



THE RAHMON PHENOMENON

New Challenges for Tajikistan's Long-Standing President

Alexey Malashenko and Aziz Niyazi



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Summary

Emomali Rahmon's reelection as president of Tajikistan in 2013 testifies to his regime's stability and its capacity for self-preservation. He now faces a number of complex tasks, which include undertaking economic reforms, counteracting religious extremism, and resolving conflicts with neighboring countries. It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain a high degree of stability under these conditions.

Key Themes

- Tajikistan is the most impoverished nation in Central Asia. Local natural resources are being depleted, and the regime will soon be unable to provide its people with even a minimal level of sustenance. Economic reforms are long overdue.
- Popular demand for a strong opposition force to the regime is growing. An alliance that sought to challenge Rahmon's reelection came up short but may learn from its mistakes before parliamentary elections scheduled for 2015.
- The political influence of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan as well as Islamic radicals is increasing.
- Tajikistan is vulnerable to penetration by Islamic extremists from Afghanistan after the scheduled 2014 withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from the country, especially if the Taliban reemerges to control Afghanistan.
- The regime has proclaimed a state monopoly on Islam and has acted to regulate religious life.
- Disagreement with Uzbekistan over the Rogun hydroelectric power plant, which is being constructed in an earthquake-prone zone, has complicated Tajik-Uzbek relations.

Challenges Ahead

The economic clock is ticking. Until reforms are implemented, Tajikistan urgently requires external economic and financial assistance. Without external

support, the country will find itself in a permanent crisis that could result in a social explosion.

Opponents need an outlet. The country's type of authoritarianism allows for a multiparty system and permits criticism from the outside. But unless the leadership finds a way to let opponents meaningfully participate in the system, more radical opposition could develop.

Attempts to regulate Islam could backfire. Some Muslims support the regime's efforts while others are critical. There is a risk that some disgruntled believers could join with fundamentalists.

The conflict over Rogun must be resolved quickly. The disagreement with Uzbekistan is making it more difficult for Tajikistan to solve other problems. An Uzbek offer to help build hydroelectric stations not in earthquake-prone regions provides a potential way to move forward.

The line of succession runs close to home. President Rahmon, serving his last term, must start grooming a successor. This person may come from either the president's immediate family or his "extended family" in the Kulob clan.

The Election

To no one's surprise, Emomali Rahmon, the leader of Tajikistan since 1992, was reelected in a landslide in the November 6, 2013, presidential election. Just over 90 percent of all eligible voters (3.8 million out of 4.2 million) participated, according to Tajikistan's Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CERC). Six candidates were running in the election. The incumbent, Emomali Rahmon, received 3.2 million votes (84.2 percent).¹ The next highest vote total (184,000) was for the Communist Party of Tajikistan candidate, Ismoil Talbakov, at a distant 4.9 percent. He was followed by Tolibbek Bukhoriyev of the Agrarian Party, who got about 168,000 votes (4.5 percent), and Olimjon Boboyev of the Party of Economic Reforms of Tajikistan, who received about 143,000 votes (3.8 percent). The other two candidates—Abduhalim Gaffarov of the Socialist Party of Tajikistan and Saidjaffar Ismonov of the Democratic Party—received 55,000 votes (1.5 percent) and 39,000 votes (1.1 percent), respectively.²

The election could have been less predictable had the independent human rights activist Oynihol Bobonazarova stayed in the race. Her candidacy was supported by the Alliance of Reformist Forces of Tajikistan—a coalition of Rahmon's opponents that includes the Social Democratic Party of Tajikistan (SDPT) and the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT).³ But the coalition was not able to collect the requisite number of signatures to register its candidate. The parties that did manage to collect the required 5 percent of voter signatures can hardly be called opposition. Four of them are opposition in name only: they are small, obscure parties that lack clearly formulated platforms and surface only during election campaigns. Most people in Tajikistan do not even know the names of their leaders. The fifth one, the Communist Party of Tajikistan, criticizes the regime only very delicately and mildly.

It is worth noting that while all five candidates allowed to challenge Rahmon collected the 210,000 signatures required for their registration, none of them managed to receive as many votes in the election. In fact, two of them got a significantly lower number of votes, which, naturally, raises some questions. Besides, vote counting procedures in Tajikistan lack transparency. Under the law, party representatives cannot be members of local electoral precincts and are not allowed to participate in counting votes. In reality, the members of the electoral precincts are quite often members of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT)⁴ and the "public activists" that support the regime. A system analogous to the Russian State Automated Elections System does not exist in Tajikistan. There are also serious issues with verifying the signatures

of the hundreds of thousands of voters who cast their ballots outside of the country. Although Tajikistan's citizens residing abroad are allowed to vote, the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda, citing technical difficulties, has prohibited collecting their signatures for a candidate's registration. This decision fosters additional opportunities for rigging election results.

Monitors from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) recorded these shortcomings, as well other instances of electoral fraud, such as ballot stuffing, when the head of the family votes for all of the family members. The U.S. State Department also took note of these irregularities. However, the Commonwealth of Independent States did not find any serious instances of electoral fraud and declared the election a success (this is a fairly typical response when elections are held in the post-Soviet states). And all of the international observers declared the election valid. The head of the OSCE/ODIHR observation mission, Paraschiva Badescu, said that the election was free and transparent in comparison to the previous ones.⁵

The next presidential election is scheduled to take place in 2020 in accordance with the Tajik Constitution. Parliamentary elections are to take place in 2015 and are expected to be spirited and competitive, provided the opposition learns from its mistakes during the 2013 election campaign. The IRPT's campaign strategy will affect the elections a great deal.

Migration's Role and Ability to Disrupt

By the time the next parliamentary and presidential elections are held, labor migrants will have been playing a greater role in Tajikistan's political life. Migration remains a factor in Tajikistan's domestic and foreign policies, particularly with regard to its relations with Russia. Those leaving the country in search of employment number 1–1.5 million, with 90 percent of them heading for Russia. According to varying estimates, 700,000 to 1.2 million Tajik citizens currently work in Russia.⁶ Russia's Federal Migration Service reported that 1.2 million Tajik citizens were residing in Russia as of October 18, 2013.⁷

According to the agency's reports, as of late summer 2013, men ages 18–29 constituted the majority of the migrants—593,500 people (48 percent). This age group outnumbered men ages 30–39 almost 2 to 1.⁸ Thus, the most politically active segment of the electorate capable of effecting change inside the country makes up the lion's share of the migrants. So far, the Tajik authorities are able to keep this electorate “at a distance” and skillfully use it to their advantage.⁹ But if even a third of the labor migrants lose their chance to leave for Russia, Tajikistan may be in for a serious sociopolitical crisis, which could possibly lead to the collapse of the current regional-clan system of governance. Such a situation may develop as a result of introducing a visa regime for Tajik citizens entering Russia (though this measure is not yet being officially

discussed). Mandatory work patents issued to foreign workers by individuals and legal entities may also stem migration flow into Russia. If Tajikistan joins the Customs Union in the next two to three years, its citizens would gain access to visa-free travel within the Customs Union borders; nevertheless, the patent system would effectively make them less mobile, since they would be tethered to a specific workplace.

