzbekistan, winning 86% of the vote against opposition Erk Party candidate Mohammad Solikh (Salih). In 1995, Karimov orchestrated a popular referendum to extend his presidency until 2000, won reelection, and in 2002 orchestrated another referendum to extend his term until 2007. He was reelected in December 2007.

Only government-controlled parties operate legally: the People's Democratic Party (PDP), formerly the communist party headed by Karimov; the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party; the Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP), consisting of government-connected businessmen; the Milliy Tiklanish (National Revival) Party, consisting of state-supported intellectuals; and the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan. Opposition parties such as Birdamlik, Birlik, Erk, Free Farmers, and the Sunshine Coalition are illegal. The former Fidokorlar (Self-Sacrifice) National Democracy Party, created by Karimov as a youth party, merged with the National Revival Party in June 2008, and the enlarged party joined the "Democratic Bloc" of Legislative Chamber factions (including Adolat and the Liberal Democratic Party) in August 2008. A constitutional law on parties and democratization came into effect in 2008 that permits "opposition" party deputies in the Legislative Chamber to offer alternative bills and take part in debates. The law also calls

for the president to "consult" with Legislative Chamber factions before nominating a candidate for prime minister.

In December 2008, President Karimov signed electoral legislation that eliminated the nomination of candidates for legislative and presidential elections by independent initiative groups, leaving only parties as eligible to nominate candidates.[1] The law also expanded the size of the Legislative Chamber from 120 to 150. Fifteen of the members of the Chamber are to be elected by delegates to a conference of the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan (EMU), registered as a political party in September 2008. The EMU proclaims that it is not like green parties in other countries, so that it can focus on environmental issues rather than grasping for political power.

The Uzbek Central Election Commission (CEC) in mid-November 2007 approved four candidates to run in the prospective December 23, 2007, presidential election. Incumbent President Karimov was nominated by the LDP. The party which Karimov once headed, the PDP, nominated its current head, Asliddin Rustamov. The Adolat Social Democratic Party nominated its head, Dilorom Toshmuhammadova. A citizen's initiative committee nominated Akmal Saidov. The CEC disqualified the candidates nominated by the Milliy Taklanish and Fidokorlar parties at their conventions (the latter party had sponsored Karimov during his 2000 election), saying they had not gathered enough signatures. Although the Uzbek constitution bars a president from more than two terms, the CEC argued that since the most recent constitution was approved in 2002, Karimov's "first term" followed his election in January 2000, and that he was eligible to run for a "second term" in December 2007.

According to the report of a small election observation mission sponsored by the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Uzbek CEC and local electoral commissions controlled public appearances and spending by the candidates. There were no campaign debates and media coverage was minimal, according to ODIHR. Each presidential candidate used similar language to laud economic development and democratization under the incumbent president. State-owned media urged the electorate to vote for Karimov. According to the CEC, Karimov received 88% of 14.8 million votes with a 90.6% turnout. The OHIDR election mission issued a press statement assessing the election as "generally fail[ing] to meet many OSCE commitments for democratic elections." Besides the problems noted above, others included lax rules regarding early voting, frequent voting by one member of a household for all members, and an observed low turnout.[2]

Elections to the Legislative Chamber were held on December 27, 2009. Over 500 candidates from the four approved parties ran for 135 seats, and an additional 15 seats were filled by voting at a conference of the EMU. Turnout reportedly was almost 88% of 17.2 million registered voters. The Central Electoral Commission reported that in 39 districts no candidate had received over 50% of the vote, so that run-offs would be held on January 10, 2010. Following these run-offs,

[1] The chairman of the Legislative Chamber's Committee on Legislation, Nurdinjon Ismoilov hailed the elimination of this nomination process as "preventing various troublemakers from getting into parliament, including members of organized crime groups, and their acquiring deputy immunity. This measure also prevents a parliament post from being used to pursue clannishness and promote parochial and corporate interests." *National Word*, 6 December, 2008, quoted in Sukhrobjon Ismoilov and Sanzhar Saidov, "On the Results of the Parliamentary Elections in Uzbekistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 11, Issue 1, 2010.

[2] OSCE, ODIHR, *Press Release: Strictly Controlled Uzbek Elections Did Not Offer a Genuine Choice, ODIHR Observers Conclude*, December 24, 2007; *Republic Of Uzbekistan, Presidential Election, 23 December 2007, OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission: Final Report*, April 23, 2008.

the Liberal Democratic Party had won 53 seats, the People's Democratic Party had won 32 seats, the Milliy Tiklanish Party had won 31 seats, and the Adolat Social Democratic Party had won 19 seats. The OSCE declined to send observers, stating that the electoral environment did not permit a free and fair contest. Some U.S. embassy personnel observed some of the voting, and the embassy stated afterward that the election campaign failed to reflect diverse viewpoints, since candidates from only pro-Karimov parties were permitted to run.[3] Indirect elections to the Senate were held on January 20-22, 2010. The president's 16 appointees to the Senate included deputy prime ministers, the chairman of the Supreme Court, and the foreign minister, making the Senate an amalgam of the three branches of government.

Perhaps to create the appearance of diversity, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Milliy Tiklanish Party, and the Adolat Social Democratic Party have declared that they form a "majority democratic bloc" in the Legislative Chamber. The People's Democratic Party has declared that it is the "minority opposition" party. Opening a joint session of the newly elected legislature in late January 2010, President Karimov called for studying the activities of the U.S. Congress in order to boost the role of budgeting and oversight in the Uzbek legislature.[4]

In a speech in November 2010, President Karimov called for several constitutional changes which were approved by the legislature and signed into law by the president in April 2011. One of the changes provides for the political party that controls a majority of seats in the lower legislative chamber to have the right to nominate a candidate for prime minister (all existing political parties are pro-Karimov). Procedures also are outlined for the legislature to hold a vote of no confidence in the prime minister. The prime minister is given responsibility for appointing regional administrators, a power formerly lodged with the president. Another amendment specifies that in the event the president is incapacitated, the chairman of the Senate will serve as the interim head of state pending the holding of a presidential election within three months. Some skeptics have linked the constitutional changes to government concerns that civil discontent could become manifest as it did in several Middle Eastern countries in early 2011. Others suggest that since some of the ostensible reform efforts predate the "Arab Spring," they are linked to infighting within the elite. Perhaps supporting the latter view, in mid-July 2011 the legislature passed a joint resolution criticizing an economic report delivered by the prime minister.[5]

On December 5, 2011, the legislature approved amendments to the constitution reducing the presidential term from seven to five years. The change was hailed as advancing democratization, but was a reversion to the pre-2002 term in office. In March 2012, the legislature approved holding legislative elections on December 28, 2014, and the presidential election in March or April 2015. Some observers suggest that President Karimov might consider succession contingencies at that time, such as designating a possible heir.

[3] OSCE. ODIHR. *Republic of Uzbekistan Parliamentary Elections 27 December 2009: OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report*, October 21-22, 2009; Deirdre Tynan, "Uzbekistan: Tashkent Holds Parliamentary Elections," *Eurasia Insight*, December 28, 2009. Uzbek analysts Sukhrobjon Ismoilov and Sanzhar Saidov claim that turnout was actually around 50% or less and that candidates were pre-designated to win seats. They argue that even though "the political parties of Uzbekistan are incapable of rallying people around them and governing the state," the parties are gaining experience and eventually may be permitted to freely and effectively aggregate interests. "On the Results of the Parliamentary Elections in Uzbekistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 11, Issue 1, 2010.

[4] Open Source Center, *Central Eurasia: Daily Report* (hereafter *CEDR*), January 28, 2010, Doc. No. CEP-950069.

[5] *CEDR*, July 22, 2011, Doc. No. CEP-950121.

In April 2012, Uzbek legislators and officials visiting the United States reported that bills had been introduced to provide for the legislature to hold hearings to question the prime minister, to hold a vote of non-confidence in the government, and to strengthen the rights of NGOs.[6] Displaying a guarded attitude toward democratization, President Karimov stated in June 2012 that "we should live in an evolutionary way ... not in a revolution or coup.... Tell me if it is possible to say a people happy, if they live in uncertainties: how will life change tomorrow, how will prices change, what sort of calamities are awaiting us.... Only peace, tranquility and unity make ... the Uzbek people [happy].... This is the Uzbek people's biggest demand from life."[7] U.S. analyst Martha Olcott has argued that Uzbek society is becoming more religiously traditional (although not radical), and that politics will probably be influenced by these societal views, so that a secular liberal democratic political system may not soon emerge.[8]

In December 2012, President Karimov stressed that the country was following a path of "evolutionary" democratization, including by increasing the checks and balances among the three branches of power and strengthening political parties. At the same time, he stated that the government's power would continue to increase in the "transitional period" in order for it to direct the reforms, and cautioned that the process of democratization was lengthy and never-ending.[9]

Human Rights

The NGO Freedom House repeatedly has included Uzbekistan among nine countries such as North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkmenistan ranked as "the world's worst human rights abusers" in terms of human rights and civil liberties.[10]

According to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, police routinely beat and otherwise mistreated detainees to obtain confessions, and torture reportedly was common in prisons and detention facilities. The government frequently harassed, arrested, and prosecuted human rights activists and political oppositionists. Most human rights organizations estimated that authorities held hundreds or even thousands of political prisoners. There were no jury trials. In the vast majority of criminal cases brought to court, the defendant was found guilty. Judges often based their verdicts solely on confessions and witness testimony extracted through abuse and threats to family members. In mid-2012, Gulnaza Yuldasheva, a human rights activist, was convicted of charges of extortion viewed by many observers as politically motivated; she had earlier accused a number of local officials of complicity in human trafficking. Officials released some high-profile prisoners during the year, and a few police officers were convicted on charges of torture or other abuse. In late 2012, legislation was approved that ostensibly expanded the use of habeas corpus in criminal cases.

