

# Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER)

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## THE CE'S ETHNIC RUSSIAN MUJAHEDIN

The power of Salafist/jihadist theo-ideology and the threat it poses to Islam and the West can be no better demonstrated than by the recently intensifying trend of a growing number of ethnic Russians, who have joined the Caucasus Emirate (CE). Many, if not all, of them have had ties to the CE mujahedin and have carried out some of the most egregious terrorist attacks in the past year or two. Some received their Islamist education abroad and then were recruited by CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov to become leading organizers and even practitioners of *istishkhad* suicide bombings.

### 'Pervaya Lastochka': Pavel Kosolapov

The first prominent ethnic Russian mujahed is the well-known Pavel Kosolapov. In 2007, Russian authorities charged this ethnic Russian jihadist and former Russian military man with organizing the Nevskii Express attack on CE amir Umarov's orders. Kosolapov was born in Volgograd on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1980 and studied in the Engineering School of the Krasnodar High Military High Command and the Rocket Forces' Rostov Military Institute. Charged with stealing from a fellow cadet, Kosolapov was discharged in 1998. He returned home where he met a group of Chechens with whom he absconded to Chechnya in 1999. He then converted to Islam and joined the militants. Kosolapov trained with the notorious Shamil Basaev and Arab amirs Abu Umar and Abu Dzeit, and specialized in attacks on transportation targets. He is reported in turn to have trained two Kazakhs, Yerkingali Taizhanov and Azamat Tolubei, to carry out transportation attacks. Reportedly, Kosolapov, another ethnic Russian Maksim 'Muslim' Panar'in and the Kazakhs proceeded to carry out a series of attacks approved by Basaev. In addition to the 2007 Nevskii Express bombing, Kosolapov and company have been charged or suspected by Russian law enforcement with involvement in several 2003 bus stop explosions in Krasnodar and carrying out multiple bomb blasts in 2004, including attacks on the Mineralnye Vody electric train in Kislovodsk that killed 47, a market in Samara, bus stops in Voronezh, and near Moscow's 'Rizhskaya' metro station.<sup>1</sup>

Early reports suggested that Kosolapov might have been behind the identical 27 November 2009 attack on the same Nevskii Express train.<sup>2</sup> The 2009 Nevskii Express attack claimed the lives of 27, wounded nearly

<sup>1</sup> Anatolii Shvedov, "Vzryv na 'Pavletskoi' organizoval russkii," 14 January 2005, 10:48, [www.izvestia.ru/incident/article1009259/](http://www.izvestia.ru/incident/article1009259/); Dmitrii Sokolov-Mitrich, "Russkii bin Laden," 21 January 2005, 20:21, [www.izvestia.ru/incident/article1043323/](http://www.izvestia.ru/incident/article1043323/); Aleksandr Shvarev, "Brat'ya po terroru," *Vremya novostei*, 17 January 2005, [www.vremya.ru/2005/4/51/116235.html](http://www.vremya.ru/2005/4/51/116235.html); Aleksandr Shvarev, "Sled Kosolapova," *Vremya novostei*, 13 January 2005, [www.vremya.ru/2005/2/51/116029.html](http://www.vremya.ru/2005/2/51/116029.html); Ivan Sas, Andrei Serenko, and Mikhail Tolpegin, "Patrioticheskoe litso terrorizma," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 27 January 2009, [www.ng.ru/events/2005-06-17/1\\_terrorizm.html](http://www.ng.ru/events/2005-06-17/1_terrorizm.html); Ivan Sas, "Terror na kazhdoi ostanovke," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 27 January 2009, [www.ng.ru/events/2005-01-27/6\\_terror.html](http://www.ng.ru/events/2005-01-27/6_terror.html); Yelena Vlasenko, "Pavel Kosolapov – fantom ili terrorist?," *Svoboda News*, 1 December 2009, 17:46, [www.svobodanews.ru/content/article/1892381.html](http://www.svobodanews.ru/content/article/1892381.html); Aleksey Nikolskiy, Vera Kholmogorova and Aleksey Nepomnyashchii, "Pervyi terakt epokhy Medvedeva," *Vedomosti*, 30 November 2009, [www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/article/2009/11/30/220126](http://www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/article/2009/11/30/220126); "Does Nevsky Express Crash Signify A New 'Railway War'?" *Itar-Tass*, 30 November 2009; and Vladislav Mal'tsev, "Dzhikhad so slavyanskim litsom," *Nezavisimaya gazeta – Religiya*, 20 July 2011, [http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-20/4\\_jihad.html](http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-20/4_jihad.html).

<sup>2</sup> *Vedomosti* reported that Russian MVD Rashid Nurgaliev was referring Kosolapov when he said that a man with red hair and about forty years old (a description that fits the 39-year old Kosolapov) is suspected in the new attack. Nikolskiy, Kholmogorova and Nepomnyashchii, "Pervyi terakt epokhy Medvedeva" and David Nowak, "Russian train toll hits 26; Police release sketch," *Associated Press*, 30 November 2009. Russian security officials claimed he had been seen working in one of the farms in the Central Federal District but did not report when he was allegedly seen. Natalia Korchmarek, "Terror vozvrashchaetsya," *Trud*, 30 November 2009, [www.trud.ru/article/30-11-2009/232874\\_terror\\_vozvrashaetsja.html](http://www.trud.ru/article/30-11-2009/232874_terror_vozvrashaetsja.html).

one hundred, and rendered a handful of passengers missing. The Nevskii Express is a high-end, high-speed, luxury passenger train that shuttles large numbers of federal and St. Petersburg officials and business people back and forth between Moscow and St. Petersburg, especially around the weekends. Among the casualties were six foreigners and two important Russian officials: head of the recently created state roads company, a former federal senator and government official from St. Petersburg and legislative assemblyman, Sergei Tarasov, and head of the Federal Reserves Agency, Boris Yevstratikov. For the first time, the CE had proved successful in killing federal officials. A second device planted near a telegraph pole was later detonated remotely by a mobile telephone, but malfunctioned as investigators arrived at the scene. Although no one was seriously hurt, the second explosion was clearly intended for the official investigators. In fact, the head of the General Prosecutor's Investigations Commission, Alexander Bastrykhin, received a mild concussion and was hospitalized in St. Petersburg along with several other officials.<sup>3</sup>

According to the developed profiles, Russian authorities and media have reported that two of the three males were possibly of Slavic origin and the other was of typical Caucasus appearance; this would be consistent with Kosolapov's involvement and his *modus operandi*. One detainee was from Azerbaijan, wherefrom Kosolapov posts articles on an Azeri jihadi website.<sup>4</sup> According to Russian authorities and media, witnesses from Novgorod ran into two men in a car with Moscow plates inquiring about the new 'Sapsan' high-speed train, which was to use the same route as the Nevskii Express, and asked where the bridge over the line was located. One of the inquirers wore a red wig and hid his face. This could have been Kosolapov.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, the U.S. government's Russian-language service published an article quoting Russian experts who questioned whether Kosolapov is still alive, referring to him as possibly a "phantom."<sup>6</sup> Days later, however, two articles apparently by Kosolapov were posted on various Russian-language jihadi websites, including the site of the Azerbaijani mujahedin *MilletiIbrahim.com*. The author denigrated statements by Russian officials and speculation in some Russian media that the CE did not execute and even lacked the capacity to execute such an attack. He did not explicitly claim responsibility for the attack for either himself or the CE.<sup>7</sup> In the second article, Kosolapov implied that the CE was behind not only the Nevskii Express bombing, but also the August 17<sup>th</sup> destruction of the Sayano-Shushenskii Hydroelectric station ("the largest in Eurasia"), recent explosions at the arms depot in Ulyanovsk and the "largest natural gas storage facility in Europe located in Stavropol, and even a recent fire that had killed some one hundred nightclub-goers in Perm, noting all these occurred on Fridays, the traditional Muslim day of prayer. He closed with an apparent warning about December 11<sup>th</sup>: "We wait till next Friday."<sup>8</sup> Nothing developed on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Viktor Myasnikov, "Rel'sovyi dzhikhad," *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, 4 December 2009, [http://nvo.ng.ru/realty/2009-12-04/1\\_jihad.html?mthree=1](http://nvo.ng.ru/realty/2009-12-04/1_jihad.html?mthree=1) and Roland Oliphant, "Blood on the Tracks - The Professionalism of the Attack Suggests Islamist Terrorists from the North Caucasus Have Struck Deep Inside Russia Once Again," *Russia Profile*, 30 November 2009, [www.russiaprofile.ru](http://www.russiaprofile.ru).

<sup>4</sup> "Po podozreniyu v podryve 'Nevskogo ekspressa' zaderzhany urozhentsy Chechny i Azerbaidzhana," *Kavkaz uzul*, 6 December 2008, 12:37, [www.kavkaz-uzul.ru/articles/162788/](http://www.kavkaz-uzul.ru/articles/162788/).

<sup>5</sup> Viktor Myasnikov, "Rel'sovyi dzhikhad".

<sup>6</sup> Vlasenko, "Pavel Kosolapov – fantom ili terrorist?"

<sup>7</sup> See Pavel Kosolapov, "Konkurs na versiyu 'Ne kavkazskii sled'," at *Milleti Ibrahim*, 3 December 2009, 14:28, <http://milleti-ibrahim.com/ru/2009-11-08-09-44-20/2009-11-08-10-12-42/121--l-r.html>; *Kavkaz tsentr*, 3 December, 18:30, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/12/03/69487.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/12/03/69487.shtml); and *Azerijihadmedia*, 4 December 2009, 2:58, <http://jixad.tk>, accessed 4 Dec 09, 20:33 PST.

<sup>8</sup> Pavel Kosolapov, "Podozhdem do sleduyushei pyatnitsy," *Milleti-Ibrahim.com*, 7 December 2009, 17:43, <http://milleti-ibrahim.com/ru/2009-11-08-10-10-29/123-2009-12-07-17-50-02.html> and *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 December 2009, 22:27, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/12/07/69558.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/12/07/69558.shtml).

