EXPLAINING EXPORT CONTROL DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN, 1992-2006

by

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Under the Direction of Gary Bertsch

ABSTRACT

This purpose of this paper is to examine the development of Uzbekistan’s export control system since the country’s independence in 1991. Employing the case study method, this paper seeks to analyze why and to what extent Uzbekistan has developed an export control system and to determine what factors drive its export control behavior. Four theoretical approaches that provide answers as to why states develop export control systems, namely the domestic political, realist/neorealist, liberal identity, and rational institutional, will be examined. Does the empirical evidence regarding Uzbekistan’s export control development match the expected behavior derived from any of the four theoretical approaches? Our analysis points toward the rational institutionalist approach as having the most explanatory power. A greater understanding of what behavior to expect should provide a foundation for improved policy prescriptions regarding Uzbekistan’s export control system as well as Central Asian economic and security cooperation.

INDEX WORDS: Uzbekistan, Central Asia, Export Control, Nonproliferation, Islam Karimov, Weapons of Mass Destruction, Great Game, Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, Border Disputes, Border Conflict, EXBS
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CHAPTER 1
A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

From the perspective of American foreign policy makers, the attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) placed a new emphasis on the geopolitical and strategic importance of the newly independent states (NIS) of Central Asia.¹ In particular, the attacks forced the United States to re-evaluate its ties (or lack thereof) with states in the region, long considered to be outside the American sphere of influence. New agreements and partnerships were quickly formed with the five states as high-level American diplomats sought out forward-operating military bases that would allow the U.S. to project its power far beyond its traditional foothold in Europe.² With the onset of the military campaign against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Central Asian NIS became frontline states in the battle against international terrorism. The leaders of the Central Asian NIS also had ample motivation to accept this newfound engagement with the West. Old Communist party bosses themselves, all were especially hostile towards

¹ For our purposes, Central Asia will refer to the five NIS of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. While Afghanistan is also viewed by many scholars, such as Starr, as also being a part of Central Asia, it was not part of the former Soviet Union and will be treated as a separate actor.
² The idea of projecting American power globally by developing a network of military bases, known as lillipads, was a product of the Bush Administration, especially championed by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the Department of Defense (DoD). The partnerships developed with the five Central Asian states ran the spectrum from limited to highly involved. For example, whereas Turkmenistan only granted overflight rights for humanitarian aid, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan granted access to military bases at Karshi-Khanabad and Manas respectively.
politicized Islam, as they faced similar threats from radical Islamists, largely based in Afghanistan, who sought to overthrow their secular governments.³

Prior to 9/11, American involvement in the region had principally focused on exploiting the Caspian’s energy reserves and repatriating to Russia part of the Soviet nuclear arsenal possessed by Kazakhstan, the only Central Asian NIS to inherit nuclear weapons.⁴ America’s newfound role as a powerbroker in the region post 9/11 presented a unique opportunity to expand its once limited engagement with the states of the region which were long assumed to be under the Russian, and to a lesser extent Chinese, spheres of influence.

Why Central Asia?

America’s newfound engagement with the Central Asian NIS post-9/11 has highlighted the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation in the region. The inroads made by terrorist organizations in Central Asia have further reinforced the potential for the region to serve as a conduit of WMD smuggling. Central Asia is bordered by states that contain large WMD stockpiles along with states that harbor the desire to expand their WMD capabilities. Specifically, Iran to the south has engaged in a long-running dispute with the West over the development and intentions behind its nuclear program. Pakistan and India, nuclear-armed states to the southeast, have continually hovered on the precipice of armed conflict. Russia, fifteen years after

³ Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan was the only president who was not previously the Communist party boss of his republic. Overnight, these leaders transformed themselves into “democratic presidents.” In reality, they are nothing more than ordinary dictators with rubberstamp legislatures and large security apparatuses that tolerate little dissent.
⁴ This is not to say that no other cooperation was occurring with the U.S. Cooperation did exist in many areas, albeit at a low level and usually limited in scope.
the collapse of the Soviet Union, still cannot effectively control its vast weapons arsenal. Both China and Russia continue to be major conventional arms proliferators in the region. In Moscow’s case, this often is a direct result of the need for hard currency to prop up its struggling economy.

Facing a regional backdrop of political uncertainty and instability, cross-border conflict, and competition between regional powers, Central Asia has become a frontline battleground in the fight against WMD proliferation. In addition to legal commerce, all five states continue to serve as transit routes for narcotics flowing north and weapons flowing south. Owing to Central Asia’s geopolitical position, the threat is real that illicit weapons and weapons-related technologies could be routed to undesirable end-user states or, more worrisome, to non-state actors. Moreover, every NIS except Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan possess the capability and capacity to produce sensitive materials, technologies, and equipment. At the minimum, the governments of these states also possess the requisite expertise required to produce sensitive technologies and equipment.

Nevertheless, in a surprising act of regional coherence, all of the region’s states have explicitly committed to the development of national export control systems in an effort to curb the spread of sensitive technologies through the region. These commitments to control sensitive materials and equipment occurred despite many factors working against them. The region is characterized by mutual hostility and distrust between the region’s leaders and governments as well as toward outside actors that wish to involve themselves in the region. Regional cooperation on issues as critical as management of the region’s scarce water supplies is highly tenuous at best. Moreover, all of the states’ economies are starved for hard currency derived from commerce across
their borders. All five states also face critical domestic challenges on issues ranging from
ethnic tensions to stunted industrial growth to the ability to pay the salaries of
government workers in their vast Soviet-style bureaucracies. Despite these, why have the
five NIS still committed to work with key Western actors to strengthen and secure their
borders, develop better MPC&A standards, and create effective export control systems
virtually from scratch?\(^5\) Why would they desire to control any export that could generate
an infusion of much-needed hard currency? When they can barely pay their government
workers’ meager wages, why would they expend valuable and scarce government
resources to create yet another layer of government administration tasked with
controlling exports?

The issues behind these questions are puzzling for several reasons. The growth of
every NIS’ economy is dependent on the ability to export to foreign markets. Their
shared Soviet legacies of monoculture economies continue to have repercussions in the
present. The Soviet command-and-control economy ensured that every republic would be
reliant on Moscow for basic commodities produced in other republics of the Union.
Once independent, these countries found themselves in a no-win “Catch-22”-type
situation. All are in desperate need of hard currency and thus continue to be reliant on
the export of one or two key commodities to prop up their fledgling economies. In
Central Asia and Uzbekistan especially, the reliance has been on cotton which has had a
devastating impact on the environment of the region. Nevertheless, in order to survive
and compete in the global marketplace, the states realize that economic diversification is

\(^5\) MPC&A stands for material protection, control, and accounting. This is a key element of effective export
control.
necessary. For Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, the answer most likely is in hydrocarbons. For Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, the answer remains unclear.

This paper aims to explain the motivations for development of export control systems of one state where the picture remains murky, namely Uzbekistan. Intuitively, one would expect that a country like Uzbekistan that has a high dependence on exports would place a low priority on export control development. This has not been the case as Tashkent has explicitly committed to developing an effective export control system. Furthermore, although progress has not been as rapid as in other NIS, Tashkent has backed its words with some verifiable action.

Also puzzling is why Uzbekistan, a country experiencing severe economic difficulties, would commit as it has to developing an export control system. Tashkent’s actions are counterintuitive in the sense that we would expect countries with similar economic difficulties to remain resistant to any legal or institutional obligations that would hinder, as opposed to spurring, any export activity. According to Grillot, this holds especially true for “high-value added economic sectors that are typical of proliferation-related WMD and dual-use technology.” Uzbekistan is unique in Central Asia in that it possesses the requisite industrial capacity to produce high-value added, proliferation-related equipment that would generate much-needed currency. Nevertheless, despite its recent schism with the West over the May 2005 events in Andijan, Tashkent has continued to cooperate on nonproliferation activities.

This paper has two principal objectives. The first is to examine to what degree Uzbekistan has developed its export control system. Perhaps more importantly, this

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paper also seeks to uncover what factors motivate and drive export control behavior in Uzbekistan.

The scholarly debate is extensive as to why states are motivated to develop export control systems. Is it because of security considerations or domestic political calculations as Mastanduno has argued? Or does the extent of a state’s liberal identification take precedence as Cupitt and Grillot have espoused? Or yet, does the answer lie in a combination of these and other factors as Bertsch et al. have argued? Employing the theoretical perspectives of realism/neorealism, rational institutionalism, domestic politics, and liberal identity, this paper aims to discern which perspective best explains Uzbekistan’s actions with regard to export control development.

Understanding how and why states such as Uzbekistan act as they do in this policy area will provide several benefits. First, it will provide a basis for the development of improved policy prescriptions with regard to export control systems. More broadly, it will provide for greater theoretical insight about Central Asian security and economic relationships, specifically, and international cooperation, more generally.

**Why Uzbekistan?**

Following 9/11, with regard to Central Asia, Washington cast a particularly keen eye toward Uzbekistan, the region’s militarily strongest and most populous, at roughly 26 million people, state. Centrally located in the region, Uzbekistan is the only state that

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borders all four of the Central Asian NIS. These factors, coupled with its superior industrial infrastructure, make it, according to experts like Starr and Olcott, the only potential regional leader and stabilizer.10 Tashkent, the capital and once the fourth largest city in the U.S.S.R., was developed during Soviet times to be the region’s military and administrative headquarters. The bulk of the region’s scientific intelligentsia were located here as the Soviets constructed a vast network of scientific institutions and scholarly publications.11 Led by President Islam Karimov since it reluctantly accepted independence from the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan has been identified by many scholars as the center of what prominent British scholar Sir Halford Mackinder originally termed, the geographic ‘pivot’ of the world.12 These scholars argue that Mackinder’s propositions still hold true today for Central Asia generally and Uzbekistan in particular, and that they form a solid basis for explaining Uzbekistan’s international relations, especially with regard to the United States.13 The United States today has developed into the democratic

10 Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are too small and geographically isolated, Turkmenistan is too sparsely populated, and Kazakhstan, the other potential regional power, possesses an underdeveloped industrial base, has weak local institutions, and is constrained by ethnic and territorial divisions of the country between Russians and Kazakhs. For greater explanation of Uzbekistan as a regional power, see S. Frederick Starr, “Making Eurasia Stable,” Foreign Affairs, Vol.75, No.1, January/February 1996, pp. 80-92 and Martha Brill Olcott, “Taking Stock of Central Asia,” Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 56, No. 2, Spring 2003, pp. 3-18.
12 Mackinder delivered his famous lecture on Central Asia being the geographic ‘pivot’ on which world history turns during a January 1904 lecture to the Royal Geographical Society. According to him, the successive migrations of large populations to Europe from ‘Euro-Asia’ indicated that the Central Asian region was the pivot on which world history turns. Because of its vast natural resources, the state that controlled the region, whether at the time it be Britain, Russia, Germany, or China, would be uniquely positioned to become an economic superpower and to develop into ‘the empire of the world.’ See Halford Mackinder, “The Geographic Pivot of History,” The Geographic Journal, Vol. 23, 1904, pp. 421-437.
13 Nevertheless, according to Mergoran, who examined the role of Mackinder on the analysis of Uzbek international relations, many of these scholars have accepted Mackinder’s pivot as a given as a result of a superficial reading of his work or secondary literature. See Nick Mergoran, “Revisiting the Pivot: The Influence of Halford Mackinder on Analysis of Uzbekistan’s International Relations,” The Geographic Journal, Vol. 170, No. 4, December 2004, pp. 347-258.
superpower that Britain was during the Great Game. After 9/11, Washington developed a new influence in the region and consequently was uniquely positioned to challenge Russia and China for influence over and thus control of Central Asia’s enormous resources.

These factors put Uzbekistan in the opportune position of being able to engage and cooperate with the international community on a wide range of issues. This paper examines one such effort, namely Uzbekistan’s endeavors to develop an effective export control system. While Kazakhstan was the only Central Asian state to actually possess nuclear weapons, Uzbekistan inherited a plethora of Soviet-era facilities with the capacity to research, develop, and test biological, chemical, or potentially, nuclear weapons. Moreover, a large number of weapons scientists found themselves without jobs following independence, creating the possibility that they could broker their services to potentially hostile end-users. Borders remained highly porous due to the lack of resources available to develop effective controls. The transiting of goods through its borders remained intensive, given its geographically central position in the region. Smuggling of all types of contraband continues to flourish due to the lack of a governmental capability to impede it. For the purpose of export controls, Uzbekistan retains tangible infrastructure and technology constructed for WMD purposes during Soviet times that triggered alarm in nonproliferation agencies, Western governments, and epistemic communities of nonproliferation policy specialists.

14 The Great Game refers to the 19th Century struggle for control of Central Asia between the British Empire to the south and Russia to the north.
Specific Proliferation Threats

Biological

Uzbekistan possesses a number of sites where weapons-related activities were conducted. Securing these sites became especially important after independence because most were left with few security safeguards as a result of a severe lack of available funding. Specifically, Vozrozhdeniya Island was the site of the largest open-air biological weapons testing grounds in the former Soviet Union. Located in the Aral Sea, testing was conducted using weapons armed with pathogens including anthrax, plague, tularemia, and possibly smallpox. When the Soviets hastily abandoned the site, eleven pits where dug wherein a slurry containing *Bacillus anthracis* was deposited. Because of the rapid shrinking of the Aral Sea caused by the mismanagement of regional water resources, this island has now become a peninsula that is connected to the Uzbek mainland. This raised concern because of the possibility that animals could become infected and then spread the pathogens to the mainland population.

In Tashkent, two biological weapons-related facilities exist. The Institute of Virology once researched pathogens for the Soviet Ministry of Defense in the hopes that these pathogens could destroy crops of hostile neighbor states. Today, the facility focuses on human-viral diseases, but still continues to maintain a collection of hemorrhagic fever viruses such as the Congo-Crimean virus.

By contrast, the Tashkent Center for Prophylaxis and Quarantine of Most Hazardous Diseases once housed the Soviet anti-plague program. This site was mainly utilized for defensive purposes in the sense that it aimed to prevent other states from
importing pathogens for offensive purposes. While it is utilized for peaceful purposes today, it still contains bacteria that cause plague, anthrax, tularemia, and brucellosis, which could potentially have catastrophic consequences if they were to fall into the wrong hands.\(^\text{16}\)

**Chemical**

With regard to chemical weapons, Uzbekistan inherited the Soviet Chemical Research Institute located near the western city of Nukus. In addition to having an open-air site for Soviet Red Army testing of chemical agents, the facility contained a one-cubic-meter reactor vessel that possessed a one-ton production capacity per day. It was also equipped with high-containment laboratories, an aerosol test chamber, and a wind tunnel used to model the dispersion of chemical agents. Speculation remains that the site was also used to test the binary agent Novichok.\(^\text{17}\)

**Nuclear**

Tashkent inherited two nuclear research reactors. One was dismantled in the 1990’s, however the second continues to operate at the Institute of Nuclear Physics (INP), located 30 kilometers north of the capital in Ulugbek. The reactor is a VVR-SM which came online in September 1959 with a capacity of 2 MW. Capacity expanded to 10 MW since it was modernized from 1971-1979. INP is the largest facility of its kind in

\(^{16}\) The specifics regarding these sites are taken from “Uzbekistan: Overview,” *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, [www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org).

