



THE SENTINEL PROJECT
FOR GENOCIDE PREVENTION

Risk Assessment

THE RISK OF GENOCIDE IN KYRGYZSTAN 2013

May 2013

THE SENTINEL PROJECT FOR GENOCIDE PREVENTION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEVOTED TO EFFECTIVE EARLY WARNING OF GENOCIDE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES BEFORE LIVES ARE LOST.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS THROUGH THE CREATIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND COOPERATION WITH THREATENED GROUPS.

About This Document

In December 2012, the Institute for Intelligence Studies (IIS) at Mercyhurst University Chapter of the Sentinel Project for Genocide Prevention was tasked to assess the likelihood of genocide occurring in the Kyrgyz Republic over the next three to five years.

As we conducted our research, the tasking changed to refer to the likelihood of mass atrocities as well as genocide. While our estimate reflects an effort to incorporate both outcomes, the Sentinel Project developed the risk factors, around which we based our research, with genocide specifically in mind. Those risk factors and the definitions provided in this document are from Appendix 2 of the Sentinel Project's Risk Assessment of Genocide in Kenya, available at thesentinelproject.org.

In response to the tasking, the IIS Team utilized open source information to prepare written and oral presentations addressing the Sentinel Project's risk factors with regard to the Kyrgyz Republic.

Table of Contents

About This Document iii

KYRGYZSTAN OVERALL FORECAST5

RISK ASSESSMENT7

 SOCIOCULTURAL FINDINGS: UZBEKS, KYRGYZ STILL PRIMED FOR VIOLENCE.....7

 ECONOMIC FINDINGS: KYRGYZ ECONOMY LIKELY TO BE STABLE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS 11

 POLITICAL - INSTITUTIONAL FINDINGS: KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT LACKS STABILITY, TRANSPARENCY 16

 POLITICAL - REGIME AND IDEOLOGY FINDINGS: KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT DOES NOT DESIRE VIOLENCE 19

 CONFLICT AND UPHEAVAL FINDINGS: GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE LIKELIHOOD OF VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE 24

TRIGGERS OF VIOLENCE..... 28

 LIKELY TRIGGERS OF VIOLENCE: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC INSTABILITY 28

SOCIAL NETWORKS ANALYSIS 31

Annex I: Timeline of Violence in Kyrgyz Republic 33

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 34

CONTACT INFORMATION 34

KYRGYZSTAN OVERALL FORECAST

Executive Summary

Genocide and mass atrocities committed against the Uzbek minority in the Kyrgyz Republic are highly unlikely over the next three to five years. Despite some minority Kyrgyz nationalist sentiment, the central government is not hostile toward its Uzbek minority. The economy is likely to improve, and tensions are likely to fall; several recent small-scale conflicts have been defused rather than escalating to violence. However, triggers of violence that are likely to alter this assessment include regime change and economic instability. The underlying ethnic tension that exploded in 2010 is still present, although it is not clear that this case was the result of widespread ethnic antagonism. The Kyrgyz government, though currently benign, lacks transparency and has experienced frequent and unplanned regime changes in the last decade, one of which was in 2010.

Discussion

Leaders of the central government are not committed to a harmful ideology, although the minority Ata-Jurt party and some local government leaders espouse Kyrgyz nationalist ideals, and ethnic Kyrgyz citizens rule the government almost exclusively. No current leader is generating a mass followership, nor is there evidence of individuals or groups with an orientation toward force poised to seize power.

Positive projections in gold pricing, which is the Kyrgyz primary export, strong trade relations with Russia and China, stable inflation rates, and positive unemployment projections indicating an improvement in citizens' economic welfare are projected to minimize reasons for near-term conflict.

While the Kyrgyz Republic has a history of conflict, mass violence, political upheaval and protests, instances of each of the occurrences within the last two years that could have escalated into greater conflict have not. The government's regain in control of the volatile south and aid from non-state actors, such as the United Nations (UN), are helping to stabilize ethnic tension and reduce the influence of organized crime.

However, tension remains in southern Kyrgyzstan. There is a distinct division between the ingroup Kyrgyz and outgroup Uzbeks, which some local Kyrgyz politicians are attempting to exacerbate by claiming traditionally Uzbek spaces. There are two previous incidences of interethnic violence, in 1990 and 2010, and after the latter, Uzbeks faced legal and physical persecution. In addition, the shared Kyrgyz perception of Uzbeks as wealthy and the nation's youth bulge increase the likelihood of genocide or mass atrocities.

The Kyrgyz political system, though not actively supporting or inciting genocide, lacks democratic transparency and has experienced frequent changes in leadership. There are members of state security agencies who disregard legal restraints, and the country spends a relatively high percentage of their GDP on military expenditures.

The persistence of the underlying sociocultural risk factors in the Kyrgyz Republic indicates that violence within the next five years is likely to have similar causes. Ethnic tension did not cause the “Second Tulip Revolution” of 2010, but it was the basis of the violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh and Jalal Abad. Economic and political factors instigated the protests in other areas of the country, but in those southern cities the unrest was itself a catalyst for the ethnic violence. While drug cartels may have intensified the 2010 violence, recent Kyrgyz and international initiatives are likely to reduce their impact over the next five years.

RISK ASSESSMENT

SOCIOCULTURAL FINDINGS: UZBEKS, KYRGYZ STILL PRIMED FOR VIOLENCE

Executive Summary

Sociocultural risk factors indicate that genocide or mass atrocities are likely within the next five years in the Kyrgyz Republic. There is a distinct division between the ingroup Kyrgyz and outgroup Uzbeks, defined by history, segregated living, and language. The language barrier is breaking down as Uzbeks increasingly adopt Kyrgyz, however this is also likely to be a manifestation of Uzbek cultural devaluation. Kyrgyz nationalists are attempting to redefine traditionally Uzbek spaces as their own, most visibly in Osh. There are two previous incidences of interethnic violence, in 1990 and 2010, and after the latter Uzbeks faced legal and physical persecution. In addition, the common perception of Uzbeks as wealthy and the nation's youth bulge increase the likelihood of genocide or mass atrocities.

Discussion

Existence of Distinctive Groups Separated by Social Divisions.

Genocide and subsequent victimization requires the separation of an outgroup from the dominant group (ingroup). The existence of distinct groups that generally vote or share similar beliefs as groups facilitates such intergroup violence and possibly genocide by encouraging individuals to view members of groups other than their own as fundamentally different. Conflicts are especially likely to occur if racial or ethnic groups become so intertwined with the general population that individuals do not vote or believe independently. The more traits that people share, the stronger their group identity will be, which is also strengthened through shared experiences of repression.

There is a clear division between Kyrgyz and Uzbek social groups. The Uzbeks and Kyrgyz distinguish themselves based on their traditional occupations and separate languages. Historically, Kyrgyz were nomadic herders while Uzbeks were urban-dwelling merchants.¹ A 2010 UN publication reports that a common phrase is that Uzbeks and Kyrgyz are “living in parallel,” meaning that they rarely intermingle and are easily distinguishable.² Further accenting the division, Uzbeks typically live in segregated areas of cities called *mahallas*.³ Anthropologist Morgan Liu, who has spent time living with Osh Uzbeks, says that this separation is chosen by Uzbeks, who favour the communal nature of the *mahalla* over the Soviet-built apartments and houses in which most other Osh residents live.⁴ However, the division is still present and is an important factor which may contribute to possible mass atrocities.

¹ https://www.econstor.eu/dspace/bitstream/10419/48342/1/75_steiner.pdf

² <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=publisher&publisher=CORI&type=COUNTRYREP&coi=&docid=4e1d60a32&skip=0>

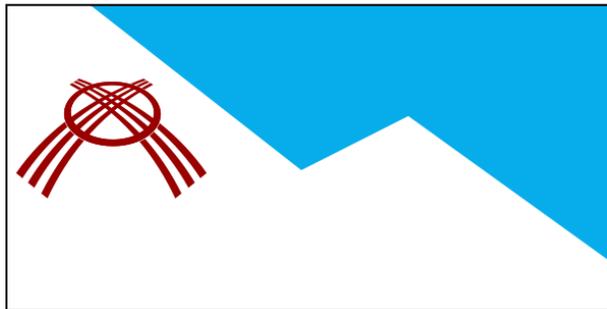
³ <http://www.rferl.org/content/interview-anthropologist-says-osh-uzbeks-model-for-life-kyrgyzstan-destroyed/24739957.html>

⁴ Liu, Morgan. *Under Solomon's Throne: Visions of Uzbek Renewal in Osh*. 1. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012. Print.