There were other signs that pointed to Kosolapov's role in the 2009 Nevskii Ezpress attack, including reported similarities in the type of bombs used and a similar Ingush connection. Thus, a previous attack on the same train, at nearly the same time and place, and in which the same bomb methodology was used in 2007 seems to trace back to Umarov, the CE, Kosolapov and Ingushetia.<sup>9</sup>

It is unclear whether Kosolapov was involved in the alleged recent plot to attack the Russian Moscow-St. Petersburg 'Sapsan' high-speed train, which might also have involved another ethnic Russian. As noted above, Kosolapov is an explosives expert and has been implicated by Russian law enforcement in the 2007 Nevskii Express train attack. In July, FSB chief Aleksandr Bortnikov claimed the KSB had foiled a plot to detonate explosives on the Sapsan line. *Ekho Moskvyy* radio reported that Russian security was claiming that it had inserted a mole inside the CE's DV, the leaders of which were planning the attack.<sup>10</sup> The DV had ties to ethnic Russian suicide bombers Vitalii 'Valid' Razdobud'ko and Marina Khorosheva (see below). Other reports had a multiethnic group of mujahedin involved in the Sapsan plot as well as other plots in the Moscow area.<sup>11</sup> The group included 22-year old lead organizer and resident of Kabardino-Balkariya Islam Khamuzhev, an ethnic Chechen Murad Eldilbiev, an ethnic Ingush Murad Umayev, as well as an ethnic Russian and/or Mordovian Fyarit Nevlyutov.<sup>12</sup>

However, Kosolapov had also emerged early in the peak jihadi season with a 19 May 2011 posting on an Azerbaijani jihadi website *Milleti-Ibrahim.com*, suggesting that he might be preparing another attack, perhaps on another train. Kosolapov, who could be based in Azerbaijan since all of his articles appear on the same Azerbaijani jihadi website, was responding to the killing of Al Qa`ida's Osama bin Laden. Despite the conspiratorial and ranting nature of his most recent article, Kosolapov's re-emergence should have raised red flags among counter-terrorism specialists, given his expertise in designing explosives and the spate of jihadi incidents recently involving ethnic Russians discussed further below. Perhaps Kosolapov had a connection to the Sapsan plot as well.

<sup>9</sup> The bomb used in the 2007 and 2009 Nevskii Express attacks are reported to have been identical in their technological design and level of sophistication, and they detonated at nearly the same minute of the day and at nearly the same place, less than 100 kilometers apart. Myasnikov, "Reil'sovyi Dzhikhad" and "Does Nevsky Express Crash Signify A New 'Railway War'?" *Itar-Tass*, 30 November 2009 and "Putin: podryv zheleznoi dorogi v Dagestane analogichen krusheniyyu 'Nevskogo ekspressa'," *Kavkaz uzel*, 30 November 2009, 23:59, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162584/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162584/). The possible Ingushetian connection to the Nevskii express bombings involves the fact that two Ingush from Ingushetia, Salanbek Dzakhkhiev and Maksharil Khidriev, were arrested and charged with supplying the explosives Kosolapov allegedly used in the 2007 attack, and two days before the 2009 bombing at their trial Khidriev admitted his involvement in the attack for the time. Aleksandr Baklanov, "Badalov priznaniem Khidrieva v podgotovke podryva 'Nevskogo ekspressa'," *Kavkaz uzel*, 30 November 2009, 19:33, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162575/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162575/). The newspaper *Trud* reports that the Ingush bought more explosives for Kosolapov than he used in the 2007 explosion, and Russian law enforcement was unable to locate the remaining TNT. Kosolapov may have hidden the remainder and used it in the recent attack. Korchmarek, "Terror vozvrashchaetsya".

<sup>10</sup> "Nekotorye podrobnosti stanovyatsya izvestny o predotvrashenii podryva skorostnogo poezda 'Sapsan'," *Ekho Moskvyy*, 15 August 2011, 21:28, [www.echo.msk.ru/news/802803-echo.html](http://www.echo.msk.ru/news/802803-echo.html). There was a possible Ingush connection to the 2009 bombing. Days before the bombing, an ethnic Ingush from Ingushetia recently arrived from France was arrested in Moscow for planning terrorist attacks and involvement in past attacks, including a 2007 assassination attempt on Chechnya president Ramzan Kadyrov. "V Moskve zaderzhan urozhnets Ingushetii, podozrevaemyi v podgotovke teraktov," *Kavkaz uzel*, 25 November 2009, 09:39, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162383/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/162383/).

<sup>11</sup> "Rabochaya vstrecha s direktorom FSB Aleksandrom Bortnikovym," *Kremlin.ru*, 18 July 2011, 15:00, <http://news.kremlin.ru/news/11996/print> and Nikolai Sergeev, "Imarat Kavkaz' doshel do Moskvyy," *Kommersant*, 19 July 2011, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/1681568](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1681568).

<sup>12</sup> "Arestovannyye urozhentsy Severnogo kavkaza obvinyayutsya v podgotovke podryva poezda 'Sapsan'," *Kavkaz uzel*, 15 August 2011, 09:00, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/190834/>.

IIPER proposed in December 2009 that the more likely perpetrator of the November 2009 Nevskii Express attack was the ethnic Buryat-Russian Aleksandr Tikhomirov, better known as Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii and the Riyadus Salikhiiin Martyrs' Brigade (RSMB) of suicide bombers.<sup>13</sup> After all, Buryatskii was based in Ingushetiya with the CE's Galgaiche (Ingushetia) Vilaiyat. Subsequently, the RSMB claimed responsibility for the attack and Russian law enforcement charged Buryatskii as the perpetrator.

### **The Buryat-Russian Sheikh: Said Abu Saad Buryatskii**

Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii-Tikhomirov clearly falls into the category of ethnic Russian converts to Islam and jihadism.<sup>14</sup> By September 2009, Buryatskii emerged as the CE's most effective ideologist, propagandist, and planner of suicide bombings. Buryatskii was half ethnic Russian and half ethnic Buryat. Russia's Buryats are a Mongol people typically of Buddhist confession. He converted from Buddhism to Islam in his teens while living in his native region of Buryatiya and then went to Egypt where he was indoctrinated in Islamist circles at university in Cairo before traveling to other Arab countries. After returning to Buryatiya, Sheikh Buryatskii became an influential Islamist preacher, producing tapes that were sold across much of the Russian-speaking Muslim world in the former USSR. He was then sought out and recruited by the CE amir Umarov, arriving in the North Caucasus and meeting with the amir in spring 2008.

In April 2009, amir Umarov announced, after the CE's traditional spring planning shura, that the CE had revived Shamil Basaev's Riyadus Salikhiiin Martyrs Brigade (RSMB) in 2008 and that it had already carried out two operations, including the November 2008 suicide bombing of a bus in Vladikavkaz, Ingushetiya that killed 14 and wounded 43 civilians.<sup>15</sup> Buryatskii was dispatched to Ingushetiya where he became deeply involved in the operation of numerous suicide bombings in 2009 and 2010. He masterminded the June 2009 suicide car bombing that severely wounded and nearly killed Ingushetiya President Yunusbek Yevkurov. He also organized the 17 August 2009 suicide truck bombing of the MVD district headquarters in Nazran. This attack killed 24 MVD servicemen and wounded approximately 260 people, including 11 children, on the very day that Yevkurov returned to Ingushetiya after months of hospitalization. Based with the CE's GV mujahedin and RSMB, Buryatskii wrote prolifically about the importance of *istishkhad* (martyrdom) operations and his preparation of RSMB suicide bombers.<sup>16</sup> Buryatskii all but made an explicit declaration of his leading role in Riyadus Salikhiiin, stating his deep involvement in the summer of 2009's RS-led suicide bombings across the North Caucasus and pledging: "I am left only to promise the infidels that while I am alive I will do everything possible so that the ranks of Riyadus-Salikhiiin are broadened and new waves of mujahedin go on martyrdom

<sup>13</sup> See Gordon M. Hahn, "The Nevskii Express Bombing: Return to the Far Enemy," *Islam, Islamism, and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER)*, No. 4, December 2009.

<sup>14</sup> For more on Buryatskii see Gordon M. Hahn, "Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii: The New Basaev of the Caucasus," *IIPER*, No. 1, December 2009.

<sup>15</sup> See the video "Majlis al-Shura of the Caucasus Emirate – 25 April 2009," *You Tube*, accessed 10 and 23 October 2009, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQQKPNfmo1U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQQKPNfmo1U). For the English translation of Umarov's post-Shura declaration with a link to his downloadable video statement in Russian, see "Amir Dokka Abu Usman: 'This Year Will Be Our Offensive Year'," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 17 May 2009, 15:17, [www.kavkaz.tv/eng/content/2009/05/17/10700.shtml](http://www.kavkaz.tv/eng/content/2009/05/17/10700.shtml).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Said Abu Saad (Buryatskii), "Istishkhad mezhdou pravdoi i lozh'yu," *Hunafa.com*, 9 December 2009, 1:01, <http://hunafa.com/?p=2514>; "Said abu Saad. Ob rezultatakh operatsii v Nazrani 17 avgusta 2009g," *Hunafa.com*, 7 September 2009, 11:23, <http://hunafa.com/?p=1984>; Said Abu Saad Buryatskii, "Vzglyad na Dzhikhad iznutri: Geroi Istiny i lzhi," *Hunafa.info*, 30 May 2009, 1:01, <http://hunafa.com/?p=1534>; Said Abu Saad Buryatskii, "Vzglyad na Dzhikhad iznutri: Geroi istiny i lzhi, Chast' 2," *Hunafa.info*, 24 June 2009, 4:04, <http://hunafa.info/?p=1715>; and "Said Abu Saad. Vzglyad na Dzhikhad iznutri: Geroi Istiny i lzhi, Chast' 3," *Hunafa.com*, 24 July 2009, 1:01, <http://hunafa.com/?p=1855>.

operations.”<sup>17</sup> He would be killed by Russian forces in Ekazhevo, Ingushetiya on 4 March 2010 in the process of planning another attack.

More than a year after his death, sources in Russian security organs claimed that the four mujahedin captured planning to attack the Sapsan train in 2011 were followers of Buryatskii.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Slavic Suicide Bombing Couple: Razdobud’ko and Khorosheva**

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, there were two separate suicide bombings carried out in Gubden, Dagestan. It turned out they were part of a single plot, and the investigation into a previous broken plot created a trail that led to the perpetrators. On New Year’s Eve 2010-2011, Russian media and security sources reported that the accidental detonation of a suicide belt on New Year’s Eve in southeast Moscow was connected to two planned suicide bombings planned for Red and/or Manezh Squares in Moscow during the mass holiday gatherings.<sup>19</sup> The plot was organized by the CE’s RSMB and/or Dagestan Vilaiyat mujahedin. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, a woman of Caucasus nationality, Zavzhat Daudova, apparently accidentally detonated a suicide belt in a single home structure on the property of a sport shooting organization, the “Obyekt” Club, located on Golovacheva Street in southeast Moscow. Daudova was killed and the 80 square meter house was completely destroyed. Her body and that of a companion were badly mutilated and severed by the explosion.<sup>20</sup> On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Zeinab Zalikhanovna Suyunova (born 1986), a woman reportedly of Chechen nationality, was arrested in Volgograd just outside the North Caucasus in connection with the explosion. The 24-year old woman was brought to Moscow for interrogation and was suspected of organizing the attack.<sup>21</sup> Interrogation revealed, however, that the cabin at the rifle club had been rented under her name and that she too was preparing to carry out a suicide bombing in Moscow.<sup>22</sup>

Suyunova’s interrogation led to a series of operations carried out on 29 January 2011. The largest was carried out in Dagestan, where, according to the National Anti-Terrorist Committee’s January 30<sup>th</sup> communique, the FSB arrested four suspected accomplices.<sup>23</sup> The investigation of Suyunova and/or the interrogations of the four male accomplices led to five more suspected accomplices being put on the federal wanted list: Arsen Alievich Magomedov (born 1985), Kamil Magomedovich Magomedov (born 1985), Shamil Paizulaevich Paizulaev (born 1978), Vitalii Yurevich Rasdobud’ko (born 1975), and his common law wife

<sup>17</sup> Said Abu Saad (Buryatskii), “Istishkhad mezhdu pravdoi i lozh’yu,” *Hunafa.com*, 9 December 2009, 1:01, <http://hunafa.com/?p=2514>.

