

CHAPTER 3

THE DYNAMIC OF US – KYRGYZTAN COUNTER TERRORISM COOPERATION AND ITS FAILURE TO COMBAT TERRORISM IN SOUTH KYRGYZSTAN

This chapter describe the dynamic of US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation and its failures to combat terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan. The chapter will discuss the existing terrorism the forms of cooperation and the failure of the counter terrorism cooperation in South Kyrgyzstan.

A. The Forms of US – Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Cooperation in South Kyrgyzstan

The US government has been fostering regional stability and security of individual states that work with the US by bolstering their counterterrorism capabilities through foreign assistance, military and law enforcement cooperation and training, and economic cooperation where needed. The Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program (ATA), administered by the Office of the Coordinator for Terrorism has been used to provide American partners with anti-terrorism training and equipment to protect their national borders and critical infrastructure to respond to terrorist incidents to mitigate the

consequences of terrorist attacks, and to prosecute those responsible for terrorism.¹ The US administration has also provided billions of dollars in assistance through the Shared Security Partnership program aimed at enhancing the ability of American partners to improve their own security in order to work with the US toward the common goal of suppressing terrorism worldwide.²

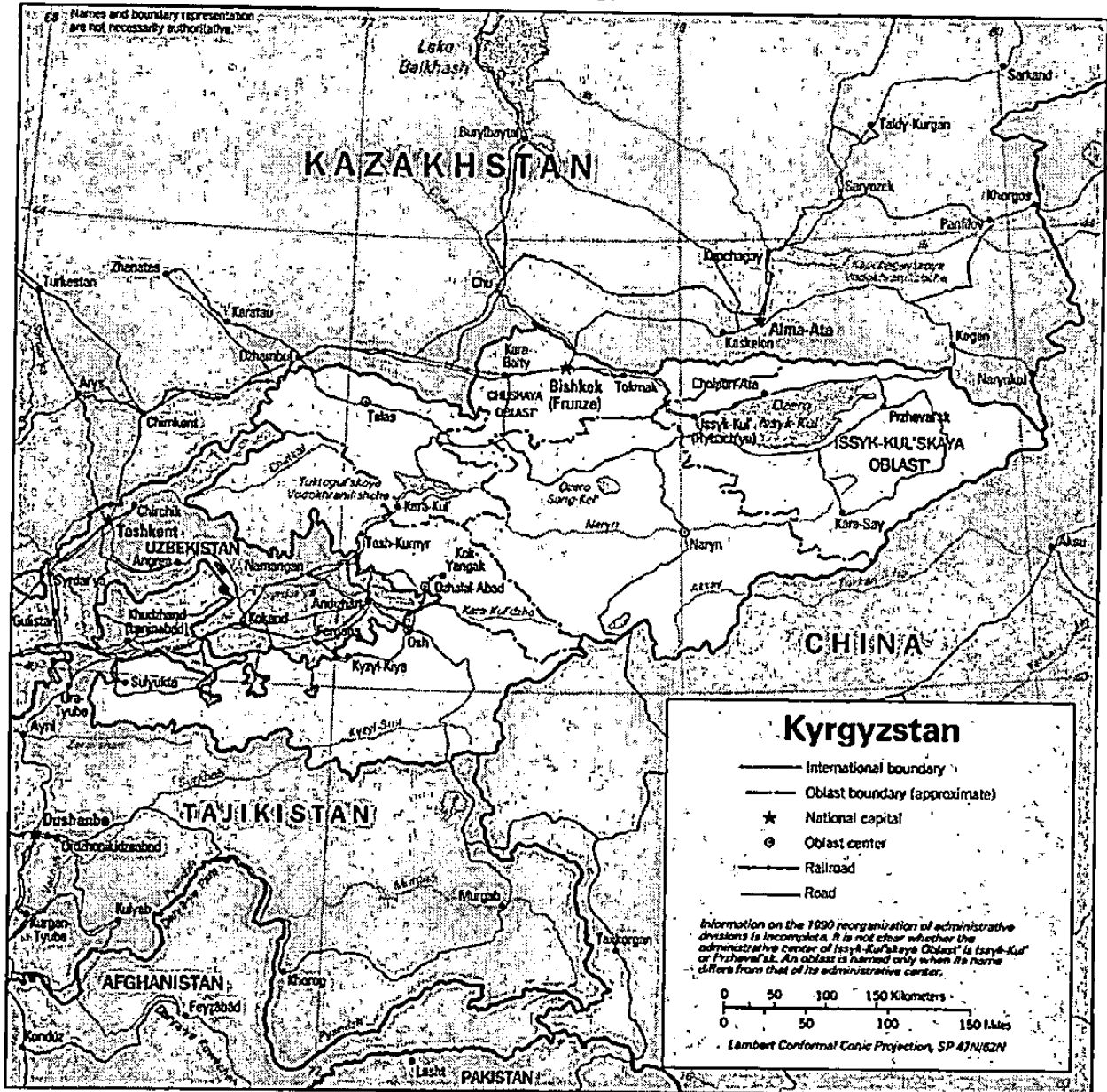
From the time of cooperation, US has been supporting the Kyrgyz government to construct several modern border point facilities equipped with radiation detection equipment. The American administration has provided funds for training Kyrgyz military service personnel, and helped with modernization of some defense facilities.³ It also supplied equipment, uniforms, and personnel gear to the Kyrgyz Ministry of Defense, Border Troops, Ministry of Emergency Situations, National Guard, and Ministry of Interior Forces. Sponsored by the US, the Kyrgyz National Guard opened a counterterrorism training facility. In this way, technical, financial, and other kinds of support from the United States have helped to build Kyrgyzstan capacity in terms of its capabilities to detect, prevent, and respond to the terrorist threat.