Ethnic Nationalism

Existing cultural assumptions of superiority and exclusive dominance by the members of a particular group facilitate the demonization of outgroups. This is differentiated from regime-promoted harmful ideologies in that ethnic nationalism is a pre-existing cultural characteristic of a population which may be exploited by leaders seeking to promote harmful ideologies (e.g. exclusionary or antagonistic).

Ethnic Kyrgyz nationalists are seeking to displace Uzbek history, especially in Osh. Osh mayor Melis Myrzakmatov, a Kyrgyz nationalist, has asserted that his city belongs to the Kyrgyz, despite its deeper Uzbek history. In 2010 he commissioned a flag and anthem for Osh, both filled with Kyrgyz symbolism.⁵ The flag depicts nearby Mt. Solomon and a traditional Kyrgyz yurt roof. The anthem references the Epic of Manas, a poem that Kyrgyz claim as their cultural heritage. The flag of the Kyrgyz Republic features a yurt roof and a 40-ray sun, referencing Manas uniting 40 tribes to become the Kyrgyz.



Osh flag with Mt. Solomon and yurt roof



Kyrgyz flag with yurt roof and 40-ray sun

Legacy of Intergroup Hatred or Grievance

Groups that feel insecurity and mistrust towards another group are more likely to respond to real or perceived threats with violence, which they will view as defensive aggression. Leaders planning to commit genocide will find such pre-existing hostility to be a powerful tool in building support for their cause by reminding their group of

⁵ <http://www.fergananews.com/news.php?id=17523>

the dangers posed by the outgroup (as well as past atrocities committed against them). Feelings of fear and anger encouraged in this way can then be forged into forceful feelings of group identity that lead to genocide based on “self-defence” (the notion that a group needs to ‘kill them before they kill us’) or revenge. This underlies many conflicts; with aggrieved groups often invoking unresolved injustices that may date back centuries.

There is a legacy of violence from 1990 and 2010. Political crises, including the collapse of the Soviet Union and the abrupt end of Kurmanbek Bakiyev’s presidency, coupled with economic instability were the proximate causes of violence in both cases.⁶ The simmering ethnic tension that the events ignited is still present. The UN estimates that the 2010 violence left roughly 400 Uzbeks dead and over 400,000 displaced.⁷

Cultural Devaluation of the Outgroup

This practice differentiates between majority society and the outgroup and denigrates the value of the latter. This may be done to strengthen the identity or increase the esteem of the dominant group by elevating it over another, or to justify the lesser status or rights of the outgroup. Such denigration of the outgroup usually builds upon the prior denial of their equality and/or humanity. Such devaluation may be culturally-based and longstanding, or a more recent phenomenon.

Use of the Uzbek language is diminishing due to Kyrgyz suppression, but Uzbek efforts to assimilate also contribute. Uzbek is not an official language of the Kyrgyz Republic, and is increasingly rare on street signs or the names of mosques or businesses. A July 2011 *Eurasianet* article cites two cafés in Osh which before 2010 had Uzbek names; their names are now the Kyrgyz words for “unity” and “happy.”⁸ There is an initiative to teach Kyrgyz exclusively, even in Uzbek schools. However, many Uzbeks support this effort and hope that it will ease tensions and encourage interethnic harmony.⁹

Prior Persecution of Outgroup

In most instances of genocide, there is a gradual progression of thoughts and actions to the ultimate extermination, which is a process that may begin long before the ultimate perpetrators arrive or become active. Such prior abuses encourage increasingly harmful acts by the dominant group. Therefore, outgroups that have suffered persecution in the past are more likely to be targeted for genocide.

Uzbeks have been blamed and persecuted for the 2010 violence. Amnesty International reports that despite suffering the majority of the violence, Uzbeks account for a majority of those prosecuted and their lawyers have also been threatened and attacked. It also details accounts of police brutality, extortion, and

⁶ <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/kyrgyzstan/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36372#.UYCdy0o9nD8>

⁸ <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/63866>

⁹ http://www.rferl.org/content/ethnic_uzbeks_push_switch_to_kyrgyz_language_in_schools/24252883.html

incidences of torture to extract confessions from Uzbeks.¹⁰

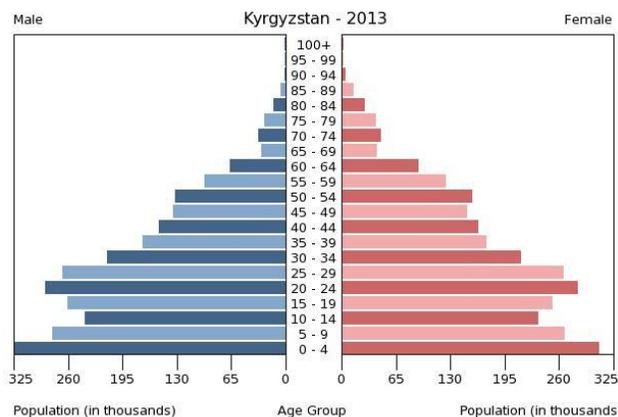
Outgroup Viewed as an Obstacle to Economic Progress

When members of a dominant group commonly view outgroup members as obstacles to the acquisition of wealth for the broader society they are more likely to participate in or tolerate the destruction of the outgroup.

Uzbeks are perceived as wealthy and possible obstacles to economic progress. The Uzbeks' history as merchants, a class that acquired more wealth than traditional Kyrgyz nomads, has led to a stereotype of prosperous merchants. Although it is inaccurate today, the stereotype persists and exacerbates tensions.¹¹

Population Growth and Youth Bulge

Rapid population growth places tremendous pressure on the economy and social structures as well as government services, infrastructure, and natural resources. Economically weak countries tend to see a direct relationship between high numbers of youth, political instability, and violence. This is primarily because these countries are unable to absorb large numbers of young men into the labour force, increasing the potential for social unrest and violence.



2010 population pyramid of Kyrgyz Republic

There is a youth bulge in the Kyrgyz Republic's population. This chart, based on the UN's 2010 World Population Prospects depicts the nation's sex and age distribution.¹² There is a distinct overrepresentation of the ages between 10 and 30, peaking at the 15-25 range. Males in this group are more prone to violence than any other, and high unemployment among this age group can lead to idleness and disaffection that presages violence in any society.

¹⁰ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/kyrgyzstan/report-2012>

¹¹ https://www.econstor.eu/dspace/bitstream/10419/48342/1/75_steiner.pdf

¹² <http://populationpyramid.net/Kyrgyzstan/2010/>

ECONOMIC FINDINGS: KYRGYZ ECONOMY LIKELY TO BE STABLE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Executive Summary

Economic risk factors indicate that genocide or mass atrocities are unlikely to occur in the Kyrgyz Republic within the next five years. New Kyrgyz government programs related to economic policies and an increase in international economic involvement are likely to lead to an economic resurgence. Positive projections in gold and trade involvement with Russia and China are likely to decrease dependency on the Kyrgyz Republic's neighbours for natural resources. Inflation rates are projected to remain stable at eight per cent for 2013 and drop to 7.5 per cent for 2014. Unemployment projections combined with a positive gold outlook will likely lead to an increase in all Kyrgyz Republic citizens' economic welfare and minimize the conflict over the Kumtor gold mine. Despite the Kyrgyz Republic's dependence on Uzbekistan's energy and natural resources, and despite socioeconomic perceptions that Uzbeks are more prosperous, mass atrocities are unlikely to occur in Kyrgyzstan within the next five years.