<sup>18</sup> Nikolai Sergeev, “Imarat Kavkaz’ doshel do Moskvy,” *Kommersant*, 19 July 2011, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/1681568](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1681568).

<sup>19</sup> National Anti-Terrorist Committee Press Release, 29 January 2011, 17:00, <http://nak.fsb.ru>, accessed 29 January – 2 February 2011; Sergei Mashkin and Yulia Rybina, “Rodstvennoe bombformirovanie,” *Kommersant*, 1 February 2011, [www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1577424&NodesID=6](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1577424&NodesID=6); and Yan Gordeev, “Terrorist poyavilsya s povinnoi,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 3 February 2011, [www.ng.ru/politics/2011-02-03/2\\_terrorist.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2011-02-03/2_terrorist.html).

<sup>20</sup> Oleg Rubnikovich, Aleksandra Larintseva, and Yuliya Rybina, “SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista,” *Kommersant*, 31 January 2011, [www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1576878](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1576878) and “V Volgograde zaderzhana chechenka, podozrevaemaya v podgotovke terakta v Moskve,” *Novyi region*, 6 January 2011, 06:23, <http://www.nr2.ru/incidents/315407.html>.

<sup>21</sup> “V Volgograde zaderzhana chechenka, podozrevaemaya v podgotovke terakta v Moskve,” *Novyi region*, 6 January 2011, 06:23, <http://www.nr2.ru/incidents/315407.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Rubnikovich, Larintseva, and Rybina, “SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista.”

<sup>23</sup> Rubnikovich, Larintseva, and Rybina, “SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista,” National Anti-Terrorist Committee Press Release, 29 January 2011, 17:00; and Sergei Mashkin and Yulia Rybina, “Rodstvennoe bombformirovanie,” *Kommersant*, 1 February 2011, [www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1577424&NodesID=6](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1577424&NodesID=6).

Marina Igorevna Khorosheva (born 1985). The latter two were ethnic Slavs; the former Ukrainian by ethnicity, the latter an ethnic Russian.<sup>24</sup>

In early reports, Razdobud'ko was implicated in the Domodedovo Airport suicide bombing that was initially thought to be part of a plot organized by the 'Nogai Jamaat', by which is meant the CE's Nogai Steppe Vilaiyat (NSV).<sup>25</sup> The NSV ostensibly runs CE operations in the largely ethnic Russian-populated regions of Krasnodar and Stavropol Krai. However, there has never been any NSV jamaat or amir ever mentioned on the CE's websites, suggesting that the NSV node is embryonic or episodic. In a *Kommersant* article, it was reported that only Razdobud'ko (and presumably Khorosheva) could have been involved in both the New Year's Eve plot and the airport bombing. Stavropol law enforcement authorities told the daily they suspect Razdobud'ko in three attacks: an attack in Pyatigorsk (likely in August 2010), the New Year's Eve failed plot, and Domodedovo. It also reported that law enforcement said the CE was behind both attacks and that Razdobud'ko was never a member of any CE combat jamaat, but was rather part of the CE's reserve to be activated for an important operation. The Russian National Antiterrorism Committee (NAK) reportedly refused to confirm or deny that version. This report gave the distinct smell of the RSMB's mode of operation.<sup>26</sup>

Also, given their Slavic nationality, Razdobud'ko and Khorosheva could have been members of a unit of ethnic Russian CE mujahedin, the Jamaat Muvakhhidun ar-Rusi (JMR) or the Group of the Muwahhidun (Wahhabis) of Russia, first mentioned in August 2009. In November 2009, the JMR claimed responsibility for two attacks: one on a naval weapons arsenal in Zavolskii district, Ulyanovsk and a natural gas storage tank in Ryzdvanyi, Stavropol.<sup>27</sup> It is also possible that the JMR operates under the NSV and was/is led by Pavel Kosolapov.

*Kommersant* and later media reports relayed that Suyunova and Khorosheva studied together in the Pyatigorsk Pharmaceutical Academy in Pyatigorsk, Stavropol. Suyunova introduced Razdobud'ko to Khorosheva, and Razdobud'ko converted the latter to Islam. The couple reportedly had a two-year old child, and Khorosheva was reported to be pregnant.<sup>28</sup> Razdobud'ko, Khorosheva, Suyunova, and the couple's children lived together for a time in Pyatigorsk before moving to Dagestan.<sup>29</sup> Khorosheva may have been the second would-be suicide bomber for the failed New Year's Eve plot.

<sup>24</sup> National Anti-Terrorist Committee Press Release, 29 January 2011, 17:00; Rubnikovich, Larintseva, and Rybina, "SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista;" and Mashkin and Rybina, "Rodstvennoe bombformirovanie."

<sup>25</sup> "Po delu o terakte v 'Domodedovo' razyskivayutsya desyat' chelovek. SMI dobyli foto 'russkogo vakhkhabita' Razdobud'ko," *Newsru.com*, 27 January 2011, 11:43, <http://newsru.ru/russia/27jan2011/oper.html>. The 'Nogai Jamaat' was supposedly destroyed in October 2010 after carrying out a series of attacks in summer. It was said to be behind the 17 August 2010 car bombing near a theater in Pyatigorsk, among other attacks in Stavropol, and planned a similar attack on 30 September in Stavropol. Its amir was 28-year old Tamerlan Gadzhiev, whose family had moved from Dagestan ten years earlier and who maintained contacts with, and often traveled to Dagestan. On October 26<sup>th</sup> Gadzhiev and another Nogai Jamaat fighter were killed and four were captured. Three of the captured were ethnic Nogais, who tend to populate parts of Stavropol and Dagestan. Sergei Mashkin, "Brat'ya iz Chernogo Kurgana," *Kommersant*, 30 October 2010, [www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1531929](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1531929) and Zaderzhannym po podozreniyu v podgotovke trakta ne predyavili obvineniya v terrorizme," *Kavkaz uzal*, 30 October 2010, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/176694/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/176694/).

<sup>26</sup> Rubnikovich, Larintseva, and Rybina, "SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista."

<sup>27</sup> "Muvakhhidun ar-Rusi' vzyala na sebya otvetstvennost' za diversii v Ulyanovske i na Stavropole," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 10:45, 25 November 2009, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/11/25/69355.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/11/25/69355.shtml).

<sup>28</sup> Rubnikovich, Larintseva, and Rybina, "SKP opoznal domodedovskogo terrorista."

<sup>29</sup> Mashkin and Rybina, "Rodstvennoe bombformirovanie."

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, Razdobud'ko and Khorosheva detonated suicide belts in different parts of Gubden, Dagestan. Two policemen were killed and twenty-seven were wounded in the two attacks.<sup>30</sup> Khorosheva attempted to enter a local administration building in Gubden, but was stopped and then detonated her bomb at the door, killing one policeman and wounding five. Razdobud'ko detonated his bomb later that evening when his car was stopped at a police checkpoint also in Gubden, killing one policeman and wounding twenty-two.<sup>31</sup> Razdobud'ko and Khorosheva videotaped an *istishkhad* or martyrdom final testament which was posted on the CE's main website *Kavkaz tsentr*. Razdobud'ko is seen sitting behind the wheel of a car, presumably the one he detonated in Gubden, and gives a long religious lecture about Islam, the obligation of jihad, and the need to raise Allah's word above all others and establish Shariah law on earth. He discusses several Surahs from the Koran and the importance of strict monotheism or *tawhid* ('*edinobozhie*'). Khorosheva's testament follows. She is seen sitting with her head covered and apparently reading a text covering various Islamist/jihadist themes. The videotape is dated 14 February 2011 and titled in the video icon as 'Russian Martyrs, Allah Willing: Vitalii Razdobud'ko and Maria Khorosheva: A Declaration.'<sup>32</sup> The couple's decision to carry out their respective *istishkhad* operations in Gubden strongly suggests their association with the Dagestani mujahedin of the CE's DV and, in particular, the Gubden Jamaat, which has produced two recent DV amirs.<sup>33</sup>

### Viktor Dvorakovskii

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Russian news agencies and the CE's *Kavkaz tsentr* reported that security forces were searching for a 23-year old ethnic Russian named Viktor Dvorakovskii, who was suspected of being an adherent of radical Islam and planning a suicide operation. Three days earlier an explosion had occurred in Pyatigorski, Stavropol when an IED that was being dried on a heating battery exploded, apparently in Dvorakovskii's apartment.<sup>34</sup> Dvorakovskii is reported to have converted to Islam in 2008. Prior to that, he is said to have lived a typical young Russian's life in a Cossack settlement punctuated by frequent visits to nightclubs and popping pills. He is also said to have had some experience in another radical milieu – skinheads. Dvorakovskii attended both the mosque in Pyatigorsk and another in the ethnic Nogai village of Kanglya, attended by Razdobud'ko and another Russian convert to Islam and Islamism, Anton 'Abdullah' Stepanenko.<sup>35</sup>

Dvorakovskii hails from an urban-like settlement in Stavropol called Inozemtsova, located not far from the krai's capitol of Pyatigorsk. Inozemtsova was also the home of Stepanenko. In 1996, then 17-year old Stepanenko converted to Islam and in 2001 he became an imam at a mosque in Pyatigorsk. In January 2006, Stepanenko was arrested by the local Organized Crime Administration on suspicion of kidnapping a member of the Islamic community. 'Wahhabi' literature and explosives were allegedly found in his apartment. On 30

<sup>30</sup> "Smertnitsa sovershila terakt v Dagestane," *Moskovskii komsomolets*, 14 February 2011, 20:26, [www.mk.ru/incident/article/2011/02/14/565642-smertnitsa-sovershila-terakt-v-dagestane.html](http://www.mk.ru/incident/article/2011/02/14/565642-smertnitsa-sovershila-terakt-v-dagestane.html).

<sup>31</sup> "Vtoroe vzryvnoe ustroystvo v Gebdene bylo sobrano na osnove miny," *Kavkaz uzel*, 16 February 2011, 11:33, <http://dagestan.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/181117/>.

<sup>32</sup> "Russkie Shakhidy (inshaLlakh): Obrashchenie Vitaliya Razdobud'ko i Marii Khoroshevoi pered' operatsiei istishkhadiya," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 25 February 2011, 07:58, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/25/79544.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/25/79544.shtml).

<sup>33</sup> A July 2011 newspaper report mentions information tying the couple to the Gubden Jamaat. Vladislav Mal'tsev, "Dzhikhad so slavyanskim litsom," *Nezavisimaya gazeta –Religiya*, 20 July 2011, [http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-20/4\\_jihad.html](http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-20/4_jihad.html).

