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** IIPER is written and edited by Dr. Gordon M. Hahn unless otherwise noted. Research assistance is provided by Leonid Naboishchikov, Daniel Painter, Seth Gray, and Daria Ushakova.*

TRENDS IN JIHADISM IN RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA, 2010

The year 2010 has been a year in which there has been general strengthening of jihadism in Russia and Central Asia. In Russia, the third full year of jihadism led by the Caucasus Emirate showed a more modest increase in terrorist activity than that between 2009 and 2008 and further consolidation of the CE's integration into the global jihadi revolutionary movement (GJRM). Another trend that was consolidated in 2010 was the

relative marginalization of the Chechen mujahedin within the overall Caucasus jihad on the background of an expanding presence of jihadism in Russia.

TOTALS FOR 2010

Table 1. Estimated Number of Jihadi Terrorist Incidents and Casualties in Russia during 2010.

Estimate is Based on Average of the Jihadi-Reported Minimum Figures and of the Average Between the Minimum and Maximum Figures from the Non-Jihadi Reports, from Data Compiled by the Author (the percentage change from 2009 is in parentheses).

Region	No. of Terrorist Incidents	Service-men and Civilian Officials Killed	Service-men and Civilian Officials Wounded	Civilians Killed	Civilians Wounded	Jihadists Killed	Jihadists Wounded	Jihadists Captured and Surrendered
Chechnya	80 -50%	59 -47%	123 -33%	1 -80%	25 +150%	54 -45%	3 +50%	46 +7%
Ingushetia	99 -43%	37 -80%	114 -64%	12 +9%	20 -80%	54 -7%	0 -100%	14 +8%
Dagestan	267 +85%	148 +189%	239 +84%	29 +164%	66 +560%	119 +151%	2 +100%	16 +167%
Kabardino-Balkaria	113 +391%	38 +443%	48 +269%	9 +800%	37 +1,133%	18 -18%	1 +∞	6 -33%
Karachaevo-Cherkessia	4 +100%	1 0%	2 -100%	0 0%	0 0%	3 0%	0 0%	0 -100%
Adygeya	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
North Ossetia	3 +200%	2 +100%	3 +∞	17 +1,600%	154 +∞	1 -50%	0 0%	3 -100%
Other North Caucasus (Stavropol)	5 +25%	2 +∞	1 +∞	4 +100%	71 +∞	2 +∞	0 0%	1 -50%
North Caucasus Total	571 +12%	287 -24%	530 -18%	72 +132%	373 +198%	251 -4%	6 +50%	86 +16%
Tatarstan	1 +∞	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 +∞	0 0%	0 0%
Bashkiria	4 +∞	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 +∞	5 +∞	1 +∞	11 +∞
Other Regions	7 +133%	1 +∞	3 +200%	40 90%	121 64%	2 +100%	0 0%	4 +∞
Total	583 +14%	288 -23%	533 -17%	112 +120%	496 +149%	261 -1%	7 +75%	101 +36%

* The data that forms the base for this table's figures were researched by Gordon M. Hahn as well as Leonid Naboishchikov, Daniel Painter, Seth Gray, and Darya Ushakova.

Methodology: The data in this table are estimates. The estimates for the figures in the table's various categories represent the average of the minimum jihadi-reported figures and of the average of the minimum and maximum figures from non-jihadi sources. The logic behind this methodology is based on the tendency of Russian and local government and non-jihadi Russian and local media (often tied to or dependent on government reporting) to underreport the number of terrorist incidents and their resulting casualties as well as the tendency of jihadist sources to exaggerate the jihadists' capacity by sometimes claiming responsibility for attacks carried out by others for criminal, ethnic, or clan purposes and exaggerating the numbers of casualties caused by their own attacks. Incidents include not only attacks carried out, but also successful and attempted arrests. They do not include prevented attacks (deactivated bombs, etc.).

SOURCES: The Caucasus Emirate's websites, especially *Kavkaz tsentr* (www.kavkazcenter.com), Hunafa.com (<http://hunafa.com>), Jamaat Shariat (www.jamaatshariat.com/ru), Islamdin.com (www.islamdin.com), as well as such non-jihadi sources as Russian media outlets like *Kavkazskii uzel* (www.kavkaz-uzel.ru).

In Central Asia, jihadism was revived in Tajikistan in comparison with recent years and included suicide bombings and a prolonged engagement between mujahedin and Tajik security forces in several regions. Ideologically and operationally, jihadism in the North Caucasus continues to exceed that in Central Asia. A review of these and other trends in more detail follows.

THE CAUCASUS EMIRATE AND JIHADI VIOLENCE IN RUSSIA

IIPER, No. 33 will provide detailed statistical data on the estimated number of attacks carried out and casualties inflicted in 2010 and a comparison with those statistics in previous years, but the general trends here are already clear. The North Caucasus-based Caucasus Emirate (CE) is likely to have succeeded in exceeding the number of operations it carried out last year, 511, according to my estimate. This is true even if one assumes that attacks in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and even Astrakhan were not carried out by mujahedin loyal to the CE.

Importantly, the CE continued to expand the geographical scope of its ideological influence and even operational activity at the expense of the intensity of the mujahedin's activity in Chechnya. This is true even if we exclude from its expanded operational activity the attacks carried out by mujahedin in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Astrakhan. The CE's, or at least jihadism's, more expansive ideological and operational reach is indicated by:

- the shift of the jihad's center of gravity to Dagestan;
- the unprecedented number of attacks in Kabardino-Balkaria;
- the first attacks in many years in Karachai-Cherkessia;
- apparently CE-backed attacks in Stavropol for the first time;
- The Ingush GV's two suicide bombings in North Ossetia;
- 4 attacks and arrests in Astrakhan;
- the March 29th Moscow subway suicide bombings.
- the first jihadi attack and first counter-terrorist operation ever in Bashkortostan;
- the first jihadi attack and first counter-terrorist operation ever in Tatarstan;

The center of gravity of the CE's jihad is now Dagestan, where some 40 percent of the CE's attacks this year were carried out by the CE's most powerful structure, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV). More importantly, the CE displayed a capacity to carry out operations over a larger geographical area than in recent years, moving beyond its usual theatre of operations in Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Chechnya. It was able to increase the number of attacks in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR) by some six-fold to an unprecedented level, despite the killing of the amir of the CE's United Vilaiyat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai (OVKBB) and CE qadi 'Seifullah' Anzor Astemirov in late March. The OVKBB is the CE's structure for carrying out jihad in the North Caucasus's Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR) and the republic of Karachai-Cherkessia (KChR). Seifullah spearheaded the jihadization of the the KBR's young Muslims during the early 2000s, but his labors bore real fruit only after his death.

Although the CE's Ingush mujahedin under the G'alg'aiche Vilaiyat (GV or Ingush Province) were less productive following the killing of Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii in early March, the GV mujahedin claimed responsibility for both of this year's suicide bombings in North Ossetia: in Prigorodnyi raion in August and in Vladikavkaz in September. The Ingush mujahedin, along with the OVKBB, also led the CE's efforts to expand operations into Stavropol. The August car bomb explosion in Stavropol appears to have been perpetrated by the Ingush mujahedin with the automobile traced back to Ingushetia. An August attack on police in Stavropol saw the perpetrators retreat back to Karachai-Cherkessia (KChR). The mujahedin appear to be trying to extend their reach and establish a bridgehead in the KChR as a springboard to operations in what they call the 'Nogai Steppe Vilaiyat' which includes Stavropol and Krasnodar Krai. This could be part of their strategy for preparing attacks in the latter's Black Sea resort city of Sochi, the venue for the 2014 Olympic Games.

The CE was able to bring terrorism to the heart of the Russian capitol, improving on last year's explosion of the Moscow-St. Petersburg Nevskii Express train bombing. The CE's DV, perhaps in cooperation with the CE's Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs Brigade (RSMB), carried out the March Moscow subway twin suicide bombings that killed 40 and wounded 100. The two shakhidkas were wives of two DV amirs; one of which was the DV's top amir. The RSMB also took responsibility for the August 11th small bombing that occurred in front of GazProm's headquarters in southwest Moscow, claiming it had been ordered by CE amir Abu Usman Dokku Usmanov and was a

demonstration of their capacity. The brigade promised more attacks deep inside Russia.¹

Early this year, CE amir Doku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov set the goal of ‘liberating’ Krasnodar, Astrakhan, and the Volga region. There were several attacks by, and arrests of mujahedin in Astrakhan this year, though it remains unclear whether they were CE operatives. The same applies to the first ever attacks by self-described mujahedin in Tatarstan in November and in Bashkortostan in March (and in August).

There was a slight decline or at least stagnation in suicide bombing operations this year as compared with 2009. In terms of number of attacks there were 16 in 2009 but only 14 in 2010. However, this is counterbalanced by the CE’s ability to carry out such an attack in central Moscow and by the perhaps larger number of casualties resulting from suicide bombings this year as compared to last.

THE CE SPLIT

In August the CE’s Nokchicho Vilaiyat (NV) split after amir Umarov first resigned as amir and then retracted his resignation. This prompted four high ranking amirs to renounce their loyalty oaths to Umarov. The four leading defectors were: Aslanbek Vadalov, ‘Mansur’ Hussein Gakaev, Tarkhan Gaziev, and the Jordanian and likely Al Qa`ida emissary Abu Anas Muhannad. Subsequently, some of the Nokchicho’s amirs and mujahedin appear to have joined the defectors. There are no reports of CE amirs of mujahedin from the DV, OVKBK or GV renouncing their bayats to Umarov. Thus, the split actually is not so much a split within the CE as one within the NV.

The newly independent NV (INV) mujahedin subsequently formed their own organizational and leadership structure. In early October they announced that they had convened their own Shura and that ‘Mansur’ Hussein Gakaev had been chosen as the INV’s amir, Tarkhan Gaziev was chosen as Gakaev’s naib, Aslanbek Vadalov is amir of the Eastern Front. According to Gakaev, he, Gaziev, Vadalov, Abu Anas Muhannad, and the amirs of all the INV’s fronts and sectors as well as some former mujahedin are members of the independent Nokchicho Vilaiyat’s Big (Bolshoi) Madzhlis Shura. Gakaev also reported that a Small (Malyi Madzhlis) Shura was created as well and consists of ten ex officio members.² It is likely that the Malyi Madzhlis will be the INV’s top decision-making body.