\(^{17}\) Ibid.
Central Asia, and it aims to become the principle nuclear research and isotope production facility in Central Asia.\textsuperscript{18}

In Soviet times, the reactor was employed for military-scientific purposes. After modernization was completed in 1979, the reactor began to use 90\% highly enriched uranium (HEU) via IRT-2M type fuel assemblies. In August 1998, under the Russian Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR) program, the last of the 90\% HEU was utilized before the reactor was modified to use 36\% HEU. Much of this fuel is purchased from the Russian Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrate Plant. Two cooling ponds are used for on-site storage of spent fuel. However, these storage facilities had a capacity of 252 fuel assemblies and by 2001, 237 fuel assemblies were being stored. Thus, it became imperative for Tashkent to reach an agreement with Moscow to repatriate spent fuel to the more secure, albeit relative, Russian facilities. The INP is of particular concern to export control officials because it relies heavily on the selling of isotopes to the West and other NIS in order to cover operational expenses, as the Uzbek government only provides for a fraction of its budget. Two commercial enterprises, Tezlagich and Radiopreparat, operate under the INP and exist solely to export these isotopes.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Dual-Use & Other Sensitive Technologies}

The importance of controlling dual-use technologies has been instilled in international nonproliferation policy over the past two decades. Several firms that produce sensitive technologies controlled in the West are located in Uzbekistan.

\textsuperscript{18} See “Uzbekistan: Institute of Nuclear Physics,” \textit{Nuclear Threat Initiative}, \texttt{www.nti.org}.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
Tekhnolog RIA produces specialized machine tools and metal-cutting instruments. Start-Avia manufactures aircraft engines and associated parts, while Uzbekkosmos produces satellite launch technologies.\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{Uranium Production}

Especially important for nonproliferation purposes is control over Uzbekistan’s vast uranium resources. Uzbekistan possesses the 6\textsuperscript{th} largest amount of proven uranium reserves in the world, estimated at 61,510 tons.\textsuperscript{21} It accounts for 7-8\% of the world’s total annual uranium output. The reserves are all located in the central Kyzylkum Desert in a 125 kilometer wide belt extending from Uchkuduk in the northwest to Nurabad in the southeast. All uranium is considered exclusive property of the state. The Navoi Mining & Metallurgy Combine (NMMC) is the entity tasked with all uranium production. Completed in 1964, all mined uranium is transported by rail to the NMMC for processing. The plant’s annual production capacity is 3,000 metric tons. NMMC is subordinate to the state holding company Kyzylkumredmetzoloto. Since 1994, the NMMC extracts all uranium through three in-situ leaching (ISL) operations located in the central Uzbek towns of Nurabad, Zafarabad, and Uchkuduk. The mining facilities in these towns are known as the Southern, Northern and No. 5 mining directorates. A fourth, the Eastern mining directorate was closed in 1994.\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{21} The five countries with higher proven uranium reserves are, in order, Australia (689,000 tons), Canada (297,264 tons), Kazakhstan (280,620 tons), South Africa (119,184 tons), and Niger (89,800 tons). See “Uranium Maps: World Uranium Resources,” \textit{WISE Uranium Project}, January 8, 2005, \url{www.antenna.nl/wise/uranium/umaps.html}.

\textsuperscript{22} “Uzbekistan Profile: Navoi Mining and Metallurgy Combine,” \textit{Nuclear Threat Initiative}, \url{www.nti.org}. 
Under the U.S.S.R., the majority of uranium produced in Uzbekistan was used by the Soviet military-industrial complex. Five “company towns” with a combined population of 500,000 were constructed for the sole purpose of providing NMMC with a constant workforce. Production peaked in the mid-1980’s at 3,700-3,800 metric tons per year. From the extracted uranium, the NMMC produces UO2 and U3O8 (yellowcake). According to William Potter, reliable sources have indicated that a uranium enrichment facility, perhaps a pilot facility, was in operation at the NMMC during the 1970’s and 1980’s before being closed. CNS has been unable to independently verify these reports as Uzbekistan’s nuclear industry officials have denied that any enrichment ever occurred on Uzbek soil. Furthermore, while speculation remains among nonproliferation experts, no direct evidence has been found that yellowcake was being converted into uranium hexafluoride (UF6) gas, a necessary first step for gas diffusion or gas centrifuge enrichment and the known method being employed by the Soviets at the time.

Following the U.S.S.R.’s demise, the United States replaced Russia as the principal customer for Uzbek uranium. All exported uranium was sold to the United States via a U.S.-based intermediary, Nukem Incorporated. A 1992 suspension agreement set limits on the amount of Uzbek uranium that could be exported to the U.S. The limits were eased over time until July 2000 when the U.S. International Trade Commission ruled that they should be lifted altogether.

27 Ibid.
Russia has also recently begun to re-establish itself as a principal customer for Uzbek uranium. In November 2004, as part of a broader government coordinated campaign aimed at preserving Russian control over key natural resources in their former client republics, Aleksandr Rumyantsev, head of the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency, pointedly stated that the Russian government should compel Uzbekistan (along with Kazakhstan and Ukraine) to sell their uranium to Russia and not the West. He argues that Russia should be the primary benefactor of NIS uranium because the Soviet Union developed the uranium fields, and Russia, as the principal successor state to the U.S.S.R., is not receiving a return on its investment.28

Moscow further emphasized these desires to Tashkent when Uzbekistan became the sixth member of the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Community (EEC) on January 25, 2006. At the EEC meeting in St. Petersburg to mark the occasion, Russian President Vladimir Putin called for collaboration in the development of peaceful uses for nuclear energy. Already assuming that Moscow should exercise some control over other NIS’ strategic resources (as it continues to aggressively do with regard to NIS oil and gas), he specifically stated that the vast uranium ore reserves possessed by Uzbekistan give Russia “additional long-term possibilities for the building of a stable nuclear fuel energy base.” Tashkent, in its post-Andijan re-engagement with Moscow, appeared willing to oblige. The two states left the meeting with a uranium mining agreement between the NMMC and the Russian firm, Tekhsnabeksport.29

This new relationship is potentially problematic on several fronts. First, resources in Russia to secure large quantities of this strategic commodity are scarce at best. The

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high levels of corruption that are pervasive in both governments increase the possibility that small quantities could be skimmed and sold off to potentially hostile end-users, including either state or non-state actors. Because the uranium has already been refined into yellowcake or other forms, it is potentially more desirable to these end-users who have one less step to overcome in enriching it to a weapons-grade level. Perhaps most concerning to the West is the possibility that large quantities of this refined uranium could end up in the hands of Iran, whom Moscow has long cooperated with in the area of nuclear energy development. This threat is discussed in greater detail below.

The Iran Factor

With regards to the threat of WMD proliferation, the Islamic Republic of Iran constitutes the proverbial “500 pound gorilla” knocking on Central Asia’s southern borders. Bordering Turkmenistan to the southwest, Iran has long sought to exert greater influence in Central Asia. However, its record in this regard is one of mixed success.

After their independence, Iran sought to play a greater role in Central Asia. Diplomatic relations between the five NIS and Iran were established. However, all of the Central Asian leaders remained skeptical of Tehran’s intentions with regard to spreading its Shia-based Islamic ideology in Sunni-dominated Central Asia where politicized Islam remains largely taboo. Tajikistan, with its minority Ismaili population, is the only country in the region with a Shia Muslim minority. Furthermore, Tajik is the only Persian-based

30 After receiving help in negotiating a peaceful settlement to its civil war, Tajikistan has enjoyed the closest relationship of any of the Central Asian NIS with Iran as Tehran has become the third largest investor in the Tajik economy behind only Russia and China. To reinforce their ties, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Dushanbe (and Ashgabat) in late July 2006. Dushanbe secured $50-60 million for the construction of the Anzobsky tunnel which will be the only route connecting Tajikistan’s
language in a region dominated by Turkic-based cultures.\textsuperscript{31} In an attempt to placate these fears, Tehran dispatched ambassadors with strong secular backgrounds who have strongly promoted commercial interests as the cornerstone of their diplomatic missions in the region.\textsuperscript{32}

This secular, commercial-oriented approach has been somewhat successful. While Turkey retains more political influence in Central Asia, Iran has been successful in promoting its territory as a viable route for the export of commercial goods. Kazakhstan’s President Nazarbayev has voiced his support for transporting some of the state’s oil and gas to the Persian Gulf via Iran.\textsuperscript{33} In Central Asia, Turkmenistan maintains the second closest ties to Iran.\textsuperscript{34} Turkmenistan’s trade volume with Iran is second only to Russia. This reality is largely due to geopolitical necessities. Iran provides the shortest route for which Ashgabat can export its natural gas. The late Turkmen President Niyazov wished to export more of Turkmenistan’s vast natural gas reserves via this route, and Turkmenistan has actively sought international financing in order to do so. Bilateral relations were further solidified with Iranian President Ahmadinejad’s state visit to Ashgabat in July 2006. There, in exchange for Turkmen support of its nuclear program and a commitment not to allow any country to use Turkmen territory for a military strike, Tehran agreed to increase the purchase of Turkmen gas supplies at rates extremely

\textsuperscript{31} This historical fact has partly allowed Turkey to play a greater in Central Asia than the Iranians have been able to. See Martha Brill Olcott (2005). \textit{Central Asia’s Second Chance}. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, pp.74-75.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{33} The Central Asian “pipeline wars” is a complex issue beyond the scope of this paper. In short, Washington has long backed the Baku–Tblishi-Ceyhan pipeline which bypasses Iran. Russia however has deployed all means of carrots & sticks with its former Union republics so that its pipelines are used to export energy to the West.

\textsuperscript{34} “Iran goes back to Central Asia,” \url{http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20060904/53468564.html}. 

\begin{flushright}16\end{flushright}
favorable to Ashgabat. Gas exports would increase from 5 billion cubic meters to 14 billion cubic meters by 2007 at a price increase of over 50%. Tehran sought this agreement partly out of concern over Washington’s voiced desires to deploy forces at a Turkmen airbase in the southern city of Mary.35

Only Uzbek-Iranian relations remain somewhat tenuous, although recent evidence shows they have been warming. President Karimov has long been wary of the Islamic regime’s intentions in secular Uzbekistan. Iran’s intelligence services have also been accused by Tashkent of having contacts with the outlawed Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).36

Despite these misgivings, Iran remains an important trading partner for Tashkent, and Karimov has maintained a cordial, albeit formal, diplomatic relationship with Tehran.37 Of particular concern for export control purposes is a joint Uzbek-Afghan-Iranian agreement to develop a transit route linking Termez to Herat to Mashad to the Iranian ports of Bandar Abbas and Chabrahari. A Trilateral Transit Treaty supporting the construction of this corridor was signed by Presidents Karimov, Khatami, and Karzai in July 2003.38 This agreement represents a departure from previous Uzbek policy of isolating itself from Afghanistan. For security reasons, Iran wants the road to transverse as little Afghan territory as possible. Uzbekistan wants a more southerly route that could

35 Ibid.
36 Russian and Uzbek officials have also claimed that the IMU receives funding from the Turkish and Saudi intelligence agencies as well. The IMU is discussed in greater detail below. See Ahmed Rashid (2002). *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.141.
37 Author’s Interview with Abdusamat Khaydarov, former Ambassador from Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran.
link up to the port of Karachi, perhaps via Pakistan’s Baluchistan province. In terms of shear distance, Karachi is the closest major seaport to Tashkent.

A tripartite meeting on this agreement was held in Tehran the following year on November 21, 2004. Iran’s Minister of Roads and Transportation, Ahmad Sadeq Bonab, announced that $2 billion would be required to complete the project. Representatives met the following year on January 5 in Tashkent. There they agreed to establish an “interstate coordinating council” to monitor the goods that are being transported via this 2,400 kilometer route.

As is commonly known, Tehran has actively been pursuing the development of an indigenous nuclear program. While Iran argues that the program is solely for the peaceful development of nuclear energy, the West contends that this argument is merely a cover for the development of a nuclear weapons program. Currently, both Iran and leading Western states are in protracted diplomatic discussions over a package of incentives that Tehran could get in exchange for halting the enrichment of uranium for nuclear purposes. It remains unclear as to what the outcome of these negotiations will provide.

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39 Ibid.
42 In the Iranian case, the United States along with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have taken the lead in diplomatic negotiations aimed at resolving the issue. For more on the American government’s viewpoint on the Iranian nuclear issue, see for example, John R. Bolton, “Iran’s Continuing Pursuit of Weapons of Mass Destruction,” Testimony before the House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, June 24, 2004, www.state.gov/t/us/rm/33909.htm.
What remains clear is that Russia has actively aided in the development of the Iranian program through the supply of technologies, uranium, and technical expertise.\(^{43}\) China has provided support as well, albeit to a lesser extent than Moscow. Because the Central Asian NIS separate both Russia and China from Iran, the possibility exists that sensitive materials and technologies could make their way to Iran via Central Asia’s relatively porous borders. Quietly transferring sensitive technologies through a third party such as Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan would allow Moscow or Beijing to absolve themselves of blame by the West while at the same time generating needed hard currency that the sale of sensitive technologies provides. Even if Moscow was not directly involved, the possibility remains that corrupt government or military officials or non-state actors in Russia could use Central Asia as a transit route to Iran.

These factors highlight the need for Uzbekistan to develop a strong export control system. Because of it geographically centralized location, the major north-south transit corridors all cross Uzbek borders. Without an effective export control system, sensitive materials and technologies could transit Uzbekistan into Turkmenistan, a supporter of Tehran’s nuclear program. Worse, they could be smuggled into Afghanistan where no effective export controls exist because the Afghan central government is unable to project its power beyond the capital, Kabul. From Afghanistan, it would be relatively easy then to smuggle materials into Iran or Pakistan. Afghanistan’s long, porous western border with Iran has long been a major drug and weapons smuggling route.\(^{44}\) Even with

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\(^{44}\) As drugs and other materials were smuggled west into Iran, Tehran has also used this area to smuggle large quantities of weapons into Afghanistan for use against the advancing Taliban in 1998. No friend of the Taliban, Iran nearly invaded western Afghanistan in October 1998 following the Taliban’s execution of 11 Iranian diplomats. Before the Taliban’s fall, Iran had periodically threatened invasion in order to curb
a large international presence, Pakistan’s porous border with Afghanistan has proven nearly impossible to control.