<sup>34</sup> "V Moskve ishut podozrevaemoe v terrorizme," *Forbes.ru*, 9 March 2011, 10:59, [www.forbes.ru/taxonomy/term/10095](http://www.forbes.ru/taxonomy/term/10095); "V Moskve ishut podozrevaemoe v terrorizme Viktora Dvorakovskogo," *Vesti.ru*, 9 March 2011, 11:20, [www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=434680](http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=434680); Pyotr Revenko, "V Moskve ishut russkogo smertnika," *Utro.ru*, 9 March 2011, 10:15, [www.utro.ru/articles/2011/03/09/960944.shtml](http://www.utro.ru/articles/2011/03/09/960944.shtml); and "Vilaiyat Nogaiskaya Step': Kafiry ishut esho odnogo 'russkogo vakhkabita-smertnika'," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 8 March 2011, 08:14, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/08/79833.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/08/79833.shtml).

<sup>35</sup> Mal'tsev, "Dzhikhad so slavyanskim litsom."

March 2007, the Pyatigorsk city court sentenced him to a year and a half in prison for instigating inter-ethnic and inter-confessional antagonism. Two members of Stepanenko's Muslim group were arrested for their involvement in the 13 October 2005 raid on Nalchik, the capitol of Kabardino-Balkariya. Consequently, according to local Organized Crime Administration officials, his community remains under observation by law enforcement.<sup>36</sup>

The daily *Komsomolskaya pravda* published Dvorakovskii's photo and interviewed some of his friends. It reported that his girlfriend was one Sadulaeva from Dagestan, who studied in the same Pyatigorsk pharmaceutical college as Razdobud'ko and Khorosheva.<sup>37</sup> The landlord of the house where Dvorakovskii and his common law wife Sadulaeva lived said that she had seen the latter often dressed in black and sometimes in a hijab. Sadulaeva was reportedly injured by shards of glass in the accidental explosion in the apartment she shared with Dvorakovskii and her young child and was detained by the police. Sources in the security organs of Russia's North Caucasus Federal District said they were certain the couple had been approached by the CE for recruitment.<sup>38</sup>

Dvorakovskii was at first thought to be the May 10<sup>th</sup> Makhachkala suicide bomber. However, on May 11<sup>th</sup>, it was determined that the May 10<sup>th</sup> suicide bomber was not Dvorakovskii, but rather a Dagestani and Makhachkala resident Abakar Aitperov.<sup>39</sup> Days before Aitperov's attack, the NAK, FSB, and Stavropol's MVD issued a warnings that Dvorakovskii and three other apparently would-be suicide 'shakhids' – 33-year old Eldar Bitae, 20-year old resident of Armavir (Krasnodar) Ibragim Yakhyaevich Torshkoev, and yet another ethnic Russian, the 27-year old Sochi (Krasnodar) resident Aleksandr Dudkin – were preparing to carry out attacks. The NAK and FSB announced a search for Torshkoev (whose name suggests he is an ethnic Ingush) on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, claiming he might be in Chechnya. On May 9<sup>th</sup>, Dvorakovskii, Dudkin, and the others were being hunted by Stavropol's MVD; the former two were said to have recently left from Sochi for Stavropol in order to carry out their suicide attacks.<sup>40</sup>

Dvorakovskii was wounded and captured by police on July 14<sup>th</sup> in Stavropol Krai's village of Inozemtsevo. When asked to stop and present his identification papers by police, he reportedly cried 'Allahu Abbar!' and threw an IED, which wounded two policemen.<sup>41</sup> In attempting to throw a second IED, it detonated and he was injured, which required the amputation of one of his arms.<sup>42</sup> Dvorakovskii's capture could yield important intelligence on the CE and specifically its Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs' Brigade among other things.

### The Astrakhan Russian Jihadists

Two Islamist/jihadist groups with a significant ethnic Russian component were uncovered in Astrakhan. This predominantly ethnic Russian region borders Dagestan and has a large minority population of Tatars and

<sup>36</sup> Mal'tsev, "Dzhikhad so slavyanskim litsom."

<sup>37</sup> Irina Kireeva, "Russkii vakhkahbit mozhnet vzorvat' sebya v Moskve," *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 9 March 2011, <http://ivanovo.kp.ru/daily/25648.4/812760/>.

<sup>38</sup> Kireeva, "Russkii vakhkahbit mozhnet vzorvat' sebya v Moskve" and "V Moskve ishut podozrevaemoe v terrorizme Viktora Dvorakovskogo."

<sup>39</sup> "MVD: samopodryv v Makhachkale sovershil zhitel' goroda Abakar Aitperov," *Kavkaz.uzel*, <http://dagestan.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/185229/>.

<sup>40</sup> "Na Stavropol'e ishut 4 terroristov v svyazi s podgotovki vzryvov cv SKFO," RIA Novosti, 9 May 2011, 14:30, [www.rian.ru/defense\\_safety/20110509/372326177.html](http://www.rian.ru/defense_safety/20110509/372326177.html) and *Webground.su*, 9 May 2011, <http://webground.su/topic/2011/05/09/t257> and "Informatsionnyie soobsheniya," National Anti-Terrorist Committee, 3 May 2011, 10:30, <http://nak.fsb.ru/>, accessed 11 May 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Mal'tsev, "Dzhikhad so slavyanskim litsom."

<sup>42</sup> "Zaderzhannyi po obvineniyu po terrorizme Viktor Dvorakovskii vyshel is komy," *Kavkaz.uzel*, 15 July 2011, 19:25, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189096/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189096/). See also <http://kalmykia.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189009/>.

Dagestanis. Four ethnic Russian mujahedin were involved altogether in these incidents. One group, the Antonov group, was arrested on May 7<sup>th</sup> and charged with preparing a terrorist attack on May 9<sup>th</sup> Victory Day, a day celebrating the victory over Nazi Germany.<sup>43</sup> This group, which included one ethnic Russian and two “residents of republics of the North Caucasians”, was planning attacks similar to those that occurred against police in Astrakhan in July and August 2010.<sup>44</sup> “Weapons, ammunition, scopes, binoculars, containers with metal balls, Wahhabi literature, and camouflage” were confiscated.<sup>45</sup> In the early hours of May 9<sup>th</sup>, a group of SpetsNaz (Special Forces troops) was fired upon in the village of Solyanka in Trusov District, Astrakhan. The shots came from a passing car in which the female driver apparently fired a non-lethal pistol. It is unclear whether this incident was tied to jihadis or the uncovered May 9<sup>th</sup> plot.<sup>46</sup> The CE’s main website *Kavkaz tseñtr* reported that 30-year old Andrei Antonov, an ethnic Russian Muslim, was killed in Astrakhan that day when he tried to detonate an explosive device as SpetsNaz approached him. Antonov’s cousin also was arrested on May 9<sup>th</sup> and allegedly found to be in possession of “extremist literature” (see more below).<sup>47</sup> After the May 9<sup>th</sup> attack, the perpetrators were planning to head for the North Caucasus and join the mujahedin.<sup>48</sup>

Subsequently, Andrei Antonov was charged along with Mussa Yaslov, a 35-year old ethnic Chechen born in Kazakhstan and residing in Astrakhan, with exploding a bomb in Volgograd near the building of the Traffic Control Police (GIBDD) and attempting to do the same near the MVD building on 26 April 2011. The motive was reportedly hatred towards those not professing radical Islamist ideas. Casualties were said to have been just barely avoided, and the bomb was reportedly loaded with nails and bolts to maximize bloodshed. The group was said to have consisted of six men who met at one of Astrakhan’s more than 40 mosques in December 2010.<sup>49</sup>

An alleged second cell was uncovered in Astrakhan on May 13<sup>th</sup> when Russian security forces carried out a broad search and detention operation targeting 12 addresses in Astrakhan. The “extremist organization ‘Dzhamaat’” turned out to be six members of Tabligh Jamaat. This group included a pair of ethnic Russian brothers from Astrakhan with the last name Avdonin.<sup>50</sup> Tabligh Jamaat, a Pakistani religious organization, is not typically known for supporting violent jihad, but it is banned in Russia and many other former Soviet republics, particularly in Central Asia. The detainees possessed alleged “extremist literature” and were proselytizing radical Islamist views in Astrakhan’s Central Mosque.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>43</sup> “Oblava na ‘dzhamaata’ v Astrakhani – zaderzhany dva chlena ekstremistkoi organizatsii,” *Newsru.ru*, 14 May 2011, 9:23 and 18:31, [www.newsru.ru/russia/14may2011/dj.html](http://www.newsru.ru/russia/14may2011/dj.html).

<sup>44</sup> “Oblava na ‘dzhamaata’ v Astrakhani – zaderzhany dva chlena ekstremistkoi organizatsii.”

<sup>45</sup> “Astrahanskuyu bandy zapodosrili v podgotovke terakta na 9 maya,” *Lenta.ru*, 8 May 2011, <http://lenta.ru/news/2011/05/08/band2/>.

<sup>46</sup> “Sotrudniki spetsnaza obstrelyany v Astrakhani, napadavshii zaderzhan,” *Ast-News.ru*, 9 May 2011, 17:38, [www.ast-news.ru/node/4000](http://www.ast-news.ru/node/4000) and “Astrakhan: V noch’ 9 maya atakovana gruppa politseiskogo spetsnaza,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 9 May 2011, 12:48, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/09/81398.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/09/81398.shtml).

<sup>47</sup> “Astrakhan: V noch’ 9 maya atakovana gruppa politseiskogo spetsnaza,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 9 May 2011, 12:48, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/09/81398.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/09/81398.shtml).

<sup>48</sup> Vladislav Mal’tsev, “Vtoroi front terroristicheskoi voiny,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta – Religiya*, 6 July 2011, [http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-06/5\\_terror.html](http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-06/5_terror.html).

<sup>49</sup> Vladislav Mal’tsev, “Vtoroi front terroristicheskoi voiny,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta – Religiya*, 6 July 2011, [http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-06/5\\_terror.html](http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2011-07-06/5_terror.html).

<sup>50</sup> Mal’tsev, “Vtoroi front terroristicheskoi voiny.”

<sup>51</sup> “Oblava na ‘dzhamaata’ v Astrakhani – zaderzhany dva chlena ekstremistkoi organizatsii.”

It remains unclear whether these Astrakhan groups or their ethnic Russian Islamic converts had any prior ties to the CE. It is well-known to IIPER readers that in early 2010 CE amir Umarov declared the “liberation” of Astrakhan, Krasnodar, and the Volga area as one of the CE’s immediate goals.

### **From *Primorskie Partizany* to Mujahedin?**

The abovementioned Dvorakovskii may not be the only ethnic Russian convert to jihadism to have been involved in ultra-nationalist activity. Russian sources and the CE’s main website *Kavkaz tsentr*, reported in late May and early June that two former ethnic Russian neo-fascists were arrested, convicted, and sent to prison as part of the so-called ‘Primore Guerillas’ in 2010, for engaging in attacks on MVD police in the Far East region. While in jail, both converted to Islam. The reports came with photos of them sitting in skullcaps. One is named Aleksandr Kovtun.<sup>52</sup> Subsequently, a third Primore partisan, Roman Savchenko, was reported to have also converted.<sup>53</sup> The implication in the *Kavkaz tsentr* reporting is that the CE hopes they will become mujahedin once released.