Table 1. INDEPENDENT NOKCHICHO VILAIYAT (INV) LEADERSHIP

MALYI MADZHLIS SHURA:

INV Amir – Hussein Vakhaevich Gakaev (Gakin Vakhin Kh’usain)

INV Naib – Tarkhan Gaziev

Amir of the INV’s Eastern Front – Aslanbek Vadalov

Amir of the INV’s Western Front – Abu Anas Muhannad

¹ “Riyadus Salikhiin: Vzryv pered zdaniem Gasproma byl demonstratsii nashikh vozmozhnostei,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 12 August 2010, 01:09, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/08/12/74504.shtml.

² “Obrashchenie rukovodstva Vilaiyata Nokhchicho,” *Daymohk.net*, 7 October 2010, 3:22, www.daymohk.net/cgi-bin/orsi3/index.cgi?id=39953;section=1#39953 and “Obrashchenie rukovodstva Chechenskogo soprotivleniya v ChRI,” *ChechenPress*, www.chechenpress.org/events/2010/10/07/2f.shtml.

Amir of a Sector of the INV's Eastern Front – Markhan
Amir of a Sector of the INV's Eastern Front – Muslim (Gakaev)
Amir of a Sector of the INV's Eastern Front – Zaurbek
Amir of a Sector of the INV's Western Front – Zumso
Amir of a Sector of the INV's Western Front – Abu-Muslim
Amir of a Sector of the INV's Western Front – Abdullah

SOURCE: "Obrashchenie rukovodstva Vilaiyata Nokhchicho," *Daymohk.net*, 7 October 2010, 3:22, www.daymohk.net/cgi-bin/orsi3/index.cgi?id=39953;section=1#39953.

The sector amir Muslim mentioned by Gakaev as the amir of a sector of the INV Eastern Front, could be Gakaev's brother Muslim, who was amir of the Southeastern Front under the CE's NV. Abu-Muslim may be the amir of the same name of the Achkoi-Martan Sector of the Southwestern Front under the CE's NV. This Front's naib before the split was Hamzat, who appeared in a video next to Umarov when he condemned the splitters (see IIPER, No. 25). Thus, it appears the CE split not only runs through the NV but through fronts and even through the Achkoi-Martan Sector.

UMAROV RESPONDS

Umarov responded to the INV amirs' move with a decree and a statement. In his decree No. 23 he abolished the CE's Southwestern and Eastern Fronts, the amirs of which before the succession struggle and split had been Gaziev and Vadalov, respectively. Gakaev had been Vadalov's naib on the Eastern Front. The decree preserved the sectors on both these fronts as "combat sectors of Vilaiyat of Nokchicho" and obliged all the amirs of these sectors to reaffirm their bayats. Umarov's decree also obliged the abolished front's amirs – Gaziev, Vadalov, and presumably Gakaev as the leader of the breakaway Nokchicho mujahedin – to return all finances to the CE and obliged Muhannad to appear before the CE's Shariah Court within a month.³ Days later, Umarov demonstrated the seriousness of his last order by appointing the acting qadi of the Dagestan Vilaiyat, Ali Abu Mukhammad ad-Dagistani, as the new qadi for the CE's Shariah Court.⁴ Subsequently, various foreign political patrons and ideological beacons for the CE and the GJRM, including Sheikh Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Sheikh Abu Basyr At-Tartusi, backed Umarov against the INV amirs, in particular Muhannad.

We were able to cull some picture of how many NV amirs remain loyal to Umarov by looking at Umarov's recent videotaped and text statements and a *Kavkaz Tsent* reponse to the INV amirs' statements discussed above.⁵ The video of his

³ "Amir Imarata Kavkaz prinyal reshenie o reorganizatsii struktury VS Vilaiyata Nokchicho," *Kavkaz tsent*, 16 October 2010, 03:02, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/10/16/75863.shtml.

⁴ "Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman naznachil verkhovnogo Kadiya Shariatskogo Suda Imarata Kavkaz," *Kavkaz tsent*, 18 October 2010, 13:09, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/10/18/75903.shtml.

⁵ "Prikaz Amira IK Dokku Abu Usman o razzhalovanii amirov, narushivshchikh baiyat," *Hunafa.com*, 20 September 2010, 2:14, <http://hunafa.com/?p=4161>; "Vilaiyat Nokchicho: V gornykh raionakh Chechni idut boi," *Kavkaz tsent*, 25 September 2010, 00:50, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/09/25/75462.shtml; and "Amiry, otkazavshiesya ot

statement in which he released the NV dissenters, as noted in IIPER No. 25, shows Umarov seated next to CE naib Supyan Abdullaev, CE's NV Southwestern Front naib or possibly now amir Hamzat, and amir Islam heading the Argun Sector of the CE's NV Southeastern Front.⁶ A response to, and summary of the INV amirs' statement posted on the CE's *Kavkaz tsentr* website countered the amirs' claims that all NV amirs were loyal to the INV. It claimed that some or all of the amirs of the Achkoi-Martan and Sunzha Sectors had reaffirmed their loyalty to Umarov.⁷ For the amirs who CE sources have claimed remain loyal to Umarov see the Table 2 below.

Table 2. NV AMIRS REMAINING LOYAL TO CE AMIR UMAROV

CE naib – Supyan Abdullaev
Southwestern Front Naib or Amir – Hamzat
Southwestern Front's Urus Martan Sector amir – Abdul Malik
Amirs (some or all) of the Achkoi-Martan Sector, Southwestern Front
Southeastern Front's Argun Sector amir – Islam
Amirs (some or all) of the Sunzha Sector
Some amirs of the sectors in Vedenno raion, Eastern Front

SOURCES: "Prikaz Amira IK Dokku Abu Usman o razzhalovanii amirov, narushivshchikh baiyat," *Hunafa.com*, 20 September 2010, 2:14, <http://hunafa.com/?p=4161>; "Vilaiyat Nokchcho: V gornyykh raionakh Chechni idut boi," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 25 September 2010, 00:50, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/09/25/75462.shtml; and "Amiry, otkazavshiesya ot baiyata (prisyagi) Amiru IK Dokku Umarovu, vystupili s zayavleniem," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 October 2010, 02:46, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/10/07/75684.shtml.

If the loyalty of these amirs is fact, then this confirms the deep nature of the split, which appears to reach down to the level of fronts within the CE's NV. For example, the Argun Sector, the amir of which is the same Islam who appeared in Umarov's video in which the CE amir released the four dissenting amirs were from their posts, is on the Southeastern Front, the amir of which was Hussein Gakaev's brother Muslim. Abdul Malik is amir of the Urus Martan Sector on the CE NV's Southwestern Front which was headed by Tarkhan Gaziev and is now likely headed by the Umarov loyalist and Gaziev's former naib, Hamzat. Achkoi Martan Sector is also in the Southwestern Front. Vedenno is located on the Eastern Front which under the CE's NV was headed by Vadalov before the power struggle and split. It remains unclear under which front the Sunzha sector is included. In sum, the Umarov video and perhaps the *Kavkaz tsentr* claims show that the

baiyata (prisyagi) Amiru IK Dokku Umarovu, vystupili s zayavleniem," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 October 2010, 02:46, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/10/07/75684.shtml.

⁶ "Prikaz Amira IK Dokku Abu Usman o razzhalovanii amirov, narushivshchikh baiyat," *Hunafa.com*, 20 September 2010, 2:14, <http://hunafa.com/?p=4161>. The video was also posted on *Kavkaz tsentr* but without a separate page. It was still available there as of 24 September 2010

⁷ "Amiry, otkazavshiesya ot baiyata (prisyagi) Amiru IK Dokku Umarovu, vystupili s zayavleniem," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 October 2010, 02:46, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/10/07/75684.shtml.

breakaway INV amirs cannot control all or even nearly all the Chechnya-based amirs, jamaats, sectors, or fronts.

The causes and consequences of the split remain somewhat murky but have become much clearer since summer. The original four defecting amirs appear to have been genuinely distressed with aspects of Umarov's leadership style. They complained in subsequent videos about his failures to convene shuras in making decisions and to secure military, food and medical supplies. The latter complaints seem to suggest that the NV defectors could also have been dismayed by the diversion of resources and leadership posts like the CE qadi to the non-Chechen vilaiyats. The growing number of attacks carried out by the GV until this March and by the DV and OVKBK suggests such a diversion. This is said with the caveat that much of the funding and supply of the CE mujahedin appears to come from their own local sources such as the collection of the zakat from the local population and internal Russian diasporas and contributions from corrupt officials and criminal activity. The Chechens' declining status within the CE is significant compared to their domination of leadership posts under the ChRI and before the recent years' expansion into the rest of the Caucasus. The Dagestanis growing role is likely to foster jealousy among the Chechen ranks, given the latter's ethnic pride and cultural preference for autonomy.

The revival of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria project – to build an independent Chechen state rather than a Caucasus-wide Islamist state – appears not to have been a factor in the split, and there is no evidence that such a project is supported by any of the mujahedin in the North Caucasus. The INV amirs themselves stated directly that a nationalist state-building agenda was not a cause of their separation from Umarov. In this regard, Vadalov said: “Do not think that the cause of our split is specifically Nokchocho, Ichkeria or that we desire something even more. No, of course. Our intentions, and Allah sees this, is the establishment of the Law of Allah, the laws of Shariah, the liberation of our people, the Caucasus, and all Muslims, Allah willing. All our major Amirs, who left us – Maskhadov and Shamil and Abdul-Khalim (Sadulaev) as well as the Akhmadovs, the Baraevs – had these same intentions.”⁸

The consequences of the split have been several. The number of attacks in Chechnya – already low in spring and summer compared to the number being carried out in the DV and OVKBK – has fallen through the floor, with very few in fall and early winter 2010. Ironically, another consequence of the split is a further diminution of the role of the Chechens within the CE in favor of the Kabardin and especially Dagestani mujahedin. Thus, the CE's new qadi Ali Abu Mukhammad ad-Dagistani was the acting DV qadi and a DV amir, as was his predecessor Magomedali Vagabov, aka Seifullah Gubdenskii. Naturally, as in any multiethnic organization, the leader needs to distribute leadership posts and other resources judiciously. Perhaps, amir Umarov has gone too far to ensure the loyalty of his more powerful Dagestan and OVKBK Vilaiyats.

