

Full Name : Guillaume NICAISE

Date: 26/03/2010

Word Count: 1500

QUESTION

The government of President Emomalii Rahmon in Tajikistan is widely believed to be on the verge of collapse. Social unrest is mounting for a number of reasons. The fragile energy infrastructure of the country has come under stress as a result of the harsh winter of 2009-10. Uzbekistan has cut off gas supplies, citing non-payment of bills and most regions of the country receive electricity for less than 3 hours a day. Protests by the unemployed in urban areas have been mounting by the week. These have been exacerbated by the forced repatriation of migrant Tajik workers from Russia and Kazakhstan, where the effects of the global financial crisis in 2009 have fuelled calls for the expulsion of foreign workers. This has severely affected the Tajik economy, given that migrant worker remittances account for more than 40% of the country's GDP. Tajikistan's biggest export revenue source—aluminium—has been hit by falling commodity prices and low energy supplies to smelters. Meanwhile, the southern border of the country has become ever more porous. As Pakistani forces flush militants out of Waziristan, fighters linked to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan have begun staging attacks in southern Tajikistan in an attempt to create a base for themselves in their struggle to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan. Taliban fighters have also been staging attacks in the Kunduz province of Afghanistan and have been threatening to move north into Tajikistan in an attempt to disrupt the Northern Distribution Network set up by the US and allied forces to supply troops in Afghanistan. In addition, the Tajik capital Dushanbe is rife with rumours of an impending internal coup within the regime. The most frequently cited names of potential challengers are those of Makhmadsaid Ubaidulloyev (chairman of the upper house of Parliament and mayor of Dushanbe) and Murodali Alimardon (former chairman of the National Bank and deputy premier).

You are an analyst in the foreign policy bureaucracy of ONE of the following states: United States, Russia, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, China, Pakistan, India. Please provide an analysis of policy implications should the government of President Rahmon collapse. Bear in mind that your government will need to determine its position both with regard to any bilateral actions that will be necessary, as well as relevant multilateral commitments and measures.

In writing your foreign policy memorandum, please do the following:

- a) Determine which government you are reporting to
- b) Specify the reason for this policy review
- c) Provide a brief background and overview of the policy issue which should include why this issue is currently relevant
- d) Offer a critique/analysis of the current policy stance towards Tajikistan; this should include a description of what the policy is at present, its success or failure thus far, and reasons for amendment, refinement or continuation
- e) Present at least three policy alternatives following from the critique/analysis for your foreign ministry to consider; analyse these in light of the critique offered
- f) Provide a policy recommendation from the three alternatives and justify this course of action
- g) Do not exceed 1500 words

Submission date: Please submit your Policy Analysis Papers by 4 pm on 26 March 2010.

POLICY PAPER



POLICY ANALYSIS ON TAJIKISTAN

The issue

This policy review is an assessment of the current US foreign policy in Tajikistan, at stake with a new threat: a high political risk.ⁱ In order to update our actual policy, alternatives will be proposed to secure our interests in the area.

The Recommendation

Our government must increase its budget to facilitate the democratic and economic development of the state.

Background

During the Tajik civil war, from 1992 to 1997, United States sustained actively Tajikistan with humanitarian aid and supported the country to establish commitment toward international financial institutions.ⁱⁱ Tajikistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world.ⁱⁱⁱ

Since 2001, the main objective of U.S policy in Tajikistan has been to impede the country from becoming harbor for terrorism.^{iv} United States deepened its cooperation with Tajikistan, in particular for counternarcotics and counterterrorism measures,^v especially after the Russian withdraw from Tajik-Afghan Border in 2005. Tajikistan joined the NATO Partnership for Peace program in 2002 and signed a transit agreement with NATO in 2004 for the Northern Distribution Network.^{vi}

In 2005, Condoleeza Rice announced a shift from humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan's economic development. Over the past 17 years the United States has invested over \$900 million in Tajikistan and our trade volume has grown from \$10 million in the early 1990s to almost \$270 million annually.^{vii}

Analysis on policy

Our national security depends of our ability to secure our interests in Central Asia. One of our main goals in Tajikistan is to prevent the state from failure and ensure stability.^{viii} President Emomali Rahmon has been the successful guarantor of security in Tajikistan since the end of the civil war. We consider him as a reliable partner, as demonstrates it its participation to the Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.^{ix} However, the political vacuum Rahmon succeeded to impose on the political exchequer does not permit the easy emerging of a legitimate successor.^x

Our government tries to create a political and popular interest against terrorism.^{xi} We invests much money to stop smugglers and insurgents on the Tajik-Afghan border, as reveals it, for example, the construction of a custom terminal in Pamir for \$6.5 million in 2008.^{xii} Nevertheless, the border remains largely uncontrolled and drug trade, linked to radical Islamism, is prolific.^{xiii}

We also promote democratic values, good governance and respect for human rights. However, we are confronted to difficulties, as Tajikistan historic and current ties with Russia are prevalent. Corruption remains high^{xiv} and undermines our economic support.