Tajikistan's younger generation can also potentially become migrants. Demographic pressure may undermine the balance of social relations from within. Even if Tajikistan's economy develops successfully, the country will not be able to ensure full employment of its citizens in neither the industrial sector nor the agricultural sector. Recent reports mentioned 193,000 new jobs created in Tajikistan for a period of eleven months in 2013, but there are doubts as to the accuracy of this number.¹⁰ In the foreseeable future, population growth will continue to outpace economic growth. As a result, migration flows will at best remain at their current level and will be mostly directed toward Russia.

The Tajik Opposition and Its Potential

For the first time since the 1992–1997 civil war, opposition forces attempted to run as a unified coalition in the presidential election in 2013. The Alliance of Reformist Forces of Tajikistan (ARFT) included the IRPT (with about 40,000 members) and the SDPT (numerically insignificant),¹¹ as well as many independent public figures, such as the influential spiritual leader Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda.

Despite government pressure that sought to split the opposition and discredit its organizations and leaders, the alliance was able to collect a little over 201,000 signatures in support of its candidate, Oynihol Bobonazarova. ARFT leaders admitted that irresponsible signature collectors are mostly to blame for coming up some 9,000 signatures short of getting their candidate on the ballot. The IRPT made the most serious effort to collect signatures despite the challenges its activists faced. Its members had to persuade traditionalist voters to support an unfamiliar candidate, let alone a woman who clearly looks secular and openly espouses pro-European views. In urging them to vote for Bobonazarova, IRPT activists often cited a fatwa issued by the renowned Islamic theologian, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, that allows a woman to run for political office. For their part, Bobonazarova's secular supporters likened her to the former Kyrgyz president Roza Otunbayeva, who enjoys popularity among the democratic electorate.

The opposition consolidation was also hindered by the fact that the Social Democrats were effectively split, with some SDPT members refusing to consider Bobonazarova the coalition leader.

Provided that the signatures the ARFT collected were legitimate, it is possible to conclude that the systemic Islamic-democratic opposition enjoys some

support among Tajiks. In a sense, this is a purely Islamic opposition, insofar as the IRPT played the central role in the alliance. There is no doubt that it would have been able to clear the 5 percent electoral threshold had the authorities allowed signatures to be collected abroad, where the IRPT may have as many as hundreds of thousands of supporters.

Around 600,000 voters did not take part in the election for various reasons. Some boycotted it. Thus, the ARFT could have been supported by at least 300,000 people, which is not an insignificant number under Tajikistan's political conditions. Those who signed the petitions for the leader of the "reformists" should be commended for their activism and courage, since such behavior could have landed them in serious trouble.¹² The 45,000-strong Communist Party receives significant support from the non-conformist electorate (most likely at least 150,000 votes).

Another opposition party, called New Tajikistan, appeared in spring 2013. Its founders hoped to receive support from thousands of Tajik citizens, especially those in the business sector. They thought that the New Tajikistan party could unite the centrists around overcoming the country's economic stagnation and that it could develop an entrepreneurial base and attempt to build a consensus between the ruling regime and the systemic Islamic opposition represented by the IRPT. The idea of creating the new party was endorsed by some leading economists, cultural figures, and politicians, such as the mayor of Dushanbe, Mahmadsaid Ubaydulloyev. However, the party was never registered, and its leader, a well-known Tajik businessman, Zayd Saidov, was arrested and charged with graft, tax evasion, polygamy, and rape.¹³ Besides, the pro-government media wrote of Saidov's connections to the Islamic militants' late leader, Mullo Abdullo.¹⁴ Saidov was convicted on four of the eight charges against him, and on December 25, 2013, the Supreme Court sentenced him to twenty-six years in prison, fined him \$16,700, and ordered the forfeiture of all illegally obtained assets. His lawyers intend to appeal the sentence.¹⁵

Based on the last election, the active and passive opposition electorate is estimated to total half a million people. It is hard to predict whether the numbers will remain the same by the time of the next presidential election in seven years. However, during the 2015 parliamentary elections, this electorate may offer the opposition a chance to play a more significant role in the government. That is provided, of course, that the regime renounces its customary practice of pressuring its opponents and agrees to loosen the electoral law as urged by the IRPT, the Social Democrats, and the Communist Party.

To be successful during the parliamentary elections, the opposition will have to change its tactics. Otherwise, the ARFT is soon likely to become a mere discussion forum or may even dissolve on its own. The IRPT is displeased with the Social Democrats' irresponsibility and inertia, while the Social Democrats complain that the IRPT pressured them on personnel appointments during the coalition building. The SDPT head, Rakhmatillo Zoirov, was eyeing the

position of ARFT leader and did not expect the IRPT to propose Oynihol Bobonazarova's candidacy for the position. The IRPT may move toward closer cooperation with the New Tajikistan party in the future. Opposition cooperation with the Communist Party, meanwhile, is unlikely because it rejects the privatization of state assets. The Communist Party disagrees with the rest of the parties on this issue. Besides, they completely oppose the political Islam that IRPT represents.

In addition to the legal opposition, a number of marginal opposition factions have emerged in Tajikistan. They include Group 24, headed by Umarali Kuvvatov, and the Vatandor movement, under the leadership of Dodojon Atovulloyev, who was forced to emigrate to Europe as a result of the regime's pressure. However, both of these groups are extremely small and have practically no impact on the country's political life.

Legal opposition parties play by the rules set by the regime—primarily by the president. In a sense, this satisfies both sides: the regime retains its aura of invincibility, believing it can perpetually remain in power, while the opposition gets a chance to remain part of political life. Even the more influential IRPT prefers to play it safe by avoiding conflicts with the regime. It is hard to say how long the status quo will remain in effect. However, popular demand for a strong opposition force is emerging, albeit slowly. If the legal opposition parties of today prove unable to become such a force, more radical groups may appear, exacerbating the situation and causing a serious conflict, as already happened in the recent past.