THE CE'S CONSOLIDATED JIHADISM

⁸ “Obrashchenie rukovodstva Vilaiyata Nokhchicho,” *Daymohk.net*, 7 October 2010, 3:22, www.daymohk.net/cgi-bin/orsi3/index.cgi?id=39953;section=1#39953 and “Obrashchenie rukovodstva Chechenskogo soprotivleniya v ChRI,” *ChechenPress*, www.chechenpress.org/events/2010/10/07/2f.shtml.

The jihadization of the Chechen (ChRI) and now Caucasus (CE) mujahedin that has been ongoing for over a decade has been completely consolidated within the CE. This is apparent in both its internal ideology, goals, strategy and tactics and its relationship to the GJRM.

There are no longer many, if any ideological tracts discussing Chechen or Ingush history. Even the Imam Shamil model has largely disappeared from the CE's various affiliated websites. Instead, ideology has become theology. Almost all articles and postings on its sites that are not about specific operations, the exploits of various mujahedin, or the evil nature of Russia, the West and Israel are about or thoroughly informed by the global jihad's theological literature. Common themes include: the need for, and nature of an Islamist state, emirate, and caliphate; the obligation to support and join the jihad; the proper role of women; and the evil nature of infidel ignorance or 'jahiliya' and of Islam's 'enemies.' Common theological and ideological sources are Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, Abu Basyr At-Tartusi, Anwar Al-Awlaki, Ali Al-Hudair, Abdullah bin Abdu-Rakhman bin Jibrin, Sheik Khamud ash-Shuayby, Sheik Addullah Ibn Muhammad Ar-Rashud, Sheik adil ibn Muhammad ibn Ali Shaikhani, Taki al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taimiyya, Sayyid Qutb, and Maulana Abul ala Maududi. The writings, statements, and fatwas of these radical Islamic scholars and ideologists among others were published this year and comprise much of the content on CE websites.

The CE's goals are global in both senses of this word. Domestically, the entire Russian Federation is the political target of its propaganda and military operations. This year amir Umarov pinpointed Krasnodar, Astrakhan and the Volga region as targets of the CE's expanded activities,⁹ and mujahedin activity increased, marginally albeit, in each. Previous official statements and website articles make clear that the CE regards all of Russia and other post-Soviet lands as properly Muslim lands either by dint of a past Muslim presence or state (for example, articles on the Kazan, Siberian, Astrakhan, and Crimean Khanates) or by dint of history's inevitable unfolding of a global abode for Islam. Similarly, statements explicitly declare the goal of an Islamist takeover of all of Russia as a prelude to linking up with Central Asian (IMU) and South Asian (Taliban and AQ) jihadi fronts towards the reconstruction of the caliphate.¹⁰

Where possible, the CE appears to be adopting a policy of parallel state-building embedded within the carrying out of violent jihad. Its websites perform the function of and Islamist state media. The collection of the *zakat* not only funds the jihad but performs a state function of tax collection and budget formation. The role of qadis, which increased this year, performs the function of an Islamist judiciary branch. CE qadis issued tens of fatwas and articles this year on subjects ranging from the need to honor one's bayat to the amir to the appropriateness of executing specific law enforcement and state officials. This year the strategy of enforcing Shariah law by attacking establishments that sell alcohol, employ or permit prostitution, or offer various gaming attractions was deployed more broadly than ever before. This had the effect of

⁹ "Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: 'My osvobodim Krasnodarskii krai, Astrakhan i Povolzhskii zemli...'", *Kavkaz tsentr*, 8 March 2010, 11:38, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/03/08/71087.shtml.

¹⁰ Abu-t-Tanvir Kavkazskii, "Vchera, segodnya, zavtra..." *Hunafa.com*, 24 April 2010, 11:23, <http://hunafa.com/?p=3451>.

implementing the CE's state policy without a still virtual CE state/emirate. This parallel state-building project was most comprehensively executed in the DV, from which there was an explicit statement issued that such a broad policy was being carried out.¹¹

THE CE AND THE GLOBAL JIHADI REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

This year saw the CE increase its ideological and operational integration into the global jihadi revolutionary movement (GJRM). For the first time, the CE emulated Al Qa`ida and other groups in the GJRM by publishing the Al Fahd fatwa justifying the use of WMD terrorism against infidels and the killing of tens of millions of Americans.¹²

The CE continued to strengthen its relationship with several of the GJRM's leading ideologists and propagandists, including GJRM's most prominent ideologist Abu Muhammad Maqdisi. In September 2009 Maqdisi became the GJRM's chief political patrons of the CE, especially its OVKBK, the OVKBK's amir, and CE qadi 'Seifullah' Anzor Astemirov killed by Russian forces in March 2010. Maqdisi's site, '*Minbar al-Jihad wa'l-Tawhid*' maintained close ties to the OVKBK's website, *Islamdin.com*, founded by Astemirov even after his death. It provides Russian translations of Maqdisi's and other jihadi theologians' books, articles, and fatwas. It is unclear how Maqdisi's re-arrest this past summer on charges by the Jordanian government of recruiting for the Taliban will affect this relationship. This year the CE's websites also began posting regularly the publications of many other jihadi ideologists, including the ethnic Yemeni American AQ recruiter and AQ in Yemen leader Anwar Al Awlaki.

Not surprisingly then, 2010 became the year when apparently for the first time the CE became involved directly in at least one international terrorist plot. On November 23rd, eleven suspects were arrested in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia on suspicion of planning terrorist attacks in Belgium and recruiting "jihadist candidates" and financing the Caucasus Emirate. Europe had been on high alert for weeks over increased chatter and intelligence indicating possible holiday season terrorist attacks; something which received more confirmation after the Iraqis interrogated a recently detained Al Qa`ida (AQ) operative. Two of those detained for involvement in the Belgium plot and cell were reported to be Russian nationals, and news agencies reported they were ethnic Chechens and/or from Chechnya.¹³ The Chechens

¹¹ "Perekhvat initsiativy," *Jamaat Shariat*, 2 June 2010, 03:29, www.jamaatshariat.com/ru/-mainmenu-29/14--/834-2010-06-02-03-05-02.html.

¹² "Issledovanie o pravovom statuse ispol'zovaniya oruzhiya massovogo porazheniya protiv nevernykh," *Islamdin.com*, 9 January 2010, 12:37, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=614:2010-01-09-13-06-19&catid=4:2009-02-04-14-07-09&Itemid=28; "Issledovanie o pravovom statuse ispol'zovaniya oruzhiya massovogo porazheniya protiv nevernykh," *Islamdin.com*, 3 April 2010, 06:53, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=706:2010-04-03-01-42-51&catid=4:2009-02-04-14-07-09&Itemid=28; and "Oni Mogut Byt' Osazhdeny i Ubity Sredstvami Massovogo Vozdeistviya - Issledovanie o pravovom statuse ispol'zovaniya oruzhiya massovogo porazheniya protiv nevernykh (Sheikh Nasir ibn Khamd Al-Fakhd, Rabi ul' Avval' 1424, Mai 2003)," *Jamaat Shariat*, 12 May 2010, 15:39, <http://jamaatshariat.com/ru/content/view/755/29/>.

¹³ Stephen Castle, "Police Arrest Suspects in Plot Against Belgium," *New York Times*, 23 November 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/world/europe/24belgium.html; Philippe Siuberski, "Police arrest 11 over Belgium 'terror plot'," *Agence France Presse*, 23 November

and all the suspects held dual citizenship and belonged to a group called 'Shariah4Belgium.'¹⁴ Earlier this year Belgian Islamist and Shariah4Belgium leader Abou Imran declared that Islam would the White House will "be conquered," and "Europe will be dominated by Islam."¹⁵

The arrested 'Shariah4Belgium' suspects were said to have been using the jihadi website *Ansar al-Mujahidin* (<http://www.ansar1.info/>) in carrying out their activity.¹⁶ There are ties between that site and the CE. On July 20th, the CE's OVKBK strengthened ties with the global jihadi revolutionary movement by co-sponsoring a joint internet project – the very same *Ansar al-Mujahidin* website.¹⁷ The website's announcement, published on the OVKBK's website *Islamdin.com*, stated that *Al-Ansar1.info* will "highlight the news summaries of the Jihad on all fronts, both in the Caucasus and in all other lands of the fight" and publish old and new works of scholars of the "ahli sunny ual' jama'a."¹⁸ It also quotes the American-born and anti-American Yemeni-based jihadist jihadi ideologist and Al-Qa`ida recruiter, Anwar al-Awlaki, who continues to maintain a high profile on CE sites. Awlaki is cited on the value of being a "jihadist of the internet" and the need to create on the worldwide web: fee-free and uncensored discussion fora, lists of e-mail addresses so Muslims interested in jihad can contact each other and exchange information, online publication and distribution of literature and news of the jihad, and sites focusing on separate aspects of the jihad.¹⁹ *Islamdin* posted the first part of Awlaki's 'Al-Janna' one day after this announcement.²⁰

2010,

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101123/wl_afp/belgiumnetherlandsgermanysecurityattacks/print; and Philippe Siuberski, "Belgium arrests 26 in raids against terror," *NineMSN*, 24 November 2010, 06:13, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/8168623/10-held-over-terror-plot-in-belgium>.

¹⁴ Valentina Pop, "Chechen Terror Suspects Busted in Belgian Raid," *EU Observer*, 24 November 2010, 09:29, <http://euobserver.com/9/31341> and Olesya Khantsevich, "Chechenskoe podpol'e raskryto v Belgii," *Nezavismaya gazeta*, 25 November 2010, www.ng.ru/world/2010-11-25/1_belgium.html.

¹⁵ "Belgian Islamist Abou Imran, of Shariah4Belgium: We Will Conquer the White House, Europe Will Be Dominated by Islam," *MEMRI*, #2695, 9 November 2010, 09:42, www.memritv.org/clip/en/2695.htm.