[6] Carnegie Endowment, *Current Developments in Uzbekistan's Parliament*, April 26, 2012, at http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/26/current-developments-in-uzbekistan-s-parliament/acih.

[7] *CEDR*, June 18, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950118.

[8] Martha Olcott, *In the Whirlwind of Jihad* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 2012).

[9] *CEDR*, December 8, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950005.

[10] *The Worst of the Worst 2012*, Freedom House, 2012; *Freedom in the World 2013*, Freedom House, 2013; *Nations in Transit*, Freedom House, June 18, 2013.

The government severely limited freedom of expression. The law imposed significant fines for libel and defamation, and insulting the president was punishable by up to five years in prison. The government used such charges as well as other methods to arrest, harass, and intimidate journalists. The government allowed publication of a few private newspapers with limited circulation that included infrequent stories critical of government socio-economic policies. Four state-run television channels dominated broadcasting. Regional television outlets sometimes broadcast some moderately critical stories on local issues. In late 2012, the government reportedly issued new regulations widening control over media, including the power to block or ban media that threaten the integrity of the "national information space." The government regularly gave explicit instructions about the types of stories permitted for publication.

The government often restricted freedom of assembly. Authorities dispersed and occasionally detained persons who were involved in peaceful protests. The law requires that all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) be registered formally with the government. The government compelled most NGOs to join a state-controlled NGO association that enabled close oversight over their funding and activities. The government limited freedom of travel and emigration, in particular through the continued requirement for citizens and permanent residents to obtain exit visas, although it generally granted the visas. There were reports that the government delayed exit visas for human rights activists and independent journalists. Government-compelled forced labor occurred during the cotton harvest, including 15- to 18-year-old students, teachers, medical workers, government and military personnel, retirees, and persons receiving welfare. Credible reporting suggested that the expanded use of forced mobilization of adult state workers was to compensate for reductions in labor by children younger than 15.[11]

Since November 2006, the State Department has designated Uzbekistan a "country of particular concern" (CPC), for severe religious and other human rights violations that could lead to U.S. sanctions. However, since 2009, the State Department has issued waivers for Uzbekistan, so that no U.S. sanctions have been taken. According to the State Department, the Uzbek government "engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom," including restrictions on unregistered groups and the prohibition of many activities, such as proselytizing. Many members of registered and unregistered minority religious groups faced heavy fines and short jail terms. The government continued to deal harshly with Muslims who practiced outside of sanctioned mosques, but permitted the regular activities of religious groups deemed traditionally present in the country, including the Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, and Russian Orthodox communities. The State Department followed the recommendation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in again designating Uzbekistan as a CPC.[12]

In June 2013, the State Department reported that Uzbekistan is a source country for human trafficking for forced labor and sex, and that while the government greatly reduced the number of children under 15 years of age involved in the 2012 cotton harvest, the government continued to subject older children and adults to forced labor in the harvest. Also, Uzbekistan has not demonstratively investigated or prosecuted government officials suspected to be complicit in forced labor. The State Department estimates that there are over 1 million individuals subject to state-imposed internal forced labor in Uzbekistan. Since designations began in 2003, Uzbekistan has ranked as a Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List, or Tier 3 country (a Tier 2 country does not fully

[11] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, April 19, 2013.

[12] U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, *Annual Report*, April 2013; U.S. Department of State, *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom*, May 20, 2013.

comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to comply; a Watch List country does not fully comply, the number of victims may be increasing, and efforts to comply are slipping; a Tier 3 country does not fully comply and is not making significant efforts to do so). In the 2003, 2006, and 2007 reports, Uzbekistan was listed as a Tier 3 country, but in the 2008-2012 reports, Uzbekistan was on the Tier 2 Watch List. In the 2011-2012 reports, Uzbekistan was granted waivers from an otherwise required downgrade to Tier 3 because the government had written plans to comply, according to the State Department. However, the government plans were not realized, and since Uzbekistan had exhausted its maximum of two consecutive waivers, it was placed on Tier 3 in the 2013 report. Countries placed on Tier 3 are subject to certain sanctions, including the withholding of non-humanitarian, non-trade-related foreign assistance. However, Uzbekistan has received partial or full waivers.[13]

The U.S. Department of Labor has listed Uzbekistan as among countries that use child labor to pick cotton. This list is meant to inform the choices made by the buying public.[14] In addition, on July 23, 2013, cotton from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan again was included on a list that requires U.S. government contractors to certify that they have made a good faith effort to determine whether forced or indentured child labor was used to produce the cotton.[15]

In testimony to Congress in April 2013, an official of the U.S. International Labor Rights Forum (IRLF), an NGO, reported that as a member of the Cotton Campaign, an international coalition of NGOs, industries, and trade unions, the IRLF had supported diplomatic and economic pressure on Uzbekistan to end forced child and adult labor in cotton production. He reported that forced child and adult labor continued to be used in the autumn 2012 cotton harvest, and that security personnel were deployed on the farms to enforce production quotas and to prevent pickers from taking pictures or otherwise documenting the use of forced labor. Ostensibly, the pickers were "volunteers" recruited from government agencies, private firms, colleges, and high schools, the latter including a majority of all faculty members. Children under age 15 were officially excused from the harvest, although many aged 11-15 were observed in the fields. Individuals could pay a fee in lieu of participating in the harvest, but most reportedly were afraid of repercussions such as dismissal from a job or university if they did not participate, according to the ILRF official. He also reported that the use of forced labor throughout the economy was increasing. The IRLF has called for the U.S. Customs Service to enforce the Tariff Act of 1930 to block the importation of Uzbek cotton materials produced by forced labor [16]

The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) was permitted to monitor the autumn 2011 cotton harvest in Uzbekistan, but not the 2012 harvest, and the country continues to bar monitors from the U.N.'s International Labor Organization. The Uzbek Ministry of Labor asserted in early September 2012

[13] U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 19, 2013. See also *Uzbekistan: Forced Labor Widespread in Cotton Harvest*, Human Rights Watch, January 25, 2013.

[14] U.S. Department of Labor, *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, September 26, 2012; For an assessment of the 2011 harvest, see Department of Labor, *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*, September 30, 2011.

[15] U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of International Labor Affairs. Executive Order 13126, *Prohibition of Acquisition of Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor*, at http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/regs/eo13126/.

[16] U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, Hearing on Tier Rankings in the Fight Against Human Trafficking, *Testimony of Brian Campbell, Director of Policy and Legal Programs, International Labor Rights Forum*, April 18, 2013; ILRF, *Press Release: Leading Labor Rights Watchdog Calls on U.S. Customs Service to Halt Imports of Forced Labor Cotton from Uzbekistan*, May 15, 2013.

that the use of forced child labor in the agricultural sector was not permitted in Uzbekistan. It stated that all cotton in the country is produced on private "family farms," where international legal norms permit children who are members of farmers' families to assist in chores. Observers have pointed out that the Uzbek government owns the land and sets production quotas and prices, and that the farmers are tenants under contract.[17]

At his confirmation hearing on May 15, 2011, Ambassador-designate to Uzbekistan George Krol reportedly stated that the United States will "relentlessly raise individual cases of [human rights] repression both privately and publicly at all levels of the Uzbekistani government and will seek to identify opportunities to support and expand space for civil society and human rights activists." He also pledged that the United States would continue to support "embattled civil society and independent media."[18]

In June 2013, Hasan Choriyev—the 71-year old father of oppositionist Bahodyr Choriyev, who fled Uzbekistan in 2004 and resides in the United States—was arrested on rape charges the day after a report that his son might be interested in eventually running for president. Observers deemed the charges politically motivated, given the elder Choriyev's ill health and the fact that he had been detained for questioning on another matter at the time of the alleged rape.

On June 26, 2013, 12 U.S. Senators sent a letter to President Karimov urging him to release human rights lawyer Agzam Turgenov and journalists Dilmurod Saidov and Salijon Abdurakhmanov, whom had been imprisoned in 2008-2009 and were termed political prisoners by the Senators.

