

## **Uprising Nuances: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's social mobilizations and order maintenance**

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**ABSTRACT:**

Social mobilization in Central Asia comes in a rare form, alongside political, economic, social and ethnical overtones, aligned with post-Soviet difficulties and dependencies. Although standing as independent nations, economic instabilities, political insurgencies and social inequalities are triggering circumstances of uprisings in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. As countries still struggling to sustain and perpetrate democratic values, social mobilization resurface as a tool to establish political change. However, although understanding that the range of protests are regional and do not offer its nations a challenge concerning national security, the casualties and government accommodations were not as peaceful and organized as it was expected.

**I. Introduction**

The nature of social mobilization followed by violent protests in Central Asia brings a volatile characteristic on how these actors response to acts that may endanger regional or national order. As observed in Azerbaijan, social mobilization has been constantly detained and shut down by the government, because of its strong political overtone. Although clashes are sporadic and episodic, protesters are still unable to voice their concerns without backlash nor file for peaceful protests.

In Kazakhstan, violent protests are mainly directional towards economic issues such as fair wages and work conditions. While protests similarly come in a rare form in Kazakhstan, they target certain dissatisfaction and concerns against former President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and his ability to continue governing a country for another four-year period. In Kyrgyzstan's case, uprisings has been more frequent and driven with ethnic ordains.

The scope of this paper rounds in the explanation of divergent types of order maintenance in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The first section explores the causes of the violent protests and social mobilizations and finds if international meddling from international actors can accommodate tensions and potentiate these events. The second section explores whether geopolitical amidst economical and ethnical conditions contribute to the exacerbation of social uprising, by explaining the conflicts in each country.

Based on the concept of different nuances of political order, this paper will argue that in order to build sustainable peace and order maintenance, it is necessary to (re-)establish a discourse of governance on a local level instituted by international actors as a filler for national governance malpractices and strong investment in cooperation (Boege et al, 2009).

Although social disturbance has been a current matter, these countries preferred to sculpt responses in their own government ideology rather than performing extreme repressive behavior. Between ideological differences, economic disruptions and episodic governmental malfeasances, the threats caused by social movements created a path that lead to the allegations of political injustice. This paper will evaluate the question mark brought on whether the development of these countries can continue at ease.

## II. Dynamics of protest

A proper preventive policy elaboration on regional variances and nuances is clearly essential for the complete understanding of the actual process of democratization and order maintenance in Central Asia. Mass mobilization in Central Asia is seen as a tool for democratization and structural political change. In this context, the definition of mobilization, depicted by J. Craig Jenkins independently sustains:

Mobilization is the process by which a group secures collective control over the resources needed for collective action. The major issues, therefore, are the resources controlled by the group prior to mobilization efforts, the process by which the group pools resources and directs these towards social change, and the extent to which outsiders increase the pool of resources. (Jenkins, 1983: 532-533)

Insecurity and inequality are the main categories that design and lead bilateral and multilateral variations of conflicts in this region. In addition, proximate causes such as discrimination, political manipulation, electoral corruption, resource mismanagement, violations of basic laws and human rights are triggering events for sparse mobilizations (Nielsen, 2004: 2-3).

The outcomes of such events compromise the visions of the future and represent a broader threat to stability and international security? How far these mobilizations go as continuous products of economic downfall, political disruptions and social injustice? How powerful and representative international meddling can be in managing or interfering in Central Asia? This chapter seeks to address these questions.

Beset with increased concern after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, Central Asian countries gathered differences, contrasts and palpable inefficiencies on terms of human rights reinforcement, principles of governance and sustainable fiscal conditions. These precepts of social and economic diseases brought challenges to development and fed politico-administrative interstate competition and the rise of diverse international regimes. Once these differences erupted, counterinsurgency mobilizations alongside opposition movements arose as a manner of antigovernment expression. Bearing in mind that these processes were varied and volatile, the strategies are also different from country to country.