¹⁶ Stephen Castle, "Police Arrest Suspects in Plot Against Belgium," *New York Times*, 23 November 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/world/europe/24belgium.html; Philippe Siuberski, "Police arrest 11 over Belgium 'terror plot'," *Agence France Presse*, 23 November 2010,

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101123/wl_afp/belgiumnetherlandsgermanysecurityattacks/print; and Philippe Siuberski, "Belgium arrests 26 in raids against terror," *NineMSN*, 24 November 2010, 06:13, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/8168623/10-held-over-terror-plot-in-belgium>.

¹⁷ "V global'noi seti interneta otkrylsya novyi forum v podderzhku Dzhikhada," *Islamdin*, 20 July 2010, 16:18, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=849:2010-07-20-16-49-47&catid=32:2009-03-05-23-19-06&Itemid=29.

¹⁸ "V global'noi seti interneta otkrylsya novyi forum v podderzhku Dzhikhada," *Islamdin*, 20 July 2010, 16:18, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=849:2010-07-20-16-49-47&catid=32:2009-03-05-23-19-06&Itemid=29.

¹⁹ Awlaki urges Muslims to following the events of the jihad is recommended because this: "enlivens our connection to the jihad"; "strengthens our belongingness to the Umma"; "approves our joining the jihad"; "inflames our desire to receive martyrdom"; allows Muslims "to see how Allah defends his slaves and leads them to victory"; provides "practical examples on how our

Little more than a month later, the webmaster of *Ansar al-Mujahidin*, an ethnic Moroccan named Faisal Errai, was arrested in Spain. According to the Spanish Civil Guard, Errai registered and paid for the hosting of the site for purposes of spreading jihadi propaganda and indoctrinating and recruiting sympathisers to radical Islamism and jihad. The website was already being used to raise money for terrorists in Chechnya as well as in Afghanistan.²¹

Belgian police said the cell was based in Antwerp, where some of the arrests were made and had connections with a local Islamic Center. The Antwerp group had been under investigation since at least 2009. The day after the first 11 arrests were made, another fifteen suspects were detained across Brussels in a separate case.²² One of the Russian nationals was a 31-year-old “Chechen” arrested in Aachen, Germany and “was the target of a European arrest warrant issued by Belgium”...“suspected of having recruited young people to fight in Chechnya.”²³ The two arrested Chechens were involved apparently both in the recruiting and financing for the CE and the planning of attacks in Belgium. The prosecutor’s statement said all detainees were involved in both recruiting and financing for the CE and in planning attacks in Belgium.²⁴

Later reports indicated the first group taken into custody for planning the Belgian attack and recruiting for and funding the CE was made up primarily if not exclusively of Moroccans and Chechens, including six Belgian citizens of Moroccan descent caught in

brothers are applying theory in contemporary conditions”; and “strengthens our attention to the Koran,” to which a strong connection “reaches its peak when we ourselves participate in this conflict (jihad), entering the ranks of the mujahedin.” “V global’noi seti interneta otkrylsya novyi forum v podderzhku Dzhikhada,” *Islamdin*, 20 July 2010, 16:18, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=849:2010-07-20-16-49-47&catid=32:2009-03-05-23-19-06&Itemid=29.

²⁰ “Imam Anuar al’ Aulyaki: Al- Dzhanna- Chast 1,” *Islamdin*, 25 July 2010, 06:09, www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=854:-q-q-1&catid=4:2009-02-04-14-07-09&Itemid=28.

²¹ “Another Online Jihadi Arrested in Spain,” *Jawa Report*, 31 August 2010, <http://mypetjawa.mu.nu/archives/203757.php>.

²² Stephen Castle, “Police Arrest Suspects in Plot Against Belgium,” *New York Times*, 23 November 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/world/europe/24belgium.html; Philippe Siuberski, “Police arrest 11 over Belgium ‘terror plot’,” *Agence France Presse*, 23 November 2010,

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101123/wl_afp/belgiumnetherlandsgermanysecurityattacks/print; and Philippe Siuberski, “Belgium arrests 26 in raids against terror,” *NineMSN*, 24 November 2010, 06:13, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/8168623/10-held-over-terror-plot-in-belgium>.

²³ Stephen Castle, “Police Arrest Suspects in Plot Against Belgium,” *New York Times*, 23 November 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/world/europe/24belgium.html; Philippe Siuberski, “Police arrest 11 over Belgium ‘terror plot’,” *Agence France Presse*, 23 November 2010,

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101123/wl_afp/belgiumnetherlandsgermanysecurityattacks/print; and Philippe Siuberski, “Belgium arrests 26 in raids against terror,” *NineMSN*, 24 November 2010, 06:13, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/8168623/10-held-over-terror-plot-in-belgium>.

²⁴ Valentina Pop, “Chechen Terror Suspects Busted in Belgian Raid,” *EU Observer*, 24 November 2010, 09:29, <http://euobserver.com/9/31341> and Olesya Khantsevich, “Chechenskoe podpol’e raskryto v Belgii,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 25 November 2010, www.ng.ru/world/2010-11-25/1_belgium.html.

Antwerp, three Belgian citizens of Moroccan origin arrested in the Netherlands, and two individuals, likely the Chechens, apprehended in the German city of Aachen near the Belgian border. The plot was apparently in its early stages, as the terrorism alert level in Belgium was never raised after the arrests and remains at level 2 out of 5.²⁵

In a related incident, a third Chechen was arrested on December 1st at Vienna's Schwechat airport on the basis of one of nine international arrest warrants issued by the Belgian government.²⁶ The Austrians reported on December 4th that the detainee was "a supporter of Doku Umarov" and was detained upon his return from the hajj to Mecca in connection with an international plot to attack "a NATO facility in Belgium."²⁷ Identified in one report as 32-year old Aslambek I., this third detainee reportedly lived in the small Austrian town of Neunkirchen (population 12,000) with this family and was planning to bomb a train carrying NATO troops. Earlier, he reportedly lost both his hands in a grenade attack in Chechnya and had been arrested earlier in Sweden for smuggling weapons, was released, and then left for Mecca.²⁸ It remains unclear whether this CE-connected plot was part of the reported Al Qa`ida plan to carry out a series of Christmas terrorist attacks in the U.S., U.K., and Europe, that also probably included the recent failed attack in Stockholm, Sweden.²⁹

The CE also might have been connected to other Chechens arrested in Europe this past year. In July, French police and security carried out a counter-terrorism operation arresting five Chechens, three men aged 21-36 and two women, in several districts across the city of Le Mans. One of the three males was described as an imam and father of five. Reportedly, French counter-terrorism was tipped off by Russian security after they arrested a Chechen citizen in Moscow in possession of weapons, explosives, plans for making bombs, and a residence permit issued by France's Prefecture de la Sarthe. The three males were arraigned on July 9th and charged on suspicion of "criminal association in relation with a terrorist enterprise."³⁰ In December, Danish authorities brought charges against Chechen Loris Dukaev for involvement in a terrorist plot. In September, Dukaev, who lost a leg at age 12 due to an explosion in his native Chechnya, was arrested in a

²⁵ Khantsevich, "Chechenskoe podpol'e raskryto v Belgii."

²⁶ "Austria arrests Chechen fugitive in Belgium plot," *AP*, 4 December 2010, 8:51:46, www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40505038/ns/world_news-europe/.

²⁷ "Austrian police arrest Chechen over possible jihad attack on Belgian NATO facility," *Jihad Watch*, 4 December 2010, www.jihadwatch.org/2010/12/austrian-police-arrest-chechen-over-possible-jihad-attack-on-belgian-nato-base.html and "Austrian police hold Chechen in Belgian attack probe," *Expatica*, 4 December 2010, www.expatica.com/be/news/belgian-news/austrian-police-hold-chechen-in-belgium-attack-probe_115126.html citing "Austrian police hold Chechen in Belgian attack probe," *Agence France Press*, 4 December 2010.

²⁸ "Suspected Terrorist: A Ghost in Neunkirchen," *Die Presse*, 5 December 2010, 18:19, http://diepresse.com/home/panorama/oesterreich/616045/Mutmasslicher-Terrorist_Ein-Phantom-in-Neunkirchen?direct=611111&_vl_backlink=/home/politik/innenpolitik/index.do&selChannel=100.

²⁹ "Qaeda Plans US, UK Christmas Attacks: Iraq Official," *Reuters*, 16 December 2010, 3:35, http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20101216/wl_nm/us_iraq_qaeda.

³⁰ "Double anti-terrorist operation in Le Mans," *Lemans Maville*, 5 July 2010, www.lemans.maville.com/actu/actudet_-Double-operation-antiterroriste-au-Mans-_dep-1440912_actu.Htm.

Copenhagen hotel after apparently he accidentally detonated an explosive device he was preparing for deployment. He was found with a map of Denmark's second largest city on which the location of the offices of the newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, which published the famous 12 caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad in 2005. The decision on Dukaev's final indictment will be made in February.³¹ It will be recalled that several other plots were uncovered before this holiday season allegedly involving plots to attack the same newspaper and inspired by Awlaki. It remains unclear whether the Chechens charged for terrorism-related activities in France and Denmark were connected with the CE.

THE CE'S GROWING PRESSURE ON TRADITIONAL ISLAM IN THE CAUCASUS

The CE's persistent military-political pressure and ideological propaganda work continues put pressure on, and create stresses within traditional Islam in the North Caucasus and across Russia. In the North Caucasus, at least four Islamic leaders were killed this year, including the chairman and chief mufti of the Muslim Spiritual Administration (DUM) of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR) Anas Pshikhachev (see below) and the head of the department for spiritual enlightenment of the Spritual Administration of the Muslims of Dagestan (DUMD), Magomedvagif Sultanmagomedov. In May, Abdulmumin Abdulmuminov, the imam of a mosque in Kizlyar, Dagestan, defected to the CE's DV mujahedin. He was killed by security forces in October, however, but not before making several perhaps influential propaganda videos calling Muslim youth to jihad (see IIPER, No. 31).

