

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Problem Background

Since its independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan faced chaotic situation because of the complex problems in all sectors of the governance. Kyrgyzstan inherited a host of economic problems, political instability, domestic security problems and concerns which rampant crime, pervasive drug industry, weapon smuggling and human trafficking thrived in a rapidly changing social, political and economic environment.<sup>1</sup>

At the national level, the transition to a free market economy has prevailed. Private enterprise remains hampered by restrictions, unemployment has increased and state services have declined drastically. In 1996 five years after independence, according to Asian Development Bank (ADB) 49% of people were living below the poverty line and approximately 70% in rural areas.<sup>2</sup> Further unemployment and deepening poverty led to growing grievance, which was done by irresponsible political elites.

The unstable political atmosphere also triggered the largest incursions. In August 1999, a group of heavily armed fighters, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) which consists of 5.000 armed fighters and numbering up to 1.000 in total, entered South

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<sup>1</sup> See, Mariya Y. Omelicheva, *Counter Terrorism Policies in Central Asia*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See, Tony Vaux and Jonathan Goodhand, *Conflict Assesments Disturbing Connections: Aid and Conflict in Kyrgyzstan*, London: The Conflict, Security and Development Group, 2002, p. 14

Kyrgyzstan and seized thirteen hostages, including four Japanese geologists, their interpreter, an interior Ministry General and several Kyrgyzstani soldiers, one of whom was eventually executed and the remaining hostages were eventually released, possibly after the payment of ransoms.<sup>3</sup>

Kyrgyzstan government had blamed on the IMU and the East Turkistan Liberation Organization for a series of terrorist acts and hostages. Countering the series of terrorist threats, Kyrgyz military forces attacked IMU insurgents attempted to penetrate Kyrgyz territory and take hostages of Kyrgyz people during 1999-2000. Furthermore, Kyrgyz government also started to persecute Hizbut Tahrir al Islami claimed as Islamic radical movement which it has been advocating and supporting the establishment of the Islamic caliphate governance in Central Asia.

On September 11, 2001, Nineteen young men, fifteen from Saudi Arabia, two from United Arab Emirate, and one each from Egypt and Lebanon who are accused as Al Qaeda network took control of four large commercial airlines departing from Boston, New York and Washington, crashed north and south part of World Trade Center and Pentagon basis of United State of America then killed 2,750 people in WTC and 198 people in Pentagon. <sup>4</sup>A moment after, Osama bin Laden, a leader of Al-Qaeda who admitted responsible for the attack, explained his goal of attack:

I agree that the Prophet Mohammed forbade the killing of babies and women. That is true, but this is not absolute. There is a saying, 'If the infidels kill women and children on purpose, we shouldn't shy away from treating them in the same way to stop

<sup>3</sup> See, *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See, Tony Vaux and Jonathan Goodhand, *Conflict Assessments Disturbing Connections: Aid and Conflict*

them from doing it again'. The men that God helped [attack, on September 11] did not intend to kill babies; they intended to destroy the strongest military power in the world, to attack the Pentagon that houses more than 64,000 employees, a military center that houses the strength and the military intelligence. . . . The towers are an economic power and not a children's school. Those that were there are men that supported the biggest economic power in the world. They have to review their books. We will do as they do. If they kill our women and our innocent people, we will kill their women and their innocent people until they stop.<sup>5</sup>

As the victims fallen, terrorists attacked on September 11, 2001 reaped international response quickly. International world including United States of America condemned terrorist attack that killed innocents. "War on Terror" is declared by the US leader and officers in every publication and speech at any occasional meetings. US seemed to have legitimated idea to attack what it is called terrorists. The Bush statement "with us or against us" became the jargon for the world to combat terrorism especially Al-Qaeda that were suspected to responsible for 9/11. Furthermore, US seemed to lead war against terrorism and strengthened the image of Islamic fundamentalist as people to be feared and fought.

The United States government, under President George W. Bush, started moves towards putting together an extraordinary cooperation of governments that would help America's response to the attacks.<sup>6</sup> Bush and leaders in Europe, especially Britain were unanimous in their conviction that these terrorist attacks were a direct challenge to the free, democratic, civilized world and American values.<sup>7</sup> Almost all the significant countries of the world endorsed the principle of war against international terrorism.