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The Tajik Regime

Having scored a resounding and predetermined victory in the presidential election, Emomali Rahmon has begun his new term by strengthening the executive branch. His main goal was to make the regime more stable and capable of solving developmental problems. At the same time, he had to maintain the traditional balance among the regional elites while preserving the dominant status of his own clan, which is also sometimes referred to as his "extended family."

Rahmon hails from Dangara District in the Kulob region, which is part of Khatlon Province. In the past, the predominantly agricultural Kulob region was a separate province. During Soviet rule, Kulob lagged behind other regions in terms of its socioeconomic development, and its elite were only marginally represented in the central republican government.

The mountainous Garm District cluster, located in the eastern foothills of the Pamir Mountains, is also mostly agricultural. The local peasants were traditionally considered prosperous. The region's residents are fiercely traditional and deeply religious.

The Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province, located in the Pamir Mountains, had been subsidized due to its climate conditions. Both agriculture and industry were poorly developed there, but the educational system of the province was quite solid. A significant part of the province's population is made up of adherents of the Ismaili branch of Shia Islam. Ismailites constitute 12 percent of Tajikistan's population; the rest of the Tajiks practice Sunni Islam.

During the Soviet era, the dominant elite faction came from the economically developed Leninabad Province (now Sughd Province) in the north of the country. The city of Khujand (formerly Leninabad) is the administrative center of the province.

The republic's central government also patronized the residents of the Gissar Valley region, which is adjacent to the Tajik capital, Dushanbe. This was another economically developed area of Tajikistan.

The regional economic development levels remained practically unchanged in the years since the breakup of the Soviet Union. During the Tajik civil war, the Popular Front, which consisted of predominantly Kulob, Leninabad (Khujand), and Gissar elites, was up against the Islamic-Democratic bloc represented mostly by the Garm and Pamir clans. The situation has changed significantly since the end of the war. The Kulob clan began to dominate, making other regional clans less powerful. Thus, the president is forced to constantly concern himself with maintaining the balance of power among the regions. Failure to do so threatens to undermine the stability and, to a large extent, the integrity of the country.

Since his 2013 victory, Emomali Rahmon has replaced 60 percent of the members of his government, dismissing 13 of the 22 ministers. The government has become younger—its members' average age is now 52. Some analysts believe it has also become more professional.¹⁶ At the same time, Tajikistan's system of governance severely curtails government powers, essentially limiting ministerial functions to carrying out executive orders. Ministers often find this situation convenient—they are not really accountable to the public; all complaints are submitted directly to the president.

Apart from reshuffling his government, Rahmon made some personnel changes in the fields of science and culture by replacing the president of the Academy of Sciences, the president of Tajik Technical University, the chairman of the governmental Committee on Language and Terminology, the president of the Tajik National Conservatory, and some other officials. Personnel changes occurred on the regional level as well.

It is worth noting that such mass personnel changes are common in authoritarian regimes. On the surface, they are directed at improving the system of governance but they actually serve to prevent possible anti-regime conspiracies as well as to thwart the appearance of a strong, potentially popular politician whose leadership skills would enable him to compete with the president.

Some analysts believed that during his new presidential term Emomali Rahmon would rely primarily on the “family,” distancing himself from his native and allied clans, as well as from his civil war brothers-in-arms from Leninabad (Khujand) and Gissar. This course of action may destabilize the situation, paving the way for a possible coup d’état. However, Rahmon’s new appointments revealed a lack of “family” influence, and the situation is unlikely to change in the future. No changes have been made to the long-standing tacit scheme of distributing political posts among the regional elites based on their loyalty and strength. The new appointments respect the political and, more importantly, economic and financial interests of the regional elites. People from the Kulob clan and the president’s native Dangara clan received several key posts they previously held—they took charge of the Committee for National Security and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Finance, Economic Development and Trade, and Education. Gissar and Leninabad natives are always offered more government positions than representatives of the “unreliable” Pamir and Pamir foothills regions. The unspoken rules dictate that the prime minister should come from the north, so this time this post was given to Kokhir Rasulzoda, the seasoned head of Sughd Province.

First Deputy Prime Minister Davlatali Saidov represents the Kulob faction (some sources claim he is related to the president). The three other deputy prime ministers come from different regions. The upper house of the parliament is still headed by Rahmon’s closest associate, Dushanbe Mayor Mahmadsaid Ubaydulloyev.

A professional from the north, Shavkat Boboyev, was put in charge of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies. Usmonali Usmonov, who comes from the Vakhdat region in the vicinity of Dushanbe, became the minister of Energy and Water Resources. Notably, Vakhdat is the Turajonzoda clan stronghold; thus, during the civil war some of its residents fought against the People’s Front, and, by extension, against Rahmon. Garm and Gorno-Badakhshan natives became the ministers of Culture and Transport in the new government. They also now head the State Committee on Investment and Management of State Property, which previously belonged to the Kulob clan. The northerner Shukurjon Zukhurov is now the speaker of the lower house of parliament, a post previously held by Garm native Saydullo Khayrulloev.

The changes also affected the president’s immediate family. The president’s twenty-six-year-old son, Rustam Emomali, who had been deputy head of the State Customs Service, has been promoted to the top position. The public perceives this appointment as a step toward establishing hereditary rule, and many are irritated by this drift toward monarchy. However, this can be done only by amending the constitution, which precludes anyone under the age of 35 from becoming the president. The president’s daughter and son-in-law, meanwhile, remain in their second-tier positions: Ozoda Emomali (Ozoda Rahmonova) is still deputy minister of foreign affairs, and her husband, Jamoliddin Nuraliev,

still holds the position of deputy minister of finance. One of the president's in-laws, Gul Sherali, retired from the position of minister of industry and energy.

Thus, the president's personnel decisions indicate that the principle of distributing political positions in accordance with regional background has remained intact. The head of state did not give in to the ambitions of his kinsmen and landsmen, leaving them with what they previously had. The president's associates control finance and trade, while loyal security forces guard his regime. Such a time-tested system of government can endure for quite a long time. Abandoning it may lead to destructive changes, upset the current bal-

ance of power, and plunge the country into turmoil similar to that of the early 1990s. This is why the regional elites recognize the strength of the Kulob clan and are ready to prove their loyalty to it. In return, they expect the ruling group to more evenly distribute resources and financial means, as well as central and local political appointments.