The controversial Russian scholar of Islam, Roman Silantyev, claims that nearly 50 Islamic clergymen have been killed in Russia by the mujahedin, but he does not indicate a time period. Silantyev argues that the situation is now critical: "(Muslim clerics) are killed almost every month, losses in some Muslim boards are irreplaceable, the greater number of people who were able to actively fight against Wahhabism have been killed." "Others are demoralized and stopped opposing or just deserted to the enemy. The situation is critical." This year the Russian government was forced to authorize the provision of body guards for Muslim clerics.³²

Also this year, the chairman and chief mufti of the North Ossetia DUM (DUMNO) Ali-khadzhi Yevteev was forced to resign after he made controversial statements about his past relationship with mujahedin in the 1990s and the place of Islam in Russian life (see IIPER, No. 17).

Islamization is proceeding apace in both the North Caucasus and the Volga-Ural republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan with reports of more young people attending mosque, wearing the hijab, and attracted to Islamist trends.³³ With re-Islamization comes

³¹ "Urozhentsu Chechni Dukaevu v Danii pred'yavleno obvinenie v terrorizme," *Kavkaz uzal*, 21 December 2010, 19:09, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/178729/.

³² "Almost fifty imams and muftis killed in North Caucasus by Wahhabis – Islamologist," *Interfax*, 29 December 2010, 14:44, www.interfax-religion.com/?act=news&div=8067.

³³ This is according to comments regarding the North Caucasus, in particular Kabardino-Balkaria, made by Akhmed Yarlykapov of the Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences at the international conference "The Northern Caucasus: Russia's Tinderbox" at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. on November 30-December 1, 2010. Deputy director of the Center for Eurasian and International Studies at the Kazan Financial University Rais Suleimanov, head of the Caucasus Department at

greater opportunities for mujahedin to radicalize and recruit Muslims. The weakness of the DUMs makes it difficult for moderate traditional Islam to siphon potential recruits away from Islamism and jihad. The attacks in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan this year may be just the first manifestations of a growing trend in those republics. However, overall the prospects of a major jihadi movement in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan remain remote right now.

RUSSIAN COUNTER-JIHADISM POLICIES

Russian 'counter-terrorism' or counter-jihadism policy is now becoming a greater priority and more comprehensive. Although Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev failed to mention the North Caucasus in this year's state of the federation address to a joint session of the Federal Assembly, in last year's address he called it Russia's "most serious domestic political problem." In addition to still overly brutal but sometimes reasonably coercive counter-terrorist operations, the Russian government is resorting increasingly to soft power as well, including deploying traditional Islam against Islamism and increasing investment into the region's socioeconomic development.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov continues to try to co-opt elements of Islam in order to combat the mujahedin by among other things requiring women to wear the head scarf in public institutions like schools and government buildings. He and other regional leaders persistently call upon the DUMs to engage Muslim youth so they refrain from joining the jihad. Although this policy may be having an co-opting effect, there is little evidence as yet that it is.

Since coming to power Medvedev has expanded the approach of providing greater federal budget funds for regional socioeconomic development from Chechnya to the rest of the North Caucasus. Growing federal investment in the North Caucasus has produced some moderate improvement in several socio-economic indicators, including youth unemployment, for several years running now and has done so again this year, according to Russian economist Natalya Zubarevich.³⁴ Again, however, we have no direct evidence that this is having a palliative effect on the scale of jihadism, which according to at least one indicator – the number of attacks – continues on the rise in the North Caucasus, especially since the formation of the CE.

The increase in assistance to the North Caucasus might have had a greater effect. However, corruption and kinship-, clan- and ethnic-based patronage politics and customs of blood revenge and violence are deeply imbedded in the region. As the coalition forces in Afghanistan are finding as well, these can be very intractable, perhaps insurmountable problems in traditionally patrimonial societies. (These factors typify the Central Asian

the Center for Eurasian and International Studies at the Kazan Financial University Yana Amelina, and Senior Analyst at CNA Strategic Studies and the editor of the journal *Russian Politics and Law* Dmitry Gorenburg all have reported this year an increasing Islamization in Tatarstan. See Dmitry Gorenburg, "Is Tatarstan Facing a Surge of Religious Extremism?," *Russian Military*, 22 November 2010, <http://russiamil.wordpress.com> and Johnson's Russia List, #219, 23 November 2010, <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs053/1102820649387/archive/1103963269677.html>.

³⁴ This is according to comments and data delivered by Dr. Zubarevskaya at the international conference "The Northern Caucasus: Russia's Tinderbox" at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. on November 30-December 1, 2010.

states and societies as well.) As Sergei Markedonov notes, Medvedev's creation of a North Caucasus Federal District separate from the Southern Federal District and the appointment of former businessman and Krasnoyarsk Governor Aleksandr Khloponin might have been able to address these problems more effectively, if he had been given political tasks and powers as opposed to only economic ones.³⁵

In fall Moscow endorsed a policy of creating ethnic militias to hunt down, capture or kill the mujahedin based on the Kadyrov model of offering amnesty to fighters and then building 'battalions' to fight the mujahedin. However, as occurred in the case of Chechnya, this strategy is fraught with risk. Kadyrov often came into conflict with some of his battalions led by the members of competing clans. For example, the Vostok Battalion headed by the Yamadaev frequently confronted and even came into violent conflict with Kadyrov's own Presidential Guards. In exceedingly multiethnic Dagestan, battalions based on different ethnic groups could have disastrous consequences for inter-ethnic relations and political stability.

RUSSIAN COUNTER-INSURGENCY SUCCESSES

The Russian security and law enforcement organs continue to be fairly effective at finding and killing the CE's amirs, with the exception of the CE's top amir, Doku Umarov. This year they managed to eliminate the following leading CE mujahedin:

- Seif al-Islam al-Urdani (2 February 2010) – amir of the Al-Ansar Brigade of Foreign Fighters and likely AQ operative;
- Aleksand Tikhomirov, aka Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii (4 March 2010) - the CE's most effective propagandist and operative. The mixed ethnic Buryat-Russian joined the CE in spring 2008, was based with the G'alg'aiche (Ingushetia) Viliayat (GV) mujahedin, and played a leading role in recruiting and preparing suicide bombers for the CE's Riyadus-Salikhin Martyrs Brigade;
- Anzor Astemirov, aka Seifullah (24 March 2010) – the CE's chief theologian and ideologist was the CE's qadi and amir of the CE's OVKBK;
- Magomedali Vagabov, aka Seifullah Gubdenskii (August 2010) – the DV's amir and Astemirov's successor as CE qadi;
- Yasir Amarat, aka Abu Yasir al-Sudani (8 June 2010) – likely Seif Islam's successor as amir of the Al-Ansar Brigade of Foreign Fighters and likely AQ operative.

In addition, Russia managed to capture the CE's military amir and the GV's amir Ali Taziev (aka Magas and Akhmed Yevloev). This is just the tip of the iceberg; Russian and local North Caucasus security, military, and police forces have killed tens of middle-ranking amirs and hundreds of mujahedin across all the vilaiyats this year.

The killing of Buryatskii seems to have resulted in the decline of jihadi activity in Ingushetia and perhaps in the slight decline or at least stagnation in the number of suicide bombing operations. On the other hand, the killing of OVKBK amir and CE qadi Astemirov and later of DV amir and CE qadi Vagabov appeared to have no effect on their

³⁵ Sergei Markedonov, "Severni Kavkaz-2010: Rost Vnutripoliticheskoi 'kapitalizatsii'," *Politkom.ru*, 28 December 2010, www.politcom.ru/11250.html.

respective vilaiyats' abilities to carry out operations at their unprecedented rates of this year.

Thus, the CE survives, persists, and to a certain extent even thrives, showing a long-term resilience in perpetrating violence whether as a radical national separatist structure as the ChRI in the 1990s or as a jihadist organization in the 2000s. Part of Moscow's challenge is one familiar for counter-terrorism strategists; the CE has a highly decentralized free-cell organizational structure with increasingly strong roots based in the local population and clans. These factors and strong recruiting help to replace easily captured and killed mujahedin and amirs.

THE JIHAD AND THE RUSSIAN STATE AND SOCIETY

The persistence of the CE jihad is proving a constant drain on the Russian state's time, political energy, and human and financial capital. The simmering counter insurgency and occasional major terrorist attacks, like the double suicide bombing on the Moscow metro on March 29th, requires the constant attention of Moscow and local authorities. The assassination of civilian and non-civilian officials and this year's creation of the new North Caucasus Federal District separate from the Southern Federal District required devoting more personnel resources to the region. Increased budget investments in the region increasingly drain resources away from other, more ethnic Russian regions.

The North Caucasus republics are finding it increasingly hard to recruit new people into the police, as more and more police, security and military personnel are killed and wounded, with approximately one thousand such casualties each year for several years running.

This long simmering violence in the Caucasus is producing similar counter trends in Russian society. Ethnic Russian or Slavic ultra-nationalist and neo-fascist groups have emerged that are intent on fighting both the regime and nationality minorities from the Caucasus. This summer a group of ultra-nationalist partisans and former police in Primore Krai in Russia's Far East, reportedly angered by rough treatment by the MVD, carried out several attacks on police before being captured and killed.³⁶ Attacks by neo-fascists and skinheads on ethnic minorities, especially those from the North Caucasus and Central Asia in Russia are on the rise this year after several years of decline in the number of such attacks.³⁷

³⁶ "V Bandu, voyuyushchuyu protiv militsionerov Primor'ya, vkhodyat byvshie voennye i natsionalisty," *Vladivostok.ru*, 8 June 2010, 16:01, http://news.vl.ru/rozyisk/2010/06/08/poiski/Ivan_Prebrazhenskii,_Primorskii_Robin_Khud," *Politkom.ru*, www.politcom.ru/10248.html; and RFERL, and *Richard Solash*, "Police in Russia's Far East Corner 'Robin Hood' Gang, Killing Two," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 11 June 2010, www.rferl.org/content/Police_in_Russias_Far_East_Corner_Robin_Hood_Gang_Killing_Two/2068492.html.

³⁷ On the recent rise in mid-late 2010, see . On the decline in previous years, see Vera Al'perovich and Galina Kozhevnikova, "Leto 2010 goda: ultralpravyie pobedy na propagandistskikh polyakh," *Sova Center*, 6 October 2010, www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2010/10/d19922/ and Galina Kozhevnikova, "Under the Sign of Political Terror. Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract It in 2009," *Sova Center*, 10 March 2010, 10:34, www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2010/03/d18151/.