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<sup>5</sup> See, Seumas Miller, *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism: Ethics and liberal Democracy*, U.K.: Blackwell Publishing, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> See, Sumar Gupta, *The Evolution of Islam*, The

US organized strategic partnership with many states, international communities and international organizations to fight against terrorist. These strategic partnerships are known as "counter terrorism cooperation". Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Central Asia which are basis for Al-Qaeda movement were targeted by US in combating the existing terrorist threats.

US commitment for combating terrorism in Central Asia aimed to eliminate terrorism in order to spread democratic values and human rights for uniting Central Asia states under US lead. It is well spoken by US Secretary of State at Eurasian University Central Asia for counter terrorism cooperation;

I want to speak to the people of Central Asia: The United States believes that liberty and dignity and justice are within reach of everyone in this region. And we are fully committed to partnership in helping you to realize this vision. We seek peace and security. We seek economic development and prosperity. We seek democratic values and human rights that unite all free nations in trust and in respect.<sup>8</sup>

In the speech, Condoleeza Rice emphasized US interest for combating terrorism because terrorism is a threat to liberty and dignity of human. She also persuaded all Central Asia countries for cooperations as way to seek democratic values and human rights that will unite all free nations in trust and respect.

US counter terrorism cooperation in Central Asia focused on three states which are Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan because the existence of jihadists who were related to Afghanistan and Pakistan geographically and ideologically threatened regional stability and international security. In addition, the network connection of terrorism in

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<sup>8</sup> See, Matthew Croston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*. England: Ash Gate Publishing limited, 2006, p. 1

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan who are linking to Afghanistan is potential for creating Central Asia as a new front of terrorist basis. Kyrgyzstan as one of US counter terrorism focus was eager to welcome US cooperation to counter terrorism, especially in South Kyrgyzstan.

US supports for Kyrgyzstan was existing since United States recognized Kyrgyzstan's independence on December 26, 1991, and established its Embassy in the capital, Bishkek on February 1, 1992. The Clinton Administration's Central Asian policy sought to eliminate residual Russian imperialism in the region, overcome potential terrorist movements and helped Kyrgyzstan join the World Trade Organization in December 1998.<sup>9</sup> For Kyrgyzstan, this meant receiving millions in economic aid from the US. The aftermath Sept. 11 attacks produced a change in American foreign policy towards Central Asia, including Kyrgyzstan. The US military established a major airbase near Bishkek (Manas Air Force Base) in December 2001 for military and humanitarian uses.

In December 2001, the Kyrgyzstani parliament signed a Status of Forces Agreement which allows basing US military forces at Manas International Airport in Bishkek. The establishing of Manas Air Force Base was the beginning of US – Kyrgyzstan counterterrorism cooperation. US and Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation aims to support a humanitarian and a military missions in facing a future

security threats from terrorists.<sup>10</sup> The base was opened in December 2001 to support US military operations in the ongoing war in Afghanistan and the base is a transit point for US military personnel coming and going from Afghanistan. The main mission of US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation was to defeat the global terrorist network including terrorist movements which linked to Al Qaeda in Kyrgyzstan. The aim was clearly declared by President Bush that “every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war [would be used for] ... the destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network”.<sup>11</sup> This objective encourages the involvement of US to combat terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan as a basis of global network terrorist.

The US began using Kyrgyzstan's Manas Air Base shortly. The base, which is at the main airport outside the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, handled about 50,000 US personnel coming and going from Afghanistan in March 2010, along with 500 tons of goods.<sup>12</sup> Manas Air Force Base is home to the 376 Air Expeditionary Wing and serves as the premier air mobility hub for the International Security Assistance Force and Coalition military operations in Afghanistan. The wing's missions include aerial refueling, combat airlift and airdrop, aeromedical evacuation and strategic airlift operations. The base also provides support for coalition personnel and cargo

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<sup>10</sup> See, Olga Olikier and Thomas S.S., *Source of Conflict and Path of US Involvement*, a chapter on *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and Caucasus: Implications for US Army*, published by RAND, 2003, pp. 319-320.

