Chapter 3

Security in Central Eurasia—
The Impact of U.S. Engagement

Since the Cold War era, many blame the political instability in the Middle East and the former Soviet republics on the revival of Islam and the Islamic fundamentalism associated with it. This movement gave rise to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and al-Qaeda members harbored there are believed to have planned the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. Following the attacks, the United States and other countries intervened militarily to maintain order in Afghanistan and stamp out these destabilizing elements directly.

This engagement policy of the United States, backed by military force, has created a new international political landscape in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and its neighboring countries. Prior to this new security environment, international cooperation against terrorism in Central Eurasia led by regional powers Russia and China was considered, but today security in the region is becoming difficult to construct unless the United States participates. Even in a regional security framework exclusive to Eurasia, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), each member state must rely on the U.S. presence to maintain security and political stability for itself. Undoubtedly, the security system in Central Eurasia backed by China and Russia is undergoing change. If the United States continues its engagement policy toward Eurasia, China and Russia may have to cooperate with the United States in order to stabilize the region. On the other hand, Russia continues to exert great influence and will maintain its presence as a regional power in South Caucasus and the Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union.

The term “Central Eurasia” herein refers to inland areas of the Eurasian Continent—the Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, Kashmir, the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and the Tibet Autonomous Region in China, and their surrounding areas. We use this geographical term without reference to existing national borders because most of the destabilizing factors in the region transcend them.

1. Security in Central Eurasia, and the United States

(1) Afghanistan—The Inauguration of an Interim Government and Deployment of International Troops

The stability of Central Eurasia hinges on Afghanistan's reconstruction. Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, the United States has become deeply involved in Afghan affairs by virtue of its military operation to destroy the al-Qaeda.

Shortly before the Taliban lost Kandahar on December 7, 2001, the U.N. Talks on Afghanistan—convened November 27 through December 5 in Bonn, Germany, by various Afghan factions, referred to as the Bonn meeting—decided on how to reconstruct post-Taliban Afghanistan. At the meeting, U.N. representatives and four anti-Taliban groups—including the Northern Alliance, which played a key role in crushing the Taliban with U.S. and Russian assistance, and the Rome group led by the former king, Mohammed Zahir Shah—agreed that a new regime would be established in two years. Specifically, the meeting agreed that an Interim Administration would be established by December 22 and that an emergency "Loya Jirga" (the traditional assembly of all national representatives) would convene within the following six months. The Transitional Authority would then replace the Interim Administration, and a Loya Jirga would be convened to enact a constitution within the next 18 months, culminating in the formal launch of a new administration.

Almost as if by trial and error, internal politics in Afghanistan muddled on, according to schedule, until the end of 2002. On December 20, 2001, Hamid Karzai, former vice minister of foreign affairs in the Rabani administration, took office as chairman of the Interim Administration. From June 11-19, 2002, 1,650 elected delegates from all parts of the country gathered for a session of the Loya Jirga, and it elected Hamid Karzai as president of the Transitional Authority on June 14.

However, nation-building in Afghanistan got off to a sluggish

start. Due to the delay in electing representatives from different areas, the opening of the Loya Jirga had to be put off. Key members of the Karzai Administration were assassinated—the civil aviation minister on February 14, 2002, the vice president and health minister on July 6—an attempt was made on the president's life on September 5 in Kandahar, and there was terrorist activity in Kabul. These attacks suggest that there are several parties discontented with the policy of the government—remnants of al-Qaeda, and other opposition forces, still exist in Afghanistan—and also indicate that the authorities lack the ability to prevent such violence and to punish the perpetrators. Moreover, powerful warlords—such as General Abdur Rashid Dostum who controlled the Uzbeks in Mazar-e Shariff in northern Afghanistan, and Ismael Khan, based in Herat in western Afghanistan—maintained control over their own regions and refused to join forces with the Karzai administration. (However, Gen. Dostum later took office as vice minister of defense in the Transitional Administration.)

President Karzai pledged in his inaugural address that the control of peace and order and warlords would be under Defense Minister General Mohammed Qasim Fahim. Furthermore, on December 2, 2002, he announced he was organizing a national army of up to 70,000 troops. However, due to a lack of funds and the deep-rooted antagonism of the warlords toward Defense Minister General Fahim, the task of organizing an integrated army has proceeded slowly. Therefore, the Karzai administration's control of the military is extremely fragile. On April 3, 2002, aid donor countries met in Geneva to discuss the creation of an internal security system, such as a national Afghan army. In a speech at this meeting, Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah asked donor nations to grant $235 million to the national army, and $187 million to the police, to cover expenses for the next 12 months. Although the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has been cooperating with Afghan authorities in organizing and training the national army, progress has been very slow.

Table 3-1. List of Initial Transitional Authority Cabinet Members

(As of June 22, 2002)

Post	Name	Tribal Affiliation	Holdovers from Interim Administration	Background
President	Hamid Karzai	Pashtun		Chairman of the Interim Administration
Vice President	Gen. Mohammed Fahim	Tajik .	Defense Minister	Hails from the Northern Alliance. Also Minister of Defense
Vice President	Karim Khalili	Hazara Shia		Hails from the Northern Alliance
Vice President	Haji Abdul Qadeer	Pashtun		Hails from the Northern Alliance, also Public Works Minister, assassinated on July 6, 2002
Advisor on Internal Security to the President	Younis Qanooni	Tajik		Hails from the Northern Alliance, former Minister of Interior. Also Minister of Education
Minister of Interior	Taj Mohammad Khan Wardak	Pashtun		
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Abdullah Abdullah	Tajik	Holdover	Hails from the Northern Alliance
Minister of Economy and Finance	Ashraf Ghani	Pashtun		Ex-World Bank
Minister of Planning	Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq	Hazara Shia	Holdover	Hails from the Northern Alliance
Minister of Communications	Masoum Stanakzai	Pashtun		
Minister of Health	Suheila Siddiq	Pashtun	Holdover	Independent, female
Minister of Reconstruction	Mohammed Amin Farhang	Pashtun	Holdover	Hails from the Rome Group
Minister of Agriculture	Sayed Hussain Anwari	Tajik Shia	Holdover	
Minister for Women's Affairs	Raihalla Sarabi	Hazara		
Minister of Frontier Area	Arif Noorzai	Pashtun		Former Minister of Light Industry
Minister of Trade	Sayed Mustafa Kasemi	Tajik Shia	Holdover	
Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism	Mir Wais Sadeq	Tajik Herati		Son of warlord Ismael Khan
Minister of Light Industry	Alim Razim	Uzbek		Former Minister of Mines and Heavy Industry
Minister of Refugees	Enyatullah Naziri	Tajik	Holdover	
Minister of Mines and Heavy Industry	Juma Mohammad Mohammedi	Pashtun		Hails from the Rome Group, ex-World Bank and former Minister of Public Works
Minister of Justice	Abbas Karimi	Uzbek		
Minister for Information and Culture	Sayed Makhdoom Rahin	Tajik	Holdover	Hails from the Rome Group