¹See, Mariya Y. Omelicheva, *Counter Terrorism Policies in Central Asia*. New York: Routledge. 2011. p. 65

²See, *Ibid.*

³US Department of State, *US Department of State: The Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism 2000*. Available online at <http://www.usraa.state.gov>. 25 Feb. 2012.

Figure 2
Map of Kyrgyzstan



Source: <http://images.nationmaster.com/images/motw/commonwealth/kyrgyzstan.gif>

1. The Establishment of US-Kyrgyzstan Military Base in Bishkek

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 counterterrorism cooperation

cooperation aims to support a humanitarian and a military missions in facing a future security threats from terrorists.⁴ 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”.⁵ This objective encourages the involvement of US to combat terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan as a basis of global network terrorist.

Figure 3
Map of Manas Air Base in Bishkek



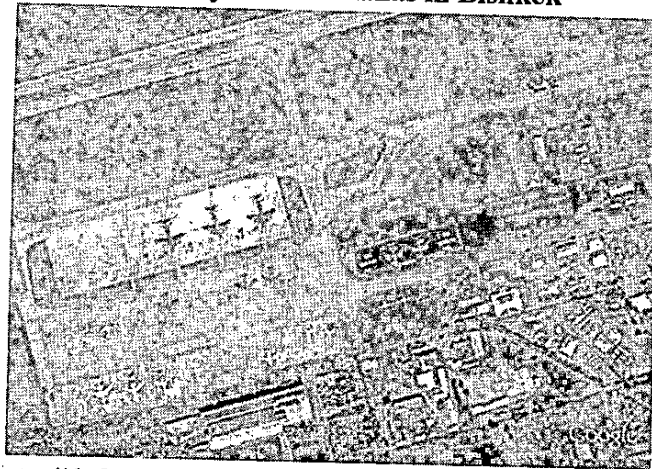
Source: <http://www.phibetaiota.net/2013/06/nightwatch-us-kicked-out-of-kyrgyzstan-taliban-declares-victory/>

⁴ See, Olga Oliner 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.

⁵ *The American Rhetoric. Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks*. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/bush0111introcongressspeech.htm>, retrieved on 24 May

The government of Kyrgyzstan has always acknowledged the benefits arising from the US–Kyrgyz Manas Air Force Base, and has been opportunistic in playing up American interests in the country. Both countries agreed that the employment of armed forces against terrorism, even more impressive than using diplomatic and economic means to combat terrorism. The use of military force is an appropriate tool for fighting terrorism. According to a fact sheet released by the US Air Force, the Manas airbase that the United States leased from the Kyrgyz republic contributed more than US\$64 million to its economy in financial year 2008 and over 500 Kyrgyz citizens have been employed at the airbase and their earnings have amounted to over US\$2.6 million.⁶In 2007, Kyrgyzstan was approved for the American program Millennium Challenge Account, a bilateral development fund created in 2004. In addition to annual foreign assistance from the United States, it received a US\$16 million grant from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, a US agency established to manage the developmental assistance to military capacity in combating terrorism.⁷