The current political system has proved itself solid by being able to survive the gravest economic crisis of the mid-2000s. However, to strengthen his grip on power, the president will have to implement economic reforms, since retaining power without reforms will be much harder than it had been. The reforms may unsettle the ruling elite and exacerbate social problems for a period of time, which is

certain to escalate political tensions. All these events are to unfold in close proximity to Afghanistan, whose internal problems are very likely to affect its neighbor to the north. In short, Emomali Rahmon and his team are in for an extremely challenging seven-year term. It remains to be seen if the regime is capable of successfully dealing with all of the challenges it is about to face.

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The Regime and Islam

In many ways, the regime's stability is contingent on the stance the ruling elite adopt toward Islam, which is playing an increasing role in shaping its adherents' consciousness and behavior. Religion also plays an important role in political life. In fact, the process of creeping shariatization is under way in Tajikistan against the backdrop of the ostensible coexistence of secular and religious laws. Essentially, one can observe informal deviations from the secular principles of state structure. These deviations, however, are limited in scope and are confined to ritualistic aspects, family law, and the (so far) theoretical application of Islamic banking (as it relates to the prohibition of usury—*riba*).

Tajikistan now has a law regulating the conduct of celebrations and rituals, which specifies the expenses allowed on celebratory events, the number of guests, and other aspects. The law frees the already impoverished public from excessive ceremonial spending (this measure was advocated by the IRPT

founders as early as the 1980s). Muslims are advised not to organize commemoration ceremonies for their dead on the third, seventh, and fortieth days, as called for by the local ethnocultural traditions. Incidentally, the Salafis urge Muslims to do the same, claiming that this ritual was not part of early Islam. The law also prohibits wearing *hijabs* and *niqabs* in offices and does not allow anyone below the age of eighteen to attend mosques.

The state plays particularly close attention to Islamic education and the work of the Muslim clergy. State institutions, in conjunction with the Islamic Center of Tajikistan (the official organization that deals with Islamic law), are in charge of controlling religious education and testing imams, *medrese* teachers, and students. They also deal with mosque registrations. In late 2013, three *medrese* in Khatlon Province were closed down due to the “incompetence of the local imam khatibs.”¹⁷ Starting in 2014, pursuant to an executive order, *imam khatibs* are to become public servants. Thus, while leaving the secular character of the state in place, the regime attempts to assume complete control over the spiritual and moral realm and religious instruction. In other words, it seeks to carry out religious administrative and legislative functions that ordinarily are outside of the purview of a secular state.

An attempt by state-run TV channels to avoid using some fictional characters in their New Year’s programs for 2014 is another telling, though indirect, sign of Islamization. According to the first deputy chair of the Television and Radio Committee, Saidali Sidiqov, Ded Moroz (Santa Claus) and Snegurochka (Snow Maiden) “are not directly related to national traditions.”¹⁸ And the IRPT representative protested the New Year’s tree. These attitudes mirror sentiments on New Year’s celebrations in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, where a 2014 New Year’s tree was set on fire. In the Russian North Caucasus (Dagestan) and even in Tatarstan, some clerics also criticized the New Year’s celebration as spiritually alien to Muslims. However, Mahmadsaid Ubaydulloyev kept the traditionalists in check by ordering a “large-scale, maximally opulent” holiday celebration featuring Ded Moroz.¹⁹ The mayor ensured that a 22-meter-high New Year’s tree and the Fairy Tale Land around it were erected in Dushanbe.

The ostentatious celebrations of the 1,310th anniversary of Abu Hanifah’s birth clearly pointed to the regime’s attempts to reaffirm its support for Islam. (Abu Hanifah, also referred to by his title Imam al-Azam, founded one of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence.) The state organized the celebrations. Interestingly, at an international conference on Abu Hanifah, pro-regime Tajik academicians made an unsuccessful attempt to prove his Tajik origin by alleging he was born in Kabul to a Tajik family, thus seeking to “nationalize” Hanafism. The lower house of the parliament went beyond that: it declared the Hanafi movement of Sunni Islam, to which 90 percent of all Tajik Muslims belong, the *official* religious movement of Tajikistan. By doing this, the secular state effectively asserted the right to proscribe its citizens’ choice of religious movement. This decision hinders the nation’s religious and civic consolidation,

given the fact that Tajikistan is also home to a large Ismaili community and a small number of Muslims who adhere to other strands of Islam. Such declarations are also harmful in light of the fact that Shia-Sunni relations have deteriorated in recent years.

By proclaiming a state monopoly on Islam, the regime is trying to curb the influence of legal Islamic opposition forces—primarily the IRPT. The party was subjected to increased pressure in the run-up to the presidential election. IRPT members and activists recorded numerous instances of intimidation of their supporters as well as some cases of violence. The state-controlled media started publishing materials that accused the “Islamic-democratic” forces of instigating a new civil war.

At the same time, the regime has tried to discredit the renowned Islamic preachers and IRPT allies Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda and Eshoni Nuriddin Turajonzoda, whose independent views on foreign and domestic matters draw the consternation of the ruling clan.²⁰ They are also influential as leaders of the prominent Sufi order of Qadiriyya. Their family Friday mosque was closed in 2011 under the pretext that the Shia Ashura mourning ritual was allegedly conducted there.²¹ Nuriddin and Akbar Turajonzoda were removed from the pulpit. The head of the Tajik Council of Islamic Clerics, Saidmukarram Abdukodirzoda, and the State Committee on Religious Affairs were behind these sanctions.

The conflict between the regime and Akbar Turajonzoda escalated after he criticized authorities for excessive interference in religious affairs, issued public appeals for tolerance of other nations, and supported the Eurasian Union proposed by Russia. He also condemned the sentence meted out by the Tajik court in the so-called pilots’ case, which he believed complicated the position of Tajik labor migrants in Russia.²²

Putting pressure on the Turajonzoda family practically coincided with another round of attempts to discredit the IRPT leadership. Tajik authorities sought to strip the party of any influence it might have had on domestic and foreign decisionmaking. They increased pressure on the local chapters and individual party members across the country. It appears that the ruling elite dreams of taking total control of the party or even doing away with it altogether.²³ It is telling that many in Tajikistan now believe that their country does not need an Islamic party whose activities fragment the nation and divide Muslims.