In July 2013, the U.N. Human Rights Council issued a working group report on Uzbekistan that contained recommendations by the member states on improving human rights conditions in Uzbekistan. The United States urged that forced labor and hazardous child labor be eliminated, that all torture allegations be independently investigated, that politically motivated prosecutions be ended, and that the harassment and detention of persons who exercise their rights to freedoms of expression, assembly, association, and religion be ended and that those held on such grounds be released. Uzbekistan rejected all the U.S. recommendations, as well as all others as factually incorrect or un-germane. The Uzbek delegation asserted that there are no political prisoners in Uzbekistan, and that so-called journalists and human rights defenders who were imprisoned had been sentenced for criminal actions. They stated that all allegations of torture are investigated and that as a result, five law enforcement officers had been brought to justice in 2012 and that religious freedom is recognized, except for proselytism, missionary activities, and the operation of unregistered religious groups. Missionary activities and proselytism, it warned, could upset the majority Muslim population and inter-faith relations. The delegation asserted that Uzbekistan does not use forced child labor during the cotton harvest, and rejected calls for an ILO special mission to inspect the harvest on the grounds that such requests were the "result of competition for economic markets [by] a number of Western cotton companies." They claimed that an April 2013 decision by the ICRC to halt visits to prisons in Uzbekistan was not due to lack of cooperation by Uzbekistan, as averred by the ICRC. They also stated that male homosexual relations would continue to be outlawed in accordance with tradition.[19]

[17] *CEDR*, September 7, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950095.

[18] U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Nomination Hearing, *Statement by George Krol, Nominee for Ambassador to Uzbekistan*, May 17, 2011.

[19] U.N. General Assembly, Human Rights Commission, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic* (continued...)

Economic Developments

After economic dislocations associated with the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Uzbek economy ceased to decline and began to turn around in 1996. In 2003, Uzbekistan announced that it would permit full currency convertibility, but vitiated the reform by reducing money in circulation, closing borders, and placing punitive tariffs on imports. These restrictions helped fuel organized crime, corruption, and consumer shortages. Uzbekistan is the world's third-largest cotton exporter. The agricultural sector accounts for about one-fifth of the country's GDP, and nearly one-half of the population depends on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. The largest portion of foreign currency earnings is based on cotton exports, followed by exports of gold and natural gas. Most exports in 2011 went to China, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, and Bangladesh. The government closely controls export earning sectors. The government claims that 16% of the population remains in poverty, based on calories of food consumption per day. A sizeable portion of the working-age population has migrated abroad for work. Some international companies have boycotted purchases of Uzbek cotton and finished goods on the grounds that forced child and adult labor is used in harvesting.

In response to the global economic downturn in 2008, the Uzbek government launched an anti-crisis program to increase budgetary expenditures on infrastructure modernization, extend credit to export industries, restructure bank debts, boost investment in small-sized businesses, and augment public-sector wages and social welfare. Transfers from the Fund for Reconstruction and Development (FRD; a pool of export and portfolio earnings launched in 2006, currently said to hold $15 billion) were used for some of these expenditures, although the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) firm alleges that mainly state-owned companies received the funds. A new industrial and infrastructure modernization program set at $47 billion was launched for 2011-2015, which the government hopes to finance partly with FRD funds and increased domestic and foreign direct investment (FDI). A new program of privatization has been announced to attract FDI. However, since 2010, dozens of foreign investors have had their businesses seized by the Uzbek government. Some Turkish businessmen whose stores were seized in 2011 alleged that they were tortured until they signed confessions of tax evasion and illegal activities.[20] In January 2013, a Russian telecom firm filed for bankruptcy in Uzbekistan, accusing Uzbek government officials of seeking to destroy the firm and seize its assets. These confiscations of foreign assets reportedly have contributed to a sizeable falloff in FDI since 2011.

The EIU states that the Uzbek government's economic data are untrustworthy, so that the true state of the economy is hard to ascertain. The EIU estimates that GDP increased by 8.0% in 2012. Economic growth was supported by increasing remittances by migrant workers and robust growth in the service, construction, and agricultural sectors, but was hampered somewhat by stalling world prices for gold and falling prices for cotton. These problems may continue to impede GDP growth in 2013, which the EIU estimates may slow to 7.3%. In July 2013, Uzbekistan reported a near-record grain harvest.

(...continued)

Review: Uzbekistan, A/HRC/24/7, July 5, 2013.

[20] Joanna Lillis, "Uzbekistan: Tashkent's Sticky Fingers Spoiling Foreign Investors' Appetites," *Eurasianet*, August 1, 2012; "Businessman Files Torture Case Against Uzbekistan," IWPR, April 30, 2012; Ashley Cleek, "Uzbekistan: Foreign Business Exodus Continues," Choihona—Eurasianet, June 19, 2012*; 'No One Left to Witness': Torture, the Failure of Habeas Corpus, and the Silencing of Lawyers in Uzbekistan*, Human Rights Watch, December 2011.

Migrant workers remitted $2.3 billion in 2012, according to the World Bank (Russia's Central Bank reported remittances of $5.7 billion in 2012). By some accounts, up to one-fourth or more of Uzbekistan's labor force may be employed abroad. Appearing to discount the pressures driving Uzbeks to seek work abroad, on June 20, 2013, President Karimov stated that "I describe as lazy those who go to Moscow and sweep its streets and squares. One feels disgusted with Uzbeks going there for a slice of bread. Nobody is starving to death in Uzbekistan.... I call such people lazy because they go there in order to make big money fast, and they are a disgrace to us all."[21]

The EIU estimates that inflation was 14.3% at the end of 2012. The Uzbek government has tried to limit inflation through price controls on food and energy, but also has contributed to inflation by increasing public sector wages, pensions, and educational stipends at an average rate of about 20% per year since 2006, according to the World Bank.[22] Added restrictions in early 2013 on the purchase of foreign exchange by residents may increase the import costs for private businesses forced to obtain foreign currency on the black market.

In late 2008, Tashkent suspended its membership in the Eurasian Economic Community (a Russia-led group including Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan that promotes unified customs tariffs and free trade). Some observers linked this action to Uzbekistan's opposition to Russian leader Vladimir Putin's neo-imperialist initiatives (other moves include suspending participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organizaton; see below). However, during his June 4, 2012, visit to Uzbekistan, President Putin and President Karimov signed a memorandum of understanding pledging Russian support for Uzbekistan joining the CIS Free Trade Zone, launched in 2011.Uzbekistan was formally admitted as a member of the Free Trade Zone at the end of May 2013. Uzbekistan's strict border controls and corruption stifle regional trade, according to observers.

The United States and Uzbekistan have minimal trade. U.S. exports to Uzbekistan were about $285 million in 2012 (mainly aircraft; see below), and imports were about $26 million, according to the U.S. Commerce Department. Among major trade initiatives, Uzbekistan purchased four Boeing 767s in late 2008, of which three were delivered by mid-2012. A joint venture between General Motors and the Uzbek state automobile firm UzAvtosanoat, termed GM Uzbekistan, was formed in 2008 and assembles over 200,000 automobiles annually for the Uzbek domestic market and for export to Russia and elsewhere. Another joint venture between the two firms opened a factory in November 2011 to assemble engines for GM Uzbekistan.

Tajikistan has alleged that Uzbekistan delays rail freight shipments, purportedly to pressure Tajikistan to halt construction of the Rogun hydro-electric power dam on the Vakhsh River, which Uzbekistan fears could limit the flow of water into the country. In November 2011, Uzbekistan closed a rail link to southern Tajikistan, reporting that a bridge was damaged, but since then allegedly has dismantled the span. In early April 2012, Tajikistan's prime minister and its foreign ministry denounced the rail restriction as part of an "economic blockade" aiming to destabilize Tajikistan. The Uzbek prime minister responded that all Uzbek actions were in accordance with bilateral agreements or responses to Tajik actions, so that the accusations were "groundless."[23]

[21] *CEDR*, June 21, 2013, Doc. No. CEN-50969548; David Trilling, "Uzbekistan's President Attacks "Lazy" Labor Migrants," *Eurasianet*, June 21, 2013.

[22] *Uzbekistan: Country Report*, Economist Intelligence Unit, August 2013; *Uzbekistan Partnership: Country Program Snapshot,* The World Bank Group, March 2013.

[23] Yulia Goryaynova, Galim Faskhutdinov, and Saule Mukhametrakhimov, "A Gas Row Highlights Tajik-Uzbek (continued...)

In July 2013, Tajikistan claimed that it had released water from its Qayroqqum reservoir into the Syr Darya River, which flows into Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Tajik officials stated that they acted to avert water shortages downstream, and blamed the lowered river flow on upsteam Kyrgyzstan, which was impounding virtually all water in its Toktogul reservoir for winter power generation.