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have observed over a decade, a series of violent manifestations on which resources varies through social, economic, ethnical and demographic circumstances. Social sources include relationships with allies

The participation of the international community, especially playing a role in cooperating and co-opting with Central Asian insurgencies, is crucial for the understanding of these protests as a way of its population to come in aid of their own political standards and voicing their grievances towards its ruling elites. Nevertheless, the necessity of social mobilization in Central Asian countries arrive in a time and place where its political standards can no longer curb its dependencies and sufficiently generates instabilities that are most certainly, critical.

**KEYWORDS:**

International relations; Central Asia; social mobilization; political instability.

and external powers, cohesive identity, grievances in defense of political justice or legitimacy of power, as well as regional requests that globalizes other criteria's, such as economic and political. The incursion of these clashes significantly strengthened opposition groups that have had different reactions. These reactions are products of a transitioned and translated behavior acquired from post-Soviet independence. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan represent models of significant growth and development in Central Asia after their independence.

This framework, although seeming effective, still shows signs of regional disturbance, as observed in Kazakhstan's cities of Zhanaozen and Aktau in 2011, Baku, and Ismayilli in Azerbaijan in 2013, respectively. These clashes between separatist groups and local governments are still threatening to keep ablaze. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan transitioned the post-Soviet era with perceptions of polarizations, dependencies and empowerment of elites, crucially causing instability and uncoordinated political conduct.

Additionally, the conflicts in Kyrgyzstan have become more ideological with reduced Marxist adherence, couched in ethnic and religious beliefs and secessionist in essence. Moreover, various non-traditional domestic security threats have been affecting these countries, mainly because of its political system and creating a sense of vulnerability of unavoidable need for proper democratic order maintenance. Therefore, as a first point, governance failure in representing properly its society, in a pivotal non-hegemonic status, is one of the main reasons why its security faces trembling statuses.

### **III. International meddling**

As a counterpoint for domestic transformation or attempt to resurface, international meddling could be understood as another reason for why these countries are facing raging episodes of disturbances and insecurities. By hindsight, international meddling is still a matter of contemporary speculation, but in the Caucasus region, where development is in construction and being de-polarized, external interference in domestic disputes and regional mobilization might as well be observed as an option.

Generally, social mobilization in the Caucasus region is coordinated by its engagement for demands of national self-determination, alongside a volatile nature of a complicated foreign policy matrix that was inherited by the post-Soviet era, where its non-traditional character challenges a great amount of instability to a regional power. This nature as a transient political environment is happening

unexpectedly to alter the balance of power between the minority, the center and an external figure (Jenne, 2007: 11-12).

In terms of poignant essence, the narrative of violence and its perceptions of victimhood are unique to residents of specific zones and currently it does not widen its demographic space, thus characterized as localized conflicts with sparse timeframe. In the full range of security-relevant interactions, it is unlikely that these regional uprisings come to endanger national security, taking in consideration state-control and governmental responses that drain further complications and detains conflict to its natural state.

However, even though the main issue does not reside within a national frame, the likelihood of an external power to present itself over managing domestic accountability for state debilitations and lobbying directly on behalf of the minority is, de facto, high. State or non-state actors often incorporate external scapegoats, claiming on who they represent and what they could do, including the participation of international organizations and media, affecting the structure and amount of resources that could easily influence minority groups and politically mislead other actors.

One of the most considerable cases of scapegoating and accusing international meddling is observed on an isolated case between Russia and the United States. When diplomatic relations between Russia and the U.S. went on a downfall, President Vladimir Putin accused the U.S. on engineering the Color Revolutions in 2004<sup>1</sup>, in Georgia and Ukraine. In clear contrast, international meddling is allegedly a debatable source of legitimating protest activity *per se*, but could be counted as a factor of giving the conflict more inflicting power, therefore increasing it. In these particular cases, it is possible to observe exogenous influences and the intervention process from state-actors is not a constant.