(Continued on next page.)

Table 3-1. (Continued)

Post	Name	Tribal Affiliation	Holdovers from Interim Administration	Background
Minister for Haj and Mosques	Mohammed Amin Nasiryar	Pashtun		
Minister for Urban Affairs	Mohammed Yousuf Pashtun	Pashtun		
Minister for Labor and Social Affairs	Noor Ahmed Qarqeen	Turkmen		
Minister of Water and Power	Ahmed Shakar Kargar	Uzbek		
Minister of Irrigation and Environment	Yousuf Nuristani	Nuristani		
Minister of Martyrs and Disabled	Abdullah Wardak	Pashtun		
Minister of Higher Education	Sharif Faez	Tajik	Holdover	Hails from the Northern Alliance
Minister for Transport	Sayed Ali Jawed	Tajik Shia		
Minister for Rural Development	Hanif Atmar	Pashtun		

Sources: Compiled from data from "EurasiaNet" (http://www.eurasianet.org/loya.jirga/cabinet.shtml) Information concerning reshuffle of Cabinet personnel was drawn from the List of Cabinet Members of the Interim Administration carried in "Afghan Info," an information site relating to Afghanistan (http://www.afghan-info.com/Politics/Interim_AfghanGovt.htm).

In addition, a sharp increase in the number of returning refugees is also a destabilizing factor in Afghanistan. Initially, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the number of returning refugees at approximately 1.2 million, but as early as August 2002, the actual number was far greater. Most had poured into Kabul, where they had hoped to receive generous international aid. As a result, the task of creating refugee relief facilities—housing, potable water, employment opportunities, and educational institutions—has become an urgent problem.

Given this situation, the Karzai administration required international recognition as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, and looked for economic and security assistance from the West. However, even these hopes proved elusive. At an International Conference on Assistance for the Reconstruction of Afghanistan, held in Tokyo in January 2002, representatives of donor nations

agreed to provide more than $4,500 million in aid to Afghanistan over a five-year period. However, this amount fell short of the estimated cost of reconstruction. Furthermore, the flow of funds from participating countries and international organizations was anything but smooth.

President Karzai with incoming and outgoing commanders of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (Kabul, June 20, 2002) (AP/WWP)

The West's involvement in the security of Afghanistan is largely comprised of troops for peacekeeping and security, and those for mopping up remnants of al-Qaeda in and around the country. The former, named the ISAF, the force mandated by the United Nations for peacekeeping operations (PKO), entered Afghanistan strengthened by the agreement reached at the Bonn meeting. The ISAF is composed of some 5,000 army personnel from 19 countries under a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) resolution and an agreement signed in Kabul on January 4, 2002. Initially, the ISAF was led by a commander from the United Kingdom, but on June 20, when the Loya Jirga convened, an officer of the Turkish army took over the position. Since the ISAF was deployed only in and around the nation's capital, President Karzai and Sadako Ogata, special Japanese representative of the prime minister of Japan for Afghanistan assistance, proposed that it also be deployed to local areas. However, those countries that had contributed troops to the ISAF were against getting involved in regional politics, so the idea was dropped.

Although the majority of foreign personnel sent to the Tora Bora region to mop up remnants of al-Qaeda were from the United States, not all of them were military troops. Among them were several hundred Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents who had infiltrated Pakistani territory. These operations are continuing even though

Operation Anaconda was called off in March 2002. However, Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, still remains at large.

(2) The Growing U.S. Presence in the Former Soviet Republics

The deployment of U.S. troops to former Communist bloc countries—those of Central Asia and South Caucasus—has added a new dynamic to Central Eurasia. In accordance with Operation Enduring Freedom, U.S. troops established bases in countries bordering Afghanistan—including Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan—which, while Muslim countries, are more secular than the Middle East. At a meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) prime ministers in Astana, Kazakhstan, on September 14, 2001, soon after the terrorist attacks on the United States, participants expressed their opposition to terrorism and allowed U.S. warplanes to use their air space. However, the reception subsequently accorded to U.S. troops differed from country to country.

It was Uzbekistan that first offered to cooperate with the United States, including the use of military bases, when the latter made it clear that the main U.S. targets were the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Uzbekistan seceded from the Treaty on Collective Security of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1999, and has since been trying to establish a security system of its own, independent of Russia. Coming at such a juncture, the presence of U.S. troops on its soil was just what Uzbekistan wanted, and more than 1,000 soldiers are believed to be stationed at the Khanabad and Termez base not far from the Afghan border. The largest U.S. camp in Central Asia is the Manas International Airport and surrounding areas in Kyrgyzstan. Military personnel deployed to the airport, located adjacent to the capital of Bishkek and with the largest facilities in Central Asia, number between 2,000 and 3,000, mostly Americans. Use of the airport facilities and the employment of locals by U.S. troops have given a greater-than-expected lift to the fragile economy of Kyrgyzstan.