Oil and Gas

British Petroleum's (BP's) *Statistical Review of World Energy* reports that Uzbekistan has about 600 million barrels of proven oil reserves and an estimated 39.7 trillion cubic feet of proven natural gas reserves as of 2012 (negligible in terms of world oil reserves but about 0.6% of world gas reserves).[24] Uzbekistan is a net importer of oil. Uzbek oil production has been declining for many years, attributable to lack of investment. The country consumes the bulk of its gas production domestically, but has used its network of Soviet-era gas pipelines to export some gas to Russia and to other Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). According to BP, Uzbekistan exported about 479 bcf of gas in 2010 (since then, BP's *Statistical Review* has not reported exports for Uzbekistan). According to some reports, gas exports declined to 424 bcf in 2011 but rebounded slightly to 441.4 bcf in 2012. Gas is provided to Russia and Kazakhstan through the Russian-owned Central Asia-Center Pipeline system. Uzbekistan began to export some gas through this pipeline system to Ukraine in 2011. Reportedly, Uzbekistan has been an unreliable gas exporter to other Central Asian states in recent winters, diverting exports to meet urgent cold-weather domestic needs. At the end of 2012, Uzbekistan suddenly ended gas shipments to Tajikistan, and these had not resumed as of August 2013.

Uzbekistan largely has been closed to Western energy investment, although efforts to attract international energy firms have appeared to increase in recent years. Russian firms Gazprom and Lukoil are the largest investors in Uzbek gas development and production. Reportedly, Gazprom pays European-pegged gas prices for only a fraction of imports from Uzbekistan. In 2005, CNPC and Uzbekistan's state-owned Uzbekneftegaz firm announced that they would form a joint venture to develop oil and gas resources. In 2007, Uzbekistan and China signed an agreement on building a 326-mile section of the Central Asia-China Pipeline, and a joint venture between Uzbekneftegaz and CNPC launched construction in 2008. Two side-by-side pipelines were completed in 2009-2010, and the third is under construction. In October 2011, Uztransgaz (Uzbek gas transportation firm) and a subsidiary of CNPC signed a contract to supply gas though this pipeline beginning in 2012. In April 2012, China announced it would spend $15 billion for oil and gas exploration in Uzbekistan. A production sharing consortium composed of Uzbekneftegaz, Lukoil, the Korea National Oil Corporation, and CNPC is exploring for gas in the Aral Sea region.

In August 2012, Uzbekistan began to export gas to China through the Central Asia-China pipeline. The Uzbek State Statistics Committee reported that energy exports in 2012 had nearly doubled over those of the previous year, from $2.78 billion to $5.03 billion, with exports to China probably accounting for much of the increase. Reportedly, the exports constrained domestic supplies, which were under further pressure from the declining output of Uzbekistan's oil and gas

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Tensions," *IWPR*, April 24, 2012; *CEDR*, April 3, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950105; April 4, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950127.

[24] *BP Statistical Review of World Energy*, British Petroleum, June 2013.

fields. Uzbekistan reportedly exported 141 bcf of gas to China in the latter part of 2012 and plans to supply 353 bcf of gas to China in 2013. In May 2013, Shokir Fayzullayev, the chairman of the board of the state holding company Uzbekneftegaz (Uzbek Oil and Gas), denied that gas exports were to blame for shortages. He claimed that the domestic gas distribution system was inadequate, particularly in the winter, but that it was being upgraded.

Foreign Policy and Defense

Home to more than half of the population of Central Asia, Uzbekistan seeks to play a leading role in regional affairs. Foreign policy is highly dependent on presidential decision-making. A new foreign policy concept was submitted to the legislature by President Karimov and quickly approved in early August 2012. It states that the main goals of Uzbekistan's foreign policy are strengthening the state's independence and sovereignty; ensuring a role in international affairs; joining the ranks of democratic and developed countries; and creating security, stability, and cooperative ties with neighboring states. Relations with Central Asian states are deemed the highest foreign policy priority because the vital interests of the country are connected with the region, including water sharing. The concept states that "Uzbekistan has always remained committed to conducting an open, friendly, and pragmatic policy towards its neighbors [and] is taking political, economic and other measures to prevent its involvement in armed conflicts and tensions in neighboring countries." The concept calls for regional problems to be solved without the interference of external forces. It proclaims that Uzbekistan "reserves the right to conclude unions, join commonwealths and other interstate groups, and also leave them." At the same time, however, the concept appears to embrace neutrality in security relations, specifying that "Uzbekistan pursues a peace-loving policy and does not take part in military-political blocs," and that the country "reserves the right of exit from any interstate group in the case of its transformation into a military-political bloc" (these provisions appear to reflect Uzbekistan's limited or non-participation in military exercises; see below). The concept also states that Uzbekistan neither will permit the stationing of foreign military bases on its soil—ostensibly referring to new bases—nor will participate in peacekeeping operations abroad.[25]

From the late 1990s until mid-2005, Karimov's priority was to seek closer ties with the United States, the European Union, and NATO while maintaining working relations with Russia and China. However, after the mid-2005 events in Andijon (see below), he shifted to closer ties with the latter two states. In 2001, Uzbekistan joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and in 2003 insisted on hosting its Regional Anti-Terrorism Center. During his early June 2012 visit to China to attend a SCO summit, President Karimov and Chinese President Hu Jintao had a side meeting and signed a declaration on strategic partnership to herald closer ties. Uzbekistan will host a meeting of the SCO prime ministers in September 2013.

Uzbekistan has ongoing tensions with other Central Asian states over its mining of borders, water-sharing, border delineation, and other issues.

- Tajikistan's relations with Uzbekistan have been problematic, including disagreements about water-sharing, Uzbek gas supplies, the mining of borders,

[25] "Uzbekistan to adopt Concept of Foreign Policy Activities," *UzDaily News Service*, July 31, 2012; "Legislative Chamber Approves Concept of Foreign Political Activities," *UzDaily News Service*, August 1, 2012; Joanna Lillis, "Uzbekistan: Tashkent Says No to Foreign Military Bases and Blocs," *Choihona—Eurasianet*, August 3, 2012.

border demarcation, and environmental pollution. In July 2008, the head of the Tajik Supreme Court asserted that Uzbek security forces had bombed the Supreme Court building the previous summer as part of efforts to topple the government. In late 2010, Uzbekistan began a transit slowdown and other economic measures to pressure Tajikistan to halt building the Rogun dam (see above).

- Turkmenistan's relations with Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have been tense. Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan have rival claims to some Caspian Sea oil and gas fields. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have vied for regional influence and argued over water-sharing. In 2002, the Turkmen government accused Uzbek officials of conspiring to overthrow it. Uzbekistan also objected to the treatment of ethnic Uzbeks in Turkmenistan under the previous president.
- The Kyrgyz premier rejected claims by Karimov in 2005 that Kyrgyzstan had provided training facilities and other support for the Andijon militants. Karimov again accused Kyrgyzstan in late May 2009 of harboring terrorists whom had attacked across the border. After the April 2010 coup in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan tightened border controls with this country, greatly harming its economy. Conflict between ethnic Uzbeks and ethnic Kyrgyz in southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 further strained relations between the two countries. Up to 100,000 ethnic Uzbeks fled fighting in southern Kyrgyzstan to refugee camps in Uzbekistan. Although critical of the Kyrgyz government, Uzbekistan did not intervene militarily or permit its citizens to enter Kyrgyzstan to join in the fighting.[26]
- On July 17, 2012, border guards exchanged gunfire at a Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan border post, reportedly killing a guard on each side. Uzbekistan responded by restricting border crossings at this post. In January 2013, Kyrgyz border guards wounded five Uzbeks in the Uzbek enclave of Sokh in Kyrgyzstan's Batken Region, bordering Uzbekistan. The Uzbeks allegedly had attempted to block an incursion into Sokh by the Kyrgyz border guards. Up to 1,000 local Uzbeks then temporarily took over three dozen Kyrgyz hostage.[27] Uzbekistan in retaliation closed a road from Kyrgyzstan to a Kyrgyz enclave in Uzbekistan, and this road remains closed. In July 2013, Kyrgyzstan began building a fence around the Sokh enclave. That same month, Kyrgyz guards allegedly killed two Uzbek guards along the Namangan-Jalalabad regional border during a reported shoot-out.[28]

On the other hand, there have been some contacts between Karimov and other Central Asian leaders:

- In early September 2012, President Karimov visited Kazakhstan for a bilateral summit. One observer suggested that this summit was an effort by the two major

[26] According to Assistant Secretary of State Eric Schwartz, "the Government of Uzbekistan acted quickly and constructively in response to the humanitarian crisis, [and] cooperated closely with U.N. agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations. These efforts helped many people in a time of dire need." U.S. Department of State. *Opening Statement of Assistant Secretary Schwartz*, June 29, 2010. See also "Tashkent's Response to Kyrgyz Crisis Boosts Karimov's Image," *Eurasianet*, July 15, 2010.