Muslims themselves are split on the government’s efforts to regulate religious life. Some believers support the efforts, while others are moderately critical, insisting that religious life should be outside the realm of the state and that freedom of expression should be promoted in the media, courts, and parliament. There are also those drifting toward more radical views, although they had been the government’s allies in its struggle against the fundamentalists—the forces that reject any form of dialogue with the regime.

The number of religiously radical fundamentalists who despise the moderate Islamic opposition and are ready to engage in armed struggle against the regime is actually quite small. However, this radical segment could accomplish a lot: under certain circumstances, it could upset the fragile social stability and attract some disgruntled believers, thus increasing its ranks. The jihadists who were fighting alongside the Islamic opposition in Syria may return to Tajikistan. Besides, the fundamentalists may strengthen their positions thanks to the possible Taliban takeover of Afghanistan after the International Security Assistance Force troops withdraw in 2014.

For the past three years, the Islamic systemic opposition partnership of the IRPT and the Turajonzoda family has been able to sway a number of their compatriots residing abroad. It will try to take advantage of a chance to expand its influence in the upcoming 2015 parliamentary elections and may even join the government under certain favorable scenarios.

Economic Problems

The president and his new government are basing their economic projections on a rosy picture of sustained economic growth, which is far from reality. In recent years, official GDP growth estimates have averaged no less than 7 percent.²⁴ Moreover, the authorities believed that GDP growth would reach 7.4 percent in 2013 and 7.5 percent in 2014. However, the Eurasian Development Bank estimates that GDP growth will not exceed 6 percent in 2014–2015.²⁵

In reality, the GDP is as about half of the officially reported figure, since the reported figure includes migrant remittances. They amounted to \$3.6 billion in 2012, which is 47.5 percent of GDP. This amount was expected to reach \$4 billion in 2013. These figures reflect only officially recorded remittances; the total number is even more impressive if all of the money transfers were accounted for. Migrant remittances should actually be included in GNP (gross national product), not GDP, since they do not affect the productive sectors of the economy.²⁶ They are not invested in production but are mostly spent on consumption—maintaining a bearable standard of living—as well as education and medical care.

Large venture capitalists are not rushing to finance the productive sphere. The share of internal private investments in the industrial sector is negligible. There have been substantial negative structural changes in the economy for the past seven years. The share of the industrial and agricultural sectors in the economy fell from 39.9 percent in January 2006 to 28.4 percent in July 2013. Conversely, the share of the service and commercial sectors in the economy has increased from 43.6 percent to 50.2 percent over the same period.²⁷

Despite the positive developments of the past decade, Tajikistan remains the most impoverished nation in Central Asia,²⁸ with a per capita GDP below \$900. Wages are still low, while the unemployment rate is high. According to

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official reports, the government annually creates 150,000–200,000 jobs, but these are predominantly seasonal, low-skilled, or low-wage jobs. Local reports estimate the actual unemployment rates to be 13 percent (excluding the self-employed) and 40 percent (including the self-employed).²⁹

The unemployment is partially offset by work in small businesses and on personal land plots. Public assistance is insufficient, and health care and education are in a deplorable state. The officially reported economic growth is based on macroeconomic indicators. Thus, it does not reflect real production growth and effectively leaves quality of life unchanged. The relatively satisfactory human development index ratings³⁰ are mostly sustained thanks to migrant earnings, as well as the remnants of the Soviet educational, health care, and housing infrastructure. But the post-Soviet reserves are being increasingly exhausted. Moreover, maintaining even the most basic quality of living standards often comes at the expense of environmental protection, which will have an adverse impact on future generations. The major threat comes from the depletion of water and land resources as a result of using outdated, “dirty” technologies.³¹

In his address to the new government in November 2013, shortly after his reelection, the president outlined the main components of his socioeconomic development program.³² The program’s goal is a 30 percent decrease in the poverty level by 2015 and a further 20 percent decrease by 2020. “Expanding the economy” by more than 80 percent by 2020 is also planned (although it remains unclear what the phrase “expanding the economy” means). By 2020, GDP is projected to increase 1.5–2 times over 2013, and spending on social programs is to rise from 12 percent of GDP in 2013 to 16 percent. Public sector wages, pension payments, and student stipends are also to increase by 2.5–3 times. The program calls for “ensuring the greater sustained economic development of Tajikistan and raising the living standards of its people by providing energy independence and food security, reducing isolation and increasing communication, as well as by developing essential spheres through developing the private sector.”³³

An allusion to the “private sector” probably implies further privatization of state property. However, the country has already had quite a negative record of privatizing state property in the atmosphere of crony capitalism and systemic corruption. Ensuring food security under current conditions is also impossible for a number of reasons. First, Tajikistan’s population growth is high, while its water and land resources are being depleted and the crop yield is low. Second, the state does not significantly subsidize agriculture. The third reason is the open market, which is bound to become even more open since Tajikistan joined the World Trade Organization in 2013. Ensuring energy independence and overcoming isolation require enormous resources and serious effort.

Neither of these goals will be accomplished unless a water and energy conflict with neighboring Uzbekistan is resolved. The conflict revolves around regulating water flow off the Pamir Mountains, which is currently de facto under Tajikistan's control. The disagreements stem from the construction of the Rogun hydroelectric power plant, which is slated to become the largest power plant of its kind in Central Asia.

The Rogun project is undergoing an international assessment study of the technological, environmental, and socioeconomic risks associated with it. Uzbekistan's technological and economic arguments against the project outweigh the claims made by the Tajik side that the dam poses no ecological dangers and that the country cannot prosper without it. Uzbekistan mainly asserts that the project is risky, since the plant is being constructed in the earthquake-prone zone of the Ilyak-Vakhsh fault line. Tashkent's position on this issue has recently been supported by Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

In exchange for Tajikistan's giving up the Rogun project, Uzbekistan pledges to help the country in constructing medium-powered hydroelectric stations, as well as a large gas-and-steam electric station that would run on Uzbek gas. It is believed that cumulatively these stations would be able to supply Tajikistan with enough energy for domestic consumption and exports. Russia and some other countries have expressed interest in participating in building these hydroelectric stations.

Thus, room for compromise does exist, although the predicament remains extremely politicized. The Tajik authorities have made Rogun into a symbol of their national revival ideology. No wonder that immediately following his reelection, President Rahmon reiterated his country's intention to complete Rogun's construction. However, Tajikistan is unable to accomplish this task single-handedly, as foreign governments and businesses do not want to risk making significant investments in it.