Discussion

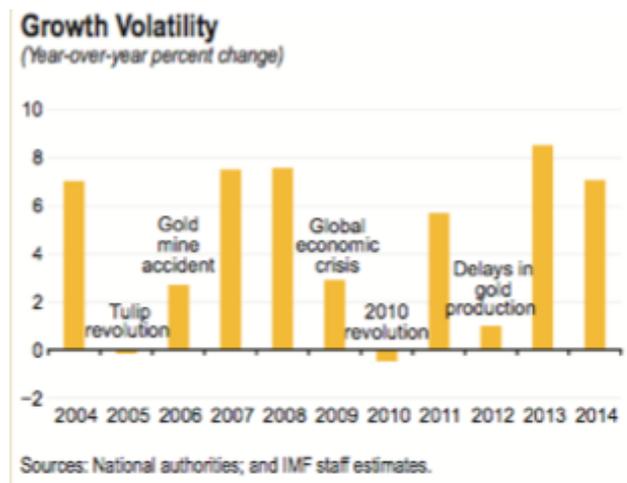
Long-Term Difficult Life Conditions

Life conditions refer to quality-of-life factors such as human and material security. Intense, long-term life problems in a society increase the likelihood of intergroup violence and severe economic problems are a powerful source of social cleavage and upheaval. Countries with widespread poverty have been shown to be at higher risk of experiencing violent crises than wealthier states.

Kyrgyzstan has endured difficult life conditions since its formation and continues to do so. Kyrgyzstan has always been a poor state with few natural resources, and remains so. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the five Central Asian successor states have had troubled economic relations.¹³ The main economic problem between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan is natural gas; Kyrgyzstan has few natural resources, and is still an agricultural economy, whereas Uzbekistan controls the primary natural gas pipeline supplying the Kyrgyz Republic with the majority of its energy supply.¹⁴ As a result, Kyrgyzstan has been heavily involved in drug trafficking via the Uzbek border, which has become an important factor in inter-state trade relations.

¹³ http://www.nataliekoch.com/docs/Bond_Koch_2010_EGE.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.nataliekoch.com/docs/Bond_Koch_2010_EGE.pdf



Growth Volatility in Kyrgyzstan, 2004-2014

Socioeconomic Deprivation Combined With Perceived Group-Based Inequality

Widespread poverty increases the likelihood of popular support for political opposition and rebel groups that promise redistribution of wealth, especially when such wealth is present but hoarded by the elite or reserved for distribution to a particular communal group. Intergroup violence and mass atrocities also become more likely when one group is perceived to have an economic advantage over others, even if it is a non-ruling group. Such relative deprivation can be a powerful source of resentment to be exploited by either regime or opposition leaders.

There is a perception in the Kyrgyz Republic that Uzbeks are more economically prosperous than Kyrgyz, especially in the Southern region. The southern region of Kyrgyzstan is economically-depressed compared to the northern areas. In part this is due to the location of the Kumtor gold mine in the North that serves as a main GDP contributor. A majority of Uzbeks live in the Southern region in and around Osh, where the average annual income is roughly half of the national average of USD 2150.¹⁵ The perception is that Uzbeks are more economically prosperous than Kyrgyz in the region due to traditional division of labour in the region that is not reflective of the current reality. Historically, Kyrgyz tended to be nomadic and contributed to the agricultural sector, while Uzbeks were traditionally merchants, and tended to appear more prosperous and live in larger settlements. Although there is no hard data to support this belief, a sharp economic crisis that Kyrgyz nationalist elements could blame on Uzbekistan or on Uzbek minority or that could encourage the perception that Kyrgyz Uzbeks are less adversely affected, has a remote probability of contributing to genocide or mass atrocities.

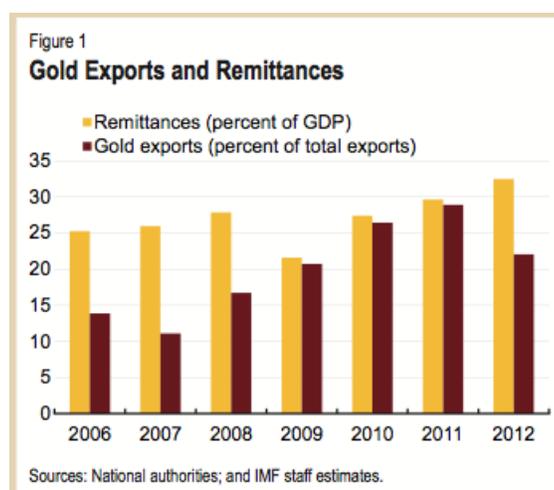
Sudden and Severe Economic Hardship

Sudden shifts in national productivity may reduce a state's capacity to distribute resources equitably. A sudden downturn may rapidly escalate hostilities and trigger intergroup violence if long-term economic instability has already strained racial,

¹⁵ http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2010/06/why_cant_kyrgyz_and_uzbeks_get_along.html

ethnic, or religious relationships.

Despite a poor gold output in 2012, the Kyrgyz Republic has not endured a severe economic hardship that would lead to long-term economic instability. The Kumtor gold mine is the most important natural resource, tax payer, and GDP factor, and it is projected to rebound after a poor year in 2012. Gold prices have reached an all-time high in the global market, and gold is Kyrgyz Republic's biggest and most valuable natural resource.¹⁶ Remittance inflows from Russia, coupled with technological and economic support from China, will increase production in the next three to five years.¹⁷ Greater political stability since 2010 has restored confidence of investors and economic growth in the country.¹⁸ Kyrgyz Republic is an oil and gas importing country and growth was at 5.0 per cent in 2012, and expected to rise to 5.8 per cent for 2013.¹⁹ The Kyrgyz Republic is currently undergoing bilateral trade talks with Germany and other WTO nations to help improve the market economy structure.²⁰ The IMF approved a three-year USD 103 million economic support package, and predicted a medium-term growth recovery following the poor 2012 gold year. The poor gold output was due to a collapse in the mine and old infrastructure. The IMF package will decrease inflation within the next two years. In addition, resources are being put towards improving the geological challenges which posed an issue in 2012.²¹



Gold Exports and Remittances, 2006-2012

Economic Status of the Regime

Economic status depends upon the number and value of resources within a state. High-status states with low international economic interdependence will have

¹⁶ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2012/mcd/eng/pdf/mreo1112.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/centerra-gold-reports-2012-gold-production-387076-ounces-provides-2013-guidance-tsx-cg-1745552.htm>

¹⁸ <http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/centerra-gold-reports-2012-gold-production-387076-ounces-provides-2013-guidance-tsx-cg-1745552.htm>

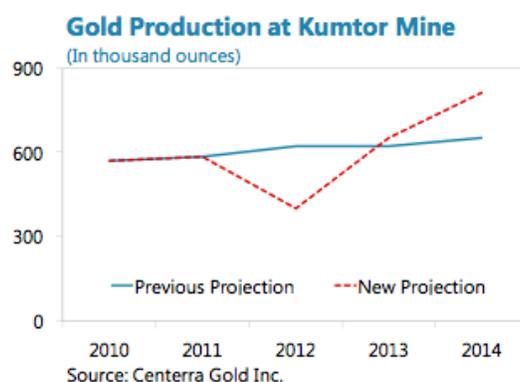
¹⁹ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2012/mcd/eng/pdf/mreo1112.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.bmwi.de/English/Navigation/Press/press-releases,did=548050.html>

²¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/10/us-imf-kyrgyzstan-idUSBRE8990I920121010>

greater freedom to deal with internal opponents as they wish. The greater economic interdependence of low-status regimes may decrease their freedom of action against internal minorities and political opponents.