The budget, requested by the bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs to Tajikistan, for 2010, is \$ 3,698 000.^{xv}

Alternatives

1) Reinforcing the military aspect

Many elites in Tajikistan, like Ubaidulloev, the chairman of Dushambe, have strong ties with Russia,^{xvi} and could consider our military policy as threatening. In case of state collapse, we risk losing an ally for the war in Afghanistan and jeopardize our military position in the region. Moreover, the surge of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan activity^{xvii} will become critical, as low income, corruption and denigration already limit the force of reaction of Tajik border guards and police in front of traffickers and smugglers.^{xviii}

I propose to reinforce the security of the Tajik-Afghan border and check points between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. By negotiating with Rahmon the involvement of Private Military Forces for mainly advisory, intelligence and training support and providing special counter

terrorist and counter narcotic forces units, it will enhance the professionalism of Tajik troops, encourage their motivation and ensure a better outcome in the fight against the Islamic insurgent troops. I will recommend bringing closer the Central Asian Rapid Reaction Force of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and NATO troops in order to coordinate their action against drug trade and Islamic insurgents. A multilateral commitment between United States, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Russia could be contemplated. It could maintain Tajikistan bonded to external military forces, but also avoid a zero sum game balance of power in the region, harmful to all states in the region having interest to fight against terrorism. At the image of the anti-terrorist regional center developed by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Kyrghizstan,^{xxix} the construction of an international military center near the Pyandj river could be proposed to our partners. For all these recommendations, a better bilateral relationship with Moscow must be enforced.

The drawback of that policy is that it does not diminished the risk of social unrest and increase our dependence on other actors in the area.

2) To put pressure on the government for democratic, social and economic reforms

A moderate muslim leader, as Senator Akbar Turajonzoda, could use religion, an oppressed but latent identity force in Tajikistan, to federate Tajiks around a new political regime. In front of the “neo-feudal structures of power”^{xxx} established by Rahmon and the huge needs of political and social change, the risk of a renewed civil war would be very high. However, as remembrances from the civil war are still very present, authorities are likely to deal harshly with any potential social unrest and relationships with Russia warrantee the continuity of the regime. In fact, for the Economist Intelligence Unit, despite a growing threat of instability in 2010, President Rahmon will remain in power.^{xxxi}

Nevertheless, because the government is actually in difficulty, it could be the right moment to enforce a more democratic regime, bargaining our economic sustainment for more investments into a welfare state, the fight against corruption and drug dealing and a better integration of the opposition into the governance. I also recommend to lobby Rahmon to allow the implementation of a local NGOs coalition, as the Kirghiz “Koalitsia” during the Tulip’s revolution^{xxii}, to develop good local governance, monitoring and advocacy activities and increase civil society, but also to facilitate the access to international and transnational NGOs.

Our government can also secretly sustain a potential successor to Rahmon that would be favorable to our policy in Central Asia, instead of taking the risk to face a pro-Russian leader

in the future. However, this policy is risky, as Tajikistan could turn toward China or Russia for help.

3) **To increase our economic aid**

A more unreliable/corrupted/unable leader can emerge, as Alimardon and its scandalous behavior at the head of the National Bank,^{xxiii} increasing the merging of criminal groups and high ranking security officers.^{xxiv} As incomes coming from aluminum and cotton are diminishing, remittances are lessening, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan has more possibilities to obtain popular sustainment.^{xxv} To hold back that phenomenon, the Tajik economic situation must be improved. Today, the huge corruption,^{xxvi} the passive public external debt, the adverse balance of payment and the recurrent inflation erode confidence in its overall macroeconomic policy management.^{xxvii}

I propose to increase immediately the budget dedicated to Tajikistan and establish a multilateral commitment between our government, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the government of Tajikistan. Whereas our government already supports the EBRD investments in Tajikistan,^{xxviii} a larger financial support would enable EBRD to develop more microfinance instruments, establish new infrastructures and cover wider financial needs and sectors of activity, while concentrating on the basic needs of the population. Consequently, it will foster the private sector and reduce the popular propensity to sustain radical Islamic movements. Furthermore, direct investments along the KKT route of the Northern Distribution Network can be contemplated, decreasing our exposure to risks associated with our supply lines running through Pakistan^{xxix} and creating new commercial outlets. All these investments must be conditioned to economic and financial reforms by the Tajik government, more commitment for a welfare state and fighting against traffickers.