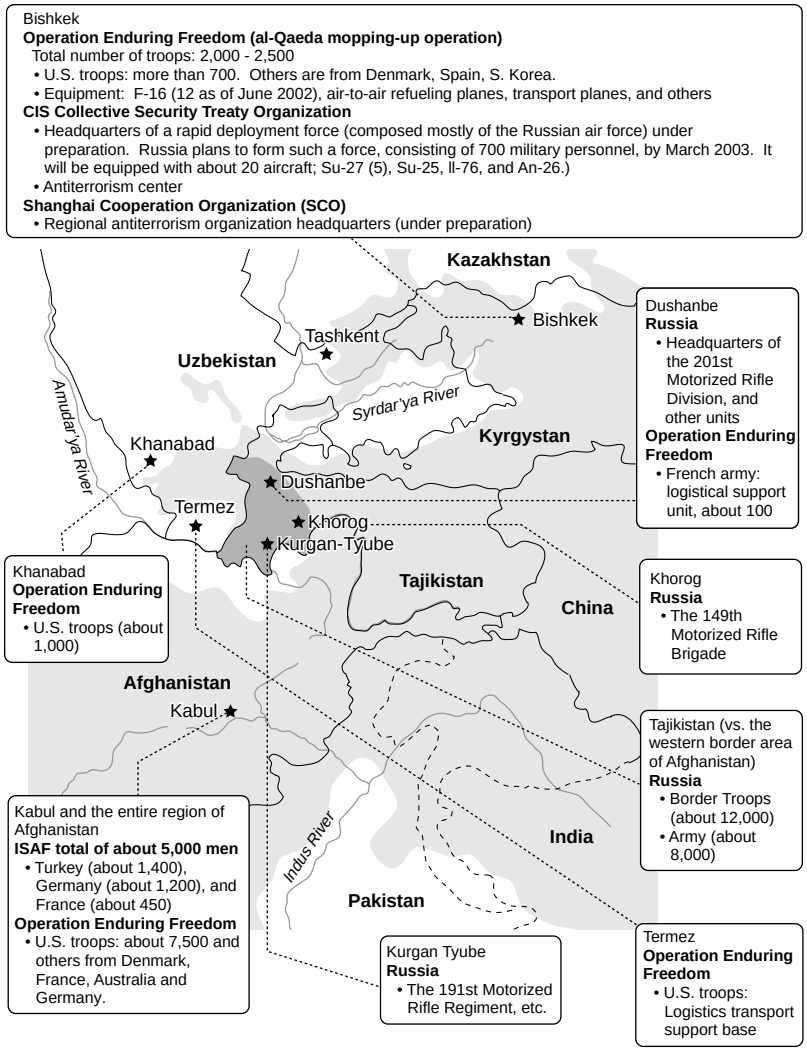
On the other hand, the United States has refrained from deploy-

ing troops in Tajikistan, another country bordering Afghanistan that is under strong Russian influence, one with many ethnic and religious similarities to Afghanistan. Instead, a logistical support unit of nearly 100 French troops was deployed in the capital. Tajikistan has been sensitive to U.S. intervention since the September 11 attacks, not only for the ethnic and religious reasons noted earlier, but also due to Russian influence that is stronger than in any other Central Asian country. Russia sent 1,500 reinforcements for its 8,000-strong 201st Motorized Rifle Division, deployed, along with Russian Border Troops, in western Tajikistan near Afghanistan immediately after September 11. This large presence of Russian troops stands in sharp contrast to the waning Russian presence in Central Asia as a whole. Following a visit by U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to Tajikistan in November 2001, at which Tajikistan agreed to allow the U.S. military to use its bases, the government was so sensitive to the reaction of its people that it kept details of the agreement secret for about a month. In addition, into 2002, Georgia, a former Soviet republic in South Caucasus, purchased combat helicopters from the United States and its forces received U.S. military training.

One of the main points in viewing the security environment of Central Eurasia is whether the United States intends to remain in the region for the long haul. Unless the mopping-up operation directed against al-Qaeda ends soon, it is hard to imagine U.S. troops withdrawing in the near future, especially now that reconstruction of Iraq after the war has begun. There is also opposition within Russia (especially its military) to the long-term presence of U.S. troops in its own "backyard," despite prior approval. (For details, see Chapter 8.) For China, also, the presence of U.S. troops in this area might be a cause of concern.

For those Central Asian countries sandwiched between two big powers (Russia and China), the U.S. military presence helped create new nation-building possibilities and diplomacy. Cooperation between the West and Central Asia was not the overnight result of

Chart 3-1. Deployment of Western Troops in Central Asia



Sources: Compiled from *The Military Balance 2002/2003* (London, IISS, 2002), *Central Asia and Post-Conflict Stabilization of Afghanistan* (London, IISS, 2002); *Kommersant vlast'*, 14 May 2002; *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 2 December 2002; Tetsuji Tanaka "June 2002, in Central Asia," *Urasia kenkyu* (Eurasian Studies) no.27, pp.14-21

Commentary

The Problem of Removing Anthrax from the Aral Sea

In October 2001, the United States and Uzbekistan agreed to cooperate to dismantle former Soviet anthrax storage facilities on Vozrozhdenie Island (more than half owned by Uzbekistan) in the Aral Sea. Since 1997, the United States had worked with Uzbekistan to remove nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons of the former Soviet Union. When terrorist attacks using anthrax occurred in the United States following September 11, the United States decided to step up its cooperation with Uzbekistan to prevent the anthrax abandoned by the former Soviet Union from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Under this agreement, the United States will contribute $6 million, and the removal will be carried out by private U.S. and Uzbekistan companies under the supervision of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency of the United States, though many details remain to be decided. The size of the Aral Sea has sharply decreased due to its heavy use for irrigation, thus posing serious environmental problems. Additionally, the NBC weapons stored in the Aral Sea began to affect the health of nearby inhabitants. The actual removal of these weapons was performed by Uzbeks, particularly the Karakalpaks, a Turkic people living near the Aral Sea. However, there are concerns about environmental degradation and the negative impact on the health of local inhabitants.

their common interest in fighting terrorism, but has been growing gradually since the end of the Cold War. The West, particularly the United States, built various forms of security cooperation with the former Soviet republics throughout the 1990s, including the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP). Since the mid-1990s, Kazakhstan, which has a relatively strong relationship with Russia, together with Uzbekistan, have carried out joint military exercises with the United States, similar to those involving the Central Asian Battalion (CENTRAZBAT). Furthermore, western involvement has been a welcome relief for most of Central Asia and South Caucasus, helping them ease out from under strong Russian influence.

