

CHAPTER 4

THE DETERMINANT FACTORS WHICH ARE LEADING TO THE FAILURE OF US – KYRGYZSTAN COUNTER TERRORISM COOPERATION IN COMBATING TERRORISM IN SOUTH KYRGYZSTAN

This chapter describes the analysis of two determinant factors which are leading to the failure of US – Kyrgyzstan counter terrorism cooperation in combating terrorism in South Kyrgyzstan. Those two factors are: the incapability of US – Kyrgyzstan military force to solve the political instability in South Kyrgyzstan; and the incapability of US – Kyrgyzstan military force to solve the unfairness of economy distribution in South Kyrgyzstan.

A. The Incapability of US-Kyrgyzstan Military Force to Solve the Political Instability in South Kyrgyzstan

Since its independence in 1999, Kyrgyzstan is undergoing in transition which is from autocratic to democratic system. 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. Furthermore the key conflict indicators are describes in table 4.

Table 4
The Key Conflict Indicators in Kyrgyzstan

Main Indicator Categories	Specifics
Politic	
Government Policies	The former presidents uses undemocratic, repressive policies to curtail civil liberties and silence opposition politicians, as well as critical journalists, creating intense unrest.
Corruption	Pervasive corruption and cronyism at all government levels continue to disaffect population
Radicalization of Opposition	Deteriorating economic conditions and increased suppression of religious movements and opposition parties is further radicalizing their behaviour
Ethnic Tension	Poor economic conditions, widening resource disparities between te North and South, and political exclusion based ethnicity have fueled ethnic tension in the country (e.g. per capita income in the rural areas of southern Kyrgyzstan was 32.1 soms (below USD 2), whereas the average per capita income for the entire republic was 84.3 soms (below USD 5)
"War on Terror"	The international community's eagerness to fight terrorism has given Kyrgyzstan the excuse to repress even moderate, non violent dissent in their population.
Economy	
Poverty Levels	One of the threats to political stability remains public discontent with the economy over 60% of the population lives below the national poverty line.
Unemployed Youth	Lacking opportunities and faith in the Kyrgyz government, unemployed youth have become particularly attracted to radical religious movements such as Hizbut Tahrir. While official Kyrgyz data suggests 3% uneemployment rate for the entire republic, annual servers cited multilateral agencies suggest that actual unemployment might be as high as 20% of the workforce.
Market Size	Landlocked and largely mountainous, Kyrgyzstan is isolated from global markets, thus making the Republic vulnerable to the dynamics and policies of its more powerful and sometimes antagonistic neighbors.
Poor Infrastructure	A small internal market size prevents the emergence of a diversified and efficient economy in the absence of international partners

Source: Bipasha Choudhury, et al. "Kyrgyzstan: A Risk Assessment Brief." Carleton University. Accessed June 28, 2010. <http://www.carleton.ca/cifp>. p. 3-4.

In Kyrgyzstan today almost all social and demographic groups of the population are affected by poverty. According to the data of the Centre for Economic and Social Development of the Ministry of Finance of Kyrgyz Republic more than 55% of the population fall into the category of "poor". About 23% of the country's population live in conditions of severe impoverishment.¹ Kyrgyzstan is a state more or less permanent political instability. The bright promise of democracy, independence, development and freedom in a post-Soviet world has contributed to the increasing political authoritarianism by massive misgovernment. The current regime has presided over significant de-industrialization, loss of jobs, increases in poverty and homelessness, and significant declines in educational and health care standards, all exacerbated by massive and endemic corruption.² So far it has managed to stay in power through a mixture of various techniques: the exploitation of nationalist symbolism combined with political authoritarianism, the playing off of clan loyalties, the calculated distribution of rewards, often made possible through foreign donors, as well as the manipulation of the threat of Islamic radicalism.³

Corruption is also a big issue in South Kyrgyzstan and it is massively practiced by the government. A serious effect is that corruption in the state sector undermines the capacity to raise revenues, and if government staff are not paid they may use their office

¹Raisa K. Kadyrova, *Protection of Power in Central Asia: Using Terror as a Pretext? A Kyrgyz NGO's Vision*. Bishkek: Foundation for Tolerance International. 2007. p 189.

²See, Tony Vaux and Jonathan Goodhand. *Conflict Assesments Disturbing Connections: Aid and Conflict in Kyrgyzstan*. London: The Conflict, Security and Development Group. 2002. p 74.

to extract wages directly from the public. This process will not be directed against the strong but against the vulnerable. All these processes of greed create grievances. It is clear in the employment of government staff that the greatest tensions are created. Russians have been progressively marginalized from positions in state industries where they used to be dominant.