<sup>11</sup> The American Rhetoric. *Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks*. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm>, retrieved on 24 May 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Allgov website team. *Kyrgyzstan*. Reviewed by allgov.com official website, available online at <http://www.allgov.com/nation/Kyrgyzstan>

According to UNHCR Kyrgyzstan country report in 2009, terrorism is remained active in Kyrgyzstan. Supporters of the terrorist groups Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) are believed to maintain a presence in Kyrgyzstan. Hizbut-Tahrir (HT), an extremist group banned in Kyrgyzstan, remained active, especially in the south. It could be seen from the events related with terrorist and Islamic extremist since 2001 – 2010. Based on Kyrgyzstan Country Report done by the Freedom house, there is no sign of the decreasing terrorist actions since the cooperation was started instead of it is getting worst. In addition, on 18 January 2011, Kyrgyz Interior Minister, Zarylbek Rysaliev, announced that there were 1.279 registered terrorists. Kyrgyz State National Security Committee Chairman Keneshbek Duishebayev also added that terrorist group that had been recently detained by authorities in Kyrgyzstan had planned on attacking a number of strategic targets, including diplomatic missions in Bishkek, police headquarters and the United States' Manas air base.<sup>13</sup> Based on these facts, the US-Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Cooperation has failed to eliminate terrorists in Kyrgyzstan.

## **B. Research Question**

By examining the background of the problem, the writer would like to question on: "Why did US – Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Fail in Combating Terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan?"

### **C. Theoretical Framework**

The writer prefers to use concepts for analyzing the research question. Therefore to analyze the question above, the writer would like to propose two theories, terrorism and counter terrorism, so that later it could lead to find out the hypothesis.

To avoid the intersection, writer divides the using of theory into two parts. Firstly, counter terrorism theory will be used in observing the failure of United States – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation for combating terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan. Secondly, terrorism theory will be used to explain the causes of the emergence of terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan.

#### **1. Counterterrorism**

The theory of counterterrorism is about the actions to response terrorism activities. The writer prefers to use counterterrorism theory proposed by Walter Enders and Todd Sandler. Counterterrorism is defined as a mix of public and foreign policies that designed to limit the actions of terrorist groups and individuals associated with terrorist organizations in an attempt to protect general public from terrorist violence.<sup>14</sup> According Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, there are two possible goals of counterterrorism that are: (1) counterterrorism consists of government actions to prevent terrorist attack or constrain their consequence, for example intelligence and police investigations resulted in the capture of the entire leadership of Direct Action (DA) in France between 1982-1987; and (2) counterterrorism can safeguard potential terrorist

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<sup>14</sup>W. Enders, M. Sandler, *Counterterrorism: A Theory of Public Policy in Central Asia*, Orono: Bowdoin, 2011, p.5



targets by reducing an attack's likelihood of success or its expected payoff, for example the deployment of federal screeners at US airports, the reinforcement of airplane cockpit doors and the designation of no-fly zone in Washington and other American cities were intended to limit terrorists success.

Counterterrorism is categorized by Todd Sandler into two different policies, proactive and defensive.<sup>15</sup> Firstly, proactive policies are offensive while government confronts the terrorist or their supporters directly. It assumed that confrontation will curtail terrorist resources, safe havens, infrastructure or sponsors then the ability of terrorists to engage in activities can be curtailed also. Confronting terrorist could be done by capturing or killing group members or by destroying their non human resources such as weapons, ammunition, training camps, communication network, or safe houses. Secondly, defensive policies is protecting potential target either by making more costly for terrorist or by reducing likelihood of success and when terrorist attack prevail, it can limit the losses.