The most recent sign of this dark potential were December 11th riots and anti-Caucasus pogroms in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other Russian cities. The riots, which took on the character of a pogrom in which more than a hundred ethnic Caucasians were injured and one person was killed, occurred in the wake of the December 6th murder of a Russian soccer fan by Caucasians from the KBR. The ultranationalist riots were perhaps the most resonant political event of the year in Russia. Sparked by a ‘perfect storm’ of ethnic Caucasian violence, police incompetence, and ethnic Russian ultra-nationalist agitation, they were predictable, though not inevitable or very replicable.³⁸

The December riot-pogroms were precipitated most immediately by the Moscow MVD’s mishandling of a case involving the murder of ethnic Russian football fan club leader, Yevgenii Sviridov, by a group of ethnic Muslims from Kabardino-Balkaria. The Moscow police released the main suspect in the murder, Aslan Cherkessov, a twice convicted resident of the North Caucasus republic of Kabardino-Balkaria. Sviridov’s relatives, friends, and fellow soccer fans saw Cherkessov’s release as unjust and likely ‘facilitated’ by payoffs from the ethnic, often criminalized Caucasus diaspora. Their ensuing protest march played right into the hands of ultranationalists, who helped up whip up the demonstrations into riots and pogroms in Moscow and other cities. The popularity of the Moscow soccer team ‘Spartak’ and its fanclub gave a boost to the scale and scope of the marches and riots.

The development of Russian neo-fascism has gone through a rather turbulent path during the post-Soviet period and has been partially intertwined with the Chechen and Caucasus issues. The early focus by ultranationalists and neo-fascists on party politics in the late perestroika and early post-Soviet period gradually gave way to street violence by small skinhead groups often tied to larger underground neo-fascist parties like National-Bolshevik Party (NBP) and Russian National Unity (RNE) and more recently the Movement Against Illegal Immigration (DPNI), Slavic Union (SS), Great Russia (VR), and Russian Form (Russkii Obraz or RO). The DPNI’s organizational efforts, led by charismatic leader, Alexander Belov-Potkin, culminated in 2006 when his organization parlayed the murder of an ethnic Russian by Chechen toughs in Kondapoga, Karelia into a pogrom against Chechens and the exodus of the entire Chechen diaspora from that northern town. The DPNI has been trying to repeat the Kondapoga scenario at several times and in different cities, including Moscow, ever since but to no avail. The failure was in part due to Belov-Potkin’s 2009 imprisonment for whipping up interethnic hatred. He recently served out his sentence, was released, and may have played a role in the December pogroms, though he is no longer the DPNI’s chairman.

There is a clear nexus between the Caucasus jihad and neo-fascist violence. The issues of the jihad and the fate of the North Caucasus have intermixed with the problem of criminalized Caucasus diasporas in Russia’s largest cities and provincial capitols.

³⁸ Alexander Bratersky, “Rioting Erupts Near Kremlin Walls,” *Moscow Times*, 13 December 2010; “Corruption seen as true reason of Moscow nationalist riots,” *Russia Today*, 13 December 2010, www.russiatoday.com; “Skonchalsya odin iz postradavshikh vo vremya besporyadkov na Manezhnoi ploshchady,” *Grani.ru*, 12 December 2010, 20:44, <http://grani.ru/Politics/Russia/activism/m.184343.phtml>; and Will Englund, “Moscow clashes put authorities in a quandary,” *Washington Post*, 13 December 2010; 4:49, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/13/AR2010121302229.html. For video of the riots in Moscow, see www.youtube.com/user/vadimbulatov#p/u/0/veB_3J3-XQo.

They have become a bone of contention within the neo-fascist movement, with some supporting the independence of the North Caucasus in order to get rid of these problem ethnic groups, as they see them. Others call for continuing violence against immigrants from the region as a method of supporting the Russian counter-insurgency effort that they hope will end in a genocide of the Caucasus Muslims. In addition, in recent years, groups like the DPNI, SS, and VR have turned increasing against the authorities, claiming they are under the control of Jewish and even Caucasus elements or at a minimum are unable to protect ethnic Slavs from a growing Caucasus onslaught.

The perfect storm that sparked December's multiple Kondapogas is unlikely to repeat itself (though there are opportunities: the building of Spartak's new stadium in the Tushino District where the DMNI, SS, RO and GV are active being one). At a State Council session held after the December riots President Medvedev laid out parameters for reinvigorating Russia's nationalities policy in order to prevent further neo-fascism and develop multiculturalism and tolerance policies for the education system, culture, and overall society. In addition, governors, government ministries, police, and courts were put under pressure to monitor inter-ethnic relations more closely and root out and punish Russian neo-fascist and Caucasian ethnic crimes.³⁹ This should help prevent, but cannot exclude the possibility of repeat episodes.

Police incompetence's role in helping to foment December's nationalist riots and to push the Far East nationalist partisans to attack throw Medvedev's MVD reform and anti-corruption efforts into even sharper relief than does this broken institution's rather negative effect on the situation in the Caucasus. There young men are often beaten at police stations and sometimes hounded into joining the jihad for protection. The picture is made more difficult by the presence of ultranationalist sympathies among some within the MVD and other security organs. The MVD reform in particular has been delayed because of infighting over just how large reform should be immediately. This issue will carry over into 2011 and will say much about the pace of Medvedev reform and the future of the liberalizing thaw.

Russia's jihadi violence, Caucasus gang violence in Russian cities, and ethnic Russian neo-fascist violence against ethnic Muslims from the Caucasus forms an explosive mix that threatens to drag Russia into a diffuse civil war of sorts. Furthermore, it cannot be completely ruled out that Russian neo-fascist groups would team up through intermediaries in order to attack the state. The CE's main website, *Kavkaz tsentr*, routinely carries statements made and reports of alleged attacks against state structures carried out by neo-fascist organizations.

ISLAMIST/JIHADIST REVIVAL IN CENTRAL ASIA

In Central Asia, Islamist trends and jihadi violence emerged in somewhat greater strength in 2010 as compared to 2009. Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami has established a strong bridgehead in Kyrgyzstan with tens of thousands of members (see IIPER, No. 31). Kazakhstanis have emerged among the Caucasus Emirate fighters and propagandists, and a Kazkah combat jamaat issued a declaration of joining the jihad in 2010 (See IIPER, No. 30).

³⁹ "Stenograficheskiy otchet o sovместnom zasedanii Gossoveta i Komissii po realizatsii prioritnykh natsional'nykh proektov i demograficheskoi politike," *Kremlin.ru*, 27 December 2010, 15:00, www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/9913.

Jihadism revived in Tajikistan in comparison with recent years and included several suicide bombings and a prolonged engagement between mujahedin and Tajik security forces in several regions, most notably in Rasht. This and reports of an IMU presence in the north suggest a return of IMU forces to Central Asia (see IIPER, Nos. 23, 30, and 31). This is likely a consequence of the Taliban's hold over several districts in Afghanistan's northern Kunduz province bordering Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. However, it remains unclear whether the IMU and affiliated groups can establish a permanent presence in Tajikistan no less extend their reach back into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. It is equally unclear whether the renewed IMU presence in Tajikistan is part of a sustained AQ/Taliban-backed effort to revive the jihad in Central Asia in order to pressure local regimes to refrain from assisting the international coalition or whether this is a one-off or purely local episode.

CONCLUSION

Moscow has still not found a solution that has proven effective in defeating or at least minimizing the jihad. Its turn to soft power as a complement to hard power and its overall attention to the North Caucasus tinderbox have strengthened again this year. All this is a step in the right direction. However, the continued brutality of law enforcement bodies in Russia and the heavy-handedness of some counter-terrorist operations maintain the flow of recruits to the forest at a stronger level than that which would be otherwise.

A truly democratic Russia would by no means preclude jihadism in the region, but it would significantly reduce it. The reality is that the CE is fed by the presence of Islam in the region. Where there is Islam, there is at least some jihadism, especially as the Islamic world is undergoing a revolutionary period not unlike that Russia and other countries experienced at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Russia's Muslims, especially those in the North Caucasus, are not immune but rather susceptible to one degree or another to the influence of the global jihadi revolutionary movement that has emerged from the near revolutionary situation in parts of the Muslim world. Unfortunately, this year proves yet again that like the rest of the world, Russia and central Asia will be dealing with a Muslim challenge and jihadi threat for years to come.

There is little evidence that the CE has established any direct contacts or carried out any activity in cooperation with Islamist or jihadi groups in Central Asia. Both ideologically and operationally, jihadism in the North Caucasus continues to far outpace that in Central Asia. This latter fact suggests that one driver of radical Islam, especially violent jihadism, is communal (ethnic and/or religious) difference between the Islamic community and ruling groups in a particular state or region. That is to say that in countries like Russia where the ruling group is non-Muslim and of a different ethnic group than that of the Muslim community, then we can expect a greater tendency towards radical Islam and jihadism, at least given the present jihadi revolutionary environment. In countries where only one of these differences is extant, such tendencies are more likely to be weaker. In countries, where there are no or minimal communal differences between Muslims and the authorities, tendencies towards radical Islam and jihadism are likely to be weak. An exception to this rule may be found in states where the ruling group is associated with a foreign entity with the noted communal differences.

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## **DAGESTAN VILAIYAT'S RESPONSE TO AMNESTY OFFER**

Dagestan's authorities offered an amnesty to the CE's Dagestan Vilaiyat mujahedin in December. In response, on December 29<sup>th</sup> the DV re-posted on *Kavkaz tsentr* the video lecture of former Kislyar mosque imam and shakhid Abdulmumin Abdulmuminov's "Yasnoe raz'yasnenie dlya somnevayushchikhsya" (A Clear Explanation for Those Who Doubt) produced by IslamUmma.com under the a new title "Otvét Dagestanskikh modzhakhedov na predlozhenii amnistii" (The Dagestan Mujahedin's Answer to the Offer of Amnesty". In the video Abdulmuminov describes the Prophet Mohammad's answer when offered negotiations by an enemy. The answer was an offer to infidels to pick one of three options: (1) surrender and adopt Islam; (2) surrender, keep your religion or "whatever you were" but submit to Islamic rule; and (3) destruction.