Accordingly, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are examples on how international involvement could bring up the heat or create itself a conflict of its own. As observed, many areas in Central Asia have ill-defined borders, a post-independence heirloom from the USSR. In Kyrgyzstan, the most notable proof of misplacement are the Uzbeks, who fit in ethnic groups mainly concentrated in the regions of Batken, Dzhahalal-Abad and Osh.

Because of the presence of many citizens who were misplaced, demands and grievances for local autonomy began to rise in the region of Osh. Ethnic clashes surfaced and separatism movements appeared with a violent and repressive tone. The Osh mobilization became a clear example of the extent of international tension and the necessity to a specific group to express arguments of supporting demands.

Civil rights, better representation, possible region autonomy and possible territorial fusion between Osh and Uzbekistan demarcated a clash between Kyrgyzstan national sovereignty and the participation of Uzbekistan elites in debating the broadening awareness of proper rights for its people. While these events have been sparse and controlled, the demands for recognition of the Uzbek ethnic groups continue, nurturing the direct involvement of Uzbekistan in a national dispute under the grounds of Kyrgyzstan. Those events characterize very specific, unfinished cases of international meddling over social mobilization. Further analysis of the Osh clash will be overviewed in chapter five.

From an ideational perspective, establishment of legitimacy and evaluation of state incoherence within these states can be seen as, in Oskanian's (2013: 37-46) elements, a phenomenon of inherent weakness. In effect, bearing in mind the possibility of international meddling being compatible but not frequent in Central Asia, the important question, in terms of state's conflict resolution and order maintenance, is how such events were dealt: *by* the state or *through* the state? How these patterns identify sub-state social groups and how strategies of survival can be consolidated in the process of securitization of these states? This latter argument requires a specific analysis of each conflict accordingly with its variations, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

#### **IV. Azerbaijan: between corruption, political backlash and a new trend**

Azerbaijan has been considered one of the most corrupt states in the Caucasus region. It also has a questionable reputation towards respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, violence towards women and a deficient level of legitimacy of its own political standards. The most relevant case of social protest in Azerbaijan is the disturbance in Ismayilli, a province localized in the northwest area of the country.

The violence between police and the Ismayilli population started on January 23, 2013, after a car accident involving Vugar Alakbarov, son of Labor and Social Security Minister, Fizuli Alakbarov and nephew of Nizami Alakbarov, the governor of Ismayilli. After the crash, both involved were freed by the police without questioning or further punishment for breaking the law, leaving the witnesses, mainly citizens of Ismayilli, frustrated and angry. This event triggered demonstrations and grievances of the Ismayilli region towards growing economic inequality as well as frustrations over the regional government, corruption, poverty and ruling elites.

The population was calling for the resignation of its governor during the entire clash, where they torched a hotel owned by the Alakbarov family and set ablaze dozens of vehicles. The police detained the mobilization by locking down the city, arresting dozens of people and cracking down the crowd with rubber bullets, water cannons and gas grenades.

Although the protests in Ismayilli were controlled with police reinforcement, they continued in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku. The events observed with most intensity happened during January, March, August, and October 2013, when all of them resulted with political backlash and oppression. Police detained and arrested over 3000 activists of the opposite coalition of the government, used unnecessary force against peaceful mobilization over economic dissatisfaction at the Fountain Square in Baku's center, also using unlawful coercion via televised confessions of discriminatory misdemeanor charges against the detained members of the opposition groups, clearly violating the right to freedom.

The Azerbaijani authorities have banned all methods of peaceful protests, and detained the Azerbaijani population to voice their fears and concerns. As observed at the Human Rights Watch (2013) press release, since 2006, the Azerbaijani authorities have not authorized any kinds of protests in the Baku area. The climax of the conflict happened in February, setting up a 'protest trend' with horrific outcome.