The Kyrgyz Republic is well-connected in the international market and depends significantly on its neighbours for resources and trade. Kyrgyzstan adopted a five-year plan to spend USD 13 billion to develop its agriculture, communications, mining and power generation infrastructure. The planned expenditure, consisting of foreign investment and aid,²² is expected to double the size of the economy and reduce dependence on the single gold mine in Kumtor.²³ Gold production in 2012 was half its projection, which caused a reliance on lower program grants to reach the fiscal deficit for 2012.²⁴ The Centerra gold mine is one of the biggest taxpayers in Kyrgyzstan; the loss of revenues diminished the government's ability to pay for social programs.²⁵



Projected Kumtor Mine Production, 2010-2014

Kyrgyzstan tax collection has improved in recent years; however, the tax revenues relative to GDP are still low.²⁶ According to the IMF, tax revenues are 19.4 per cent of GDP and there is a risk that tax revenues could be hampered for 2013 and beyond. Due to the Kyrgyz Republic's status as a transit country for goods, VAT and import taxes remain the most significant forms of tax revenue with personal and corporate income taxes accounting for less than 20 per cent of total tax collection.²⁷

Due to Kyrgyzstan's limited natural resources, it is highly dependent on fossil fuels and natural gas, and it imports 67 billion cubic feet per year from Uzbekistan.²⁸ In the past, President Karimov of Uzbekistan has shut down pipelines at times and altered the delivery terms of fossil fuels into Kyrgyzstan due to late payments.²⁹ This causes problems particularly during winter because natural gas is used for electricity

²² <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/14/kyrgyzstan-gdp-idUSL6N0AJ37120130114>

²³ <http://www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/country/Kyrgyzstan/>

²⁴ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12329.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66419>

²⁶ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12112.pdf>

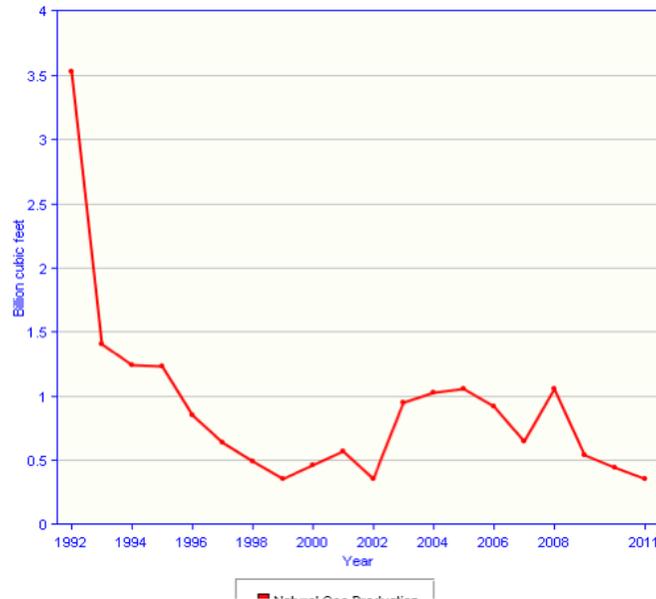
²⁷ http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/capacity/output_studies/roa87_study_kgz.pdf

²⁸ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/centralasia/kyrgyz-energy.htm> ; <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Kyrgyzstan.pdf>

²⁹ <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/kgtoc.html>

production and heating.³⁰ In December 2012, Kazakh gas company, KazTransGaz, reduced deliveries to Kyrgyzstan from Uzbekistan because of failed payments. It is estimated that Kyrgyzstan owes Uzbekistan between USD 3 and 47 million, figures heavily disputed by both sides.³¹

Kyrgyzstan's natural energy production has decreased since 2008, reaching its lowest levels since 2000.



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

³⁰ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/centralasia/kyrgyz-energy.htm>

³¹ <http://www.tol.org/client/article/23522-gas-troubles-in-kyrgyzstan-and-ukraine-macedonia-loses-torture-case.html>

POLITICAL - INSTITUTIONAL FINDINGS: KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT LACKS STABILITY, TRANSPARENCY

Executive Summary

Based solely upon The Sentinel Project's 2012 Political-Institutional Indicators, the Kyrgyz Republic is likely to experience mass atrocities within the next five years: the Kyrgyz political system lacks democratic transparency and has experienced frequent changes in leadership; there are members of state security agencies who disregard legal restraints; and the country spends a relatively high percentage of its GDP on military expenditures. However, the Kyrgyz Republic is not isolated from the international community, which is likely to put pressure on the country to enact political and security sector reform. This pressure will likely alleviate the conditions that were present at the time of the June 2010 ethnic violence. However, the indicators used to determine this estimate do not take into account the activities of non-state actors in perpetrating genocide or other mass atrocities.

Discussion

The following discussion applies the five political-institutional indicators to the Kyrgyz Republic. These indicators only take into account activities conducted by states and state entities, not non-state actors. Additionally, they do not specify a certain degree or time period for the indicators to remain relevant in the forecasting of genocide or other mass atrocities.

Low Degree of Democracy

Compliance with democratic norms such as protecting rights and freedoms and ensuring citizen participation in government reduces the risk of genocide. Autocratic governments are more likely to use violence and coercion to quell internal opposition while established democracies tend to tolerate political participation, including violent protests.

Democratic institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic lack transparency, which is likely to continue. International observers have issued reports that presidential elections, including that of current President Almazbek Atambayev in 2012, have been flawed.³² The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) noted that while the Kyrgyz authorities seem willing to improve the political process, the country still urgently needs “electoral legal reform.”³³

Frequent Changes in Political Leadership

There is a correlation between frequent leadership changes and an increased likelihood of mass killing. This link may be due to unstable elites with unconsolidated authority who will resort to mass killing in order to retain power if threatened, whereas more entrenched regimes may not feel this is necessary. Regimes which have

³² Image sources: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_945.html
<http://cpj.org/2010/06/kyrgyzstan-detains-journalists-as-violence-continues.php>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16185772>

³³ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/kyrgyzstan/82437>

come to power through violence may also be more sensitive to internal threats and overreact to any challenges.

The Kyrgyz Republic has experienced frequent changes in political leadership in the past decade. The last two presidents, Askar Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiyev, resigned in response to public protests. An interim president and provisional government served from April 2010 until October 2011 when President Atambayev entered office. Resignations and other factors have interrupted legislative and executive operations on several occasions.³⁴



Kyrgyz soldiers detain journalists near Osh during the June 2010 violence.

Former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev was convicted in absentia in February 2013 for the 2009 murder of a senior official. Bakiyev has also been “accused of mass murder over the shooting of dozens of people by police during the revolt that toppled him,” but he is currently in Belarus, where President Alexander Lukashenko has given him asylum.³⁵

State Security Agencies Operating With FEW Constraints

Security forces that operate with some degree of independence from legal or regulatory oversight are much more likely to commit serious human rights violations. This increases the risk of genocide because they may react to threats by committing mass atrocities. The risk is even greater if the forces in question are committed to a harmful ideology or the personal dominance of a ruler or elite.

State security agencies are supposed to report to political leadership and operate under legal restraints in the Kyrgyz Republic, but corruption and other factors interrupt these restraints.³⁶ A Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission report on the June 2010 violence noted the inability of leaders of the security forces to control

³⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16185772>

³⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21958401>

³⁶ <https://janes.ihs.com/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1303023&Pubabbrev=CIS>

subordinates.³⁷ Police reform is on the government's agenda, but it has not yet passed any legislation to solve the problems that occurred with police and military response in 2010.

High Level of Military Expenditure as Percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Military spending levels relative to population size reveal how security is prioritized in a given state. It may also provide context to the perception of threats and indicate the level of influence wielded by the military. High levels of expenditure make the military more likely to be used as a first choice for addressing threats or resolving conflict.

The Kyrgyz Republic spends a significant amount on military expenditures relative to nearby states. In 2010, the Kyrgyz Republic's military expenditure was 4.2 per cent of its GDP, an increase from 3.5 per cent in 2009. While this may have been the result of the political and ethnic unrest during the year, the 2009 level is still relatively high when compared to other countries in the region. Military expenditures in 2010 were 1.0 per cent of GDP for Kazakhstan and 2.0 per cent for China.³⁸

Isolation from the International Community

Isolation from interaction with other states makes regimes less predictable in their actions. There are few avenues for sanction in this case, therefore such regimes lack incentive to conform to accepted norms because they perceive a lower cost for violations. This may increase the risk of genocide when such regimes are faced with internal challenges and feel they have more freedom to use violent repression.