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CAUCASUS EMIRATE'S (CE) OVKBK KILLS SEVEN FSB OPERATIVES

The CE's United Viliayat of Kabardia, Balkaria, and Karachai (OVKBK) reported on its website that on December 19th mujahedin from the OVKBK killed 7 Russian FSB operatives who entered the forest disguised as hunters to gather intelligence on the OVKBK in its "northeastern sector."⁴⁰

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## **KABARDINO-BALKARIA'S CHIEF MUFTI AND DAGESTAN IMAM KILLED**

Chairman of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims (DUM) of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR), the KBR's chief mufti Shafik-hajii Anas Pshikhachev, was assassinated on December 15. He was reportedly called from outside his home and was gunned down by two assailants when he emerged.<sup>41</sup> Mufti Pshikhachev had been a prominent figure on the stage of KBR and Islamic politics in Russia since the collapse of the USSR and an outspoken opponent of Islamists and the Caucasus Emirate mujahedin.

Islamists have criticized him since as long ago as 2004 when the United Islamic Combat Jamaat 'Yarmuk' subjected him and the entire KBR DUM to harsh criticism for alleged corruption in building Nalchik's new central mosque, for their alleged subservience to the KBR's secular authorities and to Moscow, and for allegedly

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<sup>40</sup> "V lesnom massive likvidirovany semero okupantskikh razvedchika, Vilaiyat KBK IK," *Islamdin.com*, 19 December 2010, 18:12, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1009:2010-12-19-22-20-09&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1009:2010-12-19-22-20-09&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3).

<sup>41</sup> "V KabardinoBalkarii ubit muftii," *Kavkaz uzél*, 15 December 2010, 21:20, <http://kabardino-balkaria.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/178447/>.

composing lists of ‘Wahabbis’ for the security forces to track and arrest.<sup>42</sup> The Caucasus Emirate’s United Vilaiyat of Kabardia, Balkaria, and Karachai (OVKBK) mujahedin are very likely the perpetrators of Pshikhachev’s assassination. The OVKBK immediately carried a celebratory article on its *Islamdin* website, as did the CE’s main site ‘*Kavkaz tsentr*’ and the website of the CE’s Dagestan Vilaiyat’s website ‘*Jamaat Shariat*’ the next day. The *Islamdin* posting included a photograph of Pshikhachev with a red ‘X’ across it and numerous joyful comments from Islamist readers.<sup>43</sup>

A third mainstream Islamic leader has been killed in Dagestan in a period of some four months. On December 11<sup>th</sup>, Gazimagomed Gazimagomedov, the 53-year old imam of the mosque in the village of Gubden on Karabudakhkent district, Dagestan died in the district’s central hospital from back and neck wounds sustained that day when he was shot by unknown assailants outside his home. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Basir Salakhgareev, the imam of one of the mosques in Dagestan’s city of Khasavyurt imam, was shot to death. On August 11<sup>th</sup>, the head of the department for spiritual enlightenment of the Spritual Administration of the Muslims of Dagestan (DUMD), Magomedvagif Sultanmagomedov, was killed when his car was fired upon.<sup>44</sup> All of these assassinations are very likely the work of the CE’s Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV). The increase in the number of Islamic figures killed this year in Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria coincides with the precipitous increase in the number of jihadi attacks in those republics this year.

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## RECENT FOREIGN GLOBAL JIHADI REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGICAL-THEOLOGICAL TRACTS IN CE MEDIA

What follows is another but small sampling of numerous publications of a global jihadi-orientation appearing on CE websites. The website *Islamdin.com* of the CE’s United Vilaiyat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai (OVKBK) posted a long excerpt from AL-Qa`ida’s English-language journal *Inspire* detailing in text and photographs how to “make a bomb in your mother’s kitchen.” The translation appeared on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and is attributed to one Abu Suleiman al-Kazakhstan, perhaps an ethnic Kazakh perhaps living in Kazakhstan.<sup>45</sup>

The OVKBK’s website *Islamdin.com* carried a translation by Kazakhstani of excerpts or part of an article in AQ’s *Inspire* on “Operation ‘Bleeding’” reprinted from the journal *Ansar al-Mujahidin* of AQ in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) that organized

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<sup>42</sup> See Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia’s Islamic Threat* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp, 149-155.

<sup>43</sup> “V Nalchike ubit vrag Allakha tak nazivaemyi ‘mufti KBR’. Vilaiyat KBK,” *Islamdin.com*, 15 December 2010, 19:27, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1006:2010-12-15-19-32-40&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1006:2010-12-15-19-32-40&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3). See also [www.jamaatshariat.com/fakty/29-fakty/1366-2010-12-16-12-10-51.html](http://www.jamaatshariat.com/fakty/29-fakty/1366-2010-12-16-12-10-51.html).

<sup>44</sup> “V Karabudakhkentskom raione Dagestana ubit imam,” *Kavkaz uzal*, 14 December 2010, 1:00, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/178347/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/178347/).

<sup>45</sup> “Zhurnal ‘Vdokhnovlai’: ‘Sdelai bombu v Maminoi kuchne’,” *Islamdin.com*, 3 December 2010, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=992:2010-12-03-10-29-08&catid=43:2010-11-25-17-50-11&Itemid=33](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=992:2010-12-03-10-29-08&catid=43:2010-11-25-17-50-11&Itemid=33).

the November operation in which printer toner cartridge bombs were sent in packages by UPS to the West. The translation appeared on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The article asserts that the operation was a success in that it cost the Arab mujahedin very little but has forced the U.S. and other Western countries to implement expensive and intrusive security measures at airports.<sup>46</sup>

On December 4<sup>th</sup> *Islamdin.com* carried a call to jihad that begins as follows: “Hypocrites and people with sick hearts ay to you: ‘Do you think you will get anywhere? You have too high an opinion of yourself to think you can build a Caliphate or an Islamic State. This is impossible, and is only an illusion. Will America, Russia, Europe, and Israel allow this? They are the fiercest enemies of Islam’.” Mujahedin and other ‘true Muslims’ are instructed to answer that their goal is to establish the “hegemony of religion” and recall Hadith 2/176 in which the Prophet Mohammed is asked which city they will subjugate first, Rome or Constantinople, to which he answers that first will be Constantinople.” The author instructs readers to answer in the contemporary context that one should say that he hopes Allah will give them the gift of the subjugation of “the Kremlin and the White House.” It is unclear whether the White House in question is the American or Russian.<sup>47</sup>

The CE’s main site, *Kavkaz tseotr*, and *IslamUmma.com* published a fatwa by Sheikh Abdurrakhman Al-Barrak on December 14<sup>th</sup>. It rejects the view that Islam is a religion of equality and asserting instead that it is a religion of justice. Thus, Islam does not seek the attainment of equality between men and women or between Muslims and infidel but rather ‘just’ relationships between these.<sup>48</sup>

On December 12<sup>th</sup> *IslamUmma.com* published a fatwa from Sheikh Yasir Burkhami on the Jordanian mujahed Abu Anas Muhannad. Like decisions handed down by numerous Middle Eastern sheikhs and jihadi ideologists and by CE amir Doku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov, Burkhami’s fatwa blames Muhannad for sparking the split within the CE’s ranks by failing to submit to Umarov’s authority as amir and advises him to rethink his actions and advise with Islamic scholars. “The removal of an amir cannot happen other than through (such) counsel and not by the decision of one mujahed or a small group,” instructs Burkhami.<sup>49</sup>

On December 15<sup>th</sup> *IslamUmma.com* published the final testament of 29-year old Taimur Abdul’ Vakhkhab Abdali (aka the Iraqi), the Iraqi jihadi bomber who attempted to carry out a terrorist attack in Stockholm, Sweden, managing to kill only himself as the bomb he was carrying detonated prematurely on December 11<sup>th</sup> in the city

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<sup>46</sup> “Zhurnal ‘Vdokhnovlyai’: Operatsiya ‘Krovotechenie’,” *Islamdin.com*, 8 December 2010, 11:51, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=999:2010-12-08-11-56-36&catid=27:2009-02-09-17-38-17&Itemid=16](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=999:2010-12-08-11-56-36&catid=27:2009-02-09-17-38-17&Itemid=16).

<sup>47</sup> Suleiman Davud, “Skazhite munafikam...,” *Islamdin.com*, 4 December 2010, 15:39, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=994:2010-12-04-15-34-32&catid=27:2009-02-09-17-38-17&Itemid=16](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=994:2010-12-04-15-34-32&catid=27:2009-02-09-17-38-17&Itemid=16).

<sup>48</sup> “Islam – religiya ravenstva? Net. Islam – religiya spravedlivosti,” *Kavkaz tseotr*, 14 December 2010, 00:08, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/12/14/77250.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/12/14/77250.shtml) and “Sheikh Abdurrakhman Al-Barrak: Islam – religiya ravenstva? Net,” *IslamUmma.com*, 13 December 2010, 00:08, [www.islamumma.com/manhadj/fahmudin/1356-2010-12-13-21-11-24.html](http://www.islamumma.com/manhadj/fahmudin/1356-2010-12-13-21-11-24.html).