Proactive response is varies. There are many forms of proactive response which are retaliatory raid, preemptive attack, infiltrating and gathering intelligence, and cutting off the financial resources of terrorist. Retaliatory raid strategy can be seen in many forms including a retaliatory raid against a state sponsor that provide resources, training, safe haven, logistical support. The example of retaliatory raid actions was Israel attack against Palestine Liberation Organization bases in Syria as response to Black September attack on Israel athletes at 1972 Olympic Games. Preemptive response is conducted

against a terrorist group or a country protected. Preemptive attack strategy is different from retaliatory because the former is more sustained and intended to severely compromise the capabilities of the terrorist. As for example is an Israeli army assassinated Hamas leader and operative in 2003 and the 2004 is preemptive attack strategy. Infiltration and gathering intelligence strategy is being conducted to compromise the terrorist group security and lead to arrest the suspected terrorists. Another form of proactive policy is the strategy for cutting off the financial resources of terrorist groups by freezing assets as what have done by US by freezing \$200 million of terrorist alleged assets.

Defensive policy consist many forms of strategy. Defensive policy is reactive after past incidents that brought vulnerabilities in the future. Some defensive actions may involve strict targeting such as the action in 1976 and 1985 to defend US embassies. Another strategy is intended to hamper or prevent an attack by stiffening punishment for convicted terrorists as for example the so called Reagan get tough policy on terrorism.

In addition Walter Enders and Todd Sandler also explained about another counterterrorism policy that is not taken by states in recent situation. They called the action as *getting at the roots of terrorism*. The strategy of getting at the roots of terrorism is to address the grievance of terrorists, thereby eliminating their rationale for violence.<sup>16</sup> This strategy focuses on the basic reasons of people conducting terrorism such as political and economical situation where terrorist basis existed. Unfortunately, this strategy isn't being used by any state because when terrorism surfaces in a country

a common governmental reaction is to limit legitimate protest, thereby inducing more terrorism which has political and military wings – for example, Hezbollah and Hamas. It is why a recent counterterrorism action is not effective because it couldn't touch the root of terrorism.

In case of US Kyrgyzstan counterterrorism cooperation for combating terrorism, the action relied on mostly proactive policy by using military force. The problem with the counter terrorism cooperation is about not getting to the roots of terrorism especially in South Kyrgyzstan where the problems of politic and economy are the causes of aggrieved population.

## 2. Terrorism

In order to find out how terrorism emerges and what causing its emergence, the writer tries to use theory of terrorism. The most common definition of terrorism is the premeditated use or threat of violence by individuals or sub national groups in order to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of immediate victims<sup>17</sup>. In line with above definition, Karen Mingst defined terrorism as the use of violence by groups or state to intimidate, cause fear, or punish its victims; used for the purpose of achieving political goals.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, United Nations provided a commonly accepted definition on terrorism:

An anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or

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<sup>17</sup> See, Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> See, Karen Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999.

political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets.<sup>19</sup>

Looking at those definitions, there are some points that could be underlined in defining terrorism: (1) terrorism is a strategy of using violence action which is done by state or non state actor; (2) terrorism strategy is done in destructive way to create fear or anxious atmosphere; (3) terrorism action seeks for a specific goal that is mostly political interest. These points raise a question on why violent adheres to terrorism and why terrorists never show a peaceful way but destructive. To some extent the defined terrorism are also connected to the one who has the power or the so called the ruler or the government in the context of nation state. The ruler or the government has an absolute control over the definition of terrorism. In this case, the defined terrorism is defined and described in favor of the ruler or the government. Moreover, Walter Enders and Todd Sandler agreed that the characteristic of terrorism is the use or threat of violence and political motive. Starting on this point, terrorism should be observed comprehensively in order to find the reason of activities. The deeper discussion on terrorism as well as the urgency in conceptualizing social and political condition is the best way to find the root cause of terrorism.