Figure 4
Military Base at Manas in Bishkek



Source: http://defenseupdate.com/analysis/analysis_210209_manas.htm

The existence of the military base US helps Kyrgyzstan to improve border security throughout the country, particularly in the southern Batken region. These efforts included the construction of more modern border point facilities at several locations throughout the country, a program to create central communications between the dispersed border points and several government agencies, the installation of radiation detection equipment at select crossings, and the establishment of a tracking system to monitor the transit of certain dual-use equipment throughout the country.⁸ On the other hand, Kyrgyzstan military and internal forces also worked to improve their counterterrorism capabilities. With U.S. assistance, the Kyrgyz armed forces continued to build capacity in terms of their facilities and tactical capabilities. U.S. financial support has resulted in the training of dozens of Kyrgyz armed forces personnel, and the establishment of more modern defense facilities. Further, the Kyrgyz Ministry of

⁸See, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. *Country Reports on Terrorism 2008*. New York: United States Department of State Publication, April, 2009. p.148

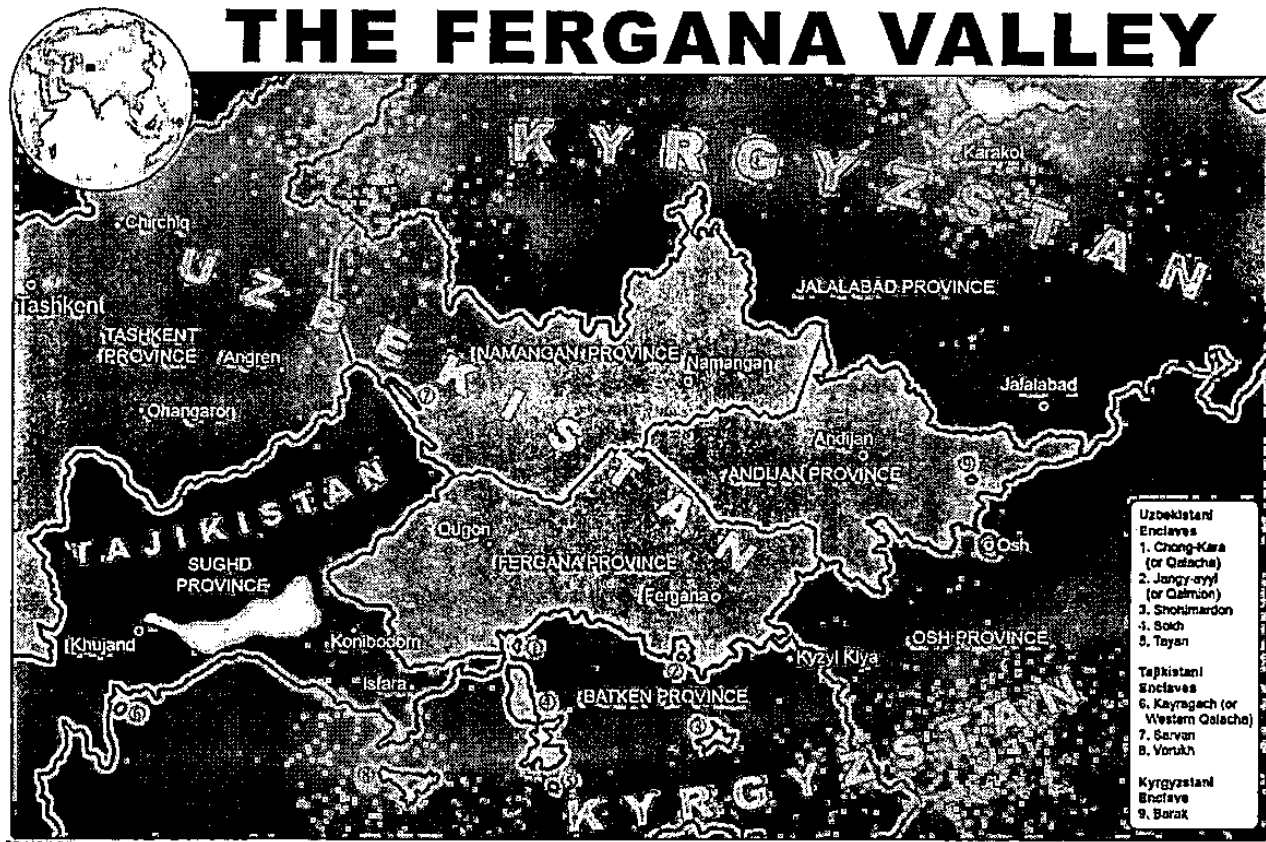
Defense is in the process of reorganizing their forces to respond more efficiently to perceived threats in the southern region of Kyrgyzstan.