Dushanbe also believes that the Rogun project is essential for Tajik oil shipments to its southern neighbors, Afghanistan and Pakistan, which have both economic and political significance. This venture came about as a result of the American-run Regional Energy Markets Assistance Program (REMAP), which sought to make Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan major energy suppliers for a large part of the territory of Central and South Asia, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. The project's aim is to revamp the entire energy system in the region; if successful, it would undermine Russia's position there.

Southbound Tajik and Kyrgyz energy shipments are part of CASA-1000 (the South Asia Regional Energy and Trade Project). The Rogun power plant is projected to generate up to 13.1 billion kilowatt-hours of electric energy, which would be sufficient for both Tajikistan's domestic consumption and exports.

The Rogun controversy makes it harder to solve the rest of the problems that complicate Tajik-Uzbek relations. For instance, it delays resolution of the

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Farkhad Dam territorial dispute and the resumption of shipments (mostly by rail) to Tajikistan via Uzbekistan's territory. Meanwhile, Tajikistan's economy is stagnating. The state development strategy fails to consider the fact that the country is at a critical juncture: local natural resources will soon be inadequate to support the people's basic needs and acceptable living standards. Tajikistan is completely dependent on foreign investment, credits and grants, energy exports, and food. Thus, the country's economic security is at stake, which makes it a priority for Emomali Rahmon and his government.

Drug Trafficking

The struggle against drug trafficking is another priority for the government. A skeptical, albeit realistic, approach to the problem exists. It can be said that neither the Tajik government nor any other Central Asian regime can prevail over the drug traffickers; thus, the eventual goal should be curtailing their influence. Besides, the Tajik drug traffickers are an integral component of international organized crime, which the international community has been relentlessly battling for decades.

Tajikistan is the main transfer hub along the so-called Northern Route, which carries Afghan drugs to Central Asia and then to Russia and subsequently, in smaller quantities, to Europe. In recent years, Afghan drugs are also being shipped to China.

Opiates—opium, morphine, and heroin—are responsible for the bulk of the illegal drug transit. Afghan heroin production is on the rise. It has grown by 40 times since 2001.³⁴ It is hard to tell exactly how much of it is being transferred along the Northern Route, but estimates provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicate that in 2010, of 380 tons of Afghan-produced heroin, 90 tons were shipped along the Northern Route. Three-fourths of this amount was intended for the Russian market. On top of that, Central Asia received 35–40 tons of raw opium. Approximately 85 percent of the opiates (75–80 tons of heroin and 18–20 tons of opium) was shipped through Tajik territory. On average, 200 kilos of heroin and 50 kilos of opium crossed the country's border on a daily basis. In 2010, authorities confiscated 985 kilos of heroin and 744 kilos of opium from drug dealers—a miniscule share of the total volume of narcotraffic.³⁵

According to figures released by Tajikistan's Drug Enforcement Agency, in 2013 law enforcement agencies confiscated 5,372 kilos of illegal drugs in the span of nine months. Cannabis-based drugs significantly outnumber the opiates, of which 1,009 kilos were confiscated, 7.8 percent more than for the same period the previous year. For heroin, 386 kilos were confiscated, 18.2 percent

less than the previous year. The amount of confiscated opium increased from 460 kilos in 2012 to 623 kilos in 2013.³⁶

Nevertheless, the Russian Federal Drug Control Service (FDCS) reports an increase in Afghan heroin shipments into the country,³⁷ and it is unlikely that heroin trafficking will be reduced in the near future.³⁸ The increased presence of the Taliban and other militant factions with a sizable Central Asian contingent in close proximity to the Tajik border will facilitate the flow of drugs.

To some extent, the militants are assisted by local drug traffickers, who either buy them off or support them on ideological grounds.

FDCS head Viktor Ivanov notes that Afghan drug factions, whose budgets may reach \$18 billion, are rapidly militarizing.³⁹ Of course, their Central Asian counterparts are not as well armed and have less combat experience; nevertheless, their reach in the region should not be underestimated. According to the FDCS, 150 large drug rings and 1,900 smaller groups numbering 20,000 people are active in the region. They employ up to 100,000 couriers to transport narcotics to Russia.⁴⁰ The drug rings actively participated in the 2010 Kyrgyz events. Tajik drug traffickers played a crucial role in arming the so-called Pamir self-defense units that fought against the government forces. Drug trafficking will remain a factor affecting the situation in Tajikistan for years to come.

Foreign Policy

Emomali Rahmon's foreign policy is unlikely to change significantly in the foreseeable future. He will continue with the multi-vector approach, focusing simultaneously on Tajikistan's relations with China, Russia, the United States, and the Muslim countries. This is the most productive approach, given the fact that it has been successfully carried out since the beginning of Rahmon's rule. Multi-vector foreign policies are characteristic of all Central Asian countries and are tolerated by foreign actors. None of them stands to gain from the deterioration of the situation in Tajikistan, let alone the breakup of the country; thus, no foreign actor will attempt to shatter the Rahmon regime.

This is why none of them is going to support the opposition to Rahmon's rule, regardless of the state of their country's relations with the Dushanbe regime. After all, Rahmon is liable to be replaced by Islamists. Beijing is satisfied with Tajikistan's "efforts to gain the status of a Chinese province," as some experts describe it.⁴¹ Washington is increasing its financial assistance to the Tajik regime, thus introducing it to its security strategy in the region, which will have special significance after American combat troops withdraw from Afghanistan. For its part, Russia does not just want to keep Tajikistan in its sphere of influence but also to incorporate it into its newly created integration structures—the Customs Union and subsequently the Eurasian Union.

Emomali Rahmon's foreign policy is unlikely to change significantly in the foreseeable future.

While maintaining his commitment to the multi-vector approach, Rahmon will have to decide which of the vectors is a priority, both economically and politically, and which of the external actors will be ready to help him in case of increased domestic and international threats to his regime.

In this context, Russia appears to be Rahmon's most convenient ally. China is not really concerned with the persona of the Tajik leader, knowing that any local ruler will treasure his friendship with Beijing. Chinese officials have made numerous statements indicating that they are concerned primarily with economic relations and will not intervene in Tajik and Central Asian political upheavals since Tajik politicians are unlikely to protest the expansion of Chinese investment in their country. Currently, Tajikistan and China are discussing the question of building the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Tajikistan–China gas pipeline, which promises to pump more than \$3 billion of Chinese investments into the Tajik economy.⁴² China will also increase its investments in developing metallic ore mines in the north of Tajikistan, regardless of who becomes the country's next president. Similarly, Washington believes that Rahmon is not the only figure who can guarantee American interests in Tajikistan.