[27] Open Source Center, *Central Eurasia: Daily Report* (hereafter, *CEDR*), January 7, 2013, Doc. Nos. CEP-7950026, CEP-950027, CEP-950043, CEP-950025, CEP-950014, and CEP-950005; January 9, 2012, Doc. No. CEP-950134; *Interfax*, January 6 and January 9, 2013.

[28] *CEDR*, July 29, 2013, Doc. No. CEL-57040555.

regional powers to join together to spur greater region-wide integration, including common responses to security threats such as terrorism and instability in Afghanistan. The two leaders also aimed to bolster significant trade ties and issued a joint statement on regional water-sharing.[29]

- In mid-June 2013, President Nazarbayev visited Uzbekistan. The two presidents signed a strategic partnership treaty, stressing that their two countries were the most strategically important in Central Asia and the necessity of holding "constant" bilateral consultations. Karimov stated that closer bilateral ties were needed to address the drawdown of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations in Afghanistan and to buttress economic development and trade. Both leaders stated that each country was economically complementary to the other. Both also emphasized that regional water issues should be resolved peacefully and equitably with an internationally mediated independent examination of environmental hazards. However, President Karimov also suggested that the Kambarata and Rogun dams should not be constructed because of the danger of earthquakes, and rejected the idea that water was a commodity that could be traded.[30]
- Since Berdimuhamedow came to power, relations between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have improved. In early October 2012, President Karimov visited Turkmenistan and met with President Berdimuhamedow, and the two leaders discussed boosting trade and other cooperation. They also called for region-wide talks before Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan build dams that could affect water-sharing. In February 2013, President Karimov phoned Berdimuhamedow to invite him to visit to discuss joint projects.

Uzbekistan has developed some ties with post-Taliban Afghanistan. In August 2011, Uzbekistan completed a 50-mile railroad linking its border town of Hairatan with the city of Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan. The railway is part of the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) of U.S. and NATO-developed land, air, and sea routes from Europe through Eurasia to Afghanistan. Since 2002, Uzbekistan has provided some electricity to northern Afghanistan. Since early 2008, President Karimov has advocated the opening of U.N.-sponsored "6+3" Afghan peace talks (participants would include regional powers Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, China, and Iran and outside powers NATO, the United States, and Russia), similar to the "6+2" Afghan peace talks he had helped originate and which were held from 1999 to 2001 (NATO was not included at that time). The United States has stressed an Afghan-led reconciliation process (see also below, "Contributions to Counter-Terrorism").

The Uzbek armed forces is the largest in the region in terms of manpower, but some observers have argued that Kazakhstan's military modernization efforts are challenging Uzbekistan's security dominance. The armed forces consist of about 24,500 ground force troops, 7,500 air force troops, and 16,000 joint troops. There are also up to 19,000 internal security (police) troops and 1,000 national guard troops.[31] Uzbekistan spent about 3.1% (about $1.4 billion) of its GDP in 2011 on the defense sector, which would be about 10% of the budget. One report stated that much

[29] Richard Weitz, "Nazarbayev-Karimov Summit Imparts New Momentum to Kazakhstani-Uzbekistani Relations," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, September 14, 2012.

[30] *CEDR*, June 16, 2013, Doc. No. CEN-70043496.

[31] International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance*, March 14, 2013.

of this spending was on officer and servicemen's benefits, and that this high level of defense spending was straining the budget.[32] Uzbekistan's military doctrine proclaims that it makes no territorial claims on other states and adheres to nuclear non-proliferation. President Karimov has stated that he strongly opposes military hazing and supports adequate social support for the troops. Military cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan is ensured through a 1992 Friendship Treaty, a 1994 military treaty, a 1999 accord on combating terrorism and Islamic extremism, and a November 2005 Treaty of Alliance. The latter accord calls for mutual consultations in case of a security threat to either party.

After withdrawing in 1999, Uzbekistan rejoined the Collective Security Treaty Organization in December 2006 (CSTO; members have included Russia, Belarus, Armenia, and the Central Asian states except Turkmenistan). However, Uzbekistan declined to participate in rapid reaction forces established in June 2009 because of concerns that the forces could become involved in disputes within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS; a grouping of Soviet successor states) on the basis of decisions made by the affected parties (rather than solely upon the agreement of all CSTO members). At CSTO summits in December 2010 and December 2011, the members reportedly agreed on procedures for intervening in domestic "emergency" situations within a member state at the behest of the member. At the latter meeting, they also agreed that no member could host a foreign military base without the permission of the CSTO. Uzbekistan reportedly raised concerns about these measures.[33] On June 20, 2012, Uzbekistan informed the CSTO that it was suspending its membership in the organization, including because the CSTO was ignoring its concerns. However, Uzbek officials stated that the country would continue to participate in the CIS air defense system and other military affairs. According to some observers, the withdrawal of Central Asia's largest military from the CSTO highlighted the organization's ineffectiveness.[34]

During President Putin's early June 2012 visit to Uzbekistan, the two sides concluded a Declaration on Deepening the Strategic Partnership, building on a 2004 agreement, which called for mutual consultations in the event of a threat to either party. Uzbekistan signed a strategic partnership accord with China within a few days and with Kazakhstan in June 2013 (see above). According to some observers, these accords have been pursued by Uzbekistan as preferable to the CSTO as a means to buttress cooperation on stability in Central Asia as ISAF draws down its forces in Afghanistan.[35] President Karimov highlighted his concerns about Afghanistan in early May 2013 when he stated that "the main threat for not only Uzbekistan but also for all countries surrounding Afghanistan is the cruel war that has been continuing in Afghanistan for over 30 years.... Unfortunately, when [ISAF] leaves, conflicts will intensify between the forces which are opposing each other.... Terrorism, drug addiction, drug trafficking, and various religious and ethnic conflicts ... will escalate.... Tension will definitely increase in the Central Asian countries after they pull out without having settled the problem of Afghanistan."[36]

Although the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Center is in Tashkent, Uzbek troops have not participated in SCO exercises, although its officers have been observers. Uzbek officers were observers at SCO military exercises held in Kazakhstan in June 2013 (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tajik

[32] "Uzbekistan: Where Conscripts Are Eager to Serve," *EurasiaNet*, May 16, 2012 .

[33] *Interfax*, December 21, 2011.

[34] "Interview: Analyst Says Uzbekistan's Suspension Shows CSTO Is 'Irrelevant,'" *RFE/RL*, June 29, 2012.

[35] *CEDR*, June 19, 2013, Doc. No. CEL-34596495.

[36] *CEDR*, May 10, 2013, Doc. No. CEL-52388391.

troops took part, while Russian and Chinese troops held separate SCO Peace Mission 2013 exercises in Russia in August 2013).

Terrorism and Unrest

On February 16, 1999, six bomb blasts in Tashkent's governmental area by various reports killed 16-28 and wounded 100-351. Karimov termed the bombing an assassination attempt. He alleged that exiled Erk Party leader Mohammad Solikh (Salih) led the plot, assisted by Afghanistan's Taliban and IMU co-leaders Tahir Yuldashev and Juma Namanganiy. Solikh denied any role in the bombings. In November 2000, Yuldashev and Namanganiy received death sentences and Solikh 15.5 years in prison. Another defendant, Najmiddin Jalolov (see below), received 18 years (all *in absentia*). Other security threats included the invasion of neighboring Kyrgyzstan in July-August 1999 by several hundred IMU and other guerrillas. They were rumored to be aiming to create an Islamic state in south Kyrgyzstan as a springboard for a jihad in Uzbekistan. By mid-October 1999, they had been forced out of Kyrgyzstan with Uzbek aid. In August 2000, dozens of IMU and other guerrillas again invaded Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, but were expelled by late October.

A series of bombings and armed attacks took place in Uzbekistan in late March-early April 2004, reportedly killing 47 individuals. President Karimov asserted that the attacks were aimed to "cause panic among our people, [and] to make them lose their trust" in the government. The then-Combined Forces Commander for Afghanistan, Lieutenant General David Barno, visited Uzbekistan in April 2004 and stressed that "we stand with Uzbekistan in facing down this terrorist menace." The obscure Islamic Jihad Union of Uzbekistan (IJU; reportedly a breakaway faction of the IMU) claimed responsibility. Suspected terrorists testified at a trial in mid-2004 that Jalolov was the leader of IJU, that they were trained by Arabs and others at camps in Kazakhstan and Pakistan, and that the IJU was linked to Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Taliban, Uighur extremists, and Al Qaeda. During this trial, explosions occurred on July 30, 2004, at the U.S. and Israeli embassies and the Uzbek Prosecutor-General's Office in Tashkent. The IMU and IJU claimed responsibility.

On May 25-26, 2009, a police checkpoint was attacked on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border, attacks took place in the border town of Khanabad, and four bombings occurred in Andijon in the commercial district, including at least one by suicide bombers. Several deaths and injuries were alleged, although reporting was suppressed. Uzbek officials blamed the IMU, although the IJU allegedly claimed responsibility. President Karimov flew to Andijon on May 31. In late August 2009, shootings took place in Tashkent that resulted in the deaths of three alleged IMU members and the apprehension of other group members. The Uzbek government alleged that the group had been involved in the 1999 explosions and in recent assassinations in Tashkent.