2. US-Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Operation in South Kyrgyzstan

The most targeted area for US – Kyrgyzstan Counter Terrorism Operation in South Kyrgyzstan is the area called Ferghana Valley. The Ferghana Valley is the most densely populated area of Central Asia and the most explosive. More than 10 million people live in the valley, which covers some 22,000 square kilometers 22.000 comparable in size to Kashmir or the Nile Delta. In addition, Kyrgyzstan has little influence in large areas of its territory surrounding the Ferghana Valley, allowing Islamic militant networks to grow, promoting arms and drug smuggling throughout the regions porous borders and into neighboring countries.⁹ The Ferghana Valley in Southern Kyrgyzstan covers the entire Batken Province and major part of Osh and Jalal-Abad.

⁹Charles Recknagel, *Ferghana Valley: A Tinderbox for Violence*, Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty. Available online at

Figure 5
Map of The Ferghana Valley



Source: <http://randomdijit.blogspot.com/2011/06/ferghana-valley-part-seven.html>

Nevertheless, the Ferghana Valley which is located in Southern Kyrgyzstan and its position across three countries, pose clear dangers for their respective states. Each is poor, has a dangerous current of antigovernment sentiment, is susceptible to radical Islamic movements, and as part of the drug-trafficking route from Afghanistan has a significant organized crime presence. And that is without even mentioning the intercommunal tensions now so evident in southern Kyrgyzstan. Faced with such a tinderbox, the governments of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan appear to have developed at least one common understanding, despite their frequent fights over water and energy and other issues: that is, to keep the lid on the box by cooperating in

suppressing radicalism but staying out of each others' internal crises, even when their own ethnic kinsmen are endangered.

Meanwhile in the Ferghana Valley, which unites several Uzbek wiloyats with Osh and Batken oblasts of Kyrgyzstan and Soghd oblast of Tajikistan, momentum grew for change in the 1990s among local citizens who felt that their governments were ignoring their basic survival and subsistence needs. In spite of the Fergana Valley reputation as the safe heaven of Central Asia, unfair economic distribution and poverty resulting from the corruption of local and national governments of the three countries left residents eager to take advantage of those promising relief. In Kyrgyzstan, the rise of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ut-Tahrir in the Ferghana Valley was a direct response to both the repression of the respective authoritarian regimes, particularly the one in Osh, as well as the poverty and deplorable state of education and employment opportunities.¹⁰

In 2002, the US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism forces clashed with the IMU insurgents who were attempting to penetrate the Kyrgyz territory and take hostages from among the Kyrgyz population. After these raids, the Kyrgyz government declared international terrorism as a threat to Kyrgyzstan's national security and began hardening its responses toward terrorism and religious extremism. The government concentrated its intelligence and counterterrorism efforts on the IMU and its military and political allies, both inside and outside of the county. The IMU was also responsible for explosions in Bishkek in December 2002 and Osh in May 2003 that killed eight

¹⁰See, Anthony C. Bowyer, *Islamic Movements and Democracy in Central Asia: Integration or Isolation?* Paper presented at the CSID's 9th Annual Conference, Washington DC, May 14, 2008.

people. In May 2003, the counter terrorism operation disrupted an IMU cell that was seeking to bomb the US Embassy and a nearby hotel in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In November 2004, the IMU was blamed for an explosion in the southern Kyrgyzstani city of Osh that killed one police officer and one terrorist.

In the name of counter terrorism operation, the Kyrgyz authorities also intensified the persecution of members of Hizbut Tahrir which advocates for the recreation of the Islamic Caliphate in Central Asia. In contrast to the IMU, Hizbut Tahrir is a non-militant Islamist movement. According to an official statement of the mission and method of the group, it neither directly advocates nor engages in violence for accomplishing its goals. Despite those facts, the Kyrgyz government alleged that Hizbut Tahrir has ties with the IMU.

In addition, the Kyrgyz authorities have alleged that the IMU and radical Islamic groups still pose the gravest security threat. As a result, the government of Kyrgyzstan declared war against Islamists in 2008.

B. The Failure of Counter Terrorism Cooperation in South Kyrgyzstan

The research of Raisa K. Kadyrova, a President of Foundation for Tolerance International in Kyrgyzstan in the year 2007, found that the ideas of the Islamic extremists find their supporters and this is also enhanced by the lengthy socioeconomic crisis, high unemployment and poverty.

absence of forms of expression of protest.¹¹ Her research explains two important points on the situation of terrorism and extremism in Southern Kyrgyzstan. Firstly, the repressions and terror implemented by the government as well as political unfairness, economic inequalities and social disturbances are the main reasons for expressing through violence on the part of certain individuals once all other means use in order to change the existing situation proved to be ineffective. The second point is that economic and political reforms in Kyrgyzstan fail to achieve success and domestic and cross border conflicts develop and break out, it is why the region become a nest of terrorism, a fireplace of religious and political extremism and an arena of international violent conflicts.

