

**TERRORISM AND ORGANIZED CRIME:
THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY OF CENTRAL ASIA**

S. A. Avcu, Director, Central Asian Research Center (ORASAM),
Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, Yildirim Beyazit University
<avcuseyit@hotmail.com>

**ТЕРРОРИЗМ И ОРГАНИЗОВАННАЯ ПРЕСТУПНОСТЬ
КАК УГРОЗА НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ГОСУДАРСТВ ЦА**

С. А. Авжу, руководитель Центральноазиатского исследовательского центра при
Кыргызско-Турецком университете «Манас», Университет Ыылдырым Бейазыт
<avcuseyit@hotmail.com>

Abstract

Especially after the end of the Cold War organized criminal activities have become a major revenue source for terrorist groups worldwide. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian countries faced the problem of organized crime and terrorist activities because of the weakness of the states. As a result in 2000, the five Central Asian countries endorsed a document that would considerably strengthen coordinated efforts to combat the scourge of drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism. The Central Asian countries have been criticized for adopting a selective approach to implementing Anti Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism legislations. However, in recent years important improvements have been made. Since 2008 all five Central Asian countries have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the International Convention for Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Financial Action task Force removed Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan from the black list. This paper analyzes the relationship between organized crime and terrorism in Central Asia. It also explores the projected spillover effect on Central Asia after the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014.

Key words: Organized Crime, Terrorism, Narco-Terrorism, Money Laundering, Central Asia. Counternarcotic.

Аннотация

После окончания холодной войны организованная преступная деятельность стала основным источником доходов для террористических групп во всем мире. После распада Советского Союза страны Центральной Азии столкнулись с проблемой организованной преступности и террористической деятельности из-за слабости государств. В результате в 2000 году пять стран Центральной Азии утвердили документ, который значительно усилит скоординированные усилия по борьбе с наркобизнесом, организованной преступностью и терроризмом. Страны Центральной Азии подверглись критике за избирательный подход к претворению законодательства по борьбе с отмыванием денег и терроризмом. Однако в последние годы были сделаны важные улучшения. С 2008 года все пять стран Центральной Азии ратифицировали Конвенцию Организации Объединенных Наций против транснациональной организованной преступности, Международную конвенцию о борьбе с финансированием терроризма и Конвенцию Организации Объединенных Наций против коррупции. Целевая группа по финансовым мероприятиям удалила Узбекистан и Туркменистан из черного списка. В статье анализируется взаимосвязь между организованной преступностью и терроризмом в Центральной Азии. Исследуется также прогнозируемое его распространение на Среднюю Азию после выхода НАТО из Афганистана в 2014 году.

Ключевые слова: организованная преступность, терроризм, наркотерроризм, отмывание денег, Центральная Азия.

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Introduction

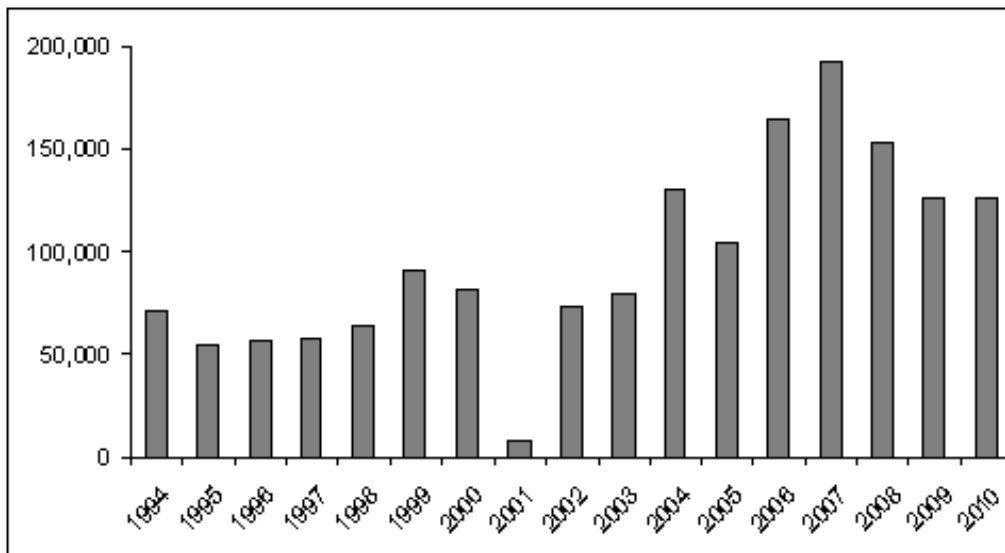
Especially after the end of the Cold War organized criminal activities have become a major revenue source for terrorist groups worldwide. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian countries faced the problem of organized crime and terrorist activities because of the weakness of the states. As a result in 2000, the five Central Asian countries endorsed a document that would considerably strengthen coordinated efforts to combat the scourge of drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism. The Central Asian countries have been criticized for adopting a selective approach to implementing Anti Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism legislations. However, in recent years important improvements have been made. Since 2008 all five Central Asian countries have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the International Convention for Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Financial Action task Force removed Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan from the black list. This paper analyzes the relationship between organized crime and terrorism in Central Asia and argues that the organized crime is much more dangerous for Central Asia than terrorism. It also explores the projected spillover effect on Central Asia after the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014 and claims that there is little evidence suggesting that the foreign fighters will come to Central Asia from Afghanistan. I organized this paper as follows: First section analyzes the New Silk Road of drug trafficking which passes through Central Asia. The second section gives a picture of the organized crime in Central Asia. The third section explores the threat of terrorism in Central Asia. It concludes with the Central Asian states in both combating with organized crime including Money Laundering and Terrorism.