While in Ukraine people are setting tires, cars and debris on fire as a way to demand change from the Soviet empire, people in Azerbaijan have been setting fire to themselves. In the past three months (Cook, 2014) more than nine occurrences of self-immolation<sup>2</sup> triggered an alarming sign for the government of Azerbaijan, especially President Aliyev. People who adhered – and survived – the new way of acting against corruption, said it was 'the only way out of misery' (Cook, 2014). This is a materialized sign of a deterioration of the state's democracy, which can be explained in three ways:

1. Co-optation, repression and regime legitimacy presented by the Aliyev governance shows a non-spontaneous *qualis*. A pristine democratic state must not show signs of censorship, physical repression and blatant political and economic corruption to hold control upon its society.
2. Corruption is a sign of the state's rejection to its own legitimacy and well-being. It represents a clear characteristic that if the state is legitimate, its society will obey institutionalized norms and rules as a symptomatic act of willingness to democratic values, envisioning high standards and practices. The protests

took place before, during and after election periods, which is also a sign of dissatisfaction with the Aliyev regime.

3. Azerbaijan's stability could become truly compromised if its maintenance of elites in closed inner circles of power and absence of legitimate institutional apparatuses, such as corruption confrontation policies and strict norms of violence against human rights, remain impenetrable.

Despite efforts of the new policy against corruption, the Azerbaijani Service and Assessment Network (ASAN)<sup>3</sup> agency, transparency and equality is still a challenge to economic development, which is on the rise thanks to oil reserves and reinforcement of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) alliance. Even though, it seems unlikely that the protests observed in Azerbaijan will become massive political demonstrations. As mentioned in the first chapter, the social mobilizations do not attack nor intend to inflict any major change at the national security level.

However, the genesis of the problems is universal in nature, which encourages the rest of society, including the Muslim presence, to keep voicing their concerns and mobilizing the public. The events, while sporadic in Azerbaijan, could be considered as a wake-up call and an example that the social structures of the Eurasia and Caucasus region is shook by grievances and political uncertainties. We can also detail another case of social disruption in Kazakhstan, subject revised in the next chapter.

## **V. Kazakhstan: an economic-political curb?**

The Republic of Kazakhstan is emblematically, through President Nursultan Nazarbayev, one of the first nations of the post-Soviet era to successfully carry out a market transition and economically lift its dependencies. According to Hug et al. (2010: 2-4) emphasis, Kazakhstan economic performance is one the highest regarding CIS members, thanks to its impressive oil reserves, a starring per capita rise from \$1260 to \$6140 in 2008. The country also lowered inflation rates from 1546%, from the 1998 financial crisis, to an impressive 7% at the end of 2009, less than ten years apart. Those facts bring Kazakhstan to a promising, independent, open and free economic state.

Although evolving, Kazakhstan faces many threats regarding its capability to derive phenomenons of insurgencies, such as corruption; socio-political instability; the likelihood of armed mobilizations; military conflict near Kazakh borders; and nationalist – separatist – movements, seeking to destabilize domestic order. The most relevant case of social uprising in Kazakhstan happened in the western city of Zhanaozen



in December 2011. The mobilization was the dissatisfaction demonstration after nearly seven months of strikes in which oil workers gathered on Zhanaozen's central square to protest peacefully, demanding better wages and safer work conditions.

On December 16, on the celebration of the Kazakh Independence Day, after a rioting disturbance, the police opened fire on oil workers, setting a crackdown that killed dozens of civilians and protesters. The protests continued in Aktau, a city located near the Caspian Sea as well as in the city of Shetpe. Those only presented a political overtone, with no signs of extreme violence, but signs of discontentment and grievances over the Zhanaozen episode (Schwartz, 2011).

The causes of the protests in Kazakhstan have long been identified as economic, characterizing the Zhanaozen protest an example of long-term dissatisfaction, despite economic growth. Before the URSS breakdown, mass protests were also observed in the Mangyshlak peninsula and in Ust-Kamenogorsk, both also claiming for better wages and work conditions. After the Zhanaozen uprising, copper miners also have gone on strike in Zhezkazgan, Karaganda and Termitau.