The exclusion of minorities also coincides with a decline in central controls. The ethnic composition of the security forces is overwhelmingly Kyrgyz, according to local reports, making it unlikely that minorities will challenge the security forces, but making it possible that the majority might use the support of the security forces to further repress minorities.⁴Corruption is so pervasive in Kyrgyz society. Personal connections, corruption, organized crime, and widespread poverty limit business competition and equality of opportunity. The nepotistic practices of former president, for example Kurmanbek Bakiyev, whose sons and brothers were prominent in business and government, were a significant source of popular dissatisfaction prior to his ouster. The temporary government charged some members of the the former regime with corruption, but the results in the largely unreformed courts have been inconclusive. Kyrgyzstan was ranked 154 out of 174 countries surveyed in Transparency International's 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index.⁵

Kyrgyz media also experienced less politically motivated harassment after the fall of the Bakiyev government. However, Uzbek language media virtually ceased to

⁴See, Tony Vaux and Jonathan Goodhand. *Conflict Assessments Disturbing Connections: Aid and Conflict in Kyrgyzstan*. London: The Conflict, Security and Development Group, 2002. p.34

⁵See, Freedom House, *Kyrgyzstan 2010*. Can be accessed at

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/kyrgyzstan>. Retrieved on March 5, 2011.

exist in southern Kyrgyzstan after the June 2010 ethnic violence, when several Uzbek television and radio outlets were closed down. Meanwhile, the interim government transformed the state-run television station into a public broadcaster with an independent oversight board. The government has generally permitted a broad range of religious practices, but all religious organizations must register with the authorities, a process that is often cumbersome and arbitrary. A January 2009 law banned proselytizing and private religious education, and the wearing of headscarves in schools was banned two months later.⁶ The government monitors and restricts Islamist groups that it regards as a threat to national security, particularly Hizbut Tahrir, an ostensibly nonviolent international movement calling for the creation of a caliphate.⁷

The widespread and extensively documented violence against the Uzbek community in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010 cause the unending violation for ethnic minorities. Uzbeks who are a half of the population in Osh, had long demanded more political and cultural rights, including greater representation in government, more Uzbek-language schools, and official status for the Uzbek language. The Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (KIC), an independent international body, put the death toll from the worst outbreak of ethnic violence in June at 470, noting that the majority of victims were ethnic Uzbeks.⁸ Government forces were ineffective at stopping ethnic violence, and may have been complicit in it. The report named specific officials in the interim government as having failed in their duties to impartially enforce the law during the

⁶See, *Ibid.*

⁷See, *Ibid.*

⁸See, Freedom House, *Kyrgyzstan 2010*. Can be accessed at

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/country/kyrgyzstan/2010>. Retrieved on March 5, 2011.

clashes. After the violence lessened, arrests and sweep operations targeted Uzbek neighborhoods and activists.

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 situation has been triggering terrorism. 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 check the power of politicians had decreased.⁹ Moreover, table 5 shows that the existing social constraints became reasons for people, especially young men and women for joining radical religious groups. As a result, the probability of terrorism as an illegitimate way of expressing grievances and engaging in violent political participation

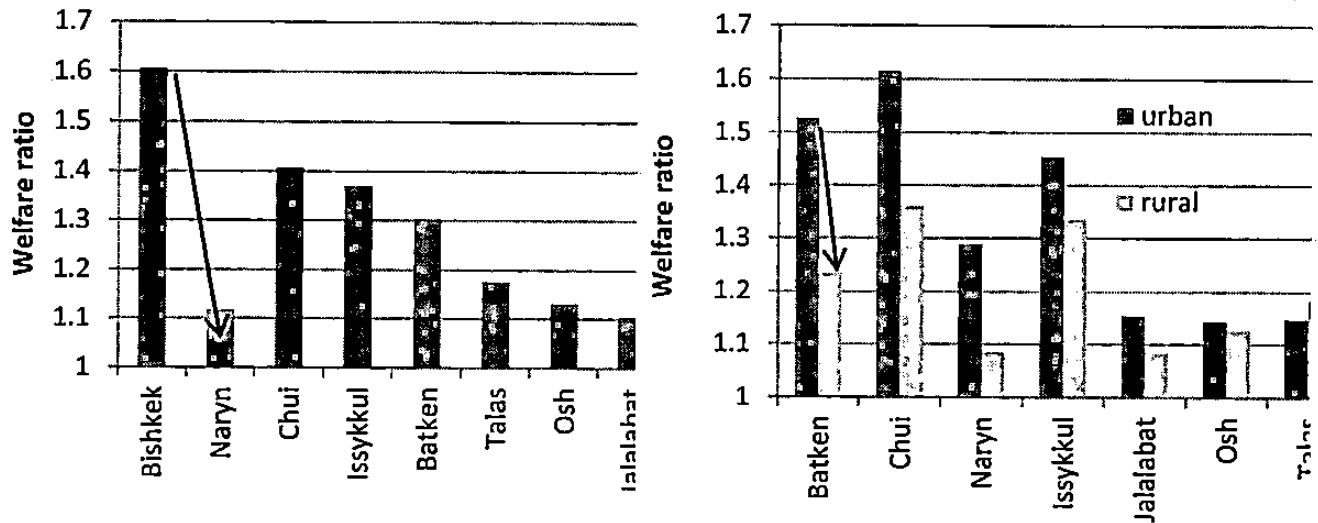
Table 5
Reasons for Young Men and Women Joining Radical Religious Groups