The Kyrgyz Republic is engaged with the international community as demonstrated by its participation in international and regional organizations and cooperation in combating terrorism and drug-trafficking. The Kyrgyz Republic hopes to gain economic and security advantages by engaging in such organizations as the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO) and the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Both the US and Russia maintain a military presence within the country, with forces located at Kant and Manas, respectively.³⁹ Additionally, the Kyrgyz Republic has been increasing economic ties with China.⁴⁰

³⁷ http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/04/world/asia/04kyrgyz.html?_r=0

³⁸ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>

³⁹ <https://janes.ihs.com/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1303018&Pubabbrev=CIS>

⁴⁰ <https://janes.ihs.com/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1303016&Pubabbrev=CIS>

POLITICAL - REGIME AND IDEOLOGY FINDINGS: KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT DOES NOT DESIRE VIOLENCE

Executive Summary

Based solely upon the Sentinel Project's 2012 Political-Regime and Ideology indicators, the Kyrgyz Republic is unlikely to experience violence and mass atrocities within the next five years. After the 2010 violence, the Kyrgyz Republic installed a new regime run by the Social Democratic Party along with a reformed constitution. President Almazbek Atambaev and Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiev currently lead the central government. While central government officials are not likely to be committed to a harmful ideology, leaders of the Ata-Jurt political party and some local government leaders espouse Kyrgyz nationalist ideals. Human rights groups reported severe discrimination by Kyrgyz law enforcement against the Uzbek minority in the last three years. Ethnic Kyrgyz citizens rule the government almost exclusively. Some Kyrgyz government officials deemed the Uzbek citizens as dangerous. In addition, there is a moderately low degree of freedom of speech in the Kyrgyz Republic. Currently, there are no charismatic leaders generating a mass followership, nor evidence of individuals or groups with an orientation toward force and coercion to seize the central government's power.

Discussion

Installation of a Newly-Created Regime

This may lead to genocidal acts against minority groups, particularly if the new regime is revolutionary in nature and minority groups are somehow associated with the former regime (either in reality or perception).

After the 2010 violence, the Kyrgyz Republic installed a new regime run by the Social Democratic Party along with a reformed constitution. The 2010 constitution helps balance the power between the president and the legislative and executive branches, but does not address the human rights abuses of the Uzbek community. According to an article titled "How Strong Is Kyrgyzstan's New Constitution?" by Charles Recknagel of Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, the new constitution still gives important powers to the president. He can veto or refuse to sign any laws except those related to the budget and fiscal policy. Recknaegel states, "In Kyrgyzstan the president will be far from a figurehead, as he is in many European parliamentary systems. But he also will be nowhere near as powerful as he was in the past when he personally controlled the government's purse strings and with them much of the country's economic life." The constitution also increased the size of parliament from 90 to 120 seats and there is a 65-seat limit for elected parties. Another important change is that the Supreme Court will handle all disputes over interpretations of the constitution.⁴¹

According to a June 2012 publication by Minority Rights Group International,

⁴¹ http://www.rferl.org/content/How_Strong_Is_Kyrgyzstans_New_Constitution/2087294.html

“President Almazbek Atambaev is likely to follow the principles of the Concept of Ethnic Development and Consolidation in the Kyrgyz Republic, drawn up under Interim President Roza Otunbayeva to increase levels of trust among various ethnic groups. The principles call for the rule of law, respect for human rights and cultural diversity, preservation of the identity of ethnic groups and non-discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities for political participation and transition from ethnic identity to civil identity.”⁴² The Concept also promotes ethnic tolerance by creating an environment for schools to teach students about constituent ethnic cultures such as Uzbek, Tajik, and Uighur.⁴³

An October 2012 *Congressional Research Service (CRS)* report asserted that many ethnic Uzbek citizens voted for President Atambaev because of his campaign slogan, “Kyrgyzstan is for all.” Atambaev won the 2011 presidential election with 62.52 per cent of the vote. However, Adahan Madumarov and Kamchybek Tashiev, received the second and third highest number of votes respectively. Both Madumarov and Tashiev espouse Kyrgyz nationalistic views.⁴⁴ CRS also reported, “Although at least some ethnic Uzbeks felt that the draft constitution failed to protect or enhance their interests, voting in ethnic Uzbek areas was reported to be largely supportive of the draft constitution.”⁴⁵

The Kyrgyz Republic parliament confirmed Jantoro Satybaldiev as the country’s new Prime Minister on 5 September 2012, according to a 7 September 2012 *Ferghana Information Agency* news article, which included a quote from Satybaldiev that, “My first action is going to be to create a commission to work out a new structure of government. We must change the existing system. Everybody talks about corruption in the country, and much of this corruption takes place in government bodies. Many people say that I am planning to establish a dictatorship, but this will not happen. I want to rebuild the power vertical and the power of the law.”⁴⁶ Prime Minister Satybaldiev was supported by a parliamentary coalition of the Social Democratic party, the Ata Meken party, and the Ar Namis party. He is Kyrgyz by nationality and was born in the Uzgen region of the Osh district. He served as Osh city Mayor and Osh District Governor.⁴⁷ He also headed the town administration of Osh and served as President Bakiyev’s Special Representative on Electroenergy Security for the southern Kyrgyz Republic. Prime Minister Satybaldiev headed the Directorate to rebuild and develop Osh and Jalal Abad following the 2010 violence. He has worked as the head of the Kyrgyz Republic President’s Office since 2011.

Prime Minister Satybaldiev and President Almazbek Atambaev have a close political relationship. According to a 2010 *Eurasia Review* article, Satybaldiev served as a deputy Prime Minister under Atambaev, who was the Prime Minister of the interim government. After Atambaev became president, he appointed Satybaldiev as the chief

⁴² <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,KGZ,4562d8cf2,4fedb3f83c,0.html>

⁴³ http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/features/main/2011/04/09/feature-01

⁴⁴ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/97-690.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ <http://enews.ferghananews.com/news.php?id=2341&mode=snews>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

of his administration. In addition, Satybaldiev belonged to the same political party as Atambaev, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan in 2010.⁴⁸ However, according to Joldosh Osmonov of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Satybaldiev does not affiliate himself with the pro-presidential Social Democratic party.⁴⁹

Commitment to a Harmful Ideology

Regimes are more likely to commit genocide when they subscribe to belief systems that justify the dominance or expansion of specific groups which are viewed as superior or the subjection of others who are seen as inferior. Such ideologies may be exclusionary, antagonistic, or revolutionary in nature and generally promote the separation of groups, hostility between them, and dehumanization of outgroup members. These messages may lead to genocide by psychologically preparing people to participate in the persecution and killing of target groups or to stand idly by while others do so.

While central government officials are not overtly committed to a harmful ideology, leaders of the Ata-Jurt political party and local government leaders espouse Kyrgyz nationalist ideals. According to a March 2012 report from the International Crisis Group (ICG) titled, *Kyrgyzstan: Widening Ethnic Divisions in the South*, Osh Mayor Melis Myrzakmatov is the standard-bearer of an ethnic Kyrgyz-first policy and the most successful radical nationalist leader to emerge after the 2010 violence.⁵⁰ The Kyrgyz central government attempted to remove Myrzakmatov from power in March 2012. However, the mayor gained the support of the two most prominent nationalist leaders, Kamchybek Tashiev and Adakhan Madumarov, and his party won the Osh municipal elections by a wide margin.

According to ICG interviews of a Kyrgyz government advisor and a member of parliament in the fall of 2011, “Long-time political observers and strategists, warned before the polls that any abrupt effort to remove the mayor - without carefully laying the ground work by undermining or co-opting his key supporters - risked at least another political crisis and quite possibly serious violence.”⁵¹ In 2011, Myrzakmatov and the Osh city council created a flag and anthem specifically for the city, according to a March 2012 article by the *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service*.⁵² Myrzakmatov also said he wanted to have his own city police force that is independent of the interior ministry.

Ruling Group Deems Outgroup to be Dangerous

This indicator may raise the likelihood of retributive genocide if there is a minority group which poses a real or perceived threat to the ruling elite. Such an attitude may be explicitly stated in government policy or by officials but may also have to be inferred from government actions.