### **Another Female Islamic Convert-Mujahed from Stavropol**

In addition to Khorosheva and Suyunova, another alleged female ethnic Russian convert, 21-year old Inna ‘Mariam’ Cherenkova, hailed from Stavropol. Cherenkova was killed in a 24 July 2011 special operation in the city of Dagestanskii Ognii, Dagestan along with two male representatives of Caucasus nationalities. Dagestani authorities announced they had killed 25 year-old Mekhtibek Bashirov and 28 year-old Islamudin Guseinov and captured 22 year-old Zagra Kadimagomedova during the operation. Cherenkova and Kadimagomedova were said by Russian law enforcement to have been would-be suicide bombers, and the group was reported to be planning terrorist attacks in central Russia. Some Russian experts supported Russian law enforcement’s interpretation of the case; others questioned whether Cherenkova was actually a terrorist.<sup>54</sup>

### **Ethnic Russian Mujahedin on Other Fronts of the Global Jihad**

The CE mujahedin may also be supplying ethnic Russian mujahedin to other fronts in the global jihadi revolutionary movement. *Islamdin*, the website of the CE network’s United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya and Karachai (OVKBK) operating in the KBR and KChR, published a poem “Under the Infidel” by one Amin, identifying himself as a Russian (‘russkii’, that is, an ethnic Russian) mujahed in Waziristan, Pakistan.<sup>55</sup> Waziristan is the base of the AQ-tied IMU successor organization, the Islamic Jihadi Union (IJU), which has had a close relationship with the CE, including the training of mujahedin who have returned to the CE. The IJU has issued messages noting the presence of ethnic Russian and other mujahedin from the Caucasus (see IIPER, No. 45). Could ethnic Russian mujahedin be undergoing training for operations targeting the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games?

### **Implications**

At least five implications can be drawn from the above. First, the CE’s last two years demonstrate a growing trend of ethnic Russian converts joining the jihad, many of who are becoming suicide bombers. Second, this trend supports the hypothesis that recent converts, in their zealotry and shallow knowledge of

<sup>52</sup> “Islam i Primorskie partizany,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 31 May 2011, 23:00, <http://kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/31/82050.shtml>.

<sup>53</sup> “Yeshe odin primorskii partisan Roman Savchenko prinyal v tyurme Islam,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 2 June 2011, 11:30, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/02/82099.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/02/82099.shtml).

<sup>54</sup> “Ubityie v Dagestanskikh Ognnykh lyudi gotovili terakty v tsentral’noi Rossii, schitayut siloviki,” *Kavkaz uzal*, 26 July 2011, 17:59, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189735/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189735/).

<sup>55</sup> Amin - Russkii mujahed v Vaziristane, “Pod kufrom,” *Islamdin*, 6 July 2010, 22:22, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=831:2010-07-06-22-40-55&catid=36:2009-11-12-19-39-41&Itemid=32](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=831:2010-07-06-22-40-55&catid=36:2009-11-12-19-39-41&Itemid=32).

Islam, are more susceptible to radicalism and more easily manipulated into becoming suicide bombers. Third, many of these ethnic Russian mujahedin have had ties to Dagestan, Dagestani (ethnic Nogai and other) communities in eastern Stavropol, and the CE's Dagestani DV. However, they tend to hail from Astrakhan and act in both Astrakhan and Krasnodar, facilitating the CE's expansion of its operations and network beyond the ethnic Muslim republics of the North Caucasus into both the western (Stavropol) and northeastern (Astrakhan) regions. Fourth, the increased jihadi activity to the west in Stavropol brings the mujahedin closer to Krasnodar where the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games are to be held. Fifth, this could mean that the CE may be trying to build up a cadre of ethnic Russian or Slavic attackers and a network closer to Sochi so as to allow easier infiltration of Sochi in order to attack the Games.

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## CE CONTINUES TO PROPAGATE AL QA`IDA AND TALIBAN

CE websites responded to the leadership change in Al Qa`ida after U.S. forces killed Osama bin Laden. *UmmaNews.com* posted an UmmaNews TV Russian-language translation of the video of new AQ amir Ayman al-Zawahiri's 'Appeal to the Islamic Umma' (Obrashenie k Islamskoi Umme) made in the wake of bin Laden's death, announcing Zawahiri as his successor, and Zawahiri's bayat to Taliban leader Mullah Omar. The video begins with an excerpt from a video of bin Laden in which he threatens U.S. security since Muslims lack security supposedly because of American actions.<sup>56</sup> The website of the CE OVKBK, *Islamdin.com*, carried a link to Zawahiri's statement declaring *bayat* to Mullah Omar from DailyMotion.com and a text announcement of Zawahiri's *bayat* to Mullah Omar.<sup>57</sup> The CE's main website *Kavkaz tsentr* also published an interview with Mullah Omar.<sup>58</sup>

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the CE website *UmmaNews.com* posted a Russian translation of an article by Samir Khan, the editor of AQ's English-language journal *Inspire*, on the importance of the psychological media war or "media conflict" from *Inspire*'s seventh issue published in September. The Russian translation includes a link to the original English-language version. The 20-year old Khan was killed in the same drone attack that killed Al Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) operative and propagandist Anwar al-Awlaki. In his article, Khan recalls how AQAP amir Sheikh Abu Basyr emphasized to him that, "media work is half of the jihad," repeating, according to Khan, "the words of Sheikh Osama (bin Laden)." Khan asserts that he did not fully understand "the seriousness of the power of the media-Jihad" until he was in America. The gist of Khan's article is that the U.S. has no ideological response to AQ's ideology. Whether a provocation or not, Khan notes: "I personally visited the mosque in America, and in all of them it is possible to notice a large group of Muslims with an anti-American mindset even if they do not carry them over into action." Friends of his who attended mosque in other U.S. cities reported to him the same. Khan adds that the same is true in Europe and the Muslim world and concludes by noting that the battle between Islam and the West will continue until "they are rendered powerless before our authority."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> "Sheikh Aima az-Zawahiri" Obrashenie k Islamskoi Umme," *UmmaNews TV*, [http://tv.ummanews.com/index.php?option=com\\_hdflvplayer&id=41](http://tv.ummanews.com/index.php?option=com_hdflvplayer&id=41).

<sup>57</sup> "Novyi lider Al'-Kaidy prislyagnul Amiru IEA Mullo Omaru," *Islamdin.com*, [www.islamdin.com/?p=1043](http://www.islamdin.com/?p=1043). For the Daily Motion link, see [www.dailymotion.com/video/xjg72x\\_yyyy-yyyyy-yy-yyyyyyyyy-yyyyyyyyy-y-yyyyyyyyy-yyyy-ummanews\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xjg72x_yyyy-yyyyy-yy-yyyyyyyyy-yyyyyyyyy-y-yyyyyyyyy-yyyy-ummanews_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>58</sup> "Interv'yu s Amirov pravovernikh Islamskogo Emirata Afganistan Mulloi Mukhammedom Umarom," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 14 October 2011, 01:42, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/14/85858.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/14/85858.shtml).

The above is but a selection of the pro-AQ, pro-Taliban, and AQ and Taliban materials published on CE sites in October 2011.

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## CE PAYS HOMAGE TO AWLAKI

The CE's main website *Kavkaz tseñtr*, the website of the CE's Ingushetiya network, the Galgaiche Vilaiyat (GV), and other CE media published a tribute to Anwar al-Awlaki, the Al Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) operative, theo-ideologist, and propagandist who was killed in a U.S. drone attack in Yemen in late September.

Awlaki was a key AQ recruiter tied to several attacks and attempted attacks on the U.S. and Europe over the past few years, including the 9/11 attacks and two of its perpetrators, the 2009 Fort Hood, Texas shootings, the failed 2009 Christmas Day airplane bombing over Detroit, and the failed November 2010 UPS package bombings. He was and will remain a near permanent presence on CE-affiliated websites and appears to have established an indirect relationship with the CE through the Ansar al-Mujahideen web forum that organized a Russian-language forum and website in cooperation with the CE's United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya and Karachai (OVKBK) and its website *Islamdin.com* (See IIPER, Nos. 13, 20, 21, 26, 30-32, 37, 38, 40 and 42).

Awlaki's possible death was reported on CE websites immediately following the first Western media reports. The CE's main website *Kavkaz tseñtr* and *Islamdin.com* published a summary and excerpts of the official Al Qa`ida announcement confirming Awlaki's death.<sup>60</sup> On the eve of Awlaki's demise, *Islamdin.com* published the tenth part of his lecture on Abu Bakr as-Syddik translated from English to Russian by a "brother" of the CE and OVKBK from Kyrgyzstan.<sup>61</sup> In July, *Islamdin.com* posted Part 7 of the series in which Awlaki underscores the importance of Muslims giving not just the small *bayat* (Islamic loyalty oath) to an amir or teacher but the "large bayat" "to the Caliphate."<sup>62</sup>

The October 12<sup>th</sup> article of homage includes a list of Awlaki's lectures and a summary biographical sketch. The homage also praises Awlaki for demonstrating one of the main themes of his lectures emphasizing that the ability of a Muslim to give his life for jihad is the highest evidence of a Muslim's sincerity. Obviously, the CE propagandist who wrote the article, Muslim Galanchozhskii, is trying to use Awlaki's '*shakhad*' or martyrdom to motivate other Muslims, particularly those in the North Caucasus, to give up their lives for the jihad.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> "Samir Khan: 'Media-konflikt' iz 7-ogo vypuska zhurnala 'al-Kaidiy' 'Vdokhnovlai'," *UmmaNews.com*, 1 October 2011, 23:19, <http://ummanews.com/articles/3496--1-r-7-1-r-lr.html>.

<sup>60</sup> "Yemen: Prishlo podtverzhdienie Shakhady (inshaa-Llakh) Sheikha Anvara al'-Avlaki," *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 10 October 2011, 23:32, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/10/85791.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/10/85791.shtml) and Prishlo podtverzhdienie Shakhady (inshaa-Llakh) Sheikha Anvara al'-Avlaki," *Islamdin.com*, [www.islamdin.com/?p=1426](http://www.islamdin.com/?p=1426).

<sup>61</sup> "Abu Bakr as Syddik – Chast 10. Dzhikha s verootstupnikami. (Prodolzhenie)," *Islamdin.com*, [www.islamdin.com/?p=1378](http://www.islamdin.com/?p=1378).

<sup>62</sup> "Abu Bakr As Syddik. Chast – 7. Inauguratsiya," *Islamdin.com*, 13 July 2011, 08:25, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1169:-7&catid=22:2009-02-08-20-36-11&Itemid=27](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1169:-7&catid=22:2009-02-08-20-36-11&Itemid=27).