Recommendation.

Looking too much for geopolitical advantage, the U.S risk to waste political capital, as it intensify Russian and Chinese concerns about U.S military power and do not bring smarter economics or domestic reforms.^{xxx} Tajikistan is situated in the Russian sphere of influence and a “big stick” policy risks to alienate our relationship and lose a good ally. Then, to increase our “soft power” and deal effectively with popular needs for economic and social changes as well as stopping the spread of drug trade, I recommend the third alternative, which enables a short and long term development of the country.

Bibliography

Centre for Strategic and International Studies, *Report of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project and the Russia and Eurasia Program: The Northern Distribution Network and the Modern Silk Road*, December 2009, <http://csis.org/publication/northern-distribution-network-and-modern-silk-road> (09/03/2010).

Centre for Strategic and International Studies, *Report of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project and the Russia and Eurasia Program: The Northern Distribution Network and Afghanistan*, January 2010, <http://csis.org/publication/northern-distribution-network-and-afghanistan> (10/03/2010)

Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, October 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html> (24/03/2010).

Chatham House, *REP Roundtable Summary: Tajikistan's Domestic and Regional Priorities and Challenges*, 15 October 2009. <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk> (09/03/2010).

Compagnie Française pour le Commerce Extérieur, http://www.coface.fr/CofacePortal/FR_fr_FR/pages/home/os/risks_home/risques_pays/fiche//Tadjikistan?nodeUid=571940 (24/03/2010).

Economist Intelligence Unit, <http://www.eiu.com/index.asp?rf=0> (09/03/2010).

Embassy of the United States of Dushambe, <http://dushanbe.usembassy.gov/history.html> (25/03/2010).

European Bank for Reconstruction and development, *Strategy for Tajikistan*, 26 January 2009, <http://www.ebrd.com/about/strategy/country/taji/strategy.pdf> (16/03/2010).

Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2010*, <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2010/news-release> (09/03/2010).

International Crisis Group, *Tajikistan: On the Road to Failure*, Asia Report N°162, 12 February 2009, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/central_asia/162_tajikistan_on_the_road_to_failure.pdf -23/03/2010)

Jonson Lena, *Tajikistan in the new Central Asia: geopolitics, great power rivalry and Radical Islam*, IB Tauris: London, 2006.

Lewis David, *The temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Library of Congress, Country Studies, <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/ci/ti/> (24/03/2010).

Mohanty Girija Prasad, *Tajikistan: A Transit Hub of Drugs Smuggling*, January 17, 2010, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1537782 (16/03/2010).

Nichol Jim, *Report for Congress: Tajikistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests*, Congressional Research Service, July 29, 2009, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/98-594.pdf> (10/03/2010).

Nichol Jim, *Report for Congress: Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests*, January 11, 2010, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL33458_20100111.pdf (10/03/2010).

Petric Boris, *Le Kirghizstan: lieu d'expérimentation pour mesurer les nouvelles normes de la mondialisation politique*, Cahier du GEMDEV n° 31, March 2007, http://www.gemdev.org/publications/cahiers/pdf/31/Cah_31_PETRIC.pdf (26/03/2010).

Tynan Deirdre, *Central Asia: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan undergoing dangerous transformation*, 10/20/09, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav102009b.shtml> (17/03/2010).

Tynan Deidre, *Afghanistan: Washington exploring re-supply route*, 2/02/10, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav020210.shtml> (18/03/2010).

United State Central Command, <http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/aor/tajikistan/> (09/03/2010)

United States Department of State, *Congressional budget justification fiscal year 2010*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123413.pdf> (16/03/2010).

United States Department of State, *Tajikistan and U.S. Relations*, Pamela **Spratlen**, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Asia: Remarks at the Center for Strategic Studies Dushanbe, Tajikistan, April 2, 2008 <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/centasia/State/102903.pdf> (23/03/2010).

Uzbekistan Malaysian Friendship Society, *Uzbek Prime Minister Writes to his Tajik Colleague on Rogun Hydroelectric Power Station*, <http://www.umfs.mtrk.uz/index.php/en/news/76-2010-02-08-08-10-37.html> (09/03/2010).

ⁱ **Compagnie Française pour le Commerce Extérieur**, http://www.coface.fr/CofacePortal/FR_fr_FR/pages/home/os/risks_home/risques_pays/fiche//Tadjikistan?nodeUjId=571940 (24/03/2010).

ⁱⁱ **Library of Congress, Country Studies**, <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/ci/ti/> (24/03/2010).