As far as Russia is concerned, Rahmon remains the most reliable partner, despite his inconsistent political course. In turn, the Tajik president remains hopeful and even confident that Moscow will be the partner that will help him in times of trouble.

In part, military cooperation between Tajikistan and Russia, which traces its roots to the Tajik civil war, serves as a basis for Rahmon's belief in Russia's further assistance. At the time of the civil war, while supporting the Popular Front, Moscow agreed to pay 50 percent of the cost of defending the Tajik-Uzbek border.⁴³ This mutually beneficial cooperation played an important role in preserving Rahmon's grip on power. Subsequently, he could rely on support from Russia's 201st Motor Rifle Division, which remained in Tajikistan and provided the framework for establishing a Russian military base in 2004.

After Moscow decided to equip the base with an estimated \$1 billion worth of new military technology, the old but battle-ready Russian military equipment was handed over to Tajikistan. It includes 160 T-62 and T-72 tanks, 140 armored personnel carriers, 169 mechanized infantry combat vehicles, the division's artillery repair base, an *Igla* man-portable surface-to-air missile complex, 30 *Shilka* and *Osa* self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, and four helicopters.⁴⁴ These weapons will be used for border defense, act as "a restraining factor in Tajik-Uzbek relations,"⁴⁵ and can also help to fight the regime's internal opponents (Islamists).

The Kremlin continues its efforts to get Tajikistan to join the Customs Union, but Rahmon still has not made a decision. However, it is reported that Tajik economists are actively studying this option on Rahmon's orders, and many of them are of the opinion that the advantages of joining the Customs Union outweigh the disadvantages. Of course, Tajikistan's membership in the

Customs Union, and its subsequent membership in the Eurasian Union, would remove barriers for labor migrants to Russia and reduce the prices Tajikistan pays for Russian petroleum products, grain, and some other goods. At the same time, it would complicate the imports of cheap Chinese, Indian, and Turkish goods, which would bankrupt the businessmen involved in importing them. According to former Tajik foreign minister Hamrokhon Zarifi, “Tajikistan’s joining the Customs Union will have little impact.”⁴⁶ It should be remembered, though, that Zarifi was later removed from his post—his anti-Russian and pro-American views being one of the reasons for his dismissal. Now that Rahmon has been reelected, Tajikistan may finally decide to join the Customs Union. Moscow certainly hopes so.

Conclusion

The 2013 election has confirmed the stability of Tajikistan’s “not too tough” authoritarian regime. One can now speak of the “Rahmon phenomenon” to refer to the president’s ability to strengthen his positions and gain the status of national leader in the face of numerous predictions of his political demise. Rahmon was able to forge relations with the opposition, co-opting the influential Islamic Renaissance Party into the country’s political system and reaching an unspoken understanding with it.

At the same time, Rahmon’s regime is expected to face serious political and economic challenges during his presidential term. The next challenge may come as early as 2015—the year of the scheduled parliamentary elections. By that time, the opposition will have tried to create a strong and viable coalition, with the IRPT most likely becoming its core again. However, this time the opposition politicians will try to learn from their mistakes, preserve their unity, and gain a more sizable representation in the parliament.

Radical Islam is another challenge faced by the regime. It is maintaining its role in society and might take advantage of the regime’s mistakes and the country’s dire economic situation. Repressive measures and persecuting the legal opposition may strengthen the radical movement. In fact, the Islamists may attempt to monopolize public protest.

The International Security Assistance Force troops’ withdrawal from Afghanistan will foment Islamist activism, since many in the Muslim world interpret this retreat as the triumph of the Taliban.

On the economic front, Rahmon will have to initiate reforms that are essential to avoid the collapse of the economy. However, he will need to minimize their negative consequences, which are inevitable at the outset.

During his current and, under the constitution, final term, Emomali Rahmon will also have to deal with the issue of succession. Searching for a successor and introducing him to the ruling elite and society at large may become the main task in Tajikistan’s nearest political future.

Notes

- 1 Emomali Rahmon has been Tajikistan's leader since 1992. He was first elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet, which was the highest executive position at that time. In 1994, he was elected president for a five-year term. In the wake of the 1999 popular referendum, the presidential term was extended from five years to seven. The constitution was amended in June 2013, allowing the head of state to run for the highest office for two more seven-year terms.
- 2 "Tajikistan's Central Election Committee Published the Final Presidential Election Results," Regnum.ru, November 14, 2013, <http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/tajik/1732191.html?forprint>.
- 3 Oynihol Bobonazarova is a doctor of law and the founder of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan. She was persecuted for her political views in Soviet and post-Soviet times. She previously headed the Tajikistan branch of the Open Society Foundations and is currently the head of the human rights advocacy Perspective+ public fund.
- 4 The PDPT, headed by Emomali Rahmon, plays a dominant role in the country's political life. It boasts about 230,000 members and is Tajikistan's largest party. The party members or protégés make up the overwhelming majority in the lower house of parliament and the central government. The same is true of the regional and municipal governments and legislatures. The party is not particularly active in the interim period between elections. It was created mostly for the purpose of mobilizing voters, and it carries out this task quite effectively.
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- 6 "Tajik Migration Services Refute the Federal Migration Service Data on the Number of Migrants in Russia," Independent Opinion, September 27, 2013, <http://nm.tj/society/12546-tadzhikskie-migracionschiki-oprovergayut-statdannye-rossiyskih-kolleg-ochisle-migrantov-v-rossii.html>.
- 7 P. Chornashbiyev, "As of October 18, 1,194,000 Tajik Citizens Were Residing in Russia," ASIA-Plus, October 23, 2013, <http://news.tj/ru/news/fms-rossii-na-18-oktyabrya-v-rfnakhodilos-bolee-1-mln-194-tys-grazhdan-tadzhikistana>.
- 8 "Is the Number of Migrants Concealed?" Independent Opinion, October 28, 2013, <http://nm.tj/society/13587-kolichestvo-migrantov-skryvaetsya.html>.
- 9 M. Agadzhanian, "Rahmon Between China and Russia and Migrants Factor During the Elections in Tajikistan," Centrasia.ru, November 11, 2013, www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1384147740.
- 10 "Almost 200,000 New Jobs Were Created in Tajikistan Since 2013," ASIA-Plus, December 18, 2013, <http://tjknews.ru/news/14950>.
- 11 The SDPT leadership claims that almost half of its members are employed in Russia. Varying estimates put the number of party members at 3,000 to 5,000 people.
- 12 ARFT refused to submit the signature lists to the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda, claiming that the signers might face persecution.