<sup>49</sup> “Fatwa Sheikh Yasira Burkhami o fitne Mukhannada sredi mudzhakhedov Kavkaza,” *IslamUmma.com*, 12 December 2010, 19:29, [www.islamumma.com/djihad/fatafa-al-djihad/1355-2010-12-12-17-18-40.html](http://www.islamumma.com/djihad/fatafa-al-djihad/1355-2010-12-12-17-18-40.html).

center. In his testament Abdali condemns Lars Vilks, who is famous for a cartoon depicting the Prophet Mohammed. He also asks his own family to try to forgive him, acknowledging he had been with the mujahedin for four years, and calls upon all “hidden mujahedin in Europe” to strike even if they have only a knife.<sup>50</sup>

*Kavkaz tsestr* carried a short video declaration by “shakhid” and AQ operative Sheikh Abu Khamza al-Mujahir (aka Abu Ayyub al-Masri) on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Mujahir was second in command to, and succeeded Abu Musab al-Zarqawi as AQ in Iraq leader after his demise at the hands of U.S. forces in 2006. Mujahir was killed by U.S. forces in April of last year. Mujahir writes here on the “doctrine of Monotehism and the dignity of the messengers and monotheists.” “Religion,” according to Mujahir, was replaced because no one stood up to defend Islam from attacks.<sup>51</sup>

*Kavkaz tsestr* carried on January 1<sup>st</sup> a theologically-based condemnation of the secular life (“Al-Ilmaniia”) and its deleterious effect on the Islamic world written by Saudi Mukhammad Shakir ash-Sharif. The introduction was written by Saydi sheikh Adbulrakhman bin AbduRrakhman al-Jibrin. The “brochure” concludes that Muslims “must declare war against anyone who struggles against Allah and His Messenger.”<sup>52</sup>

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## **AMIR AL-BARA OF DAGESTAN VILAIYAT’S MAKHACHKALA-KASPIISK SECTOR KILLED?**

Russian security forces in Dagestan reported killing the Magomed Sheikhov, the “head of the underground band in Makhachkala” -- that is, the amir of the Makhachkala mujahedin.<sup>53</sup> This likely means they killed Al-Bara, the amir of the Makhachkala Sector of the CE’s Dagestan Vilaiyat. Al-Bara was killed along with seven other mujahedin on December 26<sup>th</sup>. As reported in IIPER, No. 31, Al-Bara’s Makhachkala Sector was recently combined with the Kaspiisk Sector and special operational groups were placed under his command. In October, DV amir ‘Khasan’ Israpil Velidzhanov announced that Al-Bara was being appointed amir of a newly combined Makhachkala-Kaspiisk Sector, that the DV’s special operational groups were no longer needed, and that the DV’s special operational group along and its amir Daud were now subordinated to Al-Bara and the Makhachkala-Kaspiisk Sector.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> “Zaveshchanie brata Abdul’ Vakhkhab, sovershivshego operatsiyu v Shvetsii,” *IslamUmma.com*, 15 December 2010, 14:58, [www.islamumma.com/audio/raznoe-audio/1358-2010-12-15-13-52-44.html](http://www.islamumma.com/audio/raznoe-audio/1358-2010-12-15-13-52-44.html).

<sup>51</sup> “VIDEO: Sheikh-shakhid Abu Khamza al’-Mudzhakhir: ‘Tem komu dovereno poslanie’,” *Kavkaz tsestr*, 5 January 2011, 15:42, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/05/77879.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/05/77879.shtml).

<sup>52</sup> Mukhammad Shakir ash-Sharif, “Al’-Ilmaniia (svetskii obraz zhisni) i ego otvratitelnyie posledstviya,” *Kavkaz tsestr*, 1 January 2011, 00:17, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/01/77761.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/01/77761.shtml).

<sup>53</sup> V Makhachkale unichtozhen glavar’ banditskogo podpol’ya,” *Regnum.ru*, 26 December 2010, 14:59, [www.regnum.ru/news/1360566.html](http://www.regnum.ru/news/1360566.html).

<sup>54</sup> “Shura amirov Dagestana. Bayat Amira Dagestana Khasana, 19 October 2010,” *JamaatShariat.com*, 1 December 2010, [www.jamaatshariat.com/ru](http://www.jamaatshariat.com/ru) and *Kavkaz tsestr*, 1 December 2010, [www.kavkazcenter.com](http://www.kavkazcenter.com), last accessed 3 December 2010.

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## **CENTRAL ASIA**

### **VIOLENCE A NORMALITY IN KYRGYZSTAN**

According to Alexander Knyazev, senior fellow in the Institute of Oriental Studies under Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, the current situation in Kyrgyzstan is bleak. Knyazev expressed his concerns in an interview with *Ferghana* editor-in-chief, Daniil Kislov. In the interview, Knyazev alluded to the instability in Osh as an “intifada,” most commonly referred to as “deliverance” in the Arab-Israeli conflict, blaming the Kyrgyz state. *Central Asia Online* affirms, “Dozens of thousands Uzbeks left the republic, big share of them are demoralized while the youth, seeking the justice, may join IMU or Hizb ut-Tahrir”.<sup>55</sup>

Most recently, on January 4<sup>th</sup>, in Bishkek, while members of the democratic militia were performing routine “operational search measures,”<sup>56</sup> checking passports of tenants living in a 16 story house, four individuals of Asian appearance open fired with their Kalashnikov’s killing all three police officers instantaneously. According to local sources, the mujahadeen, “members of religious extremist jihadi groups that put the main purpose of the construction of the caliphate in the Ferghana Valley,”<sup>57</sup> were responsible.

According to *Kavkaz Center*, these mujahadeen are expanding their network and setting up covert organizations. They are allegedly responsible for carrying out car explosions in the village Sokuluk and Bishkek on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> as well as a sabotage operation on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Among those reported responsible were “Daniyar Kylychbekovich Kadyraliev (aka Abduvahab), Sovetbek Adilovich Islamov (aka Baro, Alex), Edil Alymzhanovich Abdrakhmanov, and Kairat Alybekovich (aka Abusalman).<sup>58</sup>

### **MORE CLASHES IN TAJIKISTAN, BEDAKI KILLED**

In the Runob settlement of Rasht district in East Tajikistan, 8 militants including warlord Alovuddin Davlatov, frequently referred to as Ali Bedaki, were killed by Tajiki Special Forces on January 4<sup>th</sup>. There were no casualties to the Tajik government forces. After the September 19<sup>th</sup> attack on the military convoy, the Tajik government has been organizing special operations targeting Abdullo Rakhimov (aka Mullo Abdullo) and Alovuddin Davlatov who are allegedly linked to Al-Qaida. Additionally, according to Tajikistani news, blame was placed on former United Tajik Opposition (UTO) leader,

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<sup>55</sup> “Alexander Knyazev: Terrorism will become the part of everyday life in Kyrgyzstan,” *Fergananeews.com*, 10 December 2010, <http://enews.fergananeews.com/article.php?id=2679> and “Alexander Knyazev: Terrorism will become the part of everyday life in Kyrgyzstan,” *CentralAsiaOnline.com*, 10 December 2010, [www.centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/mobile/en\\_GB/features/caii/features/main/2010/11/10/feature-01](http://www.centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/mobile/en_GB/features/caii/features/main/2010/11/10/feature-01).

<sup>56</sup> KYRGYZSTAN. V Bishkeke rastrelyali troye militzionerov,” *Kavkazcenter.com*, January 05, 2011, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/05/77871.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/05/77871.shtml).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

Mirzokhudzha Akhmadov, who denied the allegations but agreed to help the government in finding Ali Bedaki and Mullo Abdullo.<sup>59</sup> Akhmadov's knowledge of the details of the operations is questioned by many. Ferghana Information News Agency, Moscow, reports that since September 22 the governmental troops have killed or arrested some 20 mujahedin.<sup>60</sup>

On December 27th, Tajik border guards in the Shuroobod district of the Khatlon Province were forced to call upon air support to prevent drug smugglers from crossing into Tajikistan from Afghanistan.<sup>61</sup> An unidentified number of Tajik soldiers and militants were killed in the clash.<sup>62</sup>

### **SHAKHIBIDDIN SHOMIRZAYEV CONVICTED IN UZBEKISTAN**

Shakhobiddin Shomirzayev of Bekabad, a militant Islamist, was convicted to a 13 year sentence for "circulating extremist literature in Russia and Uzbekistan," Hurriyet Daily News posted December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010. A number of others convicted were sent to prison for terms ranging from 3 to 13 years.<sup>63</sup> According to Uzbekistan officials, 52 Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) militants were killed this past year, mostly in air raids.<sup>64</sup>

### **EFFORTS TO COMBAT EXTREMISMS IN KAZAKHSTAN**

Local Kazakh officials are taking steps to combat Islamic extremism, worried Islamism is penetrating from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Steps have already been taken to increase security measures along the border and in cities and villages. Regional governments are financing anti-terrorist propaganda lectures and other projects for high-

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<sup>59</sup> "Tajikistan: Warlord Ali Bedaki is killed by special services," *Fergananeews.com*, 05 January 2011, <http://enews.fergananeews.com/news.php?id=1969&mode=snews> and "Tajik troops kill al Qaeda warlord – official," *Reuters*, 04 January 2011, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE7032TD20110104?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>.

<sup>60</sup> "Tajikistan: Warlord Ali Bedaki is killed by special services," *Fergananeews.com*, 05 January 2011, <http://enews.fergananeews.com/news.php?id=1969&mode=snews>.

<sup>61</sup> "Tajik Guards Killed In Fight On Afghan Border," *Radio Free Europe: Radio Liberty*, 3 January 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan\\_afghanistan\\_border\\_gun\\_battle/2266322.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan_afghanistan_border_gun_battle/2266322.html).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> "Uzbeks Convicted Of Extremism+ Steps To Combat Extremism In Kazakhstan," *Eurasialift.wordpress.com*, December 31, 2010, <http://eurasialift.wordpress.com/2010/12/31/uzbeks-convicted-of-extremism-steps-to-combat-extremism-in-kazakhstan/>.

<sup>64</sup> "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: 52 militants killed during the current year," *sh22y.com*, 28 December 2010, <http://sh22y.com/vb/t97659.html?language=en>.

schools on religious extremism.<sup>65</sup> Other projects include a new hotline for victims of religious and other forms of extremism. According to *Eurasia Lift*, parents and close relatives are using the hotline, often reporting about their children being persuaded or pressured to join religious extremists.<sup>66</sup>



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<sup>65</sup> “Uzbeks Convicted Of Extremism+ Steps To Combat Extremism In Kazakhstan,” *Eurasialift.wordpress.com*, 31 December 2010, <http://eurasialift.wordpress.com/2010/12/31/uzbeks-convicted-of-extremism-steps-to-combat-extremism-in-kazakhstan/>.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

## **ABOUT IIPER**

Islam, Islamism and politics in Eurasia report (IIPER) is a project of the Monterey Terrorism and Research and Education Program (MonTREP) at the Monterey Institute for International Studies (MIIS), Monterey, California. It focuses on all politically-relevant issues involving or bearing on Islam and ethnic Muslim communities in Russia and Eurasia writ large. All issues of IIPER can be found at <http://www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report>.

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IIPER welcomes submissions of 1,500-6,000 words on any aspect of Islamic politics in Eurasia and financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER's mailing list, please contact [gordon.hahn@miis.edu](mailto:gordon.hahn@miis.edu) or [gordon-hahn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gordon-hahn@sbcglobal.net).

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