2. Multilateral Security in Eurasia and Antiterrorism Measures

(1) Islamic Revival and Terrorism

Another factor affecting Central Asia's fight against terrorism is the Islamic revival movement in the region, which will pressure these nations to cope with various problems.

The Islamic revival movement that has emerged as a political force in Central Asia traces its origin to the former Soviet Union during the latter part of the Gorbachev administration when the All-Union Islamic Revival Party was established in June 1990. Although the party formally dissolved with the collapse of the Soviet Union, its activities continue in each former Soviet republic, especially in Central Asia.

Among others, the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) was a major faction in the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), which fought a civil war until July 1997. The IRPT raised and trained its own army in the post-Communist years, and deliberately tried to cause chaos and confusion through the use of armed force. At its height (1993-94), the IRPT's armed groups counted about 10,000. During the civil war, key party members fled to Afghanistan and established contact with a Tajiki force in the Northern Alliance. After the civil war, the IRPT participated in the interim government, holding a number of cabinet posts, and after the parliamentary election in 2000, it became the only legalized religious party in Central Asia. Today they hold a mere two seats in parliament—out of 63 total—due largely to government obstruction and control.

The administration of Islam Karimov in Uzbekistan wanted to eliminate the extremist Islamic movements that had gathered strength there—such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami (the Islamic Liberation Party, hereinafter referred to by its formal name "Hizb al-Tahrir"). The IMU had come to the attention of Japan as the group responsible for abducting Japanese mining engineers in the summer of 1999.

As its name suggests, the political objective of the IMU is the Islamization of Uzbekistan, and Osama bin Laden is suspected to have provided it with financial assistance. By November 2001, most IMU operatives were eliminated as a result of the military operations against the Taliban and al-Qaeda by the Northern Alliance and U.S. troops. However, some key members survived, and Central Asian nations are exercising vigilance over their movements.

Hizb al-Tahrir split from Jamia al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin (the Society of Muslim Brothers) around 1953, and is currently based in Jerusalem and engaged in liberating the Palestinians, though steering clear of armed struggle. Under the slogan to revive umma (Muslim community) under a restored caliph (Islamic religious/political leader) governed by sharia (Islamic law), they are mainly engaged in an intellectual dispute—dispensing their publications throughout Central Asia—and as such are the target of efforts by the governments in the region to gag them. There are indications that Hizb al-Tahrir is cooperating with the IRPT, since the latter follows a policy of non-violence. With the influence of the violent IMU on the wane—due to the war against terrorism—Hizb al-Tahrir is becoming increasingly active in Central Asia, and local authorities are intensifying their efforts to suppress it.

Perhaps sympathetic to such movements in Central Asia, Islamic revival movements emerged in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China, which is related to Uighur independence movements from the end of the 1980s through the 1990s. However, they failed to organize into a systematic movement due to suppression and control by Chinese authorities. Today, a few small groups are believed to exist in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and neighboring countries, particularly Kazakhstan. Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, the United States has linked these groups to al-Qaeda, and refers to them as terrorist organizations. At a U.S.-China antiterrorism meeting in Beijing in November 2001, a U.S. delegate reportedly said “there are Chinese Uighurs in

Afghanistan." In August 2002, the United States decided to put the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement on its list of terrorist organizations. However, since it is one of several organizations fighting for independence, and since there is no credible evidence linking them to terrorism, there were those in other Western countries who hesitated to brand them as terrorists.

Extremists inspired by Islamic revivalism enjoy the support of the local population and are connected to international terrorist organizations. There are reports that some 10,000 Uighurs had gone to Pakistan and Afghanistan for religious education and military training by the time the United States intervened in Afghanistan. Russians are among those al-Qaeda operatives detained at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, and there are a large number of foreign soldiers participating in the Chechen conflict fighting alongside the Chechen rebels.

As the conflict between Russia and the Chechen Republic has dragged on, its effects have spilled over to the Caucasus countries, especially Georgia, bordering Chechnya. Russia has repeatedly notified Georgia of the existence of Chechen soldiers hiding in the Pankisi Valley in Georgia, saying it might attack or take complete control of the area, and demanding that Russian troops remain following any operation. By drawing on the antiterrorism theory fathered by the United States, Russian President Vladimir V. Putin hinted at the possibility of armed intervention in Georgia, raising the possibility of war. However, President Putin and President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia worked out a settlement during a CIS summit meeting in Chisinau in October 2002. U.S. troops stationed in Georgia and the anti-Chechen sentiment in Russia make the situation in Pankisi Valley complicated. Due to the hostage incident in a Moscow theater involving a group of Chechen rebels in October 2002 (see Chapter 8 for details) that claimed more than 100 lives, Russia plans to mount more vigorous operations to get rid of armed Chechen groups. Russia urged the Georgian government to step up its prosecution of Chechens, and these movements