**Summary**

The threats outlined above highlight the critical need for the development of effective export and border control in Central Asia, generally, and Uzbekistan, specifically. Uzbekistan is the primary transit route through Central Asia. It shares porous borders with every Central Asian NIS as well as Afghanistan. Moreover, Tashkent possesses many sensitive military sites left from Soviet times. Lastly, it is the only Central Asian NIS with the requisite industry and technology to produce sensitive materials already controlled in the West.

This paper traces the development of Uzbekistan’s export control system. More importantly, it seeks to address why a country such as Uzbekistan would want to develop such a system. Chapter II examines the four theories of international relations mentioned above that have been previously used to argue why states would develop these systems. Employing the expected export control behaviors derived from these theories by Grillot *et al*, we will compare them to Uzbekistan’s behavior with regards to export control development. Chapter III traces Uzbekistan’s export control actions since independence. Chapter IV analyzes Uzbek behavior in comparison to the expected behaviors prescribed by the four theories. Drawing from theses insights, the paper concludes by recommending several policy prescriptions that could be employed to promote greater export control in Uzbekistan and Central Asia.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL MOTIVATIONS FOR STATE EXPORT CONTROL DEVELOPMENT

In order to better explain why states develop export control systems, this chapter examines four theoretical paradigms that have been deemed relevant to export control behavior. Examination of theory in the context of policy-making is important because, in bridging the gap between academic scholarship and real-world policy relevance, theories serve as valuable tools by providing helpful perspectives with which to confront and attempt to explain complex, diffuse phenomena. Theory allows for generalizations across cases in order to better explain how and why a certain behavior occurs. Theory is also most valuable when combined with policy. The democratic peace theory is one such example. In the words of George, theory, if policy relevant, can help “bridge the gap” between academia and policy-makers.45 Jentleson argues that this gap has widened in recent years in part because academics in the contemporary political science and international relations disciplines have placed less importance on policy relevance, which he terms praxis. If not reversed, the disciplines are likely to suffer as a result.46 While this gap is unlikely ever to disappear due to inherent differences in the two professions, it can be narrowed through the employment of policy-relevant theory.

According to Van Evera, a good theory will contain seven important elements.\(^4\) It must have large explanatory power. It must also clearly frame and explain important phenomena. Parsimony is important, and a good theory is also falsifiable. Good theory must satisfy both the “how” and “why” questions, and lastly, it must have prescriptive richness.

With regard to international trade and security, there is no viable, over-arching, “grand” theory which captures all aspects of this field. The field’s very broadness and numerous facets militate against the development of an all-inclusive theory. Nevertheless, as stated above, scholars have identified four theories that have explanatory power with regard to state export control development, one facet of international trade and security.

This chapter examines each of these four theories in turn. From them, specific behaviors relating to why states would develop export controls are identified. Using these prescriptions, the following chapter will then analyze which argument best explains why Uzbekistan has attempted to develop an export control system.

**Realism / Neorealism**

The realist / neorealist paradigm posits that the international system in which states operate is best described as anarchical.\(^4\) Anarchy is the inherent feature or

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\(^4\) Several key distinctions exist between offensive realists such as Mearsheimer and neorealists such as Kenneth Waltz. Neorealists, also known as defensive realists, believe that states seek to maximize their security and not necessarily their power. States ultimately strive to maintain their share of world power.
ordering principle of the international system because there is no overarching world government to enforce rules, laws, and norms. As a result, states, as rational actors, must rely on their own individual capabilities as they strive to protect their national security and survive in the international system. States can never be certain about the intentions of other states. Because states must rely on their individual capabilities for survival, the primary goal of great powers, they are constantly motivated to pursue and accumulate power as the primary means of maintaining their security.

An anarchical international system also ensures that states will be motivated to balance the power of other states, who are also pursuing power and who could be potential enemies. States take a dual approach to balancing the power of other states. Individually, they will continue to enhance their own capabilities. In conjunction with other states, they will establish or participate in military alliances.

States that are continuously seeking power and balancing against the power of others will, as a direct result, be concerned with the relative gains of other states. The relative gains made by friendly states will be as important as those of hostile states because the anarchical system fosters mutual distrust based on the notion that today’s ally could be tomorrow’s enemy. Distrust is always present because states can never be certain of the intentions of other states. Consequently, states are compelled to act in an

According to Waltz, states act as “defensive positionalists” as they seek to minimize power losses relative to potential adversaries rather than seeking to strictly maximize power gains. States’ primary interest is to maintain their position in the international system and thus focus on maintaining the current distribution of power in the international system. States have an interest in behaving defensively rather than offensively because if a powerful state begins acquiring to much power, other states will join forces against them which could leave them in a worse position than if they had refrained from acquiring more power. By contrast, offensive realists believe that states always possess a revisionist orientation and thus are always motivated to reshape the distribution of power in the international system in a way that favors them over others. No states are content with the status-quo of power distribution, and the structure of the international system motivates states to constantly seek opportunities to gain power relative to their opponents. See for example, John J. Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions,” International Security,
anticipatory manner, always wary of the potential for offensive actions by others. Because states must anticipate others’ actions, they will always be concerned with the capabilities that other states possess.

According to Grillot et al, the realist/neorealist perspective would have four primary implications for state export control behavior. States would be motivated to develop export control systems if they are especially wary of external threats. States would develop these systems if they perceived them to be a means to reduce the perceived external threat through limiting the spread of military items, technologies, and expertise. Secondly, states would be expected to have a greater commitment to export control development if they are attempting to balance the power of another state or states by controlling the flow of weapons-related items to them. In their efforts to balance the power of others, states could also be expected to target their export controls toward those states whose power they are seeking to balance and conversely, target these controls away from states who may be aiding in their balancing efforts. Thirdly, a realist perspective would lead us to expect that states who are concerned about the relative gains of other states’ military capabilities would be motivated to prevent, hinder, or curb acquisitions of militarily sensitive technologies to others.

**Rational Institutionalism**

Like realists, institutionalists also believe that the international system can be characterized as anarchic. Institutionalists depart from realists in the belief that cooperation can and does occur between states in an anarchic international system.

Institutionalism is an offshoot of regime theory that emerged in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. Previously referred to as neoliberalism or neoliberal institutionalism, scholars have dropped this term in recent years largely due to the fact that institutionalism is a theory that primarily operates at the systemic level of analysis as opposed to traditional liberal theory which is principally concerned with the domestic level of analysis. Because institutionalism posits that states are fundamentally rational actors, it is often also referred to as rational institutionalism.

Rational institutionalist scholars believe that, through repeated interaction, states develop and maintain behavior patterns that result in the development of rules and norms. These rules and norms serve as a means of constraining the future policy choices of states. The international institutions that emerge from the establishment of explicit rules and norms are catalysts of cooperation between member states. They allow states to be aware of the policy choices of other states, and as a result, they are critical in reducing the uncertainty inherent in any international interaction.

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49 A systemic theory explains behaviors and outcomes by reference to changes in the attributes of the system, not the units that populate it. The advantage of a systemic theory is that it limits the number of explanatory variables.


51 Norms are standards of behavior that can be adopted or followed out of self-interest or a sense of moral obligation. Institutionalists generally assume the former: that norm adherence is a product of the self-interest of states. Simply put, states adhere to regime norms because they have something to gain from doing so.


states face from their interactions.\textsuperscript{54} International institutions also serve as means for states to show they will follow the commitment that they undertake and can also serve as a means to use side payments to others.\textsuperscript{55}

Institutionalist theory as an approach to international cooperation also can show how states, as rational, self-interested actors, can rationally calculate the costs and benefits associated with any cooperation. States join together in international institutions/regimes because they often calculate that an individual problem can be best solved through joint interaction. Consequently, states jointly cooperate via regimes as a way of resolving common problems. The prospect of future interactions based on reciprocity also makes states more likely to cooperate with one another. As states become accustomed to routine interaction, this interaction begins to occur in additional issue areas and thus results in more opportunities for cooperation.

Grillot et al derive four expected behaviors regarding export control development from the institutionalist perspective. States can be expected to be more committed to export control development if they calculate that the benefits of a developed export control system will outweigh the costs associated with developing the system. Benefits would likely include access to new technologies and markets. Furthermore, states can be expected to have a greater commitment to export control development if they acknowledge the rules and norms of international nonproliferation regimes as being

\textsuperscript{54} Keohane identified three ways that regimes improve the ability for states to make mutually beneficial agreements. Regimes provide states with a framework, albeit imperfect, for establishing rights and obligations. They alter and reduce transaction costs. Lastly, they reduce uncertainty by improving the quantity and quality of information available to states, especially regarding cheating and compliance. See Robert O. Keohane, “The Demand for International Regimes,” \textit{International Organization} 36 (Spring 1982), pp.325-56.

\textsuperscript{55} The nesting of issues under a single regime makes issue-linkages easier and facilitates an easier arrangement for side-payments. Side-payments entail giving someone something on one issue in return for their help on another issue.
constraints on their behavior. States can also be expected to have more developed export control systems if they believe that joining or abiding by the rules of the international nonproliferation regime will reduce transaction costs and uncertainty in their future interaction with other states.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{Liberal Identity}

More contemporary research on state behavior has resulted in some scholars espousing the belief that states cooperate with one another not because of a rational calculation or a cost versus benefit analysis, but because they have come to identify with a community of like-minded states.\textsuperscript{57} These scholars argue that states, like people, can share common values, beliefs, and norms, and through repeated interactions, they can come to identify themselves as being part of a group or community of like-minded states.\textsuperscript{58} This joint sense of identity can make it easier for individual states to work together in order to solve common problems. It also allows for them to behave in a cooperative manner.

Deutsch \textit{at al} first championed the idea that like-minded states can come together in “security communities” as a means of jointly and peacefully resolving shared security

\textsuperscript{56}International regimes can alter transaction costs either positively or negatively. Specifically, international regimes reduce transaction costs for legitimate behavior while increasing them for illegitimate behavior. Transaction costs can be reduced for legitimate behavior because regimes make it cheaper for governments to get together to negotiate agreements. Once a regime is established, you do not then have to renegotiate rules or norms every time a new issue arises. Instead, states can simply add or build on to the existing regime. This is partly why we see specific agreements “nested” within larger regimes.

\textsuperscript{57}This argument is analyzed in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities,” \textit{Ethics and International Affairs} 10 (1996), pp.63-98.

problems. More recently, scholars such as Russett have used these findings on security communities as a means for explaining the democratic peace concept. Russett argues that states can and do come together in security communities but that more often than not, these states tend to have a liberal rather than an illiberal orientation. Unlike illiberal states, liberal states share a greater sense of common identity due to similar normative beliefs. For example, most liberal states believe that domestic conflicts should be resolved peacefully rather than through the use of force. Other democratic states who share this norm of conflict resolution will feel surer of their allies’ potential intentions or actions.

States, like individuals, also tend to discriminate based on their group identities. Like humans, states will tend to be more cooperative toward those with whom they share a common identity. Similarly, states that do not share a common identity based on mutual norms and values will tend to be more uncooperative. Consequently, states that identify as being part of a liberal community may be more likely to target non-liberal states with proscriptive actions than they would be with their liberal allies.

Several expectations for export behavior have been derived from the liberal identity perspective. States who routinely interact on export control issues could be expected to develop a common group identity with regard to this issue. We can also expect that states who regularly interact with liberal states will have more developed export control systems because liberal states are generally seen as greater champions of nonproliferation goals. States that are developing liberal norms and institutions could be

expected to have better developed export control systems if these states come to see themselves as belonging to a liberal security community. Lastly, we would expect states that have shown a willingness to control the transfer of technologies to illiberal states would also have more developed export control systems.

**Domestic Politics**

While no overarching, “grand” theory of domestic politics currently exists to explain international cooperation or state behavior, scholars have nevertheless found that domestic variables can shape state behavior at the international level. Grillot et al have identified four perspectives on domestic politics that may shed light on how states’ foreign policy choices are articulated, and more specifically, how their actions are shaped with regard to export control policy.

The pluralist perspective of domestic politics emphasizes the role that domestic interest groups play in the shaping of a state’s foreign policy. Pluralism highlights the role that these groups, each with different interests, play as they struggle with one another for influence over state policy choices. With regard to nuclear policy, Solingen has found that two main types of interest groups, “liberalizing coalitions” and “inward-looking coalitions”, often compete for influence over state decision-making. The relative strength of each group will usually determine the direction that a state takes with regard to export control policy. Liberalizing coalitions oppose rigid state control over the national economy and are keen to seek economic opportunities abroad. They are less inclined to support the development or acquisition of sensitive technologies if it will
inhibit their state’s access to external markets. By contrast, inward-looking coalitions favor state control over the economy and other issues. They are opposed to open access for fear that it may invite external intrusions into the state’s domestic affairs. As a result, they are more willing to support the acquisition or development of sensitive technologies if it will help strengthen the state’s autonomy from outside influences. These two groups’ struggle for influence ultimately shapes state behavior by constraining the policy options of the state decision-makers.

The elitist perspective on domestic politics highlights the importance of state decision-makers as the key factor shaping state actions. State policy is not shaped by competing interest groups, but rather by the desires, interests, and belief of the state leader(s). This approach highlights how state leaders must deal with both internal and external pressures as they strive to shape state policy according to their preferences. Moreover, their very preferences are what define the national interest of the state. Unlike the pluralist perspective, the elitist approach highlights how state leaders can develop, manipulate, and exert influence over domestic interest groups in an effort to develop policies that are analogous to the leader’s preferences.

Institutional approaches to domestic politics emphasize that state behavior is determined by the specific institutional characteristics of a state rather than the preferences of interest groups or state leaders. The institutional structure of the state will shape the choices of interest groups and decision-makers, and thus shape state behavior. According to Ikenberry et al, states differ in the degree to which they and their societies are centralized, in the range of policy options available to decision-makers, and in how

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61 Solingen’s work is principally concerned with nuclear policy. However, we believe that his arguments can also hold true for a state’s export control policy. Etel Solingen, “The Political Economy of Nuclear
much autonomy these state decision-makers possess in relation to “societal forces.”

Accordingly, states can be placed on a “weak to strong” continuum. “Weak” and “strong” refer to the extent to which a state is centralized. “Weak” states are “fragmented and decentralized along bureaucratic or institutional lines,” whereas “strong” states are highly centralized and allow for state-decision makers to have a more broad range of policy options due to less domestic constraints.