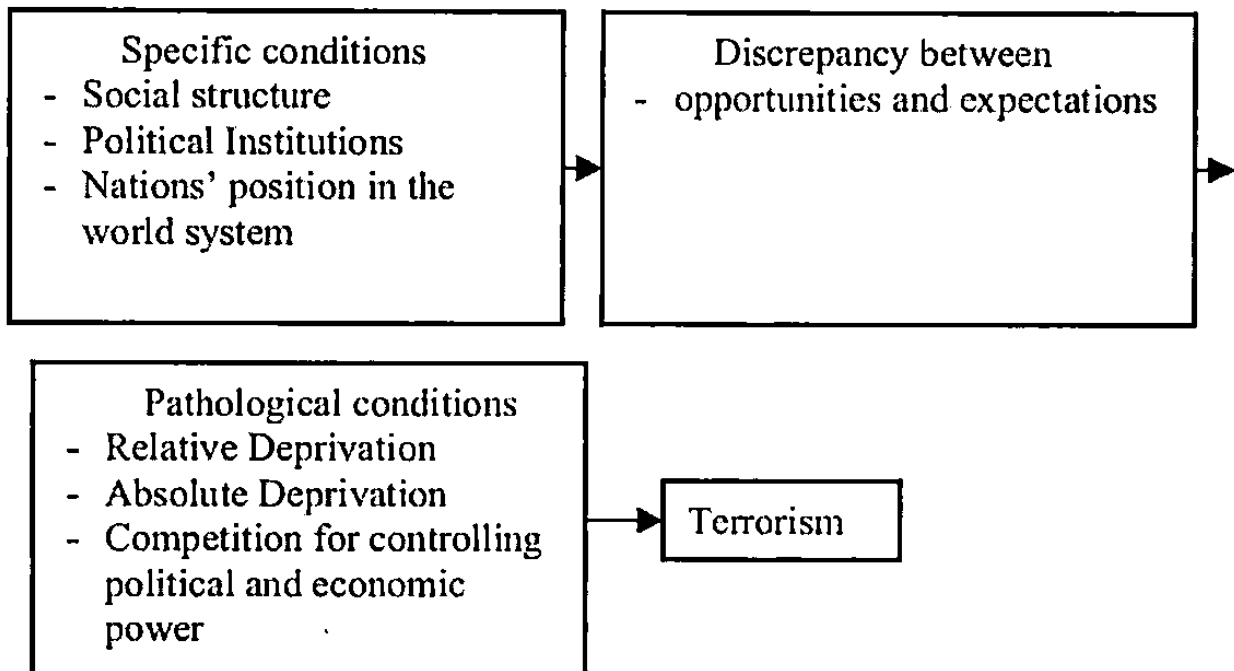
The root cause of terrorism should be viewed from politic and economy factors. In other words, terrorism is caused by political and economic factors in particular area. This can be examined using the approach from Ted Robert Gurr that illustrated as followed by Ali Ezdogan, a member of Turkish International Police, American

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<sup>19</sup> See *What is Terrorism?*, International Terrorism and Security Research Official Website, Accessed October 6, 2010, <http://www.terrorism-research.com/>.

University. Social structure should be understood as the important of economic conditions and opportunities for society in a country. In fact, the economic conditions of a country could result in terrorism, started from absolute deprivation, relative deprivation and competition over limited resource.

**Figure 1**  
**The relation of Political and Economy factors with Terrorism**



Source: *Where Do Terrorist Come From?*, an article on Robert W. Orttung and Andrey Makarychev (editor), *National Counter-Terrorism Strategies*, p. 24

Based on Ezdogan, the first process illustrates the economic situation as specific situation which is important to observe. The problems of economic in particular countries will shape the expectation of society. The second second process is the discrepancy between opportunities and expectation. In a country with problematic economic situation, the opportunities for equal economic welfare are difficult to achieve whereas society expectation for economic welfare is higher. The third process illustrates the relative deprivation or absolute deprivation as a consequence of unsolved

discrepancy between opportunities and expectations. The fourth process illustrates the terrorism which is a response for relative and absolute deprivation that is happening continuously. Huntington and Olson that it is likely that rapid economic development leads to political disorder, particularly in societies whose political institutions are not mature enough to handle the problems of economic development, such as social disorganization of the industrialized urban areas.<sup>20</sup> It means that the disorganization of the industrialized urban areas had created inequality of economic welfare distribution.

The strength and type of political institutions are important determinants in suppressing or nurturing the political order in general and terrorism in particular. The process of unstable political stability triggered terrorism is similar with the economic factor. Democracy as one of political institutions affects the amount of terrorism produced by country because the democratic state provides standard procedure for the legitimate expression of social and political grievances but on the other hand the state eliminates the legitimate means of expressing grievance, the opportunity for citizens to participate in governing the state and checking the power of politicians had decreased.<sup>21</sup> As a result, the probability of terrorism as illegitimate way of expressing grievances and engaging in violent political participation had increased.