Table 3-2. Outline of Multilateralism in Central Asia

Name	Abbreviations English	Abbreviations Russian	Date Established	Member Nations
Commonwealth of Independent Nations	CIS	СНГ	Dec. 8, 1991	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, (12 countries)
CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization		ДКБ	May 14, 2002 Reorganization announced	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan (6 countries)
Shanghai Cooperation Organization	SCO	ШОС	Jun. 12, 2001	China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan (6 countries)
GUUAM	GUUAM	ГУУАМ	Oct. 10, 1997	Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova (5 countries)
Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia	CICA	СВМДА	Sep. 1, 1999 1st Foreign Ministers Meeting	Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine Autonomous Authority, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan (16 countries)
Eurasia Economic Community		ЕврАзЭС	Oct. 6, 2000 Treaty of creation signed	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan (5 countries)

Sources: *Present State of Russia, 1996*, (Tokyo: Radio Press), 1996, pp.518-524 (for information on CIS Charter); *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, No.6, 2001, pp. 56-57; Ibid., No. 6, 2002, pp. 77-78 (CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization); *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, No.7, 2001, pp.27-29 No.7, 2002, pp.26-29 (SCO); Yoko Hirose, "The Creation of GUUAM and Outlook—Problems Facing Member Countries and the Russian Factor," *Russian Studies* (Tokyo: Japan International Affairs Institute), No.31, 2000, pp.13-149 [Japanese] and official website of the diplomatic missions of member countries in the United States (http//www.guuam.org/) (GUUAM); *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, No.7, 2002, pp.18-23 (CICA); and *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, October 10, 2000 (Eurasia Economic Community).

(As of Dec. 31, 2002)

Main organization/system	Major objective/roles	Remark
Secretariat (Minsk), the Secretariat of general meetings held between Parliamentary sessions (St. Petersburg), and regular consultation on various levels below summit meeting.	A successor organization of the now defunct Soviet system; discusses cooperation in the political, economic and environmental areas; economic and social development, cooperation between, and integration of, states; disarmament, support for movement and exchange within the Commonwealth, and judicial cooperation (excerpt from the CIS Charter).	
An antiterrorism center (located in Bishkek) decided on June 21, 2000); rapid deployment troops (decided on May 25, 2001).	Peacekeeping activities and implementation of measures including the use of military force pursuant to Article 51 of the U.N. Charter. Invocation of a mutual consultation mechanism for these purposes.	The predecessor is the CIS Collective Security Treaty concluded May 15, 1992. Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia withdrew from the Treaty in 1999.
Secretariat (located in Beijing), summit meetings, prime ministers' meeting, foreign ministers' meeting, interstate coordination meeting, antiterrorism center (Bishkek).	Mutual confidence among member states, strengthening friendly and good neighborly relations, and multifarious cooperation in projects for the maintenance and strengthening of security and stability of the region, concerted resistance to new challenges and threats, and promotion of cooperation in wide-ranging areas.	
Summit meetings, and regular consultation on various levels.	Promotion of bilateral and region-wide cooperation, exchanges with Europe, and development of special cooperation with NATO.	When Uzbekistan joined the organization in 1999, it became GUUAM, until Uzbekistan announced its intention to withdraw .
The conference aims to become a permanent organization in the future (according to statement adopted by the summit meeting held on June 4, 2002).	Promotion of people-to-people dialogue pursuant to the U.N. Charter, anti-terrorism and anti-drug trafficking measures, pointing out inequalities in benefits of globalization (according to a statement adopted by the summit meeting held on June 4, 2002).	Proposed by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in a speech delivered before the U.N. General Assembly in 1992. The first foreign ministers meeting was held in 1999, and the first summit meeting held in 2002.
Interstate Council, Integration Committee (Moscow), and interparliamentary meeting (St. Petersburg). Community Court of Justice (Minsk).	Formation of a Customs Union Integrated Economic Sphere, and deepening economic and humanitarian integration.	The 1993 Treaty on the Creation of CIS Economic Union, the 1995 Customs Union Agreement, and the process of concluding a treaty on deepening the integration of the economic and human areas is in progress.

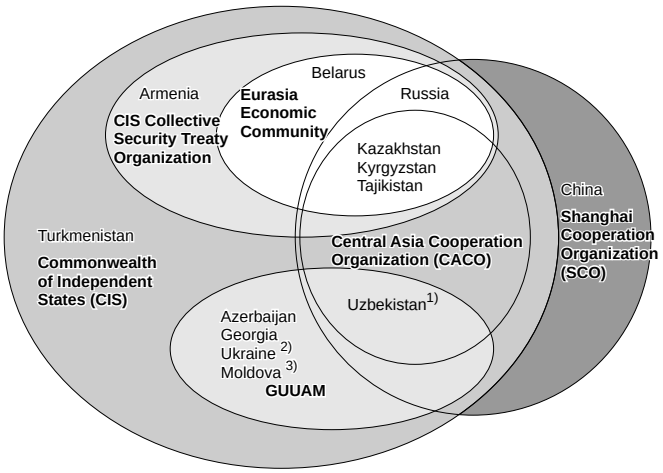
will inevitably lead to increased tension between the two countries.

(2) Multilateralism in Eurasia

How did Russia and China respond to the rise of Islamic extremism and U.S. engagement in Eurasia after the September 11 attacks? A look at developments from September 11 until the end of 2002 shows that although the two countries tried to utilize their bilateral relations with Central Asia, as well as multilateral frameworks—such as the CIS Collective Security Treaty and the SCO—neither country has yet to take a decisive lead in building a security system in Eurasia.

Previously, these Central Asian countries were republics of the former Soviet Union and had been under strong Russian influence. Although they have become more autonomous since the collapse of the Soviet Union, they have maintained close political and econom-

Chart 3-2. Multilateralism among Countries Surrounding Central Asia (As of Dec. 31, 2002)



Notes: 1) Uzbekistan once indicated its plan to withdraw from GUUAM in June 2002. After that, however, Uzbekistan continues to send its delegation to each level meeting of GUUAM.
2) Ukraine participated as an observer in the Eurasia Economic Community and the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization .
3) Moldova participated as an observer in the Eurasia Economic Community.

ic ties with Russia. Regarding security, Russia stationed troops in Tajikistan during its civil war (1992-97), and together with Uzbekistan took the initiative in negotiating a cease-fire agreement.