Lastly, the bureaucratic perspective of domestic politics emphasizes the role that state bureaucracies and government agencies play. The competition between these various groups determines the available policy options and thus state behavior. Various agencies and bureaucracies struggle with one another for influence over policy options. They negotiate with one another in a “give and take” process in an effort to gain power and make sure their voices and preferences are heard when state decisions are made. This “give and take” struggle between various governmental groups ultimately constrains the menu of policy options available to decision makers.

From these four perspectives of domestic politics, Grillot et al have determined several expectations with regard to state behavior on export control development. States can be expected to have more developed export control systems if interest groups that seek to influence export control decisions exist in the state. While inward-looking coalitions would oppose export control development because it would make their state more open to international scrutiny, liberalizing coalitions would pressure the state to

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63 Ibid.

64 For a good overview to this approach, see Graham Allison (1971), Essence of Decision, Boston: Little, Brown.
enact policies, such as export control development, which would in turn give the state more access to external markets. Secondly, more developed export controls can be expected in states where the elite decision-makers perceive such development to be in accordance with the national interest of the state. The institutional perspective tells us that “strong”, centralized states will be more capable of developing export controls than “weak”, fragmented states. Lastly, the bureaucratic perspective tells us that we can expect states to have more developed export controls if the agencies tasked with such functions exert more power and influence over governmental decision-makers than state agencies tasked with competing functions such as trade promotion.

Based on the expected behaviors enunciated in this chapter, Chapter IV will analyze how Uzbekistan has behaved with regard to export control development. Chapter IV will attempt to determine which theoretical perspective best explains the actions that Uzbekistan has or has not taken on the issue of export control development. A clearer understanding of the theoretical perspective underpinning Uzbekistan’s actions will allow for meaningful policy options to be constructed with regard to this issue.
CHAPTER 3
EXPORT CONTROL DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN

Compared with other states of the former Soviet Union (FSU), export control development in Uzbekistan, as well the other states of Central Asia (excluding Kazakhstan), has been a slow, gradual process.\textsuperscript{65} Lying at the geographical heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is the only state capable of developing into a regional power and is viewed by some as having the capability to become Central Asia’s only “superpower.”\textsuperscript{66} Uzbekistan possesses the region’s largest population (approximately 26 million), best equipped and trained military, and the region’s largest industrial base. Furthermore, the fact that it retains the most significant portion of Central Asia’s administrative and academic elites makes it, according to Daly et al, “potentially a significant engine for growth, development, and leadership within the region.” Daly and his colleagues add, “Uzbekistan’s position adjoining each state in the region, to include critical road links to Afghanistan, make it a natural trading partner and transit route for international trade and business in Central Asia.”\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{65} Anderson’s 1997 CITS evaluation of export control progress in each of the NIS concluded that Uzbekistan’s export control system was only 17% compatible with Western standards. The only states with lower scores were Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (10%). By contrast, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan’s competitor for influence in Central Asia, scored a comparatively robust 64%. See Suzette Grillot, Chapter 1, “Explaining the Development of Nonproliferation Export Controls”, p.13, in Gary Bertsch and Suzette Grillot, eds. (1998).\textit{Arms on the Market}. New York: Routledge.


Illicit smugglers have long utilized Uzbekistan as a major transit route. Narcotics flow north across it’s southern borders with Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan en route to Russia and Europe.\textsuperscript{68} Conversely, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the transit route south from Central Asia to Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Iran has become a major corridor for the smuggling of illegal arms, nuclear materials, and WMD technologies to potentially hostile end-users.\textsuperscript{69} In the words of Bekhzod Yuldasheev, Director of the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Tashkent and former President of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, “Uzbekistan is a pivotal transit point … We have nuclear neighbors, Russia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and India. Transit of all goods is very intensive.”\textsuperscript{70} Solid evidence exists that arms smugglers have been utilizing this route for such illicit purposes. Just one of numerous examples occurred in 2000, when Uzbek officials intercepted an Iranian lorry bound for Pakistan that was carrying 10 lead containers containing radioactive materials.\textsuperscript{71}

As a consequence, one could expect the Uzbek government to have made greater strides in the development of its export control system. The construction of an effective, sustainable system for controlling the export of sensitive materials and technologies is a fundamental part of building a robust, self-sustaining government. In Uzbekistan, this development is all the more critical given that it is a major transit point linking Asia and Europe. Unlike Kazakhstan, the main competitor for influence in the region, the growth

\textsuperscript{68} For more on the development of transit routes for both legal and illegal goods through the region, see Chapter 14, especially pp.189-194 in Ahmed Rashid (2001). \textit{Taliban}, New Haven: Yale University Press.
\textsuperscript{71} This interdiction was made possible by the use of radiation detection devices provided by the United States Customs Agency. Ibid.
of Uzbekistan’s export control system has been at best characterized as slow, often ad-hoc, and gradual.\textsuperscript{72}

This chapter examines the development of Uzbekistan’s export controls since independence. An understanding of how Uzbekistan’s export control system has developed will help determine which theoretical perspective best explains why Tashkent has acted as it has in the area of nonproliferation, generally, and export control, specifically.

According to Grillot, an effective export control system comprises ten key elements.\textsuperscript{73} Broadly speaking, these elements can be described as follows.\textsuperscript{74} What are the licensing procedures in the state? How is this codified in a state’s legal system? What is the nature of a state’s control lists? Are they broad or very specific? Who manages them? Does the state belong to any international nonproliferation regimes, and how does this shape their behavior? Do catch-all mechanisms exist? What is the nature of the training for export control and nonproliferation officials in a given state? How does the bureaucratic process operate? How much authority and control do the customs agencies of a given state have over its borders and the transit of goods through its

\textsuperscript{72} It must be noted however that Kazakhstan had a leg-up in this area following the dissolution of the USSR. Like Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, it inherited a sizable portion of the Soviet Union’s nuclear arsenal. Consequently, these states were the first to be engaged by the West and became a major recipient of aid under the auspices of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. As a result, it had a significant head start in being exposed to Western nonproliferation culture, norms, and standards. See Keith D. Wolfe, Chapter 5, “Kazakhstan: A Work in Progress”, p.131, Note 5, in Gary Bertsch and Suzette Grillot, eds. (1998). \textit{Arms on the Market}. New York: Routledge.

territory? What verification procedures exist? What are the nature of the penalties incurred for violations? How is information gathered and shared both internationally and domestically? Breaking down the Uzbek export control system element by element allows for key differentiations to be made.\textsuperscript{75}

\textbf{Laws, Legislation, Licensing}

An effective export control system not only requires effective institutions from which policy and action can emanate, it also requires a strong legal framework to serve as the foundation on which effective policy can rest. Without effective laws, action in the realm of export controls is likely to take on an ad-hoc approach. An effectively codified legal framework serves as the mortar or glue that binds together export control policy, action, and enforcement. Dealing with a system that had to be built from scratch, over the past fifteen years, the Uzbek government, while behind the curve, has made promising strides in developing a strong legal framework.

Uzbekistan’s first decade of independence saw legislation enacted simply through decrees issued by the Cabinet of Ministers.\textsuperscript{76} Moreover, they were often constructed in a rudimentary fashion with vague language that lacked detailed explanation. According to the Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), “early legislation was clearly designed to regulate and protect domestic markets, with export licenses required for such items as

\textsuperscript{74} For greater explanation of the elements of and how they were derived, see Grillot, Chapter 1, especially Table 5 and Appendix 1, pp.12-19.
\textsuperscript{76} The Cabinet of Ministers is chaired by President Karimov and thus effectively serves as a rubber stamp for his decisions.
cotton and carpets. Later regulations from 1994 and 1995 control military and nuclear items, but contain very general lists.\textsuperscript{77}

The earliest law established that could potentially pertain to export controls is the \textit{Law on Foreign Economic Activity No. 285-XII (14 June 1991)}. This law provides the legal framework for foreign economic activity and for the integration of the Uzbek economy into the world economic system. Specifically, Article 14 states that one method for the State to regulate its economy is by establishing rules and procedures for the import and export of commodities.\textsuperscript{78}

Six months later, penalties for violating export control procedures were codified in the \textit{Law on Violations of Export Procedures, No. 515-XII (14 January 1992)}. Additions to the Uzbek administrative and criminal codes are made via the establishment of specific punishments for violating export procedures for the “export of goods, materials, raw materials, agricultural products, food products, and other material valuables from the Republic of Uzbekistan.”\textsuperscript{79} For an ordinary citizen, penalties for a first violation are specified at “200 to 500 rubles,” along with the confiscation of the commodities in question while for a state official, penalties increase to “500 to 1000 rubles.” The penalties would increase for a second violation to a potential prison term of up to three years, confiscation of the goods in question, and a fine of “10,000 to 25,000 rubles.” According to CNS, the law refers to old Soviet rubles and does not account for Uzbekistan’s switch in late 1991 to the s’om as its national currency. In addition, it also

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
does not account for the massive inflation that gripped the entirety of the former Soviet Union in 1991 subsequent to the law’s adoption.80

The first decree pertaining to export control in Uzbekistan is *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 485, On Measures to Stimulate Foreign Economic Activity and to Attract and Protect Foreign Investment in the Republic of Uzbekistan (21 October 1992)*. It establishes a list of 73 exportable items that require obtaining a license from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs (MFER). Because the items listed as controllable range everywhere from sugar to carpets or cotton, it is clear this law had no nonproliferation intentions or purposes.

*Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 163, On Measures to Regulate Foreign Trade Operations (25 March 1994)* establishes procedures for the issuance of export licenses by MFER.81 Appendix 5 of the Decree contains a list of goods and services which require a license. These general items include chemical pesticides, arms and military technology, explosives, radioactive waste, uranium and other radioactive substances, along with instruments and equipment that use them.82

The licensing procedures for MFER are expanded in *Presidential Decree No. 837, On Measures to Secure Control of Hard Currency During Export-Import Operations (20 April 1994)*. Exporters of licensed goods must now also register their export contracts with MFER. However, the decree’s principal purpose is to establish the procedures for the Uzbek government to control and regulate hard currency export-import operations.

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80 Ibid.
81 MFER has also been referred to as the Agency for Foreign Economic Relations or the Agency for Foreign Trade.
82 Ibid.
Responsibility for licensing within MFER is also provided in Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 558 On Improving Foreign Economic Activity and Reorganizing the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations (17 November 1994). Herein, MFER is given the responsibility of promoting Uzbek exports. Appendix 2 of the Decree delineates responsibilities within MFER. The division of Regulation of Foreign Economic Activity is charged with granting export licenses.

Previous control lists were superseded in 1995 with Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 287 On Measures Regarding the Further Liberalization and Improvement of Foreign Economic Activity (25 July 1995). Annex 4 of the Decree lists goods that require an MFER license along with Cabinet of Ministers approval either for import or export. Again, included in this list are weapons, military equipment, uranium, and other radioactive materials. Items that have little military value, such as chemical pesticides, have been removed. Annex 6 describes works and services that require approval for either import or export. The professional activities of Uzbek citizens are listed as controllable. Approval is granted by the Ministry of Labor. An amendment was subsequently added in January 1997 with the purpose of further defining the bureaucratic process for granting licenses. The State Committee for Science and Technology is given authority for the licensing of the results of scientific work, scientific technologies, and scientific know-how. According to CNS, “while not necessarily drafted specifically to prevent ‘brain drain’, this list could be used as the legal basis by which to prevent the emigration of scientists with sensitive knowledge or the export of sensitive information.”83 Annex 8 lists goods and services that cannot transit Uzbek territory unless explicit approval is given by the Cabinet of Ministers. Flying apparatuses,
weapons, machine tools, and machines built for the purpose of manufacturing weapons are all on this list.

*Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 287 (6 June 1997)* established a special commission within the Cabinet of Ministers that is charged with implementing Uzbekistan’s obligations under the international Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. Uzbek membership in this regime was originally signed on November 24, 1995, ratified by the Oliy Majlis on April 26, 1996, and entered into force on April 29, 1997. The commission is also charged with implementing Uzbekistan’s obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction.

*Presidential Decree No. 1871 (10 December 1997)* and *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 137 (31 March 1998)* established more specific, updated control lists to supersede previous lists. Included in the control list are scientific know-how, inventions, and results of scientific research.

November 27, 2002 marked the date that Uzbekistan’s first draft law ‘On Export Control’ was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for review. Work on drafting the bill was coordinated by MFER along with select members of the Oliy Majlis. Article 3 of this law specifically defines what the export control system entails. Notably, dual-use goods are specifically defined and controlled. This language is important because dual-

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83 Ibid.
84 According to NTI, there are two Cabinet Ministers Decree No.287, one from 1995 and one from 1997. They are distinct and should not be confused with one another. See [www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org).
86 Information concerning the draft law ‘On Export Control’ is taken from the original document, supplied by the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
use items had not been addressed in any previous legislation and as late as 1998, were not even widely recognized in government circles.87 Article 4 defines who is governed by the law. The Uzbek military is specifically excluded. Article 5 establishes the principles for the implementation of export control. Article 7 states that MFER will be responsible for maintaining and updating the control lists which are subject to approval by the Cabinet of Ministers. Article 9 gives the Cabinet the power to direct federal policy in the area of export control. Article 10 specifies the responsibilities of MFER to implement state policy and to serve as the coordinator of government agencies in the area of export control. Article 12 specifies the duties of exporters to fully furnish any information that the state may request with regard to granting a license. Article 15 establishes acceptable reasons for the denial of an export control license, while Article 16 states the reasons why a license may be cancelled after it has already been issued. Article 17 states that a state customs agency must notify MFER within one month of an export controlled item arriving in the territory of Uzbekistan. Article 18 authorizes procedures for internal export control including the creation of a database by MFER detailing all organizations that have established internal export control programs. Article 19 authorizes the state to cooperate with foreign states and international organizations for the purpose of preventing the proliferation of WMD. Article 20 authorizes MFER to maintain a list of states that should be specifically targeted for export controls whether it is a blanket restriction or for specified items. Article 21 defines the types of violations of the law such as conveying items without a license, refusing to provide authorized agencies with requested information, or obstructing authorized export control officials. Appendix 1

outlines the specific rules for completing an MFER export/import license. Significantly, a new, more detailed control list of both weapons and non-weapons related items is included in the draft law. Commodity classification (TNVED) codes are also listed for each controlled commodity.

Importantly, after review by international experts, the responsibilities of exporters were increased. Producers and exporters of controlled items are required to establish an internal compliance program. Specifically, Section 2.10 of the statute, which establishes catch-all or end-use controls, was added. The end-user is required to certify in writing their obligations not to use the specified commodity for purposes other than those stated and not to transfer the commodity to another user without explicit approval. Import certificates are also required. Although the clause establishes a legal mechanism for triggering a review of questionable exports, in reality, a lack of resources and a Soviet legacy of secrecy in regards to information sharing mean that this mechanism will only be used under exceptional circumstances.