Those events happened in a regional context, but recent terrorist attacks, including those organized by Islamist groups such as Junud Alla, have been trying to gather international attention to internal affairs of Kazakhstan. The volatility of such terrorist attacks brings a specific concern, regarding the fact they are not regional in any form and may, unprecedentedly happen at any circumstance, which is alarming and a 'new' threat for the Kazakh security policy.

The governmental response to the protests varied between (a) intervention on behalf of striking workers; (b) partially providing their requests and domestically minimizing its occurrences; and (c) the use of force in order to suppress social upheaval and other preventive measures to stop the protests from spreading throughout the country. Although economic grievances have been the most important causes of discontentment, it is impossible to dissociate a political context behind the scenes. It is most likely to say Kazakhstan was and it is not ready for protests in a national scale, under the pressure of not holding a firm hand against organized violence.

In this context, regional insecurities to Kazakh's citizens continue to be the spread in the forms of state corruption. President Nursultan Nazarbayev's mandate<sup>4</sup> is also creating political uncertainty regarding who is going to substitute its life-long leadership, also causing social uneasiness. The right to peaceful assembly<sup>5</sup> (Human Rights Watch, 2012), although have given the population to voice their concerns over better working conditions regarding wages and safety.

According to Malashenko (2012), between regional stability and unstable domestic, economic and social behavior, Kazakhstan's protests legitimize a sense of unprecedented facets that may leave the future for its uprisings still in the hands of *raison d'état* norms. Restructuration of economic integration, dissuasion of protectionist measures and a softer control of domestic policies to accommodate social grievances in a natural demeanor are also factors to be considered. Lastly, in the next chapter, we will observe the last nuance of social mobilization in one the most controversial and fragile countries of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan.

## **VI. Kyrgyzstan: interethnic threats and post-Osh stability tentative**

In Kyrgyzstan, domestic policy confronts a dubious paradox between a promising path of positive developments and stability threats, since the country is geographically divided between north and south, identity and ethnically-wise. In 2010, ethno-nationalism violence between the Kyrgyz and Uzbek populations in the South, in Osh, coincided with the twentieth anniversary of Kyrgyzstan's deadly 1990 Osh conflict, which killed over 470 people; injured 1,900 and over 50.000-70.000<sup>6</sup>, were displaced to other regions of Kyrgyzstan or fled into Uzbekistan.

This represents one of the worst clashes and political twists (a seeing process currently taking charge in Ukraine) of the past 20 years in the history of Kyrgyzstan. Social mobilization was also observed in a political opposition overtone towards elections, statehood insecurities and anti-Uzbek slogans, in the northern Kyrgyz cities of Talas, Bishkek and Jalalabad. While violence remained rampant, authorities lost control of the South and had to request outside forces to intervene to restore order under the concern of a civil war break. Although requested, Russia's intervention was cautiously reconsidered, bearing in mind the extent of its consequences<sup>7</sup>. This model of protest is a product of the 1990 revolution in Osh, replicated in a modern context for grievances of government's failures to free Kyrgyzstan of deadly attacks and of its own political and ethnical shackles.

The Osh conflict began over social mobilization due to recognition of identity and territory for ethnic groups residing in the city and conglomerates over the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border. According to Matveeva (2011), the main reasons that set the mobilizations ablaze, were:

- a. Weakening of political authority in the wake of a division of power between social and political fragmentation – the 2005 Tulip Revolution<sup>8</sup> (who deposed

President Askar Akaev) explain on the siege of its extension, how political and business elites maintain relationships with particular localities, which weakens the government authority over state institutions;

- b. Disregard/disrespect for human rights and weak regional law enforcement;
- c. Ethno-nationalism under the aegis of predatory political and social elites. Those elites view the state only as a tool for private enrichment (Juraev, 2010: 3-4);
- d. An atmosphere of openness which permitted demands to be voiced;
- e. Sense of an historical opportunity to make gains, which seemed to be impossible in previous contexts;
- f. Fear and political anger.