⁴⁸ <http://www.eurasiareview.com/25122010-kyrgyzstan-who-is-who-in-new-government/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5842>

⁵⁰ <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/222-kyrgyzstan-widening-ethnic-divisions-in-the-south.pdf>

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyzstan_elections_local_osh_myrzakmatov/24504777.html

Some Kyrgyz government officials deem the Uzbek citizens as dangerous. The ICG report further stated, “Government claims that after the June 2010 pogrom, several hundred young Uzbeks from Osh and other parts of the south went to northern Afghanistan and southern Waziristan (Pakistan) for military training with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and other radical Islamist groups have further raised tensions.”⁵³

Exclusive Group-based Rule

Regimes with a support base rooted exclusively in one communal group are likely to lead to discriminatory practices by the regime which will create popular resentment and threaten regime security. This threat (real or perceived) may make the regime more likely to use violence to defend itself against opposition.

Kyrgyz citizens rule the government almost exclusively. Few minorities hold a position of power in the Kyrgyz government. According to a 2011 article by Asker Sultanov of *Central Asia Online*, “[At least] 408 of the 436 (93 per cent) judges are Kyrgyz and in the prosecutor’s office, only four of the 53 (7 per cent) prosecutors are ethnic minorities.”⁵⁴ According to the 1999 census, Kyrgyz represent 65 per cent of the population, Uzbeks 14 per cent, Russians 12 per cent, and 9 per cent other minorities.

Low degree of Freedom of Speech

The degree to which individuals, institutions, and the media are able to speak freely and criticise the government is a good indicator of the level of freedom in broader society. Lower levels of freedom correlate to a higher risk of genocide as the government is able to act more freely with members of civil society being able to publicize and condemn these actions.

Severe Government Discrimination Against Communal Groups

Governments that practice discrimination or active repression against communal groups have been found to be significantly more likely to perpetrate mass killings than governments that do not. This suggests that governments which have demonstrated a willingness to use such measures against their citizens during periods of stability are more likely to resort to even more extreme measures during crises. This may also increase the likelihood of inter-group violence as disenfranchised groups try to access resources and the regime tries to suppress them.

According to a U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2011, Kyrgyz constitutional law provides for freedom of speech and press. In addition, the report stated, “Following the 2010 change of government, the government took steps toward ensuring those rights were respected.”⁵⁵ However, the U.S. State Department report also stated, “Members of law enforcement continued to

⁵³ <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/222-kyrgyzstan-widening-ethnic-divisions-in-the-south.pdf>

⁵⁴ http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/features/main/2011/04/09/feature-01

⁵⁵ <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/186678.pdf>

commit human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrest, mistreatment, torture, and extortion, against all demographic groups, but particularly against ethnic Uzbeks, who constituted more than 70 per cent of June 2010 casualties but comprised 80 per cent of those charged with crimes related to that violence.”⁵⁶ Lawyers and journalists are often the targets of local police harassment. Azimjon Askarov, a human rights defender who worked on documenting police treatment of detainees, was found guilty of involvement in the killing of a policeman and injuring several officers during mass disturbances in the southern city of Bazar-Kurgan in June 2010. After a prosecution marred with fair trial violations and allegations of torture, the court sentenced him to life in prison.

Charismatic Leadership that Generates Mass Followership

This is particularly dangerous when the leadership appeals to intangibles such as national pride, prestige, or communal group (e.g. racial or ethnic) consciousness. It increases the likelihood of genocide by encouraging members of the dominant group to become either active perpetrators or passive bystanders if victimization and killing begin.

Currently, there are no charismatic leaders generating a mass followership in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Orientation Toward Force and Coercion to Seize and Maintain Power

Elites accustomed to using violence in response to challenges to their power are more likely to use coercion against real or perceived threats. This may escalate into mass atrocities and genocide, which are more likely to be viewed as acceptable measures.

There is no current evidence of individuals or groups with an orientation toward force and coercion to seize the central government’s power in the Kyrgyz Republic.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

CONFLICT AND UPHEAVAL FINDINGS: GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE LIKELIHOOD OF VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE

Executive Summary

Efforts by the Kyrgyz Republic government to reduce violence and ethnic tension within the last two years make genocide or mass atrocities unlikely within the next five years. While the Kyrgyz Republic has a history of conflict, mass violence, political upheaval and protests, instances of each within the last two years that could have turned into greater conflict have not. The government is regaining control of the volatile south and aid from non-state actors is helping to stabilize ethnic tension and reduce the influence of organized crime.

Discussion

History of Conflict

Armed conflict and other crises increase the likelihood of genocide by increasing intergroup tensions, breaking down inhibitions against killing, and providing opportunities to eliminate real or perceived threats. Countries that experience 6 years of conflict within a 25-year period are an average of 15 times more likely to experience a crisis in the year following that period.

Political Upheaval

The uprooting of large numbers of people, elites, and/or institutions threatens general security and provides opportunities for both regimes and their challengers to secure/seize power, eliminate threats, and/or attempt to change the social order.

The Kyrgyz Republic has a history of conflict due to the “Tulip Revolution” in 2005,⁵⁷ the 2010 political upheaval, and continued tension in the South. Ethnic tensions, political activism, and organized crime are the cause of much of Kyrgyzstan’s violence. Political upheaval and subsequent conflict have been common as Kyrgyz citizens are opposed to too much government power.



2010 violence in the Tulip Revolution

⁵⁷ Image Sources:

Figure 1: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Kyrgyzstan%E2%80%99s-unfinished-revolution-18086.html>

Figure 2: <https://www.fas.org/irp/threat/pub45270chap3.html>
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4365945.stm>

The “Tulip Revolution” in 2005 caused President Akayev to fall as disputes over polls escalated. In 2010, opposition protests from Northern Kyrgyz Republic forced the resignation of President Bakiyev, allowing opposition leader, Roza Otunbayeva to become interim president.⁵⁸ In 2010 violence in Jalal Abad and Osh was caused by ethnic tension between the Kyrgyz majority and Uzbek minority. Kurmanbek Bakiyev’s removal from office resulted in fragmented power throughout the Kyrgyz Republic, creating instability and tension.⁵⁹ The 2010 violence was highly influenced by organized crime.

History of Genocide

A history of genocide, whether recent or in the distant past, increases the likelihood of subsequent genocide by helping to define group identities in terms of victimization by a neighbouring group. This helps those intending to perpetrate genocide build support by reminding group members of their past victimization. The feelings of fear and anger created by these memories of past brutality and injustice are often channelled into strong feelings of the need for group “self-defence” or revenge by eliminating the outgroup.

The Kyrgyz Republic does not have a history of genocide. While the term “genocide” has been used to describe past ethnic conflicts between the Kyrgyz and Uzbek minorities, specifically the clash resulting from the 2010 political upheaval,⁶⁰ the Independent International Commission of Inquiry (KIC) does not categorize the event as genocide.⁶¹ However, crimes against humanity, in reference to both the Tulip Revolution in 2005 and the “Second Revolution” in 2010, have been present.

Ongoing Insurgency or Civil War

The majority of genocides and other mass atrocities have occurred during or shortly after wars and rebellions. Governments are most likely to perpetrate mass killing when confronted with insurgencies or engaged in civil wars, especially if the outgroup is a source of real or perceived support for anti-government combatants.

There is currently no evidence of a civil war or insurgency within Kyrgyz Republic despite persistent ethnic tensions in the South. While President Almazbek Atambayev won the October election based on national unity,⁶² Southern detachment from the central government makes it difficult for unity ideals to spread.

Organized Crime rings in the south incite instability “in order to protect trafficking networks.”⁶³ Despite a 2010 report from the UN Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs that estimated a civil war in the near future,⁶⁴ a recent ethnic

⁵⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16185772>

⁵⁹ <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/asia/100615/kyrgyzstan-osh-jalalabad-ethnic-violence>

⁶⁰ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/kyrgyz-gangs-accused-of-genocide-as-death-toll-rises-1999652.html>

⁶¹ "Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010"

⁶² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/kyrgyzstan/9178198/Ethnic-tension-rising-in-southern-Kyrgyzstan-says-report.html>

⁶³ <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61078>

⁶⁴ <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/88818/KYRGYZSTAN-Civil-war-fears>

dispute in Sokh was peacefully resolved and quickly handled by both the Kyrgyz Republic government and Uzbekistan.