After this lengthy review, the law was adopted on August 26, 2004 after a second reading by the Oliy Majlis. According to Mukhammadzhon Umaraliyev, chairman of the Oliy Majlis Committee on Economic Reform and Entrepreneurship, the law was modeled on export control practices and legislation of the European Union, Japan, Russia, and the United States.

90 Personal communication with Fred Fety and Dmitri Bityutskiy, EXBS advisors to Uzbekistan.
Additionally, *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 62 (21 February 2002)* establishes procedures for the transit of sensitive commodities through state territory. *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 109 (5 March 2004)* codifies and further strengthens regulations on the licensing of explosive and poisonous commodities along with equipment that may use them. *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 213 (6 May 2004)* establishes improved procedures for the monitoring of such commodities as they transit state territory. *Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 239 (20 May 2005)* mandates a compulsory customs escort for the transport for certain military-use commodities.\(^92\)

**Control Lists**

Overall, progress has been made in the creation of detailed control lists, yet work still remains in order to bring them up to Western standards. While lists were mandated by the passage of the export control law and MFER was given the mandate of maintaining the lists, key flaws remain evident. Owing largely to a lack of membership in any of the international export control regimes, Tashkent consequently has no obligation to make these lists coincide with international standards, and currently they do not. Greater specificity is needed in them. The content of the three page list makes it apparent that Tashkent is more interested in controlling items that it produces or possesses, and less interested in controlling technologies that it does not have. Furthermore, the list contains items that have no military value such as pearls, rare coins, or historical artifacts. While the recognition of dual-use items is clearly established in Article 3, a specific list of dual-use items is still lacking from the control lists. If the lists

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are not highly specific, customs and other export control officials will be less likely to
recognize potentially sensitive items, raising the probability that these items will pass
undetected through the control systems.

Questions also exist as to how well the responsible government agencies maintain
these lists. Because of the lack of membership in any international export control regime,
officials may be slow in updating the control lists to account for the never ceasing
development of technologies that have dual-use applications and which are deemed
controllable by other states. As a result, it is important that officials receive continued
training from regime-member states in order to identify and control newly developed
sensitive technologies.

Training

Largely due to its recent cooperation with the West, especially the United States,
real progress has been made in the training element component of an effective control
system. Unfortunately, because of Tashkent’s recent schism with the European Union
and United States, much of this cooperation has since ceased. The Karimov regime has
re-embraced Russia, from whom it tried to distance itself from after independence in
order to demonstrate that it was not reliant on Moscow. Russia has in turn revitalized
cooperation with Tashkent. Joint military exercises are now being conducted.
However, no evidence exists that any of this cooperation included counterproliferation or
export control training. Indeed, Russia, due to a severe lack of resources, still has trouble
training its personnel to safeguard sensitive technologies and to control its long, porous
borders, and has shown little inclination to promote training in its former republics.

The Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework between the United States and the Republic of Uzbekistan (7 April 2002) established, among other things, the areas of cooperation between the two states on the issue of nonproliferation. Specifically, Article 2.2 calls for:

- intensifying the export control cooperative relationship to create an effective export control system in the Republic of Uzbekistan
- supporting the regime of nonproliferation of nuclear, bacteriological, biological, and chemical weapons and their means of delivery, as well as dual-use technologies
- further strengthening and building up the infrastructure of the state border of the Republic of Uzbekistan and ensuring greater effectiveness in guarding and protecting the border

In reality, export control cooperation between the U.S. and Uzbekistan commenced much earlier. Training was conducted by a range of U.S. government agencies mentioned below. Following is a representative list of training programs conducted by these various agencies.

Much early training was conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Export Administration (BXA). In July 1996, a high-level Uzbek delegation of both executive and Parliamentary officials attended a training program sponsored by the Monterey Institute and entitled Formulating and Implementing Arms Control and

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94 The Bureau of Export Administration (BXA) changed its name in April 2002 to the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).
Among the export control issues discussed was legislative progress on the U.S. Export Administration Act. On December 2-6, 1996, an interagency team of U.S. government officials traveled to Tashkent to conduct a comprehensive export control and nonproliferation assessment. According to BIS, this assessment focused on political commitment, legal and regulatory infrastructure, interagency coordination, licensing procedures, enforcement, industry-government relations, and automation requirements. In addition, a one-day export control seminar was conducted for Uzbek officials. On June 16-20, 1997, BIS hosted an export control legal technical forum in Washington. Uzbek officials were briefed on developing a legal basis for a comprehensive, effective export control system. An export licensing workshop was conducted for an Uzbek delegation on April 6-10, 1998.\footnote{Kyrgyzstan also attended.} The focus of the training was on standards, practices, and procedures in export licensing. The following year a workshop on licensing was held in Washington on January 11-15. Uzbek and Kyrgyz officials responsible for the interpretation and implementation of export control laws and decrees focused on the development of control lists. A joint BXA/FBI/DOD team returned to Tashkent on September 20-24, 1999, to provide feedback and recommendations on an early draft of Uzbekistan’s export control law. Again on June 5-9, 2000, BXA led an interagency team that conducted training for Uzbek officials on enforcement of controls, with a focus on the transit of arms and dual-use technologies.\footnote{For archives of this and other BXA/BIS sponsored programs, see \url{www.bis.gov}.}

On April 15-18, 2002, a U.S. interagency team co-sponsored with the Uzbek government the \textit{Sixth Forum in Export Controls: Barriers against Weapons of Mass}
Destruction, Proliferation, and Terrorism in Tashkent. Bringing together states from the Caucasus and Central Asia, much discussion centered on adoption of the unified European control list. Other primary topics discussed included developing a regional Transit Agreement, interagency coordination, the need for harmonization of end-user certificates, involving the scientific community in the export control process, customs officials training, and creating export control command centers.

Under the auspices of the International Counterproliferation Program (ICP), a joint DOD/FBI/Homeland Security interagency team conducted WMD-related exercises on October 30-November 5, 2004. Representing the whole range of government agencies charged with nonproliferation responsibilities, seventy-five Uzbek officials from the General Prosecutor’s Office, Ministries of Defense, Internal Affairs, Emergency Situations and Health, State Customs Committee, Committee on State Border Protection, and the Institute of Nuclear Physics participated. In addition to policy reviews and assessments, training in the use of border control equipment was provided. Among the equipment used in the training were radiation pagers, intrusion detection devices, chemical and radiological detection and measurement devices, individual protective gear, decontamination equipment, and evidence collection devices.

ICP also sponsored a workshop entitled Counterproliferation Awareness the following year in Tashkent on April 4-8, 2005. Approximately eighty Uzbek officials from the same responsible government agencies again attended. Included were a large

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98 The Institute of Strategic & Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS) was the Uzbek government organ responsible for hosting the forum.
contingent of both senior and junior Uzbek border guards. In addition to numerous seminars, participants were divided into small groups for case studies concerning WMD-related smuggling. Each group was expected to come up with a plan of action and present it to the other participants.102

Unfortunately, many of the officials, notably the border guards, appeared to lack much of the training and education of their more Western counterparts.103 A “shoot first, ask questions later” mentality appeared pervasive. Several of the attendees seemed shocked when informed that American border guards do not shoot Mexican immigrants trying to cross the border.104 When conducting the WMD smuggling case study, a couple of the subgroups failed to come up with an appropriate response. The responses planned by other groups were shoddy at best. Furthermore, the training manuals being employed were generic in the sense that they were used for training in many other countries and did not include issues specific to Uzbekistan and Central Asia. Perhaps a more appropriate strategy would be for officials to tailor the manuals to each specific country, including highlighting the unique threats and problem areas endemic to each state. Furthermore, more work needs to be done on education regarding corruption by border officials, one of the most widespread problems facing Uzbekistan and virtually all of the NIS. Even today, it is difficult to travel in Tashkent, much less cross the border, without being solicited for a bribe due to a concocted “violation.” Admittedly a difficult task that must be tackled on many different fronts, the culture of corruption that pervades all Uzbek law enforcement bodies must be reduced if effective export and border control systems are to

102 Based on author’s attendance and observation.
103 Author’s observation.
become a reality. This change must originate at the highest levels as corruption by high-ranking officials legitimizes corruption by lesser officials.

**Customs**

Due to its double-landlocked geographic position within Central Asia, Uzbek exports must cross at least one frontier before they can reach the surrounding European and Asian continents. Consequently, border demarcation, border control, and regional customs cooperation become critical. Effective customs authority and controls are a front-line tool in combating the spread of sensitive technologies and in developing effective export control systems.

Unfortunately, the development of effective border control is hindered by the very nature of the borders themselves. This fact is largely due to the Soviet legacy of drawing territorial boundaries that cross-cut and divided ethnic groups across republic borders. This policy was initiated by Stalin who was originally responsible for carving the borders of the Soviet Republics in Central Asia. He used this “divide and conquer” strategy as a means of diluting the power of the region’s various ethnic groups so that mobilizing any united opposition to Moscow would prove extremely difficult. With the dissolution of the USSR, these artificially drawn borders became the national boundaries of sovereign

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104 This question was posed twice to American instructors.
105 This legacy of corruption is a product of the Soviet era when Uzbekistan was notorious among the Soviet Republics for its high level of corruption. Most notable is the “Cotton Scandal” of the 1970’s and 1980’s when former Uzbek Communist Party boss Sharif Rashidov engineered the over-reporting of millions of dollars in cotton production. Moscow only uncovered the scam after satellite images showed thousands of acres of empty land that was supposed to be producing cotton as was being reported by the Uzbeks. Moscow’s response was to sack hundreds of officials including Rashidov. Nevertheless, after independence, he was rehabilitated by Karimov as a hero of the Uzbek nation.
states. Uzbekistan, for example, inherited a large Tajik population within its southern territory.\footnote{For example, the southern Uzbek cities of Samarkand and Bukhara are majority Tajik.}

The most obvious example of irregular borders is the Ferghana Valley where Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan’s borders spiral around the valley. Further complicating matters is the existence of four Uzbek enclaves in the valley that are located entirely within Kyrgyz territory.\footnote{These enclaves are Sokh, Shakhimardan, Chong-Kara, and Dzhangail. In addition, the Kyrgyz enclave of Barak and the Tajik enclave of Sarvan are located within Uzbek territory. The Tajik enclave of Voruhk is located within Kyrgyz territory.} Largely due to a lack of regional cooperation, terrorist and insurgents, especially those affiliated with the IMU, infiltrated Uzbek territory in order to carry out attacks and then quickly retreated by transiting into Tajik or Kyrgyz territory.\footnote{An unfortunate response by the Uzbek government to this problem has been to heavily mine large portions of the borders with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. This had to a large number of civilian casualties. According to Tajikistan’s Mine Action Center, 120 Tajik, 62 of which resulted in death, casualties have resulted from Uzbek landmines since 2000. See Olcott (2005), p.217 and p.339.} Similarly, in the absence of effective controls, smugglers can use these routes to transfer narcotics, persons, or sensitive technologies.

Uzbekistan has made promising strides in developing, training, and implementing an effective customs authority.\footnote{In addition to customs officials and border guards, members of the National Security Service also are also involved in border enforcement. See Liam Anderson (1998), p.158.} The Uzbek State Customs Committee was established by Presidential decree in August 1992 with a special emphasis placed on the prevention of narcotics and arms smuggling.\footnote{“Uzbekistan to set up Customs Agency,” Russia and Commonwealth Business Law Report, “Briefs,” Vol.3, No.12, Lexis-Nexis.} Approximately 200 customs posts are dispersed across borders and internal transit points such as airports and railway stations.\footnote{Liam Anderson (1998), p. 163.} A customs laboratory and facilities for training customs officials also exist. Experts such as Starr believe customs officials to be competent and organized.\footnote{See Ibid. and S. Frederick Starr (1996).}
Customs laws were tightened in January 2003 due to what was cited by an Uzbek official as “growing contraband problems.” This action was largely due to an increase in the smuggling of cheap Chinese commodities. In an effort to avoid customs, the requisite tax payments, and Uzbekistan’s strict monetary regulations, these commodities are often stockpiled along border areas and then smuggled across the Uzbek border in small batches. Furthermore, small markets were being established on the Kazakh and Kyrgyz side of the border where Uzbek citizens could cross easily. As evidence of this fact, Uzbek customs reported in 2002 that 212 trucks carrying Chinese commodities bound for Uzbekistan via southern Kazakhstan never made it to their destination.113

In an effort to improve customs training, President Karimov authorized the development of a new military customs institute via Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 229, On Further Improvement for the Training System of Personnel of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan (22 May 2003). Located in Tashkent, the facility is under the Academy of Tax and Customs which, in turn, is under the State Tax Committee along with being under the Customs College of the State Customs Committee. The curriculum for the training of customs professionals calls for four years of training to earn the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree with an additional two years required in order to earn the equivalent of a master’s degree. Around 125 students were admitted the first year.114

On November 9, 2003, Uzbekistan commissioned the largest customs post in Central Asia on the Uzbek-Afghan border. Located next to the Termez-Khayraton

Bridge, the post was constructed under the auspices of the UN Office of Drugs and Crime with $2 million in financing from the governments of the United States, Great Britain, Norway, and Finland. The post contains telecom equipment, video monitoring systems, a vehicle weighing machine, cranes, special equipment for detecting drugs, radiation detection and control equipment, and other machinery. Previously open only to international humanitarian aid for Afghanistan, Uzbek and Afghan citizens will now be allowed to utilize this crossing along the Amu-Darya River. This will result in a substantial increase in the quantity of commodities transiting the border.

American assistance to the State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan has occurred largely under the auspices of the U.S. State Department’s Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance Program (EXBS). This interagency program brings together other nonproliferation-tasked agencies from DOD, DOC, and DOE. According to Khripunov, “this program has given Customs the opportunity to ensure long-term sustainability of improved border control procedures and infrastructure in several former Soviet republics including Russia.” Tasked with a broad set of mission goals, EXBS assists countries in four distinct activities:

- Establishing the necessary legal and regulatory basis for effective export controls

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115 Nevertheless, this border crossing still frequently is closed with little or no advance notice and often for long time periods.
• Developing appropriate export authorization, i.e. licensing procedures and practices
• Establishing and enhancing effective enforcement capabilities and procedures, including through the provision of WMD detection and interdiction equipment and training
• Promoting effective interaction between governments and industry on export controls.\textsuperscript{119}

Point 3 - establishing and enhancing effective enforcement capabilities and procedures, including through the provision of WMD detection and interdiction equipment and training - is where a preponderance of EXBS’ funds in Uzbekistan have been allocated. The basis for EXBS’ work in Uzbekistan came in April 2000 with the U.S. government’s announcement of the Central Asian Security Initiative (CASI) wherein it stated that the government would expand joint cooperation with their Uzbek counterparts for the purpose of improving border security. Initially, the U.S. pledged $3 million toward these ends. Following 9/11 and Uzbekistan’s newfound role as an American ally, this material assistance increased far beyond the $3 million threshold.