In September 2000, the State Department designated the IMU as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, stating that the IMU, aided by Afghanistan's Taliban and by Osama bin Laden, resorts to terrorism, actively threatens U.S. interests, and attacks American citizens. The "main goal of the IMU is to topple the current government in Uzbekistan," the State Department warned, and it linked the IMU to bombings and attacks on Uzbekistan in 1999-2000. IMU forces assisting the

Taliban and Al Qaeda suffered major losses during coalition actions in Afghanistan, and IMU co-head Namanganiy was probably killed.[37]

Former CIA Director Porter Goss testified in March 2005 that the IJG/IJU "has become a more virulent threat to U.S. interests and local governments."[38] In May 2005, the State Department designated the IJG/IJU as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist, and in June, the U.N. Security Council added the IJG/IJU to its terrorism list.[39] In June 2008, IJG head Jalolov and his associate Suhayl Fatilloevich Buranov were added to the U.N. 1267 Sanctions Committee's Consolidated List of individuals and entities associated with bin Laden, al Qaeda, and the Taliban. Also, the U.S. Treasury Department ordered that any of their assets under U.S. jurisdiction be frozen and prohibited U.S. citizens from financial dealings with the terrorists.[40] IMU head Yuldashev reportedly was killed in late August 2009 in Pakistan by a U.S. predator drone missile, and Jalalov allegedly similarly was killed in late September 2009. Yuldashev's deputy, Abu Usmon Odil, became the head of the IMU.

In July 2011, an Uzbek citizen on an expired student visa was arrested on charges of being directed by IMU terrorists to assassinate President Obama. He confessed and was sentenced in 2012. Two other ethnic Uzbeks were arrested in the United States in early 2012 on charges of collaborating with the IJU. One of the Uzbeks had been granted refugee status after he fled the Uzbek government crackdown in Andijon in 2005. He was arrested at a U.S. airport while allegedly planning to join IJU terrorists abroad. In May 2013, an ethnic Uzbek was arrested in Idaho on charges of providing money and computer support to the IMU for an unspecified attack.

The 2005 Violence in Andijon, Uzbekistan

Dozens or perhaps hundreds of civilians were killed or wounded on May 13, 2005, after Uzbek troops fired on demonstrators in the eastern town of Andijon. The protestors had gathered to demand the end of a trial of local businessmen charged with belonging to an Islamic terrorist group. The night before, a group stormed a prison where those on trial were held and released hundreds of inmates.[41] Many freed inmates then joined others in storming government buildings. President Karimov flew to the city to direct operations, and reportedly had restored order by late on May 13.[42] On July 29, 439 people who had fled from Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan were airlifted

[37] U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003*, April 2004.

[38] U.S. Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Testimony of the Director of Central Intelligence, The Honorable Porter J. Goss, March 17, 2005.

[39] U.S. Department of State, Press Statement: U.S. Department of State Designates the Islamic Jihad Group Under Executive Order 13224, May 26, 2005; U.N. Security Council, The Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, Press Release: Security Council Committee Adds One Entity to Al-Qaida Section of Consolidated List, SC/8405, June 3, 2005.

[40] U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release: Treasury Designates Leadership of the IJU Terrorist Group, June 18, 2008.

[41] There is a great deal of controversy about whether this group contained foreign-trained terrorists or was composed mainly of the friends and families of the accused. See U.S. Congress. Commission on Security and Cooperation In Europe. Briefing: The Uzbekistan Crisis. *Testimony of Galima Bukharbayeva, Correspondent. Institute for War and Peace Reporting,* June 29, 2005. For a contrasting assessment, see Shirin Akiner, *Violence in Andijon, 13 May 2005: An Independent Assessment*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, July 2005; and AbduMannob Polat, *Reassessing Andijan: The Road to Restoring U.S.-Uzbek Relations*, Jamestown Foundation, June 2007.

[42] Analyst Adeeb Khalid draws a parallel between the Uzbek government's actions at Andijon and at a large student demonstration in Tashkent in January 1992. In the latter case, Karimov allegedly ordered troops to fire on the marchers, (continued...)

to Romania for resettlement processing, after the United States and others raised concerns that they might be tortured if returned to Uzbekistan.[43]

The United States and others in the international community repeatedly called for an international inquiry into events in Andijon, which the Uzbek government rejected as violating its sovereignty. In November 2005, the EU Council approved a visa ban on 12 Uzbek officials it stated were "directly responsible for the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force in Andijon and for the obstruction of an independent inquiry." The Council also embargoed exports of "arms, military equipment, and other equipment that might be used for internal repression."[44] In October 2007 and April 2008, the EU Council suspended the visa ban for six months but left the arms embargo in place. In October 2008, the EU Council praised what it viewed as some positive trends in human rights in Uzbekistan and lifted the visa ban, although it left the arms embargo in place.[45] In October 2009, it lifted the arms embargo.

At the first major trial of 15 alleged perpetrators of the Andijon unrest in late 2005, the accused all confessed and asked for death penalties. They testified that they were members of Akramiya, a branch of Hizb ut-Tahrira (HT), a banned Islamic political organization launched in 1994 by Akram Yuldashev that allegedly aimed to use force to create a caliphate in the area of the Fergana Valley located in Uzbekistan. Besides receiving assistance from HT, Akramiya was alleged to receive financial aid and arms training from the IMU. The defendants also claimed that the U.S. and Kyrgyz governments helped finance and support their effort to overthrow the government, and that international media colluded with local human rights groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in this effort. The U.S. and Kyrgyz governments denied involvement, and many observers criticized the trial as appearing stage-managed. Reportedly, 100 or more individuals were arrested and sentenced, including some Uzbek opposition party members and media and NGO representatives.[46] Partly in response, the U.S. Congress tightened conditions on aid to Uzbekistan at that time (see below).

U.S. Relations

According to testimony to Congress in 2012 by Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake, "Uzbekistan has been a critical part of regional support for Afghanistan, building a rail line connecting Afghanistan to Central Asia and providing electricity that benefits the Afghan people. In addition, Uzbekistan has a central role in the NDN, with the majority of supplies transiting through the Uzbek-Afghan border." He also stated that U.S. officials continue to raise human rights concerns and that "we continually advocate for those who seek peaceful democratic

(...continued)

resulting in up to six deaths and two dozen or more injuries. *Islam After Communism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), p. 155. See also Reuters, January 17, 1992.

[43] See also CRS Report RS22161, *Unrest in Andijon, Uzbekistan: Context and Implications*, by (name redacted).

[44] Council of the European Union, *Uzbekistan: Council Adopts Restrictive Measures*, Press Release 14392/05, November 14, 2005. U.S. officials argued that the United States already had been limiting military assistance—at congressional request—because of human rights abuses.

[45] Council of the European Union, 2824th General Affairs Council Meeting, *Press Release*, October 15-16, 2007; 2864th and 2865th General Affairs and External Relations Council Meetings, *Press Release*, April 29, 2008; 2897th General Affairs and External Relations Council Meeting, *Press Release*, October 13, 2008.

[46] OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), *Report from the OSCE/ODIHR Trial Monitoring in Uzbekistan*, April 21, 2006; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uzbekistan, *Comments on the Report Prepared by the OSCE ODIHR*, April 19, 2006.

reforms. In particular, we ask the government to take steps to eliminate the forced labor of children and adults during the cotton harvest.... We are also working with the Government of Uzbekistan to increase religious freedom by addressing its overly restrictive religious registration policies and allegations of arbitrary arrests and detentions of peaceful religious leaders." He raised hopes that Uzbekistan would address restrictive currency conversion law and pervasive corruption, so that U.S. investment could increase. He also called for Uzbekistan to facilitate scientific and educational exchanges.[47]

During President Karimov's March 2002 U.S. visit, former Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Komilov and former Secretary of State Colin Powell signed a *Declaration on Strategic Partnership and Cooperation* that set forth broad-scale goals for political, economic, security, and humanitarian cooperation. The accord pledged the United States to "urgent consultations" in the case of external security threats to Uzbekistan and pledged Uzbekistan "to further intensify the democratic transformation of society in the political, economic and spiritual areas," and to "ensure the effective exercise and protection of human rights."[48] U.S. relations with Uzbekistan were set back in 2005 after the United States joined others in the international community to criticize an Uzbek government crackdown in the town of Andijon (see above). The criticism contributed to Uzbekistan's closure of over a dozen U.S.-based or U.S.-supported non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the termination of U.S. basing rights at Karshi-Khanabad (see below), a fall-off in official and diplomatic contacts, and the strengthening of U.S. congressional restrictions on aid to the Uzbek government (see directly below).