1. New Silk Road of Drug Trafficking

Central Asia, which is generally agreed to consist of five central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, is located between Afghanistan – largest producer of heroin – and the markets of Russia and Western Europe. 65% of opiates pass through the borders of this region, making it one of the world's most important drug smuggling routes.

Afghanistan has dominated the worldwide opium market for more than a decade. In 2009, the total quantity of opium produced in that country was 6,900 metric tons, accounting for 90 per cent of global supply. Afghan heroin feeds a global market worth some \$55 billion annually, and most of the profits of the trade are made outside Afghanistan. Afghanistan and its neighbors are affected by trafficking as the drugs are moved to their key destination markets of Western Europe and the Russian Federation. 1/3 heroin produced in Afghanistan is transported to Europe via the Balkan route. 1/4 is trafficked north to Central Asia and the Russian Federation along the northern route. Afghan heroin is also increasingly meeting a rapidly growing share of Asian demand. Approximately 15-20 metric tons are estimated to be trafficked to China. 35 metric tons are trafficked to other South and South-East Asian countries. 35 metric tons are to Africa. The remainder supplies markets in other parts of Asia, North America and Oceania.

Another important drug is Cannabis, which is naturally grown as a weed in Central Asia. Therefore Cannabis production in Central Asia is itself important as well as being the trade route for Afghani Hashish. For example, hashish from Chuy Valley of Kyrgyzstan is well known in Moscow and hashish has been used as currency in Kyrgyzstan. The hashish trade has grown in recent years, and total production today may rival that of Europe's traditional supplier, Morocco. Cannabis production has been reported in 20 of Afghanistan's 33 provinces.



Afghanistan opium poppy cultivation, 1994–2010 (hectares)

2. Organized Crime in Central Asia

Related to drug trafficking, the organized crime has flourished in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Organized crime is active in following areas in Central Asia: in trafficking drugs, human trafficking, firearms and explosives trafficking, smuggling precious materials, such as gold and aluminum, and money laundering. There are several factors are contributing to the rise of organized crime in Central Asia. According to Berdikееva, “The findings of this research demonstrate that a combination of negative factors, the key ones being authoritarianism, corruption, poverty, weak law enforcement capabilities, lack of the rule of law, and divisions along clan and regional lines, have created fertile grounds for the growth and entrenchment of organized crime in Central Asia.”(Berdikееva, 2009: 75).

3. Terrorism in Central Asia

Although there has been no major terrorist event in Central Asia in recent years, there is high level of concern and rhetoric on terrorism in Central Asia because of systemic and regional influence. The global environment created after the September 11 continues and there is a fear that the terrorism might spill to the Central Asia from Afghanistan. There is a major concern about what will happen after withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan in 2014. There are two theories on this issue; first one is that the foreign fighters will stay in Afghanistan and continue to fight with weakened Afghan government. The Second theory is that all foreign fighters will spread to Central Asia to fight with secular governments. There is no real evidence about this possibility. It might happen, but so far Islamic revivalism in central Asia has been peaceful with the exception of Islamic of movement of Uzbekistan.

Moreover, as a regional influence, Central Asian countries tend to adopt the classification of Russia and adopt the similar policies in terms of terrorism. This leads to the problem with countries classification. Thus there are tendencies to include peaceful religious movements in terrorism classification as well and resulting banning of these organizations, such as Tabligi Jamaat. Hizbuttahrir, although not resorted to terrorism, has been classified as a terrorist organization. There are some negative consequences of this classification. First is the violation of Human rights; there have been heavy executions of suspected terrorists without given any proper judicial process.

There are several factors are contributing to the problem of organized crime terrorism. There are border issues; first of all the border of countries are not secure. Second, there are unresolved border issues with countries. Third factor is the weak state capabilities, especially in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Because of lack of resources, these countries have hard time in protecting their

borders and are in danger of being a weak state. The corruption is still high; there are link between organized crime and government officials. Money laundering, because of poor banking system, is not a major player. However, organized crime is involved in money laundering by investing in real estate and businesses.

The governments of Central Asia have been trying to fight with organized crime and terrorism. Since 2008, all five Central Asian states have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.¹ For example, Tajikistan is a member of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Through the EAG, Tajikistan received assistance and other resources towards improving legislative and regulatory frameworks and operational capabilities.

Conclusion

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and increasing globalization changed the landscape of terrorism and organized crime especially in Central Asia. After the invasion of the Afghanistan, the opium production increased. Iran and Turkey tightened their borders to drug trafficking; this made the northern route which dubbed as New Silk Road of Drug Trafficking and goes through the Central Asian countries important supply route for Russia and Europe. In this article, I assessed the scope of terrorism and organized crime in Central Asia. I conclude that organized crime which deals with drug trafficking, trafficking, human trafficking, firearms and explosives trafficking, smuggling precious materials, such as gold and aluminum, and money laundering is still a major threat because of corruption, poverty, weak law enforcement capabilities, and lack of the rule of law. On the other hand, the threat of terrorism has been exaggerated by the governments and lead to violation of human rights and executions of suspected terrorists without given any proper judicial process. Finally, there is few evidence of the spread of terrorism to Central Asian post withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan in 2014.

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¹ An overview on crime and terrorism in Central Asia http://business-risk-research.com/wd_downloads/doc52_CentralAsia_Part2.pdf