FY 2000 saw $1.85 million budgeted for assistance in the area of border security. The following year (FY 2001) marked a 65% increase in EXBS’ budget (to $2.83 million) with $70,000 going towards the procurement of eight UAZ Model 3153

In addition, $900,000 was budgeted for communications equipment, $500,000 for surveillance, detection, personal protection, and medical equipment, and over $500,000 for training and other assistance. FY 2002 saw the allocation of $800,000 for the procurement of an additional 146 UAZ vehicles. Delivered in July 2003, these vehicles included five UAZ vans, ten UAZ ambulances, 55 UAZ lorries, and 76 UAZ (four-wheel drive) vehicles. An additional $6 million was allocated for the procurement and delivery of communications systems, night vision goggles, and lorries.

August 2003 saw the procurement and delivery of 3,776 Motorola radios, 708 antennas, and other communications equipment totaling $1.8 million. A further $217,000 in instructional equipment for the Tashkent Customs Institute was delivered the following month. February 2004 marked the delivery of equipment totaling approximately $1.2 million. Included were 45 heavy trucks, 50 Honda generators, 200 Nikon Binoculars, and 150 Lectro-Science handheld spotlights. Two months later, approximately $516,000 in equipment was handed over. Included in this delivery were 36 HGU-56/P Aircrew Integrated Helmet Systems, 26 Garmin GPS196 receivers, 100 Magellan GP315 GPS

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120 Procurement is the term used by EXBS for the acquisition of material assistance. According to EXBS, country advisors work with their respective counterparts to determine the nature of equipment that is most needed at the time in order to improve border security in the recipient state. EXBS advisors then solicit bids and place orders with firms that make the desired equipment. Notably, these contracts are given largely to foreign, and when possible, NIS countries rather than American firms. For example, much of the material donated to Uzbekistan via EXBS has been produced by Ukrainian or Russian companies. Personal communication with Fred Fetty and Dmitri Bityutskiy, EXBS advisors to Uzbekistan.


122 UAZ stands for “Ulyanovsky Avtomobilny Zavod,” a Russian company specializing in the production of off-road, cross-country vehicles since the Cold War era. See www.uaz.ru.

receivers, 10 U-98 Diesel Generators, 3 Marine Diesel engines, 266 Maintenance-free automobile batteries, and 15 contraband inspection kits.124

FY 2004 marked a dramatic surge in material assistance. Total assistance was nearly doubled to total almost $13 million. Major items delivered in November and December of 2004 included two Mi-8/24 helicopter flight simulators along with two “Gyurza” class river patrol boats.125 In February 2005, video control and tracking loops equipment worth $600,000 was handed over to the State Customs Committee for use at the Termez-Khayraton customs facility.126

FY 2005 saw the allocation of $63.3 million by the U.S. government for security and law enforcement programs. Of this total, $38.5 million was allocated to support Cooperative Threat Reduction programs to destroy and dismantle WMD sources and capacity.127 However, while nonproliferation cooperation, albeit in a much reduced capacity, has so far survived the rupture in relations following Andijan, to date, none of these funds have been used for further material procurements by EXBS or other nonproliferation agencies.

125 These 20 meter-long Gyurza boats are produced by the Ukrainian design and construction firm Progress at the Leninskaya Kuznica shipyard located on the Black Sea. Designed with a very shallow draft and tunnel hull drive, these boats were designed especially for the unique hydrology of the Amu-Darya River, as they will sail from Termez and patrol Uzbekistan’s 110 kilometer border with Afghanistan. They also possess an integrated sensor package that allows for day/night, all-weather operation. See “United States Presents River Patrol Boats to the Committee for State Border Protection,” Uzbekistan National News Agency, January 13, 2005. www.uzreport.com.
Regional Cooperation

In sum, regional cooperation in Central Asia with regard to nonproliferation has produced mixed results. While many regional agreements have been signed, with each successive one bringing hope for more tangible cooperation, the reality is that much work remains in order to elicit meaningful cooperation between the five Central Asian NIS in export control development. As with other regional agreements, whether they relate to water sharing or environmental cooperation, the extent of cooperation is generally limited by the current state of the personal relationships between the states’ five presidents. When relations are good, cooperation can occur. When relations are tenuous, cooperation has generally soured. Owing in part to their positions as former Communist party bosses of their respective republics, the personal relationships of the region’s leaders are best characterized as ones of mutual distrust.\textsuperscript{128} The leaders are also said to personally dislike one another.\textsuperscript{129} The Soviet legacy has also perpetuated an ingrained suspicion of Western leaders.\textsuperscript{130} Implementation of the Soviet top-down bureaucratic management style after independence has meant that any major cooperation cannot occur without the leader’s tacit approval. Furthermore, as a result of this management style and because the republics’ respective governments during Soviet times were always in competition for scarce resources and funding emanating from Moscow, the bureaucracies that are charged with implementing cooperation are also suspect of their counterparts’ intentions.

\textsuperscript{128} Only Kyrgyzstan’s former and current presidents, Askar Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiyev respectively, were not former Communist party bosses.
\textsuperscript{130} For more on this mutual distrust, see Starr (1996) and Olcott (2005), especially p.221.
While these factors may be difficult to overcome, tangible progress has been made in regional nonproliferation cooperation and should not be discounted. The earliest example of cooperation is seen in the efforts to establish the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANFWZ). First proposed by President Karimov at the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 28, 1993, the proposal was regarded as a means to foster regional cooperation in related areas such as addressing environmental degradation in the region.  

Following Karimov’s 1993 proposal, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan took the lead in holding regular consultations in order to advance the idea. Uzbek and Kyrgyz delegations continued to push the proposal at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference for state parties to the NPT. Kyrgyzstan and co-sponsor Mongolia submitted a first draft resolution pertaining to the subject at the 51st UN General Assembly in October 1996. However, it was subsequently withdrawn due to a lack of regional consensus.  

Far from shelving the idea, Uzbekistan continued to push its support, albeit without any concrete results, at a December 1996 summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The first major advancement came in February 1997 with the signing of the Almaty Declaration. All five Central Asian NIS finally came on board, with the declaration promoting the CANWFZ in the context of

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132 Ibid.
cooperating regionally in order to address the environmental damage wrought by the production and testing of Soviet nuclear weapons in Central Asia.\textsuperscript{134}

Turkmenistan’s cooperation was notable because of its proclamation of a foreign policy of neutrality following independence. Late Turkmen President Sapamurat Niyazov had been reluctant to participate in any regional agreement. Ashgabat’s decision to support the CANWFZ signaled the possibility that Turkmenistan may have found a new willingness to cooperate regionally.\textsuperscript{135}

The five states advanced the proposal two months later at the April 1997 NPT Prepcom where a working group of foreign ministry officials was formed in order to coordinate activities. Their first action was the holding of an international conference in Tashkent on September 14-16, 1997. Nonproliferation experts from 56 countries as well as representatives from the four other NWFZs attended.\textsuperscript{136} The result of the conference was the signing by foreign ministers of the five Central Asian NIS of the \textit{Tashkent Statement}.\textsuperscript{137} This document reaffirmed the states’ commitment in creating the CANWFZ and called on the UN along with any interested states to provide all possible assistance in drafting a treaty for the regime.

At the November 1997 UN 52\textsuperscript{nd} General Assembly, a joint resolution by the five states was submitted and later approved after the adoption of several suggested

\textsuperscript{134} Parrish (1997).

\textsuperscript{135} In the nine years since the Almaty Declaration, Ashgabat’s record regarding regional cooperation has been a mixed bag. While Turkmenistan has supported some regional agreements and not others, tangible cooperation on those agreements that it has supported has often been lacking. Far from being constrained by any formal agreements, President Niyazov has generally adopted a “go at your own pace” mentality. If agreements lose favor in his eyes, he will often simply ignore his obligations or demand that the agreement be amended. For examples, see Olcott (2005).

\textsuperscript{136} The four other NWFZs are Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific and were created by the Treaties of Tleltolco, Pelindaba, Bangkok, and Rarotonga, respectively. See Parrish (1997) and Sodikiva (1999).

\textsuperscript{137} ISRS organized and hosted the conference.
amendments by the United States, Russia, China, Great Britain, and France.\textsuperscript{138} Specifically, the United States, Great Britain, and France were concerned with possible expansion of the zone as well as certain provisions regarding transit of nuclear weapons through the zone. On the other hand, Russia was principally concerned with a provision regarding the treaty’s relationship with other regional security arrangements, particularly the Treaty of Tashkent.\textsuperscript{139} Before ultimately relenting, the Russians argued that the treaty would still allow them to deploy nuclear weapons within a treaty state if permission was granted by that state.\textsuperscript{140}

The revised resolution was adopted on November 10, 1997 in the First Main Committee of the UN General Assembly.\textsuperscript{141} Interestingly, the United States issued a statement supporting the resolution in principle but noted that “the devil is in the details” and that its support was contingent upon the detailed provisions of the treaty.\textsuperscript{142}

A similar resolution was passed the following year at the 53\textsuperscript{rd} session of the UN General Assembly in December 1998.\textsuperscript{143} This resolution was largely spurred by the May 1998 nuclear tests of India and Pakistan, both of which lie in close geographic proximity to Central Asia. The threat of environmental damage along with the potential of being

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\textsuperscript{138} Central Asian diplomats were initially unsure whether these states would support the resolution as Russia and China had expressed reservations about it in 1994 and 1995. See Parrish (1997).
\textsuperscript{139} The Treaty of Tashkent, also called the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement, was ratified on May 15, 1992 as a collective security and cooperation agreement between Russian, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Georgia. Attempting to distance itself from Moscow, Uzbekistan withdrew in 1999, and the organization was renamed the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). See Olcott (2005), p. 57 and www.dod.mil/acq/acic/treaties/cfe/agreements/tashkent.htm.
\textsuperscript{141} This committee deals with international security and disarmament issues. www.un.org.
drawn into a wider conflict resulted in swift condemnation of the tests by the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.\textsuperscript{144}

It was not until four years later at a September 25-27, 2002 conference in Samarkand that the participating states finally reached consensus on a draft of the treaty. Nevertheless, three more years of consultations would pass before the treaty would reach final approval. This final approval occurred in Tashkent on February 9, 2005, where it was agreed that Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, the site of major Soviet open-air nuclear testing, would be the location for the signing ceremony.\textsuperscript{145} Consisting of 18 articles and an additional protocol, the treaty had several unique characteristics differentiating it from the four other NWFZs. The CANFWZ is the first of its kind to include a former nuclear state (Kazakhstan). In addition, it is the first NWFZ to include provisions obligating participants to fully comply with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty as well as the IAEA’s Additional Protocol on strengthened safeguards. Also unique was the UN’s direct involvement in the drafting process from the outset, which ideally would allow for a more robust treaty. Lastly, Kyrgyzstan was designated as the depositary of the treaty.\textsuperscript{146}

For several years, the Central Asian states have also been in negotiations over the development of a regional transit agreement (RTA) as a means to reduce non-physical trade barriers. The lack of such an agreement results in increased transaction costs as each country has specific tariffs and barriers pertaining to different commodities. A unified transit agreement would reduce many of these transaction costs while

\textsuperscript{144} See Sodikiva (1999), p.148.
\textsuperscript{145} “Central Asian Experts Approve Agreement on Nuclear Free Zone,” \textit{UzReport}, February 9, 2005. \texttt{www.uzreport.com.}
\textsuperscript{146} \texttt{www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/nwfz/CANFWZ.htm.}
simultaneously spurring trade in the region for firms otherwise predisposed to avoid dealing with the ever-changing regulations.

Many international actors have made efforts to accomplish such an agreement. BIS conducted draft workshops on developing an RTA in Tbilisi, Georgia between January 29-30 and in Astana, Kazakhstan on March 28-29, 2001.\footnote{www.bis.doc.gov/news/2001/AnnualReport/01annualchap7nec.pdf.} Similarly, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been a major proponent of such an agreement. Its October 2005 \textit{Central Asia Regional Cooperation Strategy and Program Update} calls such an agreement vital for the future development of trade in the region.\footnote{www.adb.org/Documents/CSPs/CAREC/2006/CSPU-CAREC-2006.pdf.} It has conducted numerous intergovernmental meetings on implementing such an agreement.\footnote{For a database of these meetings, see \url{www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2004/CCC/Transit_System/default.asp}.}

As the protracted negotiations regarding the development of the CANFWZ indicate, forming the consensus necessary to enact such an agreement should be measured in years not months. The Central Asian leaders are extremely wary of becoming entangled in regional agreements that could weaken the absolute control that they enjoy over their respective states’ economies. The high level of economic protectionism and stubborn refusal to introduce market reforms at an acceptable pace, especially in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, allows for the leaders to centralize power and reward friends while punishing enemies. They too often view regional integration as a means to limit their individual sovereignty and authority, which to them is too often unacceptable.\footnote{www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2004/CCC/Transit_System/default.asp.}
Bilateral Cooperation

The success of Uzbekistan’s bilateral cooperation with its neighbors in the area of nonproliferation is also a mixed record. Bilateral cooperation in this realm has principally focused on the demarcation of borders and the installation of basic border controls such as the construction of border posts. The development of more sophisticated export controls tends to be the domain of regional or multilateral cooperation with Western donor states and international nonproliferation regimes.

The Central Asian states began at independence with the unenviable task of securing their borders. This was further complicated by the fact that, even before the Soviets attempted to carve out artificial borders, the region had no history of precise border limitations.151 In nomadic tradition, many citizens of the region relied on small-scale trade and consequently paid little heed to concepts of state or regional boundaries. During Soviet times, inter-republican borders had much less significance than they do today for the newly sovereign states of the region.

Further complicating matters was the introduction of strict visa regimes by these states in the 1990’s. The other Central Asian states have also asserted that Uzbekistan has an unfair advantage because all the central archives are located in Tashkent which has refused them direct access to these once-shared documents.