U.S.-Uzbek relations recently have improved, according to the Administration. Assistant Secretary Blake visited Uzbekistan in November 2009 and stated that his meetings there were "a reflection of the determination of President Obama and Secretary Clinton to strengthen ties between the United States and Uzbekistan." He proposed that the two countries set up high-level annual consultations to "build our partnership across a wide range of areas. These include trade and development, border security, cooperation on narcotics, the development of civil society, and individual rights."[49] The first Annual Bilateral Consultation (ABC) took place in late December 2009 with a U.S. visit by an Uzbek delegation led by Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov. The two sides drew up a plan for cooperation for 2010 that involved diplomatic visits, increased military-to-military contacts, and investment and trade overtures.[50]

In November 2010, Assistant Secretary Blake testified to Congress that

> the Obama Administration has increased its engagement with Uzbekistan on a full agenda of security, economic and human rights issues. In the regional security field, Uzbekistan has become a key partner for the United States' effort in Afghanistan…. It has facilitated transit for essential supplies to Coalition forces and constructed an important railroad line inside of Afghanistan.... We have seen an improved relationship with Uzbekistan, but many

[47] U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia, Hearing on U.S. Engagement in Central Asia, *Testimony by Robert O. Blake, Jr., Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs*, July 24, 2012.

[48] U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, *Press Release: United States-Uzbekistan Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework*, March 12, 2002, at http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/pr031203.html.

[49] U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. *Press Conference of Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert Blake*, October 14, 2009.

[50] *CEDR*, January 29, 2010, Doc. No. CEP-4019.

> challenges remain. We continue to encourage the Uzbek authorities to address significant human rights concerns.[51]

During her December 2010 visit to Uzbekistan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that an improved bilateral relationship was "crucial" to U.S. interests. She reportedly thanked President Islam Karimov for Uzbekistan's support for the Northern Distribution Network (transport routes supporting military operations in Afghanistan) and for other assistance to Afghanistan. She stated that issues of human rights also had been discussed. She hailed the signing of a bilateral science and technology cooperation agreement as an effort "to try to find other ways to connect with and promote positive cooperation between our two countries."[52]

The second U.S.-Uzbek ABC took place in February 2011 with a visit to Uzbekistan led by Assistant Secretary Blake. The talks reportedly included security cooperation, trade and development, science and technology, counter-narcotics, civil society development, and human rights. A U.S. business delegation discussed means to increase trade ties. Blake reported that the United States had purchased $23 million in Uzbek goods for transit to Afghanistan in FY2010 (see below).

President Obama telephoned President Karimov on September 28, 2011, to thank him for Uzbekistan's cooperation in stabilization efforts in Afghanistan, and reportedly to urge him to facilitate the transit of U.S. and NATO cargoes into and out of Afghanistan. During her October 22-23, 2011, visit to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Secretary Clinton discussed the U.S. "New Silk Road Vision" to turn Afghanistan into a regional transportation, trade, and energy hub linked to Central Asia. She also warned the presidents of both countries that restrictions on religious freedom could contribute to rising religious discontent. A congressional delegation led by Representative Dan Burton visited Uzbekistan in early July 2012 and met with President Karimov, who called for closer Uzbek-U.S. ties.

The third ABC was held in August 2012, and like the second involved a visit to Tashkent by a U.S. delegation led by Assistant Secretary Blake. He reported that the meeting covered Uzbekistan's support for U.S. operations in Afghanistan, energy, agriculture, health, parliamentary exchanges, education, science and technology, counter-narcotics, border security, counter-terrorism, religious freedom, trafficking in persons, and human rights. At an associated U.S.-Uzbek business forum, Assistant Secretary of State Blake raised concerns about currency convertibility and contract sanctity that hamper foreign investment.[53]

In a speech in October 2012, Blake stated that because of Uzbekistan's poor human rights record, the United States provided it only non-lethal security assistance.[54]

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[51] U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, Hearing on the Emerging Importance of the U.S.-Central Asia Partnership, *Testimony of Robert O. Blake, Jr., Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs*, November 17, 2010.

[52] U.S. Department of State, *Meeting With Staff and Their Families of Embassy Tashkent*, December 2, 2010.

[53] U.S. Department of State, *Press Availability Following the U.S.-Uzbekistan Annual Bilateral Consultations*, August 17, 2012; Daniil Kislov, "U.S. Ambassador in Uzbekistan George Krol: 'We Recognize Democracy May Develop and Look Differently in Uzbekistan,'" *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, September 25, 2012.

[54] U.S. Department of State, *Remarks, Robert O. Blake, Jr., Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, [at] Indiana University's Inner Asian and Uralic Natural Resource Center*, October 18, 2012.

Indicative of U.S. interest in Uzbekistan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Jane Zimmerman visited Uzbekistan in mid-July 2013, reportedly to discuss human rights issues, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Matthew Murray visited in May to discuss trade and investment (U.S. businesses discussed projects in Uzbekistan at a business round table in Washington D.C. later that month). Assistant Secretary Blake visited Uzbekistan in late April 2013. He reported that human trafficking and civil society problems were among human rights issues that were discussed. He indicated that discussions were beginning on providing Uzbekistan with possible excess defense articles from Afghanistan. He also stated that trade and investment issues were discussed, including U.S. concerns about added restrictions on currency convertibility and repatriation. Assistant Secretary of State Mike Hammer visited Uzbekistan in April 2013. He discussed U.S. concerns about freedom of the press, while praising some Uzbek open government initiatives. In March 2013, Secretary Kerry met with visiting Uzbek Foreign Minister Kamilov. Secretary Kerry stated that U.S.-Uzbek relations were continuing to improve, and to expand beyond mutual concerns about Afghanistan. In February 2013, a Congressional delegation headed by Representative Dana Rohrabacher visited Uzbekistan.

Cumulative U.S. assistance budgeted for Uzbekistan in FY1992-FY2010 was $971.36 million (all agencies and programs), according to the data compiled by the State Department's Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. Of this aid, $393.0 million (about two-fifths) was budgeted for combating weapons of mass destruction (including Comprehensive Threat Reduction aid), Foreign Military Financing, counter-narcotics, Partnership for Peace, and anti-crime support.[55] Food, health, and other social welfare and humanitarian aid accounted for $222.4 million (nearly one-fourth), and democratization aid accounted for $174.1 million (nearly one-fifth). See **Table 1** and **Table 2**.

Budgeted assistance was $11.34 million in FY2011 and $16.7 million in FY2012, and the Administration has requested $11.6 million for FY2014 (numbers include funds from the Economic Support Fund and other "Function 150" foreign aid, and exclude Defense and Energy Department funds). Country totals are not yet available for FY2013. The main priorities of U.S. assistance requested for FY2014 are technical advice for Uzbekistan's planned accession to WTO ($3 million); training for judges and defense lawyers on habeas corpus, funding to improve the legal environment for NGOs, and other support for local NGOs and independent media ($1.8 million); and funding for health programs ($3 million).[56]

In FY2003 foreign operations appropriations (P.L. 108-7) and thereafter, Congress prohibited assistance to the government of Uzbekistan unless the Secretary of State determined and reported that Uzbekistan was making substantial progress in meeting commitments to respect human rights; establish a multiparty system; and ensure free and fair elections, freedom of expression, and the independence of the media. Congress received a determination of progress in FY2003. In FY2004 and thereafter, however, some aid to Uzbekistan was withheld because of lack of

[55] In addition to this peace and security assistance reported by the Coordinator's Office, the Defense Department provided some coalition support payments to Uzbekistan, including a payment of $15.7 million for use of the Karshi-Khanabad airbase and associated services, and the Defense Department in September 2005 announced an intention to pay another $23 million owed for such services. On October 5, 2005, an amendment to Defense Appropriations for FY2006 (H.R. 2863) was approved in the Senate to place a one-year hold on the payment. Despite congressional concern, the Defense Department transferred the payment in November 2005. The conferees on H.R. 2863 later dropped the amendment (H.Rept. 109-360; P.L. 109-359).

[56] U.S. Department of State. *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, Annex: Regional Perspectives, FY2014*, May 17, 2013.

progress on democratic reforms. In FY2008, Congress added a provision blocking Uzbek government officials from entering the United States if they were deemed to have been responsible for events in Andijon or to have violated other human rights.

In late 2009, Congress permitted (P.L. 111-84, §801)—for the first time since restrictions were put in place—the provision of some assistance on national security grounds to facilitate the acquisition of supplies for U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan from countries along the Northern Distribution Network. In 2010, Congress permitted (P.L. 111-117) an expanded IMET program for training Uzbek military officers on human rights, civilian control of the military, and other democracy topics.