<sup>63</sup> "Voistinu, ya – odin iz musuluman'," *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 12 October 2011, 13:51, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/12/85827.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/10/12/85827.shtml) and "Ch'ya rech' prekrasnee, chem togo, kto prizyvaet k

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## CE WEBSITE POSTS MAQDISI COMMENT ON CE MUJAHEDIN'S SALAFIST-JIHADIST CREDENTIALS

In October, the CE OVKBK's website *Islamdin.com* and the official website of the CE's Dagestan Vilaiyat *VDagestan.info* posted a response, translated from Arabic into Russian, of leading jihadi philosopher Abu Mohammad Asem al-Maqdisi. Maqdisi's response was an answer to a question about the "methodology and religious convictions of the mujahedin in the Caucasus Emirate." Maqdisi replied that both the CE mujahedin's methodology and religious convictions are "ahlu sunna wal-jama'a," meaning that the CE's methodology and theo-ideology corresponds to that which adherents to the Sunna of the Prophet Mohammed hold to - that is, the true Islamic teachings and practices taught by Allah to the Prophet Mohammed and relayed in the Koran's verses and by Mohammed's conduct as relayed by his most immediate companions in the Sunna's hadiths as understood or interpreted by Islamists and jihadists. The original Arabic version appears on Maqdisi's website [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws) at the link [www.tawhed.ws/FAQ/display\\_question?qid=252](http://www.tawhed.ws/FAQ/display_question?qid=252) and was translated into Russian, according to *Islamdin.com*, by one Mamlyuk from "Western Cherkessiya, i.e. Krasnodar Krai."<sup>64</sup>

IIPER readers will recall that Maqdisi endorsed the CE as a legitimate 'ahlu sunna wal-jama'a' or Salafi-jihadi organization back in September 2009. Maqdisi is regarded by the United States Military Academy's Combatting Terrorism Center as the most influential jihadi theo-ideologist and propagandist. He is currently imprisoned in Jordan for his jihadi activities.

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## CE-AFFILIATED WEBSITE'S DATA ON THE NUMBER OF CE ATTACKS AND RESULTING CASUALTIES FROM JANUARY THROUGH AUGUST 2011

The CE-affiliated website *UmmaNews.com* continues to issue monthly reports on the number of attacks carried out by the CE mujahedin and the casualties that have resulted from those attacks (and presumably Russian counter-terrorism operations) in the North Caucasus. The data does not include the 24 January 2011 Moscow Domodedovo Airport suicide bombing carried out by the CE, its Riyadus Salikhiin Martyrs' Brigade and, specifically, the ethnic Ingush mujahed and Ingushetiya native Magomed Yevloev.<sup>65</sup> The data for the North

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Allakhu, postupaet pravedno i govorit: 'Voistinu, ya – odin iz musulman?'" *Hunafa.com*, 11 October 2011, 10:22, <http://hunafa.com/2011/10/chya-rech-prekrasnee-chem-rech-togo-kto-prizyvaet-k-allaxu-postupaet-pravedno-i-govorit-voistinu-ya-%e2%80%93-odin-iz-musulman/>.

<sup>64</sup> "Sheikh Abu Mukhammad al'-Makdisi o veroybezhdennii i metodologii mudzhakhidov Imarata Kavkaz," *Islamdin.com*, October 2011, [www.islamdin.com/?p=1366](http://www.islamdin.com/?p=1366) and "Sheikh Abu Mukhammad al'-Makdisi o veroybezhdennii i metodologii mudzhakhidov Imarata Kavkaz," *VDagestan.info*, 29 September 2011, <http://vdagestan.info/2011/09/29/%d1%88%d0%b5%d0%b9%d1%85-%d0%b0%d0%b1%d1%83-%d0%bc%d1%83%d1%85-%d0%b0%d0%bc-%d0%bc-%d0%b0%d0%b4-%d0%b0%d0%bb%d1%8c-%d0%bc-%d0%b0%d0%ba-%d0%b4-%d0%b8%d1%81-%d0%b8-%d0%be-%d0%b2-%d0%b5%d1%80-%d0%be%d1%83-%d0%b1/>.

<sup>65</sup> For the Moscow Domodedovo Airport attack see "V osushchestvlenii terakta v aeroportu Domodedovo uchastvovali, kak minimum, 5 chelovek," *Ekho Moskvy*, 8 February 2011, 21:00, <http://echo.msk.ru/news/748417-echo.html> and

Caucasus also does not include the assassination of Colonel Yurii Budanov in June for which CE amir Dokku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov took responsibility for in July.<sup>66</sup> IIPER adds these two attacks to the data below. The data does include the two 14 February 2011 coordinated suicide bombings carried out in Gubden, Dagestan by the ethnic Russian couple of Vitallii Razdobud’ko and Maria Khorosheva. Also, since the reports continue to divide fatalities and wounded into the categories of *kafiry* (infidels) and *murtady* or *marinonetki* (apostates or puppets), we are unable to delineate between casualties among state agents and those among civilians from the jihadi sources, as we do for our own estimate. Therefore, we are including the total number of fatalities and wounded.

The CE’s data through August shows that in the first eight months of 2011 the CE mujahedin are claiming responsibility for carrying out 546 attacks: 543 in the North Caucasus and 3 in Moscow (see Table 1).

**Table 1. CE Data on Number of Attacks and Casualties in the First Eight Months of 2011 (figures for June through August are in parentheses).**

Vilaiyat of the Caucasus Emirate	Attacks/Incidents	“Infidels”/ “Apostates” Killed	“Infidels”/ “Apostates” Wounded	Mujahedin Killed
Nokchicho Vilaiyat or NV (Chechnya)	55 (27)	46 (29)	127 (65)	20 (0)
Galgaiche Vilaiyat or GV (Ingushetia)	71 (47)	30 (21)	37 (29)	14 (1)
Dagestan Vilaiyat or DV (Dagestan)	321 (134)	181 (80)	283 (138)	85 (27)
OVKKB*	93 (30)	45 (11)	51 (12)	26 (9)
Nogai Steppe Vilaiyat**	3 (0)	5 (0)	6 (0)	0 (0)
Moscow***	3*** (0)	40 (0)	180 (0)	1 (0)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>546 (238)</b>	<b>347 (141)</b>	<b>684 (234)</b>	<b>146 (37)</b>

\*OVKKB – the United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya and Karachai, the CE’s jihadi network the North Caucasus republics of Kabardino-Balkariya and Karachaevo-Cherkessiya.

\*\* Nogai Steppe Vilaiyat covers the North Caucasus regions of Krasnodar Krai and Stavropol Krai for the CE.

\*\*\* Two CE-claimed attacks in Moscow but not attributed to the CE in non-jihadi sources. One attack and the attendant casualties are from the 24 January 2011 suicide bombing at Moscow’s Domodeovo Airport not included in the mujahedin’s numbers on casualties in the North Caucasus.

SOURCES: The data for attacks in the North Caucasus was provided by the CE-affiliated website UmmaNews.com: “Imarat Kavkaz. Svodka boevikh deistvii modzhakhedov Imarata Kavkaz za mesyats Safar 1432 goda po Khidzhre (Yanvar’ 2011),” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 5 February 2011, 23:30, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/05/78900.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/05/78900.shtml) citing UmmaNews.com; “Imarat Kavkaz:

“Terakt v Domodedove podgotovili i proveli, kak minimum, 5 chelovek,” *Ekho Moskvyy*, 8 February 2011, 22:03, <http://echo.msk.ru/news/748430-echo.html>.

<sup>66</sup> “Amir IK Dokku Abu Usman: ‘Uchast’ Budanova ozhidaet i drugikh prestupnikov’,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 23 July 2011, 19:02, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/23/83755.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/23/83755.shtml).

Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za rabi' al'-avval' 1432 goda po Khidzhre (4 fevralya – 5 marta 2011 g.," *Umma News*, 6 March 2011, 14:31, <http://ummanews.com/news/last-news/734-----1432---4---5--2011-.html> and *Kavkaz tsentr*, 6 March 2011, 17:09, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/06/79792.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/06/79792.shtml); "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats rabias-sani 1432 po khidzhre (6 marta – 5 aprelya 2011 g.," *UmmaNews.com*, 6 April 2011, 13:30, <http://ummanews.com/news/last-news/977--1432-6-5-2011-.html> and "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevikh operatsii," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 April 2011, 13:19, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/04/07/80520.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/04/07/80520.shtml); "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats dzhumada al'-ulya 1432 goda po khidzhre (6 aprelya – 3 maya 2011 g.)," *Umma News*, 4 May 2011, 2:18, <http://ummanews.ru/news/last-news/1197--1432-6-3-2011-.html> and "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 4 May 2011, 18:00, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/04/81270.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/04/81270.shtml); "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats dzhumada as-sani 1423 goda," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 6 June 2011, 21:20, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/06/82267.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/06/82267.shtml); "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats dzhumada as-sani 1423 goda po khidzhre (4 maya – 3 iyunya)," *UmmaNews.com*, 6 June 2011, 18:43, [www.ummanews.com/news/last-news/1478-----c--1432---4---3--2011-.html](http://www.ummanews.com/news/last-news/1478-----c--1432---4---3--2011-.html); "Imarat Kavkaz: Svodka boevikh deistvii i poter' za iyun' 2011 goda," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 1 July 2011, 19:04, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/01/83065.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/01/83065.shtml); "Imarat Kavkaz. Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats shaaban 1432 goda po khidzhre (2 iyulua – 1 avgusta 2011 g.)," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 2 August 2011, 15:14, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/08/02/84027.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/08/02/84027.shtml); and "Imarat Kavkaz. Svodka boevykh operatsii modzhakhedov za mesyats Ramadan 1432 goda po khidzhre (1 avgusta – 29 avgusta 2011 g.)," *Umma News*, 31 August 2011, 22:30, <http://ummanews.com/news/kavkaz/2866-----1432---1---29--2011--.html>.

The largest number of CE attacks continues to be carried out by the CE's Dagestani mujahedin, the so-called Dagestan Vilaiyat mujahedin. This has been the case for more than a year, since April 2010. Now, according to the mujahedin's data, 59 percent of the jihadi attacks carried out in Russia this year have occurred in Dagestan. The Chechen mujahedin of the CE's Nokchicho (Chechnya) Vilaiyat (NV) continue to be the laggards. The explanation for this may be the political activity involved in the return of the breakaway or independent NV amirs and fighters that was announced in late July, ending the nearly year-long schism between CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov and the bulk of the NV amirs and fighters. According CE data, the Galgaiche Vilaiyat (GV) covering Ingushetiya and North Ossetiya remained ahead of Chechnya, while the OVKBK, covering Kabardino-Balkariya and Karachaevo-Cherkessiya, continues to be the second most active vilaiyat, as it has been since spring of last year. In sum, the CE's own data shows that its jihad is becoming an almost purely Dagestani effort.

If one compares IIPER's numbers for the first six months, which relies on both jihadi and non-jihadi sources' reporting, with the CE's figures for the first eight months, it appears that the mujahedin are producing increasingly higher figures than IIPER and others. However, the CE's data is not as inaccurate as one might expect and may be more accurate and little, if at all, inflated as far as we can know.