	Young men join radical religious groups		Young women join radical religious groups	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Because of socio-economic constraints	41.5	49.7	36.3	39.1
Political beliefs	1.9	4.7	2.1	0.7
Religion	31.4	26.3	22.6	23.1
Forced by family members: wife, sister, brother...	7.5	7.0	15.8	18.1
Because of illiteracy, low level of education	0.6	2.9	0.7	1.4
Other	0.6	1.2	1.4	1.4
Difficult to answer	16.4	8.2	21.2	15.9

Source: from UNIFEM: Ferghana Valley: Current Challenge. November 2005. p. 52

However, the US Kyrgyzstan military force for combating terrorism relied on mostly proactive policy by using military force. Unfortunately, the use of the military force to eliminate physical existence of terrorist has nothing to do with the efforts to stabilize the political instability. As a result, the military force is incapable to solve the existing political instability of South Kyrgyzstan because the military force only urge on the elimination of terrorist and its facilities. In conclusion, the major problem with the counterterrorism cooperation is about not getting to the roots of terrorism especially in South Kyrgyzstan where the problems of political instability, the causes of aggrieved

Figure 6
Regional Disparities on Economy Welfare 2010



Source: Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Europe and Central

At the time of privatization in 1998, each member of the collective farm called Kolkhoz, including children and dependants, received the same amount. The average Kyrgyz family of five people would receive less than half a hectare. Such amount are not viable even for subsistence farming. Some have already disposed of their land even though land sales were technically illegal. In the rural areas, there is a marked polarization of wealth. The team met richer farmers who had been able to consolidate large farms of a hundred hectares and suggesting corrupt practices from the outset. This tendencious Kyrgyzstan government on the free market economics and privatisation. These policies have pushed up prices and created very high levels of unemployment. Structural adjustment policies have led to a decline in state services.

Under the land distribution process, 25% of the total available was held back by local government. This land is auctioned but practically it always ends up as the property of the local elite, either because they are the only people with the money to rent

the land or because they manipulate the auctions. It seems likely that when the moratorium on land sales is lifted and poor people which are estimated to be 20% of the total will sell their land. Another important issue is the loss of productive capacity and the informalisation of the economy. Kyrgyzstan has been described as a bazaar economy in which there is very little productive activity or inward investment. In fact, a number of areas in the south Kyrgyzstan is no longer engage in the cash economy but live entirely by subsistence farming and a very limited use of barter. This is not by choice, but out of necessity arising from poverty.

Currently the major development in Kyrgyzstan focus has been primarily on macroeconomic reform and to a much lesser extent governance. The leverage of economic involvement has not been used in support of improvements in governance. The increasing possibility of conflict and the link between failures of governance and growing insecurity have been insufficiently recognised. The failure to control the monopolisation of economy distribution by elites have helped to create a class of predatory interests, which employ extra legal and illegal means to secure their ends. They are able to use external support, such as aid programmes, to further consolidate their current position as an elite.

The rise of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizbut-Tahrir in the Ferghana Valley was a direct response to both the repression of the respective authoritarian regimes, particularly in South Kyrgyzstan, as well as the poverty and the lack of education and employment opportunities. The problem of economy has forced hundreds of thousands of citizens of the Kyrgyzstan, mostly young men, to seek out

employment elsewhere. The primary destinations are Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. For those left behind, there is no chance for the future life. For those taking the long journey to the north, the difficult working conditions as well as the stereotypes and prejudice, in addition to outright violence, that they face in their countries of destination makes earning money and being removed from their families for many months at a time that much more difficult.¹³ With desperate conditions at home and the seeming indifference or outright hostility of their governments toward their plight, growing numbers of people have turned to Islamic political movements as a possible means of salvation.

However, the US Kyrgyzstan military force for combating terrorism relied on mostly proactive and defensive policies by using military force. Unfortunately, the use of the military force to eliminate physical existence of terrorist has nothing to do with the efforts to distribute economy welfare adequately. As a result, the military force is incapable to solve the existing unfairness of economy welfare of South Kyrgyzstan because the military force only urge on the elimination of terrorist and its facilities. In conclusion, the major problem with the counterterrorism cooperation is about not getting to the roots of terrorism especially in South Kyrgyzstan where the problems of unfair economy distribution is the causes of individual join the terrorism act.

¹³See, 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