Starting around the year 2000, Central Asian countries began discussing specific measures for multilateral cooperation, and in February of the same year a full-scale anti-terrorist military exercise, dubbed "Southern Shield 2000," was carried out under the leadership of Russia. (Four Central Asian countries, excluding Turkmenistan, participated.) The CIS Collective Security Treaty, concluded in 1992, is the cooperative security framework in which Russia has played a leading role. The CIS summit in Moscow on June 21, 2000, decided to found a "CIS Antiterrorism Center" in Bishkek, and the Collective Security Council Session of the Collective Security Treaty States Parties held in Yerevan, Armenia on May 25, 2001, agreed to set up a "CIS Collective Security Rapid Reaction Force." As 2002 rolled around, member nations of the CIS Collective Security Treaty began moving to establish an organization. Although the Russian-led antiterrorism measures appeared to have been systematized and to have strengthened unity among member nations, a lack of funds and differences in expectations among member nations impeded progress of the CIS.

Thus, the creation of a Russia-led multilateral security system in the region of the former Soviet Union had bogged down even before the September 11 terrorist attacks. The formation of a pro-West regional cooperation organization, GUAM (representing the participating countries—Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova), serves as proof of Russia's waning influence in the region. (When Uzbekistan joined the organization in 1998, the name was changed to "GUUAM.") As GUUAM itself was unable to take any concrete action following the September 11 terrorist attacks, and member nations attempted friendly approaches to Russia bilaterally, the position of GUUAM as a security organization and as one aimed at keeping Russia at bay has weakened to transform itself into a mul-

tilateral organization focused on economic development. However, as we will see later, it is fair to say that it has played a leading role in asserting the uniqueness of former Soviet republics, including those of Central Asia.

Russia, also, is losing its position of leadership in the SCO, and eventually it was decided to establish the SCO Secretariat in Beijing. (For details on the foundation of the SCO, see Chapter 5, *East Asian Strategic Review 2002*.) At an SCO foreign ministers meeting in Beijing on January 7, 2002, China, which was very active in the SCO, and other members issued a joint statement implicitly restraining the United States, stating that any attempts to impose on Afghanistan some or other form of government, and the drawing of the country into the sphere of somebody's influence, may lead to a new crisis in and around Afghanistan. At a defense ministers meeting in Moscow in May, 2002, it was decided to establish a permanent military organization. In line with this, an SCO summit took place in St. Petersburg on June 7, and agreements were reached on a charter and a regional antiterrorist organization. However, how these agreements will be implemented must be addressed over the coming years. China and Kyrgyzstan conducted military exercises "Exercise 01," on October 10-11 in Kyrgyzstan, the first ever conducted within the framework of the SCO. In truth, however, the "Shanghai process" has also lost steam, due largely to the effects of the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan.

This is not to say that these efforts in Eurasia to build a multilateral security system of their own are futile, and the SCO still remains an attractive framework for Eurasian countries. According to a Russian official in charge of the SCO, Iran, India, Pakistan, and Mongolia are exploring the possibility of joining the SCO. It seems that hopes for the formation of an economic and security cooperation framework drives the SCO forward. Furthermore, a Eurasia Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) aims to create, under the leadership of Kazakhstan, a framework for security dialogue covering a region

larger than the SCO. At its first summit on June 3, 2002, in Almaty, the CICA played an important role by arranging a meeting between India and Pakistan, countries whose relations rapidly deteriorated during the first half of the year. Prior to that, on February 28, four Central Asian countries, excluding Turkmenistan, signed a treaty to create a Central Asian Cooperation Organization that expanded and replaced the existing Economic Community. In the coming years, it will be necessary to strengthen the functions and systems of these organizations, and arrangements designed to coordinate—and complement—their intertwining activities will become increasingly important.

Heads of state attending the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) summit meeting (June 4, 2002 at Almaty) (AP/WWP)

3. The Impact on the Internal Affairs of Central Eurasian Countries

In the short run, the U.S. presence in Central Asian countries helped strengthen their political regimes. To stabilize countries where it maintains military bases, the United States has no choice but to support the legitimacy of its host governments. For the governments of Central Asia, U.S. presence is instrumental in suppressing Islamic extremism. In fact, after U.S. engagement, Central Asia played up the threat of terrorism and went after anti-government activists, including moderates, on the grounds of maintaining peace and order, with greater vigor than before.

From Turkmenistan on down (a country that had established a de facto president for life and had strengthened a dictatorship by

deporting opposition leaders), Central Asian countries are authoritarian regimes, though to varying degrees. Although on the surface they may seem to follow democratic procedures—national referendums and parliamentary approval—the reality is that groups of governmental elites with vested interests, headed by an incumbent president, are interested only in holding onto power. On January 27, 2002, Uzbekistan held a national referendum to extend President Karimov's term of office, and on August 24, Azerbaijan in South Caucasus abolished the proportional representation system of its parliament, expanded presidential powers, and held a national referendum to change the presidential line of succession. The West views these actions by President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan as possibly leading to a "monarchical" presidential system. These procedures are reminiscent of the Soviet era, employed to produce overwhelming "support" for the government by mobilizing crowds and by cracking down on opposition parties—all to engineer a choreographed democracy.

The United States, with its democratic ideals, does not look favorably upon such a political system. An annual report on human rights, released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor under the U.S. State Department, criticized Central Asia for human rights abuses that continued even after U.S. forces were deployed there. In actuality, however, the United States, intent on carrying on operations after its invasion of Afghanistan, was forced to turn a blind eye to the internal politics of former Soviet republics. If the United States were involved in the long-term maintenance of social order in Central Asia, the United States would leave itself open to criticism for its double standard.