In line with Raisa conclusion, the research done by United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in 2005 in Ferghana Valley, South Kyrgyzstan shown the similar result that the economic constrains. About half of the interviewed respondents which are young men and women from Kyrgyzstan mentioned that young men initially join radical religious groups for socio-economic reasons and then religious ideals (29%). Social and economic constraints(38%) and religious beliefs (22%) prevail in women's answers.

In contrary with the reasons of the emergence of terrorism in Kyrgyzstan, the government counterterrorism cooperation with U.S for combating terrorism, the action relied the use of military force. The main mission of US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation was to defeat the global terrorist network including terrorist movements

¹¹ See, Raisa K. Kadyrova, *Protection of Power in Central Asia: Using Terror as a Pretext? A Kyrgyz*

which linked to Al Qaeda in Kyrgyzstan which is Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. 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”.¹² The ultimate goal of the cooperation is the decreasing number of terrorist and its terror attack in South Kyrgyzstan, particularly in Ferghana Valley.

¹²The American Rhetoric. *Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks*. Available online at <http://www.theamericanrhetoric.com/speeches/ambush011jointcongressspeech.htm>, retrieved on 24 May 2011.

Table 3

Events Related with Terrorist Attacks, 2001-2010

No	Year	Event
1	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March: terrorist attacked Tolesan Ismailova, the president of the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society. • During 2001: a number of Kyrgyz civilians were killed by land mines placed by IMU along the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border in South Kyrgyzstan.
2	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 May: police detained six terrorists in Djalalabad. • 27 Dec. : a bombing in a market in Bishkek killed six people and wounded 40
3	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May: a group of terrorist attacked, and some were beaten and captured by police when they tried to hold an action in Bishkek. • 8May: a bombing in a currency exchange office in Osh killed one person • October: Russia formally established a military base in the town of Kant near Bishkek under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States Collective Security Treaty Organization.
4	2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May: Uzbek and Kyrgyz secret services conducted joint surveillance of a mosque in Karasuu near Osh during prayers. • 3 July: the daughter of Ramazan Dyrlydaev, head of the Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights, was beaten by terrorist.
5	2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October – November: terrorist attacks resulted more than 20 people were killed, including parliament member Tynychbek Akhmatbayev. • The government monitors and restricts Islamic groups that it regards as extremist and a threat to national security, particularly Hizbut-Tahrir. • August: Russia and Kyrgyzstan announced an expansion of a military base in the town of Kant near Bishkek to fight terrorist especially IMU.
6	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 May: armed attacks on border and customs posts in South Kyrgyzstan • July: terrorist shot representative of the British mining company Oxus Gold, in Bishkek. • July: Kyrgyz – US counterterrorism force killed of five alleged members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan militant group in Southern Kyrgyzstan. • August: Kyrgyz security forces carried out a joint operation in the Kyrgyz city of Karasuu in which Imam Muhammadrafiq Kamalov was shot to death. • 11 September: the IMU leadership renewed its commitment to attack the governments of Central Asia, especially Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Tajik Presidents. • Second half: a number of violent incidents involving alleged religious extremists took place in South Kyrgyzstan
7	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 12, the terrorists <i>attacked</i> on Kyrgyzborder posts in the southern Kyrgyzstan.
8	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March: six civilians were killed by terrorist in village of Aksy. • Interior Ministry banned large public prayers during religious holidays.
9	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March: terrorist killed MedetSadyrkulov, Bakiyev's former chief of staff in a Bishkek • 17 July, domestic Media in Kyrgyzstan reported that terrorists attacked security forces in Southern Kyrgyzstan.
10	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each extremist's profile outlines his group affiliation and background. • 19 January: Islamic Jihad Union attacked a local security force in Bishkek. Two terrorist were killed and one was captured after a gun fire. • On November 30, Terrorists bomb explosion has injured two police officers in the Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek, two days before a visit by Hillary Clinton.

Since the implementation of U.S.- Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation, there is no comprehensive evidence stated the decreasing number of terrorist and terrorist attack in Kyrgyzstan. Conversely, the number of terrorist and terrorist attack raise significantly. Compare to the number of terror events before the counter terrorism cooperation came into force, the number of terror during the cooperation is still higher. The U.S - Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation has failed to diminish terrorist and the terrorist attack in South Kyrgyzstan. The cooperation could not even decrease the number of terrorist.