Consolidated Appropriations for FY2012 (P.L. 112-74; signed into law on December 23, 2011) provides for the Secretary of State to waive conditions on assistance to Uzbekistan for a period of not more than six months and every six months thereafter until September 30, 2013, on national security grounds and as necessary to facilitate U.S. access to and from Afghanistan. The law requires that the waiver include an assessment of democratization progress, and calls for a report on aid provided to Uzbekistan, including expenditures made in support of the NDN in Uzbekistan and any credible information that such assistance or expenditures are being diverted for corrupt purposes. The law also extends a provision permitting expanded IMET assistance for Uzbekistan. The State Department has issued waivers for assistance to Uzbekistan, while assessing human rights conditions as of "serious concern." Under the waivers, $2.69 million in Foreign Military Financing was provided to Uzbekistan for FY2012, and $1.5 million is requested for FY2014. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act for FY2013 (P.L. 113-6; signed into law on March 26, 2013), calls for foreign assistance to be provided under the authority and conditions provided in FY2012 in P.L. 112-74.

Contributions to Counter-Terrorism

Even before the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, Uzbekistan had cooperated with the United States on regional anti-terrorism efforts, including allegedly serving as a base for U.S. drone operations in Afghanistan. This Uzbek support was attributed by observers to the country's concerns about the IMU. An agreement on the U.S. use of the Khanabad airbase, near the town of Karshi (termed the K2 base) for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan was signed in October 2001, and a joint statement pledged the two sides to consult in the event of a threat to Uzbekistan's security and territorial integrity. This non-specific security pledge was reiterated in the March 2002 "Strategic Partnership" accord (mentioned above). In addition to security assurances and increased military and other aid, U.S. forces in Afghanistan killed many terrorists belonging to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU; dedicated to the forceful establishment of Islamic rule in Uzbekistan). Uzbekistan allegedly also served as a site for extraordinary renditions of U.S. terrorism suspects in the early 2000s.

Following U.S. criticism of Uzbek government actions in Andijon, the government demanded at the end of July 2005 that the United States vacate K2 within six months (U.S.-Uzbek relations had shown strains before this demand). On November 21, 2005, the United States officially ceased operations at K2. The Uzbek government has permitted Germany to maintain a small

airbase at Termez with about 163 troops. According to some German reports, the country has paid an average of 11 million euros since 2002 for basing privileges.[57]

Among possible signs of improving U.S.-Uzbek relations, in early 2008 Uzbekistan reportedly permitted U.S. military personnel under NATO command, on a case-by-case basis, to transit through the Termez airbase operated by Germany.[58] President Karimov attended the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, in early April 2008 and stated that Uzbekistan was ready to discuss the transit of non-lethal goods and equipment by NATO through Uzbekistan to Afghanistan. This issue was part of the agenda during then-Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher's May 30-June 3, 2008, visit to Uzbekistan. After the Commander of the U.S. Central Command, General David Petraeus, visited Uzbekistan in January 2009, the country reportedly began facilitating the transit of U.S. non-lethal supplies to Afghanistan as part of the NDN. A first rail shipment of U.S. non-lethal supplies departed from Latvia and entered Afghanistan in late March 2009 after transiting Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. President Karimov announced in May 2009 that the United States and NATO had been permitted to use the Navoi airport (located between Samarkand and Bukhara in east-central Uzbekistan) to receive non-lethal supplies, which could then be transported by air, rail, and ground to Afghanistan. In August 2009, General Petraeus visited and signed an accord on boosting military educational exchanges and training. Reportedly, these visits also resulted in permission by Uzbekistan for military overflights carrying weapons to Afghanistan. President Karimov hailed the visit by General Petraeus as a sign that "relations between our states are developing further. In the fact that we are meeting with you again I see a big element of the fact that both sides are interested in boosting and developing relations."[59]

Among other security-related visits, in November 2010, then-U.S. Central Command Commander James Mattis visited Uzbekistan, where he signed a military cooperation accord with General-Major Kabul Berdiyev, the Uzbek Minister of Defense, on engagements and training between USCENTCOM and the Ministry of Defense to be held in 2011, a follow-on to the accord signed in August 2009. In late May 2011, Deputy National Security Advisor Denis McDonough met with President Karimov to discuss Uzbekistan's assistance to Afghanistan. In early July 2011, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Kurt Amend visited Uzbekistan. His specialties include defense cooperation and status of forces negotiations. In February 2012, the director of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Middle East regional office, Mark Destito, visited the Interior Ministry and reportedly discussed DEA training courses carried out in Uzbekistan. Also in February 2012, Elizabeth Jones, the Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, visited Uzbekistan to discuss its cooperation efforts in Afghanistan.

In late March 2012, then-USCENTCOM Commander Mattis visited Uzbekistan and met with Karimov. During this visit, the two sides signed an accord on military air transit of cargo and personnel from Afghanistan, which the Uzbek legislature later approved. In early June 2012, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen announced that agreements had been reached

[57] International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance*, March 7, 2012; Deirdre Tynan, "Uzbekistan: Tashkent Tries to Stuff Termez Genie Back in the Bottle," *Eurasianet*, August 4, 2011.

[58] "U.S. Military Returns to Ex-Soviet Uzbekistan," *Agence France Presse*, March 6, 2008; "Only Germany Can Use Uzbek Bases Now," *United Press International*, December 13, 2005.

[59] Open Source Center. *Central Eurasia: Daily Report* (hereafter *CEDR*), August 18, 2009, Doc. No CEP950264; July 14, 2009, Doc. No. CEP-950075.

with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan for the land transit of materials from Afghanistan. On June 12-13, 2012, Deputy Secretary Bill Burns visited Uzbekistan to discuss security issues, including Afghanistan. He also met with civil society representatives. A few days later, Alice Wells, the National Security Council's Senior Director for Russian and Eurasian Affairs, visited Uzbekistan. U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) Commander William Fraser visited in October 2012, reportedly to discuss NDN-related issued, and new USCENTCOM Commander Lloyd Austin visited in July 2013.

Although Uzbekistan's rail network to Afghanistan has been relied upon to ship most of the fuel used by ISAF, corruption and bureaucracy in Uzbekistan reportedly have posed challenges to the use of the NDN routes through the country.[60] Reportedly, only a small percentage of ISAF material is being shipped out of Afghanistan along the NDN for a variety of reasons, including the difficulties of the mountainous terrain in northern Afghanistan, the focus of current military operations in eastern Afghanistan, and restrictions by NDN transit states on cargoes, particularly Uzbekistan.[61]

[60] Deirdre Tynan, "Uzbekistan: Tashkent's Shakedown Practices Hold Up NDN Traffic – Contractors," *Eurasianet*, February 27, 2012.

[61] Joshua Kucera, "Uzbekistan Setting Up Checkpoints On New Silk Road," *Eurasianet*, June 19, 2013; Joshua Kucera, "NDN Only Carrying Four Percent Of U.S. Military Traffic Out Of Afghanistan," *Eurasianet*, June 24, 2013.

Table 1. U.S. Budgeted Assistance to Uzbekistan by Objective and Year, FY1992-FY2001

(millions of current dollars)

Objective	FY1992	FY1993	FY1994	FY1995	FY1996	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Economic Growth	0.56	3.73	17.92	5.55	14.76	13.04	10.61	6.33	1.75	4.34
Governing Justly & Democratically	2.24	4.81	7.79	5.62	4.84	5.25	8.58	10.12	8.21	9.55
Investing in People	0.81	3.36	3.62	1.78	3.33	3.6	3.71	9.08	6.73	7.56
Peace & Security	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.41	7.93	3.47	7.02	9.8	24.27
Humanitarian	2.0	3.1	4.73	1.4	0.0	1.06	0.48	14.34	12.57	1.26
Cross-Cutting & Program Support	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.35
Total	5.62	15.0	34.07	14.44	23.34	30.88	26.84	46.88	39.06	48.33

Source: Derived from U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia.

Notes: Includes all agencies and accounts. Some rounding has occured.

Table 2. US Budgeted Assistance to Uzbekistan by Objective and Year, FY2002-FY2010 (and Totals, FY1992-FY2010)

(millions of current dollars)

Objective	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	Total (FY1993-FY2010)
Economic Growth	36.37	11.68	10.29	9.05	3.32	3.54	0.88	0.71	1.25	155.69
Governing Justly & Democratically	23.22	15.31	15.11	14.08	9.03	8.87	6.37	9.13	5.98	174.1
Investing in People	19.93	9.4	10.81	8.7	5.03	4.25	3.29	2.73	1.27	109.0
Peace & Security	82.53	39.18	41.62	43.43	28.67	17.82	26.82	33.98	25.95	393.01
Humanitarian	49.06	12.68	5.38	1.8	0.95	0.75	0.47	0.4	1.01	113.44
Cross-Cutting & Program Support	13.02	2.53	1.03	1.21	2.29	0.67	0.5	1.6	1.9	26.11
Total	224.14	90.77	84.25	78.28	49.3	35.9	38.33	48.55	37.38	971.35

Source: Derived from U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia.

Notes: Includes all agencies and accounts. Some rounding has occurred.

Figure 1. Map of Uzbekistan

Source: CRS

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