The government of Osh was broken between difficulties in reconciliation with the Uzbek protesters, since there is barely representation for peace building in the Uzbek political side of the conflict. Although the Uzbekistan government left Osh undermined by its policy failures, President Islam Karimov, known for its unprecedented temper and disrespect for human rights international norms, may harbor separatist intentions. This could mean he might not be as compliant with preceding's of no retaliation over grievances towards Kyrgyzstan<sup>9</sup> in the eminence of a new conflict.

Instability in Kyrgyzstan is a constant concern, because many of its uprisings are border-conflict<sup>10</sup>. The international community failure to act when clashes broke out proved to be an act of abandonment and unwillingness to assess and take care of the upheavals in order to identify and avert crisis in its apex. This act of abandonment cost many Uzbek-Kyrgyz lives and increased a sense of political mismanagement towards order maintenance and ability to provide proper security.

In terms of international cooperation, Kyrgyzstan is one of the most open and prone to take advice. International actors such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) have constantly invested with substantial aid to the security sector. However, few results have yielded, concerning conflict prevention, because Kyrgyzstan has low capacity in co-opting transnational aid.

Sensing that Kyrgyz main issues are leaned towards ethnic disruptions, it is safe to say that this issue must compel international actors to foster stronger concerns in the domestic policies of Kyrgyzstan. Mass violence events are not likely in

the near future, but Kyrgyzstan is still susceptible to cross-border clashes and tense South-North relations over regional disputes. Due to social fragmentation, democracy and inter-ethnic mobilizations are still respectively compromised and highlighted, alongside a possible downfall of economic development and feelings of vulnerability. Ethnic conflicts in Kyrgyzstan blended profusely the sense of a national discontentment and stagnancy in all sides of its dominance – political, economic, ethnic, religious and cultural.

In order to give Kyrgyzstan its progress and recognition a full-throttle restart post-t-Osh, international actors<sup>11</sup> should propose a stronger international cooperation. This cooperation should target sectors of extreme importance to the country, such as energetic, and encourage a sense of perspective (Matveeva, 2011). In order to re-establish state's democratic cohesion and prevent further bloodshed, confidence is necessary to maintain order and openly react sovereignly to social mobilization, border, regional or central-wise.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Stability and change in Central Asia are central points of convergence. As the examples followed by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, mobilization was used as a tool for structural change and desire to voice out political, economic and ethnical dissuasions. On a contrary lane of conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia, these conflicts and mobilizations were accommodated by the states instead of accentuating its repression. Although grievances over economic instability, inequality, ethno-nationalism and identity disruption still continue to threaten regional order, these conflicts represented a level of regionalism that did not de-legitimized national sovereignty.

In conclusion, this paper wonders to recommend the actions by the international community through specific criteria:

- a. Under the aegis of political development, Azerbaijan still faces difficulties finding a spot on the human rights consolidation. Allowing peaceful protests might be a weapon of positive outcome for the government to ease social mobilizations and avoid disruptions. Anti-corruption policies, proposed by the government and the CIS, are considered the most powerful political act as a preventive tool for violent mobilization demeanor. As one of the most influential economies in Central Asia, Azerbaijan has the possibility to alter its differences

by giving the opportunity to pluralize and homogenize its protectionism and open itself for cooperation policies.