In their zeal to suppress opposition, some fragile Central Asian governments have wound up weakening themselves in the process. Take, for example, the January 2002 arrest in Kyrgyzstan of Azimbek Beknazarov—a vocal government critic and member of parliament who hailed from southern Kyrgyzstan, an area heavily populated by devout Muslims. His arrest provoked a wave of mass

demonstrations in southern Kyrgyzstan. In March, a group of demonstrators clashed with police, leaving five dead and many injured and inflaming widespread government opposition, including calls for the president to step down. In response, the Kurmanbek Bakiev Cabinet resigned en masse on May 22, and the head of the Presidential Administration, Amanbek Karypkulov, was replaced. Once the president appointed Deputy Prime Minister Nikolai Tanayev as prime minister, and allowed an anti-government newspaper he had previously shut down to resume publication, the disturbance wound down. However, since opposition leaders and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan were not part of the new cabinet—dominated, as it was, by bureaucrats with ties to the president—the inauguration of a new cabinet hardly solved the problem. However, the fact that open criticism of the president pressured the cabinet into resigning will have a considerable impact on the politics of the surrounding countries.

4. International Relations in Central Eurasia—Problems and Outlook

(1) Poverty, Islamic Revivalism, and Border Control

Except for the period before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union and during the civil war in Tajikistan, unstable security environments were the exception rather than the rule in Central Eurasia. In the post-September 11 world, the most important goals shared by all of Central Asia were political stability and economic development—in light of the destabilizing affect of neighboring Afghanistan.

Poverty is the basic factor responsible for the political destabilization in this region. Despite the recent development of oil and gas fields raising hopes for economic growth, particularly in Kazakhstan, the majority of people are only able to eke out a living below the poverty level. This is found mostly in the Ferghana region—southern Kyrgyzstan, eastern Uzbekistan, and northern

Tajikistan—a poverty-stricken reason with a large population of devout, Muslims that has become a fertile breeding ground for Islamic extremism. This same Ferghana Valley region was the arena where political movements had been inspired by Islamic revivalism, as outlined in Section 2 above. The governments of Central Asia feel somewhat victimized by the rise of Islamic movements in their countries, believing that the destabilizing factors are imported from abroad. If the circumstances that gave rise to political movements such as the IMU mentioned earlier are any guide, that is not necessarily the case. However, what is true is that outside factors, such as the destabilization of Afghanistan and surrounding areas, border crossings and attacks by guerrillas based in the mountains of Afghanistan and Tajikistan, the creation of drug-smuggling routes, and an increase in drug addicts, have intensified.

Given these circumstances, Central Asia has not exactly taken a firm stand against Islamic revivalism. When the Taliban gained the upper hand in northern Afghanistan in the summer of 2000, even Uzbekistan eased its earlier firm stand against them. Uzbekistan's appeasement policy was designed to check Russian assertions that Islam threatened its security, as well as for the answer to its fear of being attacked by the IMU, which had been moving in step with the Taliban. Another example was seen in November 2000, while President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan, seeking reelection, vowed to fight the encroachment of Islamic revivalists into the southern part of his country. At the same time, however, in order to win popularity over the Uzbeks in the area, who were more receptive to Islam than the Kyrgys, he proposed an affirmative action plan on their behalf.

The numerous problems caused by poverty and Islamic revivalism remain to be solved through the cooperative efforts of Central Asian countries. The amount of poppy (opium) grown is said to have surpassed pre-Afghan levels after the collapse of the Taliban, so it is hoped that countries in the region take firm preventive steps against terrorism and drug smuggling.

(2) Growing Autonomy of Central Eurasian Countries

Maintaining good relations with the three powers—China, Russia, and the United States (the latter having recently become involved in Eurasian politics)—is another diplomatic challenge facing Central Asia. This challenge is most urgent for Kazakhstan, which is sandwiched between China and Russia. Since the concept of a Eurasian Union was first broached at the end of the Soviet era, Kazakhstan has been keenly interested in multilateralism. Kyrgyzstan, with a smaller population than its neighbors and poor in natural resources and industry, has partnered with neighboring China for the development of trade and industry. However, its growing economic dependence on China, and the resulting inflow of Chinese citizens, is cause for concern. In 2001, internal problems arose when it came to light that Kyrgyzstan had signed a secret agreement with China in 1999, making major concessions in the creation of a border between the two countries. Tajikistan, also, is heavily dependent on Russia and the West in the area of security and economy.

As previously noted, Uzbekistan boasts the largest population and gross domestic product in Central Asia, and maintains more of a distance from China and Russia than the three countries mentioned above, hoping, instead, to build close relations with the United States. On March 12-14, 2002, President Karimov of Uzbekistan visited the White House and signed the Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework with the United States. While much of Central Asia flustered about cooperating in the U.S. attack on Iraq, only Uzbekistan was positive about the use of its bases by the United States, thus showing its pro-American colors and its desire to become a regional power along with China and Russia. Uzbekistan has also been distancing itself from GUUAM, and has declined to send a delegation to its meetings since June 2002.

In October 2002, an event took place that symbolized the independence of Central Asia as a major player in international poli-

tics. Immediately prior to the CIS summit meeting in Chisinau, Moldova, heads of states of five Central Asian countries met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, and signed a declaration establishing Central Asia as a nuclear-free zone, which, from a Russian perspective, seemed designed to belittle its leadership in the region. Yet Central Asian nations—surrounded by an unstable Afghanistan, nuclear-armed India and Pakistan, and two members of "the axis of evil" (Iran and Iraq)—felt the need to declare their security self-reliance to their own people and the international community in order to stabilize their internal politics.

Although Russia is no longer a superpower, the fact remains that the Russian presence in Central Asia is strong and will become an increasingly important strategic asset in dealing with the West. Even after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Russia has not eased its diplomatic offensive toward Central Asia and southern Caucasus; in fact, it has continuously sought to strengthen relations with them. On January 25, 2002, President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow and agreed to lease Russia, for a period of ten years, the Qabala radar station in Azerbaijan whose ownership had been disputed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. With an early warning ballistic missile radar system able to cover Central Eurasia (including Afghanistan) and South Asia, this will prove to be a useful asset for Russia to cooperate with the United States.