An estimated 40 Kyrgyz Republic citizens were taken hostage in the January 6 to 7 border dispute in Sokh, and a Kyrgyz policeman was seriously injured. This event also happened two days after Kyrgyz officials shot and killed an Uzbek drug smuggler.⁶⁵

Large-scale, nonviolent, anti-government protests

Countries in which large portions of the population have publicly displayed disapproval of the regime in the period prior to an episode of instability are significantly more likely to suffer a mass killing during that instability as those which have not experienced such events.

Protests in the Kyrgyz Republic are due primarily to opposition to government policies and attempts to overthrow those in power; non-violent marches and protests usually turn violent over a short period. In January 2012 inmates began a hunger strike to protest prison crackdowns. There were no fatalities and the situation was quickly handled.⁶⁶ In June 2012 protesters removed a blockade that had been constructed in order to make demands regarding environmental protection of the Kumtor Mine.⁶⁷ In October 2012 Prime Minister Zhantoro Satbaldiev refused to nationalize the Kumtor Mine which accounts for 12 per cent of the Kyrgyz Republic's GDP. In the riot that resulted police fired tear gas on demonstrators that attempted a coup, and 12 were injured.⁶⁸ Over 2,000 people protested in Jalal Abad and Bishkek. Sources predicted mass protests in addition to another revolution immediately after this riot.⁶⁹

Conflict over status, power, and rights

When subordinate groups demand greater rights and opportunities, the resulting conflict can lead to genocide with either the protesting group or the dominant group as potential perpetrators. In the first case, protest can turn into revolt which may, if successful, lead to mass killings or genocide against the dominant group and others associated with the former regime. In the second case, protest and rebellion may provoke reprisal atrocities against the outgroup by the regime. Independence movements create significant disputes, especially if the seceding group uses no military force and the government responds with military force.

Several factors have led to conflicts over rights in 2005, 2010, and 2012, including: persistent government corruption; a weak economy; a rise in organized crime; human rights abuses; and utility price increases.⁷⁰ A violent conflict in 2012 was, however avoided. The short 2012 protests were due to a conflict over power

⁶⁵ <http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-kyrgyzstan-hostages-sokh/24817219.html>

⁶⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/01/201212420950643539.html>

⁶⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/04/gold-kyrgyzstan-idUSL5E8H48AG20120604>

⁶⁸ <http://rt.com/news/protest-kyrgyzstan-parliament-storm-560/>

⁶⁹ <http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/conflicts/05-10-2012/122368-kyrgyzstan-0/>

⁷⁰ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/14/kyrgyzstan-conflict-background>

since the Ata-Jurt faction in the Kyrgyz government orchestrated it.⁷¹ The Ata-Jurt faction promoted nationalizing the Kumtor mine, which is currently owned by a Canadian firm, to raise populist issues and bring up fears about foreigners taking Kyrgyz resources.⁷²

In March 2013, opposition groups met in Jalal Abad for a rally regarding constitutional reform, Kumtor gold mine management, border and environmental issues, and the responsiveness of the government. The main Ata-Jurt opposition, in addition to other opposition groups, was present at the rally. If demands were not addressed by 7 April, a march would be held. The group made known that no third revolution would be necessary but the “demands are serious”.⁷³ Public anger still exists in Kyrgyzstan, surrounding complaints of unemployment and allegations of corruption, and while there are small demonstrations, no violence or revolution is expected at this time.⁷⁴

⁷¹ <http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/conflicts/05-10-2012/122368-kyrgyzstan-0/>

⁷² <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/oct/12/opposition-risks-kyrgyzstans-stability-in-protests/>

⁷³ <http://www.worldbulletin.net/?aType=haber&ArticleID=105327>

⁷⁴ <http://iwpr.net/report-news/kyrgyzstan-public-anger-no-revolution>

TRIGGERS OF VIOLENCE

LIKELY TRIGGERS OF VIOLENCE: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

Executive Summary

The persistence of the underlying sociocultural risk factors in the Kyrgyz Republic indicates that violence within the next five years is likely to have similar causes. Ethnic tension did not cause the “Second Tulip Revolution” of 2010, but it was the basis of the violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh and Jalal Abad. Economic and political factors began the protests in other areas of the country, but in those southern cities the unrest was itself a catalyst for the ethnic violence. However, drug cartels organized along ethnic lines may have been the main perpetrators of violence, but the recent successes of the Kyrgyz government and international organizations reduce cartels’ impact.

Discussion

The proximal cause of the unrest was poverty and the economic instability of the Kyrgyz Republic. Lacking the natural resources upon which its neighbours depend and with up to 40 per cent of the population below the poverty line,⁷⁵ the country was primed for protests in 2010 when the government raised electricity prices.⁷⁶

In addition to the economic grievances, the protesters rallied against political corruption. Although not as blatantly corrupt as long time President Askar Akayev’s regime, his successor, Kurmanbek Bakiev’s relatives and government are being investigated for corruption,⁷⁷ and opposition journalists were frequent targets for arrest and assault under his regime.⁷⁸ Juxtaposed with the wealth of government officials, the price hikes were especially maddening to the protesters.

In the Osh and Jalal Abad regions ethnic tension was always present, and the destabilization of this “Second Tulip Revolution” allowed it to come to the surface. The theme of economic inequality could also be seen here in the popular perception of Uzbeks as a wealthy merchant class. The similarities with ethnic conflict in 1990, which was also predicated on economic and political instability, indicate that this pattern could continue.⁷⁹ Ethnic conflict does not appear to be an insignificant side-effect of greater violence, but rather political instability seems to ignite the primed ethnic tensions.

Drug Cartel Involvement in 2010

In 2010 Suyun Omurzakov, a prominent drug lord and chief of police, and Osh Mayor Melis Myrzakmatov, plotted, lead, financed and participated in anti-Uzbek programs

⁷⁵ http://www.sras.org/recurring_themes_in_the_kyrgyz_revolutions

⁷⁶ http://www.rferl.org/content/Kyrgyz_Protest_Electricity_Price_Hike_/1968192.html

⁷⁷ <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/60999>

⁷⁸ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/08/kyrgyzstan-second-tulip-revolution>

⁷⁹ http://www.sras.org/recurring_themes_in_the_kyrgyz_revolutions

and supplied arms and ammunition to Kyrgyz militia.⁸⁰ Kurmanbek and Zhanysh Bakiyev changed security structures, hired foreign snipers against the crowds, and replaced power ministers, inciting violence in 2010.⁸¹ The interim government cancelled the most illiberal of the Bakiyevs' changes.

Recent efforts by the Kyrgyz government, state and private medical institutions, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to take power from drug cartels are likely to further reduce the chances of conflict. The Kyrgyz Republic Government began seriously combating drug trafficking with the addition of the State Service on Drug Control in 2011. The head of this Service is Vice Chair Timyr Isakov, a Russian officer, who is part of Russian involvement in the Kyrgyz government. Other offices involved in drug trafficking are Kyrgyzstan's National Security Committee, the Southern Directorate for the Fight Against Illegal Drugs, and Kyrgyz Special Services.

The UNODC has actively supported anti-drug-trafficking efforts in the Kyrgyz Republic contributing material, and technical and logistical support, in addition to launching a regional program to combat the drug trade stemming from Afghanistan.⁸²

State and private medical institutions provide voluntary drug addiction and abuse treatment focused on juveniles, those in the penal system and those just released from prison. Since January 2008, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria has provided support to those focused on the penal system in the Kyrgyz Republic.⁸³



The Northern Route of the Afghan Drug Trade includes Kyrgyzstan.

⁸⁰ <http://enews.fergananews.com/articles/2737>

⁸¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,RDCI,,KGZ,4c2c508a2,0.html>

⁸² <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2012/January/unodc-supports-kyrgyz-anti-drug-agency-in-curbing-narcotics-and-organized-crime.html>

⁸³ <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/country-overviews/kg>

Successes in combating drug trafficking since October 2012 include cutting off an international supply chain, preventing bribery, detaining Kamchybek Kolbayev, a wanted criminal kingpin who helped organize the Northern Route, and increasing drug seizures.