- 13 Saidov had previously been a member of the United Tajik Opposition and headed the Ministry of Industry for a period of time after the peace treaty was signed.
- 14 A. Kadyrov, "The Head of a New Political Force Is Arrested in Tajikistan," Institute for War and Peace Reporting, May 20, 2013, <http://iwpr.net/node/59125>.
- 15 "The 2013 Round-Up: Rahmon Has the Upper Hand in Tajikistan. The Opposition Is Knocked Down," CA-News, March 27, 2014, www.ca-news.org/news:1093475.
- 16 F. Milod, "The President Initiated the Process of Forming the New Government. According to Sources Close to the Government, Emomali Rahmon Introduced a Number of New Officials Who Are Professionally Trained in Their Field," [rus.ozodi.org](http://rus.ozodi.org/content/article/25176342.html), November 22, 2013, <http://rus.ozodi.org/content/article/25176342.html>.
- 17 "All Three Medrese in the South of Tajikistan Are Closed Down Because of 'Incompetence of the Local Imam Khatibs,'" www.topnews.tj, December 18, 2013, www.topnews.tj/2013/12/18/na-yuge-tadzhikistana-zakryityi-vse-tri-medrese-iz-zanizkoy-kvalifikatsii-mestnyih-imam-hatibov.
- 18 "Tajikistan Takes Away Father Frost and His Suite From New Year's TV Shows," RIA Novosti, December 11, 2013, <http://ria.ru/world/20131211/983370523.html>.
- 19 "It Was Decided Not to Prohibit Father Frost and Snow Maiden in Tajikistan," RIA Novosti, December 17, 2013, <http://ria.ru/world/20131217/984738389.html>.
- 20 Akbar Turajonzoda held the position of *kazi kalon* (supreme Muslim leader) during Soviet times. During the civil war, he was one of the leaders of the Islamic Renaissance Movement of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition, which also included the IRPT. After the war, Akbar Turajonzoda became a member of the government and held the post of deputy prime minister. He later withdrew from political life altogether.
- 21 This accusation is unfounded, since there was no Shia mourning ceremony in the Friday Muhammadiya mosque. Imam Hussein's name and his family were simply mentioned in a sermon marking the start of the Muslim holy month of Mukharram, which corresponded with early December 2011. Hussein is the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad and the son of the righteous caliph Ali. The commemoration of Ali's death during the month had been taking place for twelve years, and no one accused the Sunni imams of spreading Shia Islam during that time. According to Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda, "the only Muslims who do not recognize Imam Hussein are the Salafis outlawed in Tajikistan several years ago." See "'The Statement by the Tajik Council of Islamic Clerics Is a Provocation,' Turajonzoda," Islam in CIS Medina Media Holding, December 7, 2011, www.islamsng.com/tjk/news/3532.
- 22 A. Dubnov, "He Took the Rap for the Pilots: The Tajik Opposition Leader Turajonzoda Is Being Persecuted for His Pro-Russian Views," *Moscow News*, December 16, 2011.
- 23 IRPT Chairman Muhiddin Kabiri essentially confirmed this when speaking at the Carnegie Moscow Center on May 3, 2012. Despite impressive electoral support, in recent years the party has consistently received two seats in the parliament, one of which is occupied by Muhiddin Kabiri. The party has about 40,000 card-carrying members—half of which are women.
- 24 Statistical Agency Under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, "Nominal and Real GDP 1991–2012," www.stat.tj/ru/analytical-tables/real-sector.
- 25 The Eurasian Development Bank forecasts slower economic growth for Tajikistan at the rate of 6 percent in the medium term.
- 26 The leading Tajik economist, Hojimuhammad Umarov, points to this inconsistency. Hojimuhammad Umarov, "Finance Ministry Data on Economic Growth Are Absurd," ASIA-Plus, January 28, 2011, <http://www2.asiaplus.tj/ru/newspaper/interview/kh-umarov-dannye-minfina-o-tempakh-ekonomicheskogo-rosta-absurdy>.
- 27 "Rahmon's Inheritance," CentralAsia.ru, November 29, 2013, www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1385669580.

- 28 Seventy-two percent of the country's population lived below the poverty line in 2003, while 38.3 percent did in 2012.
- 29 See "Rahmon's Inheritance."
- 30 According to the 2013 UN Development Program Human Development Report, Tajikistan ranks 125 of 186 countries in the study. For instance, Cuba is ranked 59 and Russia is 55 on this list. See United Nations Development Program, "Tajikistan: Human Development Indicators," <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/TJK>.
- 31 A. Niyazi, "Tajikistan. Conflict Between Regions in the Context of Socioecological Crisis," in *Ecology, Society and Tradition: Social and Political Crises in the CIS in the Context of Environmental Destruction (Tajikistan and the Russian North)*, eds. M. Olcott and A. Malashenko, Carnegie Moscow Center, Scientific Reports 15, 1997, 8–41; A. Niyazi, "Tajikistan: The Problems of Using Water and Energy Resources," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 4, no. 28 (2003): 123–31.
- 32 See Emomali Rahmon's speech at the Tajikistan cabinet meeting, www.president.tj/ru/node/5914.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 "Afghanistan: Heroin Production Is Up 40 Times Since 2011," No to Drugs website, October 2, 2013, www.narkotiki.ru/5_43746.htm.
- 35 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Opiate Flows Through Northern Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Threat Assessment*, May 2012, 7, 8, 61.
- 36 Drug Enforcement Agency Under the President of Tajikistan, "Confiscating Illegal Drugs in the Republic of Tajikistan," http://rus.akn.tj/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=965:2013-08-13-04-10-06&catid=48:statistika&Itemid=48.
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- 38 "Seeking an Effective State Border That Undermines Drug Trafficking From Afghanistan," address by the chairman of the State Anti-Narcotics Committee Viktor Ivanov at the State Anti-Narcotics Committee visiting conference on "Increasing the Administrative and Legal Regimes at the Russia-Kazakhstan Border to Counteract Drug Smuggling From Afghanistan," Troitsk, Chelyabinsk Region, Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation website, September 13, 2013, www.fskn.gov.ru/includes/periodics/speeches_last/2013/0913/111326034/detail.shtml.
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