At present, the extent of bilateral cooperation, as with wider regional cooperation, often corresponds to the current state of relations between Karimov and the leader of the states in question. Intuitively, when personal relations are strained, cooperation becomes more difficult as government officials, always wary of the ease in which they can be

150 For more on this widely held viewpoint, see Olcott (2005).
replaced, often refuse to deal with their counterparts.\textsuperscript{152} The net result has been a decline in inter-regional trade over recent years.\textsuperscript{153} In the delicate balance between trade and security, the leaders of these states, long suspicious of one another, have leaned heavily to the security side to the great detriment of regional trade. Unfortunately, many of their security measures have often been arbitrary and ad-hoc in nature. The following sections examine the bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and its neighbors regarding the development of normalized borders and border controls.

**Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan**

With regard to Kazakhstan, the greatest source of low-level tension with Uzbekistan is the permeability of the countries’ 2,440 kilometer border.\textsuperscript{154} This is by far the longest border that Tashkent shares with any of its neighbors. It has also been the source of much friction for relations between the two states.

Astana was alarmed in early 2000 to discover Uzbek border guards undertaking unilateral border demarcation and the construction of outposts significantly inside Kazakh territory. Forces from the Kazakh Southern Military District were quickly deployed to this border area. A joint commission was formed in an effort to defuse tensions. Holding an emergency meeting on February 21, 2000, the two sides agreed to work together and hold further border talks as necessary. Nevertheless, bilateral demarcation remained a slow,  


\textsuperscript{152} This is based on author’s own conversations in Tashkent in the two weeks following the events at Andijan. For example, in the wake of Andijan and the subsequent criticism directed towards Tashkent from Western governments such as the U.S., channels of communication between U.S. and Uzbek officials, many of whom had a close personal relationship, suddenly disappeared. Uzbek officials felt that their jobs would be in jeopardy merely for communicating with their respective counterparts.

arduous process, and by mid-2000, only 194 kilometers had been demarcated. Border tensions remained high as Uzbek border guards continued to be accused of undertaking unilateral demarcation.\textsuperscript{155}

Joint delineation of the border began to take a turn for the better with a September 2001 agreement between President Karimov and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev that demarcated 4% of the border. Two months later in November 2001, the remaining 96% was delineated. This delineation was finalized with a September 2002 bilateral agreement between Tashkent and Astana.\textsuperscript{156}

On November 28, 2002, the deputy prime ministers of the two states signed a freight transit information exchange protocol. Tashkent’s primary motivation for this agreement was not related to nonproliferation, rather it was meant as an extra tool in preventing cheap Chinese commodities from penetrating the Uzbek market.\textsuperscript{157} This issue, always a source of tension, came to a head in December 2002 with Tashkent accusing Astana of deliberately turning a blind eye to the smuggling of goods across its border into Uzbek territory.\textsuperscript{158} The Uzbek government’s response was to close the border.\textsuperscript{159} The Uzbek government failed to recognize that its policies often fuel the rampant smuggling. Tashkent’s refusal to introduce reforms pertaining to currency

\textsuperscript{154} Olcott (2005), p. 219.
convertibility continues to spur a mass exodus across the Kazakh and Kyrgyz borders by Uzbek citizens in search of cheaper goods.\footnote{In response to a hard currency outflow, Tashkent placed severe limitations on how much national currency could be imported or exported. See “Uzbek Currency Restrictions due to Money Flowing out to Kazakhstan,” \textit{Centrasia website}, translated in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, March 8, 2004, Lexis-Nexis.}

Uzbekistan’s response to this problem has been to set up multiple checkpoints leading to the main border crossing, the Qoplonbek border post located 10 kilometers north of Tashkent. Uzbek citizens are prevented from even reaching the border post while Kazakh citizens are waived through. The result has been the creation of a smuggling black market by Kazakhs who use their automobiles to ferry Uzbeks back and forth across the border.\footnote{“Rights Group Reports on Violations on Uzbek-Kazakh Border,” \textit{Centrasia website}, translated in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, December 9, 2003, Lexis-Nexis.} When not turning the other way as a result of bribes, Uzbek border guards also are reported to have become very heavy-handed, as illustrated by several cases in which border guards shot at unarmed civilians.

While preventive measures with regard to commercial goods have been somewhat effective in stemming the flow of goods, Tashkent has had less success in preventing individuals from transiting the border. IMU and al-Qaeda affiliated terrorist groups successfully transited the border in the spring of 2004 in order to carry out bombings of Uzbek facilities in the Ferghana Valley.\footnote{Since these attacks occurred in very close proximity to the Kazakh and Kyrgyz borders, it has been speculated that the terrorists had constructed a secret training facility just across the Kazakh border. See Olcott (2005), p. 339.} A few months later, a related group called the Mujihadeen Jamaat established a base just north of Tashkent in the Shymkent region of Kazakhstan. In addition to being responsible for other attacks in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, in the summer of 2004 terrorists from this group crossed into Tashkent and bombed the U.S. and Israeli embassies along with the General Prosecutor’s Office of
Uzbekistan. After detaining seventeen members of the group, including both Kazakhs and Uzbeks along with four women, security officials determined that the group was using Kazakhstan as a transportation hub. Terrorists used the western Kazakh port of Aqtau to ferry recruits and supplies across the Caspian to and from Dagestan, Chechnya, and other volatile regions of the North Caucasus. From southern Kazakhstan, they would transit Uzbekistan en route to terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. They would then return to their forward bases in southern Kazakhstan, from which they would be deployed to carry out operations inside Uzbek territory.

Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan

Like Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan’s relations with Uzbekistan have been strained in recent years. President Karimov and late President Niyazov had long been rivals for influence in the region. Both countries share a border that is second in length only to that of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. This border’s permeability is increased by the fact that it traverses some of the harshest terrain in Central Asia where governmental presence is minimal. Crossing the remote Ustyurt Plateau adjacent to the Aral Sea in the north, it runs south along the Amu-Darya delta dividing the vast Karakum and Kyzylkum Deserts before terminating along Afghanistan’s northern border. To reach the Persian Gulf, the greater Middle East, and beyond, Uzbek goods have to first transit Turkmenistan and then Iran, via the border crossing of Sarkhs, before reaching the northeastern Iranian

163 In addition to southern Kazakhstan, group members were detained throughout the country in Almaty, the northern Pavlodar region, and the eastern region around Semipalatinsk. See “Further on Detention of Al-Qa’ida-Linked Group in Kazakhstan,” Interfax, November 11, 2004, FBIS-SOV-2004-1111.
164 According to Vladimir Bozhko, first deputy chairman of the Kazakh National Security Committee, this group was well trained, supplied, and disciplined and had the principal motivation of toppling the Karimov regime due to its oppression of Islam. “Kazakhstani, Uzbekistani Security Forces Investigating Terrorist Transit Route,” Interfax, September 10, 2004, FBIS-NES-2004-0910.
town of Mashad. Goods then must either proceed west or south to the ports of Bandar Abbas or Chabrahari. Tashkent’s strained relationship with Ashgabat has been a motivating factor in Uzbekistan’s attempt to develop a trade route from Termez to Herat, Afghanistan to Mashad which bypasses Turkmen territory altogether.¹⁶⁵

Also complicating matters between the two countries is the fact a large minority of ethnic Uzbeks live just across the Turkmen border while a substantial Turkmen minority lives on the opposite side of the border. Uzbeks make up the largest diaspora of any ethnic minority in Turkmenistan, consisting of just over 2% of the four million plus population. Like the Russians, the Uzbek minority in Turkmenistan is treated worse than anywhere else in the region.¹⁶⁶

Both sides also have historical territorial claims to the other’s territory. Turkmen nationalists claim that Khiva and parts of Khorezm Province should belong to Ashgabat because the inhabitants are of Turkmen descent. Similarly, Uzbek nationalists claim that the Tashauz and Turkmenabad areas should belong to Uzbekistan as they are majority Uzbek. However, territorial leases have been the major focus in the dispute. Turkmenistan claims that Uzbekistan does not pay adequate compensation for the gas and oil fields that it leases on Turkmen territory. Tashkent, in turn, has demanded full ownership of the territories. These disputes continued to fester in the mid-1990’s until trade was effectively discontinued as all rail, bus, and air links were halted.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Author’s Interview with Abdusamat Khaydarov, former Uzbek Ambassador to Iran, March 10, 2005.
¹⁶⁶ Among other things, the Turkmen government has abolished funding for Uzbek language education and media, imprisoned prominent Uzbek clerics, and increased travel restrictions to the point were it is almost impossible for Uzbeks to conduct cross-border trade or even visit their families across the border. Olcott (2005), p. 162.
Relations began to thaw somewhat in 1996 when a presidential meeting was held. Significantly, Uzbekistan recognized Turkmenistan’s right to adopt a foreign policy of neutrality, an issue which it had previously resisted in hopes of forging a regional collective security agreement. Ashgabat reciprocated by granting Tashkent ownership of the leased hydrocarbon fields in return for increased lease compensation and a share of the proceeds from all extracted oil.168

By August 2000, a joint commission completed work on border delimitation. The two presidents then met on September 21 and agreed to proceed with demarcation of the border. Both sides began installing border posts and fencing off of their territory.169 The following March (2001), President Niyazov decreed that a fence should be constructed for 1,700 kilometers of the border.170

While these were no doubt signs of progress, the implementation of more stringent border controls had the effect of worsening bilateral relations. Border clashes between guards and civilians began to occur in 2001 as multiple incidents resulted in the deaths of several civilians. Many of the citizens of the border regions began to see their livelihoods dry up as cross-border trade was their principle source of income. The introduction of border crossing fees by both sides only exacerbated the economic situation for many of these citizens.171

168 Ibid.
170 Like many of his grandiose proclamations, the completion of the majority of this fence has yet to materialize. See International Crisis Group (2002), p.10.
171 Ibid.
The situation further deteriorated in 2002. More shooting deaths by border guards began to occur from both sides. Protests began to occur on both sides of the border, and bilateral relations again appeared to take a turn for the worse.

Much speculation exists that these long-running disputes were at the center of the Uzbek government’s decision to facilitate the return from exile of former Niyazov loyalist and Turkmen foreign minister, Boris Shihkmuradov. From exile abroad, he formed the People’s Democratic Movement of Turkmenistan and became a prominent and vocal opponent of the Niyazov regime. Returning to Turkmenistan in 2002 in the misguided belief that he could convince Niyazov to resign, Shihkmuradov later was held responsible for the November 25, 2002 failed coup attempt on Niyazov. Before being arrested, he was given safe-haven in the Uzbek embassy, fueling speculation that the Uzbeks were somehow involved in the attempt.

The immediate result of these events was a complete breakdown in relations between the two countries. Ambassadors from both states were quickly recalled. Cross-border cooperation and trade became virtually nonexistent.

Tensions remained high for two years until Niyazov and Karimov met at a November 2004 summit in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. The meeting was an attempt to mend relations in order to deal with cross-border issues that were plaguing cooperation and hampering trade. In all, three agreements pertaining to management of the Amu-Darya, 

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172 Gunmen opened fire on Niyazov’s motorcade as he traveled from one of his palaces to work. Niyazov escaped unhurt and unleashed a fierce crackdown on his perceived opponents, with at least 100 people being arrested following the attempt. Shihkmuradov himself was given a Stalinist show-trial before being handed a 25 year sentence. Nevertheless, exact details of the coup attempt are incomplete. Some point the blame at disloyal security forces while others believe Niyazov himself may have staged the whole thing as a pretext to launch a major crackdown on opponents. See Olcott (2005), pp. 159-162.

173 Evidence also exists that the United States, Russia, and Turkey had advanced knowledge of Shihkmuradov’s intentions and that they may have promised support if he were successful. *Ibid.*
measures on facilitating cross-border trade, and improving cross-border access for citizens were signed.\textsuperscript{174}

Despite their grandiose proclamations of friendship, these agreements were only as good as the current state of relations between the two leaders.\textsuperscript{175} The death of President Niyazov has further complicated the situation, as it remains unclear how his successor will behave with regard to bilateral relations. Further complicating relations is the fact that the border has yet to be fully delineated.

\textbf{Uzbekistan-Tajikistan}

The permeability and porous nature of Tajikistan’s border with Uzbekistan has proved to be a severe strain on relations between the two states. The border is 1,300 kilometers long with roughly 70\% of it being delineated by the two governments in July 2002.\textsuperscript{176} However, much of this border stretches along the Tien Shan and Pamir mountain ranges and is difficult to police. Mutual suspicions have been fueled by historical claims to each other’s territory. Irredentist sentiments have long been fostered by the fact that a large swath of south-central Uzbekistan, including Samarkand and Bukhara, is predominately populated by ethnic Tajiks.\textsuperscript{177}

\textsuperscript{175} The tenuous nature of Karimov and Niyazov’s relationship was shown at the Bukhara meeting when as a traditional sign of respect, Karimov presented Niyazov, an avid collector of rare and expensive automobiles, with a new car. However, speaking volumes to the relationship’s strength, this gift was an cheap Uzbek-produced Daewoo. See “Niyazov-Karimov Press Conference – Transcript of Tape,” \textit{Central Asia News}, November 21, 2004, \url{www.newscentralasia.com}.
During the mid-1990’s, Tashkent was extremely alarmed at the prospect of the Tajik civil war (1992-1997) spilling over into Uzbek territory. Tashkent’s immediate reaction was to mine large portions of the border. While no evidence exists that this had any effect in stopping illegal border-crossings, it has resulted in the deaths of dozens of civilians on both sides.

While the end of the civil war in 1997 ushered in a relatively smooth national reconciliation process, culminating in the formation of a coalition government led by Imamali Rahkmonov, Tajikistan still found itself having difficulty policing its borders, especially its mountainous, southern border with Afghanistan. Despite the Russian military taking control of guarding this border in 1992 and having over 18,000 soldiers and conscripts at its disposal, the cross-border flow of drug smugglers and armed militants remains problematic.

Most troubling for Tashkent was the arrival of Juma Namangani in Tajikistan in 1998. Namangani helped form the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in the Ferghana Valley in the mid 1990’s. Tashkent has long been wary of the potential for disadvantaged Tajik minorities to join radical Islamist groups. After fleeing Uzbekistan, Namangani was given safe haven in eastern-central Tajikistan. From there, he expanded his organization into a formidable fighting force. Their first major attack came in 1999 with the bombing of several government facilities in Tashkent. This attack was to begin a series of annual incursions into Uzbekistan, largely via Kyrgyz territory in the Ferghana Valley, in order to carry out operations against the Karimov government. Despite heavy pressure from Tashkent, Dushanbe largely turned a blind eye to these IMU incursions. Killed in Afghanistan in 2002 by American bombing, Namangani did not live
to see fulfillment of his dream of establishing an Islamic caliphate in Uzbekistan. The IMU, although weakened, remains a significant threat for the Uzbek government to this day.\footnote{For more on Namangani and the rise of the IMU, see Ahmed Rashid (2003). \textit{Jihad}. New Haven: Yale University Press.}

Besides heavy mining of the borders, the Karimov regime has employed other heavy-handed tactics in its attempts to thwart the IMU. Beginning in 1999, the Uzbek military has been accused by Dushanbe of carrying out cross-border bombing runs and military incursions into Tajik territory without permission. Borders were sealed to the point where it was virtually impossible for citizens to visit their families or conduct trade on the opposite side. A bridge across the Syr-Darya that connected the two states was destroyed. Flights between the capitals of Dushanbe and Tashkent were suspended. Travelers from Tashkent now had to obtain a Tajik visa before traveling south and crossing the border to the town of Khojand where flights to Dushanbe could be caught.