## HOW MANY MUJAHEDIN ARE THERE IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS?

According to the Russian president's plenipotentiary envoy in the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFO), Aleksandr Khloponin, currently there are approximately a thousand terrorists remaining on the NCFO's territory of the North Caucasus Federal District. Khloponin claimed that all the leaders of the "bandit formations" or the jihadi groups are known to the authorities and the mujahedin are mostly financed from within the country by way of getting money from representatives of local business: "The latest analysis has shown that the proportion of financing from abroad and, let's say, within Russia, is 10 to 90 in Russia's favor. This means that there is no need to obtain for this some sort of grants or support from international foundations and some other, so to say, international terrorist organizations, such as Al-Qa'ida. It is enough for them (bandit formations) to put the squeeze directly on businesses and there will be much more of this money for the

implementation of their tasks.” Khloponin’s comments were made in an interview given to Russia’s English-language television channel ‘Russia Today’ on 30 September 2011.<sup>67</sup>

Earlier, in May of this year, the CE *Kavkaz tseñtr* reported a claim, supposedly made by a member of Vladimir Zhirinovskii’s Liberal Democratic Party, that there are 3,000 mujahedin in Russia.<sup>68</sup> In June, *Kavkaz tseñtr* noted the FSB’s claim that there were 340 mujahedin in Ingushetiya. Extrapolating from that figure and the fact that there is 10 large nationalities in the North Caucasus engaged in the jihad, *Kavkaz tseñtr* proposed there are at least 3,400 mujahedin. It added that there are more than 100 nationalities in the North Caucasus.<sup>69</sup> Using a different methodology – taking into account that Ingushetiya’s population was just under 500,000 according to the 2010 Russian census results and the population of North Caucasus’s four main republics including Ingushetiya (plus Dagestan, Chechnya, and Kabardino-Balkariya) is approximately 5.5 million, we get a figure of 3,740 mujahedin in the North Caucasus. However, given the low level of jihadi activity in Ingushetiya, the base figure of 340 mujahedin confounds either result, regardless of methodology. If the figure of 340 mujahedin in Ingushetiya includes part-time fighters and active non-fighting facilitators and supporters providing intelligence, funding, and other forms of material support, then it seems such figures could be accurate.

However, an unidentified source in Russia’s National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAK) reported in July that there are approximately 1,500-2,000 fighters in Dagestan. The source reported particularly large jihadi presences in Makhachkala, Kizlyar, Derbent, and the “distant mountainous areas” in particular Agvali and Botlikh (a target of the 1999 jihadi invasion that kicked off the second war) and that the Dagestani mujahedin had a “common strategic command and good communications at the tactical level.”<sup>70</sup> If the source’s numbers are accurate, then the figure of 3,740 or certainly 3,000 (as opposed to the estimates of 800-1,500 just a few years ago) is possible to attain.

Defections from normal civilian life to the mujahedin might also explain any possible summer upsurge in the number of mujahedin. There were reports of 120 young men ‘leaving for the forest’ in July from Kurchalo, Gudermes and Shali. There were also reports of “successful businessmen” and Ramzan Kadyrov “apostates” heading to the mujahedin in the forest.<sup>71</sup> Thus, there appears to be some indications that the number of mujahedin in the North Caucasus has grown. Not the least weighty piece of evidence is the growing number of attacks carried out annually since 2007.

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<sup>67</sup> “Russian Official Says About 1,000 Rebels Still Remain In North Caucasus RIA-Novosti,” *Russia Today*, 30 September 2011, [www.russiatoday.ru](http://www.russiatoday.ru).

<sup>68</sup> “Khadzhi-Tarkhan: Russkie okkupanty soobshili o nalichii v strane 3 tysyach modzhakhedov,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 30 May 2011, 16:37, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/30/82012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/05/30/82012.shtml).

<sup>69</sup> “Imarat Kavkaz: Lubyanka nechayanno naschitala na Kavkaze 3740 modzhakhedov. Rovno stol’ko ikh naschityvali i 11 let nazad,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 13 June 2011, 23:41, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/13/82492.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/06/13/82492.shtml).

<sup>70</sup> “Dagestan ukhodit v podpol’e,” *Argumenty.ru*, 4 July 2011, 10:24, <http://news.argumenty.ru/crime/2011/07/114166?type=all>.

<sup>71</sup> “MVD: v Chechne presleduetsya gruppa boevikov pod rukovodstvom bratev Gakaevykh,” *Kavkaz uzal*, 3 July 2011, 11:15, <http://chechnya.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/188344/>; “Zhiteli Chechny soobshayut o podzhogakh domov rodstvennikov boevikov, siloviki svedeniya oprovergayut,” *Kavkaz uzal*, 6 July 2011, 11:10, <http://chechnya.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/188469/>; “V techenie iyunya v gory k modzhakhedam ushli okolo 120 chechenskikh parnei,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 3 July 2011, 12:15, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/03/83092.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/03/83092.shtml).

## NATIONALISM, ISLAMISM, AND JIHADISM IN THE VOLGA-URAL

The Islamic web portal *Golos Islam* re-posted a communiqué from a branch of the Tatar nationalist organization All-Tatar Public Center (VTOTs) in Naberezhnyi Chelny.<sup>72</sup> Traditionally, the Naberezhnyi Chelny branch of VTOTS (NChOVTOTs) has been the most radical branch of the organization and has been spearheaded by Rafis Kashapov.<sup>73</sup> The statement criticized a search conducted by Tatarstan security agents of the apartment of Tatarstan’s “oldest public figure”, former chairwoman of VTOTs Zinur Agliullina, the seizure of her property (presumably as evidence), and the criminal case opened against Agliullina and Kashapov for inciting inter-ethnic antagonism. *Golos Islam* reiterated the charges made by Kashapov and Agliullina that the Ryssian/Tatarstan authorities “cynically spit and trample on the Tatar language of a state-forming people of Russia.”<sup>74</sup>

The statement claims that the case against the VTOTs leaders was opened in response to actions taken by “Tatarphobes” V.A. Tikhonov and Olga Samson. The former is a chairman of Naberezhnyi Chelny’s Antifascist Committee, and the latter organized a demonstration in April 2011 against the teaching of the Tatar language in Tatarstan’s schools, according to the NChOVTOTS statement. Kashapov has had a series of run-ins with Tatarstan authorities and has served some prison time for his ethno-political activities. Most recently, in October 2010, he and Agliullina were called to the prosecutor’s office in Naberezhnyi Chelny, issued a warning, and forbidden from leaving the city.<sup>75</sup>

Agliullina is said in the report to have been preparing to travel to Kazan when her apartment was searched in October. She was to attend an 11 October meeting of the Tatar nationalist youth organization ‘Azatlyk’, the annual VTOTs congress on 14 October, and the annual October 15<sup>th</sup> demonstration commemorating those killed defending Kazan in 1552 from Russian and allied Tatar forces who took the city and incorporated the Kazan Khanate into the emerging Russian empire.<sup>76</sup> To some extent, Tatar nationalism overlaps with Islamic identity and even Islamism and jihadism. For example, Kashapov served a prison term in part because he posted articles on the CE mujahedin’s main website *Kavkaz tsentr*.<sup>77</sup> *Golos Islam* re-posted the statement from the Tatar quasi-Islamist, quasi-Tatar nationalist website *Tatarskaya Gazeta* ([www.tatargazeta.ru](http://www.tatargazeta.ru)).<sup>78</sup>

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## MEDVEDEV NOTES THE PRESENCE OF “EXTREMIST STRUCTURES” IN BASHKIRIYA

Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev noted in a meeting with students at Moscow State University in Moscow on 22 October 2011 that “the FSB and other law enforcement organs regularly report” to him about the

<sup>72</sup> “Antifashchizm ili fashchizm protiv Tatarskogo naroda,” *Golos Islam*, 11 October 2011, 19:04, <http://golosislama.ru/news.php?id=2755>.

<sup>73</sup> For more on NChOVTOTs and Kashapov, see Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia’s Islamic Threat* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 198-206.

<sup>74</sup> “Antifashchizm ili fashchizm protiv Tatarskogo naroda.”

<sup>75</sup> “Antifashchizm ili fashchizm protiv Tatarskogo naroda.”

<sup>76</sup> “Antifashchizm ili fashchizm protiv Tatarskogo naroda.”

<sup>77</sup> Hahn, *Russia’s Islamic Threat*, p. 205.

<sup>78</sup> “Antifashchizm ili fashchizm protiv Tatarskogo naroda.”

presence of “extremist structures” in Bashkortostan and that those structures need to be “mercilessly repressed.”<sup>79</sup> The CE-affiliated website *Umma News* emphasized that Medvedev urged repressing “Muslims” and noted that, “some still think that there are no conditions for armed Jihad in Bashkortostan.”<sup>80</sup>

IIPER readers will recall that there was one jihadi attack in Tatarstan last year and several in Bashkortostan last year as well as one thus far this year. Along with its ethnic Muslim Bashkir plurality, Bashkortostan has a large ethnic Tatar minority of some 30 percent. Moreover, as IIPER readers will recall, a group of self-declared mujahedin appealed to CE amir Dokku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov to include their self-proclaimed “Idel-Ural Vilaiyat” (IUV) within the CE and for support to set up and supply training camps in the southern Ural mountains in order to carry out terrorist attacks presumably in Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. A later statement from the IUV posted on the CE’s main website *Kavkaz tseñtr* in July, claimed sovereignty over 21 regions of Russia including Tatarstan and Bashkortostan and noted the existence of an Idel-Ural Emirate (IUE). The amir of the IUV was said to be one ‘Seifullah.’ The statement noted that the two groups had simultaneously formed in 2009 and that the question of which group would represent the Idel-Ural’s jihadists was now before a group of unidentified Islamic scholars.<sup>81</sup>

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## RUSSIAN MUFTI ASHIROV REJECTS RUSSIAN COURT DECISIONS

Co-chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia (SMR), Nafigulla Ashirov, said Muslims could ignore a decision of Russia’s Supreme Court that ruled against making the Islamic holidays Kurban-bairam (Id al-Adha) and Uraza-bairam (Id ul-Fitr) non-working holidays.<sup>82</sup> The former holiday marks the end of the period for the hajj to Mecca, and the latter marks the end of the fast for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The Council of Muftis is the leading umbrella organization of the state-affiliated Muslim spiritual administrations that run the officially recognized Islamic communities in one or more Russian regions. Thus, Ashirov is one of Russia’s most influential official Islamic clergymen.

Ashirov seemed to reject the authority of the secular courts in Russia: “The decisions of the Supreme Court, of a lower court, or a mid-level court absolutely do not concern real Muslims who practice their religion. Any Muslim will always find one day to celebrate his holy day. He can skip or simply leave work to do this, because religious conviction and religious principles are higher than any other principles that touch on his work. Those decisions, which were taken, really discriminate against Muslims for religious reasons, because Russia’s citizens should have the same rights or should be deprived of rights in the same way.”<sup>83</sup>

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## TATARSTAN’S CHIEF MUFTI CRITICISES RUSSIAN MUSLIM FILM FESTIVAL

<sup>79</sup> “Medvedev zayavil, chto ekstremistov v Bashkirii nado ‘besposhadno davit’,” *RIA Novosti*, 20 October 2011, 19:10, [http://ria.ru/defense\\_safety/20111020/465627565.html](http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20111020/465627565.html).