In the aftermath of 9/11 as international society declared "Global War on Terror", terrorism is often identified to Muslim fundamentalist, especially Al-Qaeda which is being presumed responsible for 9/11 tragedy by United States. Professor of law from Washburn University, J. Ali Khan in his book "A Theory of International

Terrorism: Understanding Islamic Militancy” explained that the western perceived the Islamic warrior only understand the language of force and violence.<sup>22</sup> The 9/11 tragedy changed terrorism target into more specific group which is Al Qaeda and its companions as Islamic militancy group.

Unfortunately, the jargon “War on Terror” proposed by US after 9/11 2001 was totally fault and full of political motives. L. Ali Khan divided the characteristic of “War on Terror” after 9/11 into three things:<sup>23</sup>

1. The war on terror appears to be lawless, though it is not. The US, like a classical Western hegemony, obeys the laws of war and other rules of international law but in doing so it carves out exemptions and exceptions to serve its warfare interests.
2. The war on terror is primarily a US war against Muslim militants. The US makes certain assumptions about the character of Muslim militants, which he called the ontology of war. These ontological assumptions portray Muslim militants as irrational and violent extremists who fight without rules. This portrayal allows the US to further manipulate international law to promote its hegemony.
3. The war on terrorism has been privatized, generating strong corporate interests. The corporatization of war may also have weakened the rule of international law, particularly by granting immunities to protect corporate participation in the armed conflict.

Based on the above characteristics, he argued that "War on Terror" didn't aim to the root cause of why terrorism had emerge but the war aimed for the political interest of US and particular states involved. Moreover war on terror declared by US ignored the importance of politic and economic situation that triggered the emergence of terrorism.

Since its independence in 1999, Kyrgyzstan is undergoing in triple transition which are autocratic to democratic, from a command to market economy and from socialism to capitalism. Firstly, many forms of democratic governments have been prevailed by Kyrgyzstan but the government failed to practice the norms and values of democratic state. In consequence, the interest of political elites is dominant rather than society interest and the ordinary society have no space to address injustice in legitimate way which they tended to use illegitimate and violent way in expressing their grievances. Secondly, even the aftermath of Kyrgyzstan independence, Russia is still taking control over the economy of Kyrgyzstan because it is hard for Kyrgyzstan to merely untie from dependency to Russia. Economy welfare is only for particular elites and group especially in northern Kyrgyzstan whereas poverty is a main face of most people especially in South Kyrgyzstan. In short, the open market economy and capitalism are the main reasons of the economy ruthless. Liberalization of economy is viewed as the best problem of poverty and it pulled out society trust, nothing remains



## **D. Hypothesis**

By examining the theoretical framework and data mentioned previously, the writer takes a tentative statement that US - Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Cooperation failed to eliminate terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan because the cooperation did not solve the root cause of terrorism which is politic and economy factors.

## **E. Range of Research**

It is very important to have limitation of the time frame in which the research is going to be done, in order to avoid the topic from being expanded and out of context. Since the main issue of this final paper is about the failure of counter terrorism cooperation, the writer would like to limit the time of research to be from 2001 up to 2010. In 2001 cooperation started between US and Kyrgyzstan by building Manas air base, and in 2010, the new elected president, Roza Otunbayeva leads Kyrgyzstani.

## **F. Method of Research**

The research method used for writing is content analysis research which means that the researcher is allowed to research the object without involving in it. In using the method, the researcher gained the information by an extensive of relevant published materials such as books, journals, reports, newsletters, official websites and other resources on a wide variety of topics related with the subject of the paper.

## **G. Systematic of Writing**

The outline of thesis writing is as described as followed:

1. Chapter I outlines the background of the research, research purpose, research question, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research method and systematic of writing.
2. Chapter II will discuss the proliferation of terrorism.
3. Chapter III will discuss US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation to combat terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan.
4. Chapter IV will provide an analysis and explanation about why US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation fail to eliminate terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan.
5. Chapter V will conclude and summarize the research paper.