It was reported that when U.S. troops were poised to intervene in Afghanistan, there were between 1,000 and 2,000 Russian military advisers working with the Northern Alliance. Defense Minister Fahim of the Transitional Administration of Afghanistan has maintained a close line of communication with Russia since the early days of the Northern Alliance. On February 11, 2002, Fahim met with Russia's Defense Minister Sergei B. Ivanov, and the two agreed to work toward a military technology agreement that provides for Russian-made weapons. When Minister Ivanov visited Afghanistan in September of the same year, he promised to provide

Afghanistan with used Russian army weapons. Though Russia was less active than the United States in helping maintain order in Afghanistan, the potential for its influence and growing presence as a regional power remains, depending on how the situation in Central Asia plays out.

The diplomatic independence of Central Asia will be strengthened, not weakened, by maintaining the balance of power between the United States, China, and Russia, even considering the latter's potential influence in the region. If oil drilling proceeds smoothly, Kazakhstan will be well positioned for economic growth in the coming years, and Uzbekistan will develop a voice of its own in dealing with Central Asian affairs by pursuing pro-American policies. Yet countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, with smaller populations and a dearth of natural resources, may have to rely on their neighbors, including China and Russia, for diplomatic and security issues.

(3) Japan and Central Eurasia

In a 1997 address entitled "Eurasian Diplomacy," then Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said: "The focus of world diplomacy has shifted from an Atlantic axis poised for conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union to a Eurasian axis spanning many nations, large and small." Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, this observation has gained added relevance and resonance.

Hashimoto's statement reflects Japan's national interests in building relationships with countries of Central Eurasia. However, as the Japanese government changed hands in rapid succession, and as Japan's policies toward Russia and the "Silk Road countries" became bogged down in pork-barrel politics, Japan's Eurasian diplomacy has slowed to a trickle.

Because of the geographical remoteness of this region, there was a lack of a sense of urgency in Japan to deal with these countries. Post-World War II, Japan's foreign policy toward the region was

based on bilateral relations, so it was difficult for Japan to switch to multilateral relations based on comprehensive regional considerations. This was a factor that doomed Hashimoto's diplomatic initiative to address the issues relating to Eurasia from a broad point of view. With the world community learning first-hand the threat posed by international terrorists, it is imperative that Japan cooperate in dismantling the terrorists' networks, and that Japan build better relations with Central Eurasia, even with those countries that condone Islamic extremism.

Due, in part, to scientific and technological advancements, the new type of threat posed by terrorism moves swiftly from one location to another, easily slipping through national borders. With globalization spreading, Central Eurasia is no longer a remote region unrelated to Japan's diplomacy and security. Today, while the West is pursuing diplomacy and security with Central Eurasia with the urgency we previously noted, it is necessary once again for Japan to advocate "Eurasian diplomacy viewed from the Pacific."

Although Central Eurasia is engaged in an uphill struggle, it is actively trying to safeguard its independence from China and Russia, and to build democratic, nuclear-free nations. Japan welcomes and encourages the creation of a stable Central Eurasia, one that shares its democratic values and one that is of benefit to all. Such a task is by no means impossible.

As demonstrated by the International Conference for Assisting Reconstruction of Afghanistan, held in Tokyo in January 2002 (see Section 1 of this chapter), Japan has helped stabilize Central Eurasia since the September 11 terrorist attacks. By the end of 2002, Japan granted approximately $375 million in reconstruction aid to Afghanistan, as well as another $100 million to surrounding countries. However, it should be noted that this economic assistance is limited to humanitarian aid, aimed at establishing peace and stability in the region rather than from a long-term national strategy.

Although the Eurasian diplomacy advocated by former Prime

Commentary

Japan's Diplomacy toward Eurasia

Since the former Soviet republics gained their independence, Japan has been developing economic and cultural relationships with them, albeit at a measured pace. The Mission for Dialogue with Russia and Central Asia, headed by then Diet member Keizo Obuchi (who became prime minister in 1998), visited the region in June-July 1997. This mission, combined with then Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's speech entitled "Eurasian Diplomacy" at a meeting of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (July 24, 1997), prompted the Japanese government to adopt its goal of Eurasian diplomacy. In the days when NATO inclusion of East European countries was a foregone conclusion, these two events pushed Japan to take an active role in "Eurasian diplomacy viewed from the Pacific" rather than "Eurasian diplomacy viewed from the Atlantic," and outlined a policy to develop new diplomatic relations with Russia, China, and the Silk Road countries (Central Asia and Southern Caucasus). The Hashimoto speech, which set out three principles regarding diplomacy with Russia—trust, mutual interest, and a long-term perspective—subsequently led to a Japan-Russian summit in November 1997 in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, where the two leaders agreed to strive toward a peace treaty by the end of 2000.

However, as a comprehensive diplomatic strategy, eyeing the Eurasian continent as a whole, Eurasian diplomacy gradually tailed off following the failure of the Krasnoyarsk process and the downfall of the Hashimoto and Obuchi administrations. Consequently, the Japanese government has coined the slogan "Silk Road diplomacy," aimed at the emerging former Soviet republics. While Japan-Russia relations are stalled, Japan's relations with these former Soviet republics have grown closer, due to Japan's economic cooperation. The countries of Central Asia, by and large, consider Japan to be a reliable partner. When President Karimov of Uzbekistan visited Japan in July 2002, he and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi signed a "Strategic Partnership" statement, demonstrating Central Asia's desire to strengthen political, economic and security-related cooperation with Japan.

Minister Hashimoto has all but faded, isn't it time for Japan to come up with a new diplomatic and security strategy vis-à-vis Central Eurasia where a new security environment is being formed?