<sup>80</sup> “Moskva: formal’nyi kremlyovskii glavar’ treboval ubivat’ musul’man Bashkortostana ‘besposhadno’,” *Umma News*, 22 October 2011, 15:39, <http://ummanews.com/news/russia/3916-----lr.html>.

<sup>81</sup> “Idel’-Ural: Modzhakhedy Idel’Urala sdelali poyasneniya otnositel’no statusa Idel’-Urala,” *Kavkaz tseñtr*, 31 July 2011, 13:09, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/31/83983.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/31/83983.shtml).

<sup>82</sup> “Mufti Ashirov: ‘Prazdnovat’ musul’manskie prazdniki nikakoi sud pravovernym ne zapretit’,” *GolosIslama.ru*, 27 September 2011, 00:30, <http://goloslama.ru/news.php?id=2555>.

<sup>83</sup> “Mufti Ashirov: ‘Prazdnovat’ musul’manskie prazdniki nikakoi sud pravovernym ne zapretit’.”

The new chief mufti of the Muslim Spiritual Administration or Board of Russia's Republic of Tatarstan, Ildus Faiz, sent a letter to the Tatarstan Culture Ministry and Minister Airat Sibagatullin protesting the "immoral background" of some actresses who attended the Muslim Film Festival held in the republic's capitol, Kazan, in September. His letter was also posted on the website of Kazan's Russian Islamic University. Specifically, Faiz objected to awarding Sibel Kekilli as best actress, since she had performed in X-rated movies in the past. He also criticized the selection of the festival's honored guests, in particular the selection of actress Olga Kabo, who was one of the first actresses in Russia to appear naked in film. Faiz proposed that they needed to "either invite religious authorities to take part in the process of selecting the movies for the festival or exclude the word 'Muslim' from the event's name." The ministry responded that religious clergy had participated in the selection of films for the festival.<sup>84</sup>

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## **CENTRAL ASIA**

### **Kazakhstan Judge Fired for Extremist Ties**

Judge Aghyzbek Tolegenov was fired in September for having ties to terrorist organizations such as Tablig-i-Jamaat. On 17 October 2011, the Kazakh Supreme Court upheld the city court decision despite claims of unreliable evidence against the judge.<sup>85</sup>

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### **Four Sentenced for Jihadi Attacks in Kazakhstan**

The regional Kazakh court of Aktobe sentenced four members of a jihadi group to prison on 6 October. The men were accused of being involved in a shootout in the villages of Kenkiyak and Shubarshi and killing two policemen in early July. Further, they were charged with allegedly establishing criminal groups and illegally possessing firearms. Two of the four men received 14-year jail terms and the other two, who were the leaders, were sentenced to life in prison.<sup>86</sup>

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### **Three Men Sentenced in Uzbekistan Court for Religious Extremism**

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<sup>84</sup> "Tatar Mufti Upset That 'Immoral' Actresses Attend Muslim Film Festival," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFERL)*, 10 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/muslim\\_film\\_festival\\_mufti\\_tatarstan/24354387.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/muslim_film_festival_mufti_tatarstan/24354387.html).

<sup>85</sup> "Kazakh Judge's Sacking For Extremist Ties Upheld By High Court," *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*, 17 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/kazakh\\_judge\\_sacking\\_for\\_extremist\\_ties\\_upheld\\_by\\_high\\_court/24362604.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kazakh_judge_sacking_for_extremist_ties_upheld_by_high_court/24362604.html).

<sup>86</sup> "Kazakhstan Imposes Tougher Measures to Stem the Rise of Religious Extremism," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 21 October 2011, <http://soc.kuleuven.be/iieb/cee/aggregator?page=5> and "Kazakhs Sentenced For Islamic Extremism And Shoot-Out With Police," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 07 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/kazakhs\\_sentenced\\_for\\_islamic\\_extremism/24351916.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kazakhs_sentenced_for_islamic_extremism/24351916.html).

The three men who were extradited from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan have been sentenced to prison. Kobijon Kurbanov received four years for alleged involvement in “illegal religious gatherings.”<sup>87</sup> “Faizillakhon Akbarov was convicted for allegedly circulating religious materials likely to threaten security and public order and was sentenced to five years in prison.”<sup>88</sup> Akhmad Boltaev received a 13-year sentence for charges related to alleged religious extremism.

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## **BBC Reporter Sentenced to Prison in Tajikistan**

BBC Reporter for Central Asia, Uronboi Usmonov, was sentenced to three years in jail for allegedly having ties with the extremist organization, Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami (HTI).<sup>89</sup> The BBC World Service claims that he dealt with the group exclusively for vocational purposes. Originally, Usmonov was arrested on suspicion that he belonged to HTI. However prosecutors reduced that charge following condemnation by U.S. and E.U. officials. Immediately following the ruling, Usmanov was granted amnesty and released.<sup>90</sup>

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## **Four Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami Members Sentenced to Prison in Tajikistan**

Four men were sentenced for alleged membership in the banned extremist organization, Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami by the Soghd court. Yakhekhon Rakhmonkhujiev and Abdunabi Abdulkodirov, the leaders, were sentenced to 20 years in prison.<sup>91</sup> The other two members, Talat Mavlonov and Ibrohimbek Mahmoudov, received 22-year sentences as they were in possession of arms and narcotics.<sup>92</sup>

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## **Two Women Arrested in Kyrgyzstan for Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami Involvement**

Two women have been arrested in Bishkek for their involvement in Hizb Ut-Tahrir and propagating religious extremism. Two other women have been detained but not charged for promoting an Islamic state in Central Asia.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> “Three Uzbek Refugees Extradited From Kazakhstan Now In Prison,” *Eurasialift.wordpress.com*, 3 October 2011, <http://eurasialift.wordpress.com/2011/10/03/three-uzbek-refugees-extradited-from-kazakhstan-now-in-prison/>.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> “BBC Reporter Sentenced for Links to Islamist Group,” *ABC News*, 14 October 2011, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bbc-reporter-sentenced-links-islamist-group-14738661>.

<sup>90</sup> “Tajikistan: BBC reporter gets three years in jail for ties to Islamic supremacist group,” *Jihad Watch*, 14 October 2011, <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2011/10/tajikistan-bbc-reporter-gets-three-years-in-jail-for-ties-to-islamic-supremacist-group.html>.

<sup>91</sup> “Tajik Court Hands Out Stiff Sentences To Hizb Ut-Tahrir Members,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFERL)*, 17 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan\\_hizb\\_ut-tahrir/24362237.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan_hizb_ut-tahrir/24362237.html).

<sup>92</sup> “Four Hizb ut-Tahrir activists get long jail terms,” *Asia-Plus*, 15 October 2011, <http://news.tj/en/news/four-hizb-ut-tahrir-activists-get-long-jail-terms>.

<sup>93</sup> “Kyrgyz Women Detained For ‘Propagating Extremism,’” *RFERL*, 5 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyz\\_women\\_detained\\_for\\_propagating\\_extremism/24349373.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyz_women_detained_for_propagating_extremism/24349373.html).

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## Kyrgyzstan Searching for Islamic Jihad Union Suspects

Following a security operation in the southern of Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyzstan's State Committee for National Security has reported the capture of 10 alleged members of the Islamic Jihad Union. The suspects were reported to be planning several bombing attacks across the region. This operation comes in the wake of a terrorist hijacking on October 8<sup>th</sup>. While fleeing the police, the suspect boarded a bus traveling from Kara-Suu to Osh and took the 15 passengers hostage. The alleged terrorist was eventually killed by sniper fire and all passengers escaped unharmed.<sup>94</sup>

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## Kyrgyzstan Extradites a Russian Citizen

Kyrgyz authorities have extradited a Russian citizen back to Russia after his alleged involvement with terrorism and in forming an armed group. Kyrgyz security forces arrested a man with the surname Akhtakhanov on 8 August and on 21 October Akhtakhanov was on a plane back to Moscow.<sup>95</sup> It remains unclear from where in Russia he hails or what his nationality is.

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## Tajikistan Drug Smugglers and Drug Trafficking

A citizen of Kyrgyzstan was arrested in Sughd district for heroin possession. He had more than 20 kilograms of heroin that the Tajik Drug Control Agency (DCA) confiscated on its way to Kyrgyzstan and other CIS nations.<sup>96</sup> The suspect will face “charges of acquiring, manufacturing, transporting and storing the drugs.”<sup>97</sup> Another incident occurred when two police officials in the Khalton province were arrested on drug trafficking and misuse of power charges. According to Asia-Plus, “Nouriddin Nabotov, acting chief of the police department in Qumsangir district, Khalton province and Mohammad Sharipov, head of the drug control unit (drug police) at the Qumsangir police department” were arrested.<sup>98</sup>

Drug trafficking and drug trafficking routes are often used by mujahedin for funding and transiting between AfPak and Central Asia.

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<sup>94</sup> “Kyrgyz Police Kill Bus Hijacker,” RFERL, 08 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyz\\_police\\_kill\\_bus\\_hijacker/24353517.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyz_police_kill_bus_hijacker/24353517.html) and “Kyrgyzstan: After Osh Hijacking, Police Target Uzbek Town,” Eurasianet.org, 9 October 2011, [www.eurasianet.org/node/64290](http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64290).

<sup>95</sup> “Kyrgyzstan Extradites Alleged Terrorist To Russia,” RFERL, 21 October 2011, [www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyzstan\\_extradites\\_alleged\\_terrorist\\_to\\_russia/24367299.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyzstan_extradites_alleged_terrorist_to_russia/24367299.html).

<sup>96</sup> “Tajik police seize Kyrgyz national with heroin,” *Universal Newswire*, 20 October 2011, [www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10492](http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10492) and “Kyrgyz national detained with large amount of heroin in Tajikistan,” Asia-Plus, 20 October 2011, <http://news.tj/en/news/kyrgyz-national-detained-large-amount-heroin-tajikistan>.

<sup>97</sup> “Tajik police seize Kyrgyz national with heroin,” *Universal Newswire*, 20 October 2011, [www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10492](http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10492).

<sup>98</sup> “Two police officials from Khalton face corruption and drug trafficking charges,” *Asia-Plus*, 15 October 2011, <http://news.tj/en/news/two-police-officials-khalton-face-corruption-and-drug-trafficking-charges>.

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## ABOUT IIPER

Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER) is a project of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. It focuses on all politically relevant issues involving or bearing on Islam, Islamism, and Jihadism in Russia and Eurasia writ large. All issues of IIPER will soon be permanently archived at <http://csis.org/program/russia-and-eurasia-program>. All back issues temporarily remain archived at: [www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report](http://www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report).

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IIPER welcomes submissions on any aspect of Islamic, Islamist, or Jihadist politics in Eurasia as well as financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER’s mailing list, please contact:

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