- b. Kazakhstan will continue to make its progress throughout the international community due to its chair in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This might help, economically and politically, its neighbor, Kyrgyzstan, to establish policies of security enforcement and initiate a strong ethical policy against violence towards ethnical groups. Kazakhstan continuous desire to join and unite with international cooperation bodies proves that its economic problematic nuances have an unseen or so to say, predicted benefit. Its accommodation responses throughout order maintenance gave the population a sense of hope within grievances and fear, towards government policies to help development, and it is fundamental to state that development will prove to be a long-term possibility to curb its political and economic diseases.
- c. Kyrgyzstan's poor government performance has exacerbated conflict events and deteriorated socioeconomic development. A regime reshape would be acceptable for the international community, in order to strengthen political governance gradually, with no empowerment of elites and coordination between North-South. Kyrgyzstan's ethnical disruptions are mainly political mismanagements and social exclusion, which can be reverted over de-fragmentation and cooperation with international actors. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) could play an important role to stabilize the country's finances and guide economic parties to policies against corruption, a disease commonly shared between states in Eurasia and Central Asia. The recommended lessons on Kazakhstan also might be the solution Kyrgyzstan needs to embody and solidify its government to prevent social mobilizations amongst chaos and stabilize its order maintenance as a democratic sovereign state.

These countries need to be encouraged by the international community and international actors, not as an act of international meddling or extreme intervention. The incentive have to be made as a coordinated cooperation, concerning harmonized policies and wider investment in security in order to protect civil, human rights, and resolve disputes non-violently. Regional stability is guaranteed with sensible preventive policies, incentives to encourage political steadiness, justifiable economic progress, social development and political growth dodging corruption. For a recipe over a solid foundation on social justice in Central Asia, transparency seems to be just about the right ingredient.

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<sup>1</sup> For more, access "Color Revolutions: High Hopes and Broken Promises" by Salome Asatiani: <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1079175.html>

<sup>2</sup> According to Oxford Dictionaries, self-immolation is the act to "kill or offer as a sacrifice, especially by burning". This trend is also common in the Middle East, especially in Tunisia, an act that, informally, 'kick-started' the Arab Spring.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, see: [http://www.asan.gov.az/en/content/index/329/contact\\_us](http://www.asan.gov.az/en/content/index/329/contact_us)

<sup>4</sup> President Nursultan Nazarbayev has governed the country for 23 years, since the break of the Soviet Union in 1991. Due to his advanced age, rumors are afloat that he might need to step down and create a new political coalition to support his ideals. This political uncertainty is one of the reasons of Kazakhstan's main insecurities towards economic development.

<sup>5</sup> This is a right protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Kazakhstan ratified the international convention in 2006 and institutionalized it in its own constitution. Article 21 of the ICCPR states: "The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

<sup>6</sup> The data of 300.000 or 400.000 still show signs of uncertainty, according to: [http://www.atlantic-council.org/images/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/UncertainKyrgyzstan\\_ETFBrief.pdf](http://www.atlantic-council.org/images/files/publication_pdfs/403/UncertainKyrgyzstan_ETFBrief.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> A Russia intervention would cause political disturbance in Kyrgyzstan because the Kyrgyz republic was on the verge to lose its statehood over the inadequacy of the political authorities to properly protect its own people. As a post-Soviet republic, Russia's dominance all over the Kyrgyz territory would be something the White House (U.S.) would deeply worry and call the attention for the international community.

<sup>8</sup> For more, see America University of Central Asia (Social Research Center): [https://src.auca.kg/images/stories/files/A%20Tale%20of%20Two%20Revolutions%20DM%20FINAL%20old%20word%20version\\_3.pdf](https://src.auca.kg/images/stories/files/A%20Tale%20of%20Two%20Revolutions%20DM%20FINAL%20old%20word%20version_3.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Exclusively the Kyrgyz side of the border, who favor vehemently their ethnic kin, took Law enforcement and security measures. They believe that if the state weakens its security priorities, the community would be vulnerable to fear and international insecurity.

<sup>10</sup> As observed in the Kyrgyz-Uzbek and Kyrgyz-Tajik borders, the conflicts of minor content intensified in 2011 due to instability of the Kyrgyz government, partially because of the elections.

<sup>11</sup> Particularly Europe, since EU's assistance programs BOMCA and CADAP established since 2004 are focused at strengthening Border Guards and further security structures. BOMCA spent 4,346,584 euro in Kyrgyzstan between 2004 and 2010. For more information, see: <http://bomca.eu/en/kyrgyzstan.html>.