

OSCE Vienna Roundtable, 12-13 December 2010

Session on Security and Human Rights

Focus on Central Asia (RFE/RL CA analyst, recent trip to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan)

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Human rights – state actions prevent citizens from exercising rights or violate rights → protect human rights by placing limits on the state

Security – outside actors violate rights either in single instances (terrorism) or when the state loses its monopoly on violence (war, civil conflict) → enhance security by increasing state capacity

Hard to do both at once → tension. Western democracies confront this issue in their counter-terrorism policies. Uphill struggle to put limits on state power in CA...

Last 20 years in CA – little progress, little cause for optimism about the future. We are not more secure today (Kyrgyzstan), and we do not have greater respect for human rights (across the region).

Major factors moving forward: Succession in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan's experience with parliamentary democracy and aftermath of violence in the South, and outside players

Succession in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan: Turkmen model (continuity)? Reform? Chaos?

Kyrgyzstan: Failed state? Muddle through? Pluralistic society, or the dominance of a single ethnicity?

Outside forces: Rise of China and Russia, retreat of the West (after NDN: energy in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, limited elsewhere), uncertain fate of Afghanistan...

Best outcome: Peaceful transitions in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan followed by political and economic modernization, workable parliamentary government in Kyrgyzstan, investment, and balancing of outside influences as Afghanistan slowly becomes more manageable...

Pitfalls: Conflict within states (elites, ethnicity), conflicts between states (water, ethnicity), outside rivalries (exacerbating, not causal factors)

Silver lining to the cloud of uncertainty: Central Asia will increasingly be the master of its own fate → opportunity to build a different sort of dialogue on security and human rights

1990s assumption of a single trajectory of becoming more like the West gave rise to a teacher-pupil dynamic → defensiveness

W complaints about rights while prioritizing own security → hypocrisy

As the West recedes, and as Russia and China push statist models, CA states will have choices: how to

defend themselves against internal and external threats, the relationship between rulers and ruled, and how best to safeguard the lives and livelihood of citizens.

Role for the OSCE – platform for dialogue of equals within security, humanitarian, and economic and environmental dimensions...