ⁱⁱⁱ **Central Intelligence Agency**, *The World Factbook*, October 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html> (24/03/2010). Tajikistan is at 189th position.

^{iv} U.S. Senate. *Committee on Foreign Relations. Subcommittee on Central Asia and the South Caucasus. The U.S. Role in Central Asia*, in **Nichol Jim**, *Report for Congress: Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests*, January 11th 2010, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL33458_20100111.pdf (10/03/2010), p.3.

^v **Department of State**, *Background Notes*, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5775.htm> (24/03/2010).

^{vi} **NATO** Background, October 2007: Partners in Central Asia http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2007_11/2009_03_687B00694B0B4918A2143DBD2EB990F5_partners_central_asia-e.pdf (23/03/2010), p.5.

^{vii} **Embassy of the United States of Dushambe**, <http://dushanbe.usembassy.gov/history.html> (25/03/2010).

-
- ^{viii} **Nichol Jim**, *Report for Congress: Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests*, January 11, 2010, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL33458_20100111.pdf (10/03/2010), p.3.
- ^{ix} **Department of State**, *Tajikistan and U.S. Relations*, Pamela **Spratlen**, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Asia: Remarks at the Center for Strategic Studies Dushanbe, Tajikistan, April 2, 2008 <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/centasia/State/102903.pdf> (23/03/2010), p.2.
- ^x **International Crisis Group**, *Tajikistan : On the Road to Failure*, Asia Report N°162, 12 February 2009, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/central_asia/162_tajikistan_on_the_road_to_failure.pdf - 23/03/2010](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/central_asia/162_tajikistan_on_the_road_to_failure.pdf-23/03/2010)), p.4.
- ^{xi} **United States Department of State**, *Congressional budget justification fiscal year 2010*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123413.pdf> (16/03/2010), p.219.
- ^{xii} **Mohanty Girija Prasad**, *Tajikistan: A Transit Hub of Drugs Smuggling*, January 17, 2010, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1537782 (16/03/2010), p.1.
- ^{xiii} **International Crisis Group**, *Tajikistan : On the Road to Failure*, Asia Report N°162, 12 February 2009, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/central_asia/162_tajikistan_on_the_road_to_failure.pdf - 23/03/2010](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/central_asia/162_tajikistan_on_the_road_to_failure.pdf-23/03/2010)), p.18.
- ^{xiv} http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table (23/03/2010), Tajikistan is in 158th position
- ^{xv} **United States Department of State**, *Congressional budget justification fiscal year 2010*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123413.pdf> (16/03/2010), p.230.
- ^{xvi} **Jonson Lena**, *Tajikistan in the new Central Asia: geopolitics, great power rivalry and Radical Islam*, IB Tauris: London, 2006, p. 145 & 228.
- ^{xvii} **Tynan Deirdre**, *ibid*.
- ^{xviii} Nichol 2009, *ibid*, p.2.
- ^{xix} **Nichol Jim**, *Report for Congress: Tajikistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests*, Congressional Research Service, July 29, 2009, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/98-594.pdf> (10/03/2010), p.4.
- ^{xx} **Lewis David**, *The temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia*, Columbia University Press, New York, p.181.
- ^{xxi} **Economist Intelligence Unit**, *Country Report : Tajikistan*, March 2010.
- ^{xxii} **Petric Boris**, *Le Kirghizstan: lieu d'expérimentation pour mesurer les nouvelles normes de la mondialisation politique*, Cahier du GEMDEV n° 31, March 2007, http://www.gemdev.org/publications/cahiers/pdf/31/Cah_31_PETRIC.pdf (26/03/2010), p.45.
- ^{xxiii} **Central Asia Caucasus Institute**, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5103> (25/03/2010).
- ^{xxiv} **Lewis David**, *The temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia*, Columbia University Press, New York, p.176.
- ^{xxv} **Tynan Deirdre**, *Central Asia: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan undergoing dangerous transformation*, 10/20/09, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav102009b.shtml> (17/03/2010).
- ^{xxvi} <http://www.globalintegrity.org/reports/2006/Tajikistan/index.cfm> (17/03/2010).
- ^{xxvii} **European Bank for Reconstruction and development**, *Strategy for Tajikistan*, 26 January 2009, <http://www.ebrd.com/about/strategy/country/taji/strategy.pdf> (16/03/2010), p.1.
- ^{xxviii} **Chatham House**, *ibid*, p.4.
- ^{xxix} **United State Central Command**, <http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/aor/tajikistan/> (09/03/2010)
- ^{xxx} **Lewis David**, *The temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia*, Columbia University Press, New York, p.230.