Efforts being made in the rest of the Northern Route “shield” countries, including Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan are likely to reduce drug trafficking as well, subsequently diminishing the chances of violence and future conflict. These efforts in the other shield nations are not yet mature as most began in 2011. Uzbekistan-United States joint efforts to combat drug trafficking began as recently as October 2012.⁸⁴ Improved efforts in Tajikistan after the initial attempts in 2009 have begun with U.S. assistance in 2012.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/russia-and-former-soviet-union/uzbekistan-us-will-jointly-combat-drug-trafficking-314212.html>

⁸⁵ https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:yT4w7Lilw2Yl:www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/98-594.pdf+&hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEEShhxfuax6p94-kDfkU2Bxewd-ugqK4GleRkt6mqECOEF7FblmPY1WyzEXwQv8gmWWra54IRRLd5Nc4fv3BIONs8TOIkXbv0_7dwFSDayHEuNkBqpE-MIHfYiz_6gu3393z3jRmG4&sig=AHIEtbQE0Dth3zBND7EzeuRHPleXjhELQ
Tajikistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests

SOCIAL NETWORKS ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The effort to use the social networking and data mining software program ORA in order to accurately portray Twitter social networks using the words “sart” and “adir” was unsuccessful. While the search produced clear social networks, the relevance of the findings is low due to the small number of Twitter users in the Kyrgyz Republic. Kyrgyz and Russian networks including *agent*, *v kontakte*, and *odnoklassniki* that are used more widely would likely be of use once the networks could be represented by software similar to NodeXL or ORA.

Discussion

A 4 October 2012 *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* article highlighting a recent protest brought the topic of social media in the Kyrgyz Republic to the Team’s attention.⁸⁶ This article discusses the importance of texting and social networks in the Kyrgyz Republic as a means of communicating for rallies and protests, often before violence.⁸⁷

The available software on campus included NodeXL and ORA. The search terms were the Kyrgyz words “sart,” a slur for Uzbeks used frequently during the 2010 violence, and “adir,” neighborhoods of displaced Uzbeks just outside Osh. NodeXL pulled tweets from Twitter and organized them by tweet, username, and those to whom the messages were sent or those who “retweeted.”

This information was then imported into ORA, which generated visuals including web diagrams and bar charts, as well as a report showing most important nodes and links. The analyst then edited the nodes to display eigenvector between-ness, which shows those who are the most connected to the most connected nodes.

The analyst then generated reports and looked at highlighted individuals. No individuals were deemed dangerous or appeared to be Kyrgyz. Further research revealed that “sart” is also a common word in Turkish with no Uzbek connotation and that Twitter is not used widely in the Kyrgyz Republic.⁸⁸

The networks that are used widely in the Kyrgyz Republic include *agent*, *v kontakte* and *odnoklassniki*. Kyrgyz use these sites, as well as texting, increasingly for communication, as Internet and smart phone use rises within the country.

Though Twitter was not a useful network for analysis at this point, its popularity within the Kyrgyz Republic is expected to grow.⁸⁹ ORA and NodeXL were useful for pulling and organizing information.

⁸⁶ <http://www.rferl.org/content/was-krygyz-protest-really-about-gold-mine-or-face-time/24729408.html>

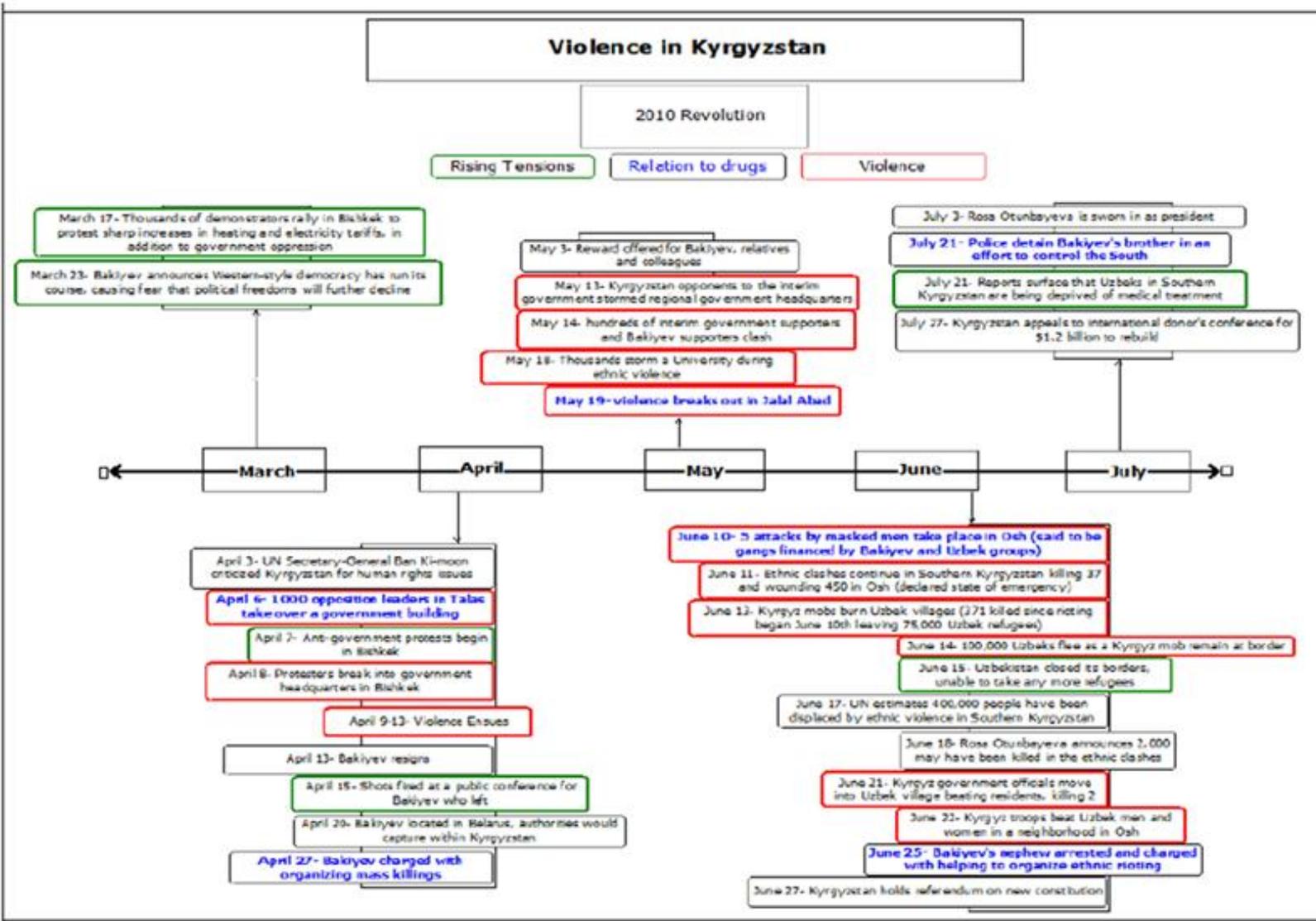
⁸⁷ <http://ts-1.eee.hku.hk/ccst9015sp13/p26/3arab-spring-vs-kyrgyz-revolution/kyrgyzstan-revolution/>

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/expanding-twitter-s-reach-kyrgyzstan>

In the right situations and with the right software, this method would be an effective tool for The Sentinel Project, especially for use with its growing Hate Speech Database. This method enables rapid, late-stage analysis; although ineffective in this circumstance, we recommend further exploration of social network analysis.

Annex I: Timeline of Violence in Kyrgyz Republic



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to sincerely thank Professor Diane Chido for her instruction, guidance, expertise, time, and food throughout this project.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Andrea Javor, Team Leader
ajavor08@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

Scott Dempsey, Editor, Sociocultural Analyst
sdemps44@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

Stefani Baughman, Political – Institutional Analyst
sbaugh79@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

Emily Francis, Conflict and Upheaval Analyst
efranc61@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

George McConville, Economic Analyst
gmcon86@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

Levi Williams, Political – Regime and Ideology Analyst
lwilli27@lakers.mercyhurst.edu