Both Uzbeks and Tajiks living in border areas have come under increased suspicion from Tashkent. The Karimov regime views many of them as IMU sympathizers, and they often have been dealt with harshly. A notorious example occurred in 2000 when, in response to IMU incursions in the area, the Uzbek government forcibly “evacuated” 2000 households in Surkhandarya Province, viewing them as potential IMU sympathizers or collaborators.\footnote{For more on Namangani and the rise of the IMU, see Ahmed Rashid (2003). \textit{Jihad}. New Haven: Yale University Press.}

The 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan marked a point in which relations between Tashkent and Dushanbe began to thaw. Previously, Presidents Karimov and Rahkmonov had met in July 2000 and agreed to talks on border demarcation. In December 2001, they
met again in Tashkent where Karimov declared his intention to ease some of the harsh cross-border restrictions. Two months later on February 12, 2002, the states’ prime ministers met and formulated an agreement on border crossing points and procedures.\textsuperscript{180} This meeting was followed by the November 2002 meeting in which 70% of the border was demarcated.

Despite this positive progress, unfinished work remains. A large swath of the border remains undelineated. Tajikistan, with the help of the international community, must continue developing its border controls so as not to give Tashkent an excuse to violate its territorial integrity. Uzbekistan must understand that unilateral military actions, the pervasive harassment of ordinary citizens, and obstruction of cross-border trade will have adverse long-term consequences as it will feed and foster instability in weaker Tajikistan.

Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan

As seems to be the norm in the region, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have been entangled in long-running border disputes that hinder the development of effective export and border control development. The disputed territories are principally located in the Ferghana Valley where Stalin’s artificial borders divided ethnic populations. A large minority of ethnic Kyrgyz live just inside Uzbek territory, while a large population of ethnic Uzbeks live within Kyrgyzstan. Both states possess ethnic enclaves in the area that are completely surrounded by the other state’s territory.

Border tensions are further exacerbated by the fact that the border populations of these states have traditionally relied on cross-border trade. Osh and Jalalabad, the major Kyrgyz cities in the region, lie just across the border from the valley’s major industrial centers of Andijan, Namangan, and Ferghana City. Traders rely heavily on these large population centers for conducting business.

Like Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan has incurred Tashkent’s wrath for failing to stop IMU fighters from transiting its territory into Uzbekistan. Beginning in 1998, Uzbekistan imposed a visa regime on Kyrgyz citizens, and Bishkek responded in kind. Because no consulates or visa-issuing facilities existed in the valley, citizens were forced to travel the long distances to Bishkek and Tashkent if they wanted a visa that would allow them to travel beyond the Ferghana Valley.\textsuperscript{181} The IMU’s 1999 bombings of Tashkent resulted in Uzbekistan completely sealing the border for security purposes. Without permission from Bishkek, Tashkent launched air strikes in southern Kyrgyzstan. In one case, over a dozen civilians were killed as the result of a bombing raid. Uzbek security services also further angered the population by conducting unauthorized cross-border operations aimed at capturing militants.

Bilateral relations have also remained tenuous over the issue of access to the ethnic enclaves. Tashkent has long demanded that it be given corridors in order to directly access its enclaves. The enclaves of Sokh and Shahimardan have proved especially troublesome. Sokh, although territorially part of Uzbekistan, has a predominantly Tajik population. Fears that the IMU would use the enclave as safe haven prompted Uzbekistan to mine the entire border of the enclave and set up checkpoints to
check all persons and vehicles entering or exiting. Bishkek was naturally alarmed by this unilateral action, viewing it as a direct threat to the Kyrgyz population. The direct result was a major decrease in trade as citizens could not deal with the harassment and corruption that awaited them at multiple border posts.182

Disputes over control of resources have also proven problematic. Kyrgyzstan has leased gas and oil fields within its territory to Uzbekistan.183 At border talks in February 2001, Uzbekistan refused to relinquish jurisdiction over the fields or even pay the rent arrears that Bishkek claims it is owed. The Kyrgyz government in turn refused to surrender jurisdiction over Uzbek territories that had been leased to it in Soviet times for the purpose of cattle grazing.184

Similarly, water is also at the center of a territorial dispute. Uzbekistan leases the Andijan Reservoir, located with Kyrgyz territory. Local tensions are stoked by the fact that all water from the reservoir is used exclusively by Uzbekistan. Popular anger in Kyrgyzstan has also built over the fact that Tashkent has flatly refused negotiations, even though Bishkek claims that it is not receiving adequate compensation.185

181 At the time, residents of southern Kyrgyzstan were still allowed to travel up to 100 kilometers within Uzbekistan without obtaining a visa. This effectively limited their travel to the Ferghana Valley. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
182 Negotiations between the two states over a direct Uzbek corridor to Sokh began in February 2001. The prime ministers of the two states agreed that, in return for this corridor, Uzbekistan would grant Kyrgyzstan a smaller corridor to its enclave of Barak. However, negotiations stalled later that year as the secret agreement was leaked to the Kyrgyz press where it was met with considerable outrage by the Kyrgyz population. Seen as unsatisfactory compensation by Uzbekistan, public pressure effectively tied President Askar Akaev’s hands as he could not be seen as weak on defending the country’s interests. This was all the more important because previously, he had caved to Chinese pressure and ceded some disputed territories during the demarcation process Ibid., p.14.
183 Of special concern is control is the Ferghana Oil Refinery, the largest hydrocarbon facility on this disputed territory. See “Kyrgyz Paper Warns against Haste, Secrecy in Border Demarcation with Uzbekistan,” Oshchestvenny Reyting, translated in BBC summary of world broadcasts, May 19, 2004, Lexis-Nexis.
184 Ibid., p.16.
In addition to their claim of an unreasonably low compensation, Bishkek also accuses Tashkent of overusing the water it is supplied from the Andijan Reservoir. They claim that Tashkent consumes 80% of the roughly 48 billion cubic liters of water resources possessed by Kyrgyzstan.\textsuperscript{186}

Work on border demarcation began in February 2000 and has since been a slow process. Of the roughly 1,400 kilometer border, only 209 kilometers had been demarcated as of February 2002.\textsuperscript{187} An August 2003 meeting produced an agreement to begin demarcating the remaining 1000 plus kilometers by November 2003. When this failed to materialize, the Uzbek government accused their counterparts of intentionally stalling.\textsuperscript{188}

The Kyrgyz government and media responded by accusing the Uzbeks of acting unilaterally, hastily, and secretively. The Kyrgyz media, which is relatively free compared to the four other states, has also accused its own government of failing to stand up to Tashkent and being highly secretive about the negotiations.\textsuperscript{189} Kyrgyz nationalists accused the Akaev regime of being weak when dealing with stronger states such as China and Uzbekistan. This perceived weakness ultimately led to his downfall in March 2005 precipitated by an anti-government revolt. The revolt began in the southern region that had been so impoverished partly as a result of the myriad border restrictions. Over the

\textsuperscript{186} Obshchestvenny Reytin (2004). The five Central Asian states have a complicated water sharing arrangement whereby water resources are allocated from the upriver producers, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, to the downstream users, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. This vitally important and well-researched topic is far beyond the scope of this paper to explain. For a good general overview of the topic, see Olcott (2005) and Rashid (2003).

\textsuperscript{187} The exact length of the border is also in question given the number of ethnic enclaves the two states possess. Other sources have put the border length at 1,225 kilometers.


\textsuperscript{189} Obshchestvenny Reytin (2004).
course of a week, popular support turned against Akaev culminating in his flight from Bishkek to Russia where he entered into forced exile.

Relations between the two neighbors quickly soured with the massacre of hundreds of Uzbek citizens at the hands of their own government’s security services in the wake of a popular uprising in the border town of Andijan in May 2005.\textsuperscript{190} Hundreds of Uzbek citizens, justifiably fearing for their lives, fled across the Kyrgyz border. Despite vehement opposition from Tashkent who demanded their immediate return, many of these Uzbek citizens were given refugee status by the UN and airlifted to Romania. Tashkent has further complicated any kind of border cooperation by again using its security forces to conduct unilateral cross-border raids in an attempt to hunt down any participants in the uprising. Additionally, the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Chinese, and Russian governments have all also been accused of aiding Uzbek authorities in their hunt by kidnapping suspects who are then handed over to Tashkent.\textsuperscript{191} To date, border tensions remain high between these two neighbors.

In summary, Uzbekistan has a history of, and continues to experience, tenuous relations with its neighbors. This tenuous relationship between Uzbekistan and its neighbors, along with heightened skepticism of Western donor states have hindered the development of an effective export control system. The concluding chapter will analyze which theoretical approach best explains Uzbekistan’s motivations for developing an

\textsuperscript{190} The author was in Tashkent when the events in Andijan transpired. Uzbekistan claims that it killed only roughly 140 “terrorists.” The majority of the international community have put the death toll at well over 900, including many women and children. To date, Karimov has resisted EU and U.S. demands for an international investigation. As a result, relations have become fragile at best.

\textsuperscript{191} Not coincidentally, the Uzbeks have been accused by the international community of detaining ethnic Uighers from China and handing them over to Beijing where they face possible execution. The most prominent case has been the 2006 rendition from Uzbekistan of a prominent ethnic Uigher activist who is also a Canadian citizen. Ottawa, fearing his possible execution, has demanded his return, while Beijing so far has refused.
effective export control system. A theoretical understanding of these motivations will allow for better policy prescriptions to be devised. The absence of significant components of an effective export control system in Uzbekistan does not invalidate this exercise; rather it provides a more rigorous testing ground for analyzing each theoretical approach.
CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Realist Approach: Regional Threats, Mixed Response

No doubt exists that Uzbekistan faces real security threats in the region. Events such as Andijan have highlighted the public’s dissatisfaction with the government. This unhappiness, clearly simmering for some time, ultimately boiled over despite the government’s best efforts to prevent both the domestic and international communities from seeing what really occurred.

Externally, Uzbekistan also faces three clear security threats, namely the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, potential instability in Turkmenistan, and Iran’s continuing efforts to develop its nuclear capabilities. With regard to two of the three, it is unclear how export control development would alleviate the situations. Hostilities in Afghanistan have not ceased, but rather have intensified throughout 2006. Prior to and following 9/11, much of the conflict was centered in northern Afghanistan and within close proximity to the Uzbek border. Tashkent supplied the Northern Alliance and in particular, ethnic Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum with money and weapons. However, the resurgence of fighting in Afghanistan throughout 2006 has been principally centered in the Taliban-dominated provinces surrounding Kandahar in southern Afghanistan. Export control development in Uzbekistan is unlikely to affect this situation as the Taliban and their sympathizers were never acquiring weapons or technologies from
Central Asian states or Iran, all of whom remain avowed enemies of the Taliban. Rather, the Taliban’s support continues to come largely from sympathetic donors in the Middle East and Pakistan. Much of this support continues to be channeled to the Taliban via Pakistan’s ISI intelligence service. Moreover, despite the continued threat posed by this conflict, it essentially remains an internal struggle meant to foment regional instability. Because it presents a limited external threat, it is not a useful case from which to test the realist approach.

This fact is similarly true with regard to potential instability in the wake of President Niyazov’s unexpected death. While it appears likely that Niyazov’s successor will likely keep the government’s authoritarian and secretive structure in place, there remains a small chance that a popular uprising could spill across the border into Uzbekistan. However, as in North Korea, the extent of the government’s total control over the population makes the scenario of a popular uprising highly unlikely. Real change most likely would have to come from a revolt by the country’s military and security leadership. Nonproliferation export controls would have little effect on any potential internal struggle as Ashgabat does not even possess the military or industrial means by which to use items of nonproliferation concern. Again, this example does not prove useful in testing the realist approach.

Iran provides the real test of the realist perspective in relation to export control development in Uzbekistan. Iran is the only state near the region that could present a real security threat to the Uzbek leadership. Tehran has long sough to acquire nuclear capabilities, and Tashkent, along with its neighbors, have long been concerned that Iran has sought nuclear capabilities as a means of spreading its influence and brand of Islamic
fundamentalism into secular Central Asia. A nuclear Iran, they fear, would significantly alter the balance of power in not only Central Asia, but the Middle East and Caucasus as well. Furthermore, an unstable Turkmenistan could aid Iran as a transit point in the procurement of controlled technologies.

Because Uzbekistan is the only Central Asian state capable of developing into a wider regional power, one would expect it to be concerned with the relative gains in military capabilities that would be achieved by a nuclear Iran. In addition, Uzbekistan is the only Central Asian country to possess the requisite scientific technology, expertise, and industrial base to be of use to Iran in the development of their weapons program. Tashkent has also repeatedly supported international sanctions aimed at Iran for its efforts to acquire nuclear capabilities. As a result, one could expect Tashkent to place a high emphasis on export control development and export controls targeted toward Tehran as a means of preventing further development of Iranian military and economic capabilities.

Contrary to this expectation, however, Uzbekistan, rather than attempting to develop any meaningful export control policy toward Iran, has actively been seeking to strengthen and broaden their economic relationship through the development of new transit corridors and rail links. While Tashkent may make proclamations of support for the international community, as is often the case with Uzbek domestic and foreign policy, their actions prove far different than their words. Moreover, past support for international sanctions likely came from Tashkent’s desire to ingratiate itself with Washington and distance itself from Moscow. Now that their policy has essentially reversed in the wake of Western condemnation of Andijan, it is unlikely that Tashkent would follow.

192 These concerns held by Tashkent with respect to Iran were reinforced during the author’s interview with Dr. Abdusamat Khaydarov, former Uzbek ambassador to Iran.
would have supported the U.N. Security Council’s December 2007 sanctions against Tehran if Moscow and/or Beijing had not also, albeit reluctantly, approved. Meanwhile, these sanctions have not decreased Tashkent’s desire to increase economic ties with Iran despite the security threat they pose. Thus the realist approach provides little explanatory power with regard to Uzbek export control development.

The Liberal Identity Approach

This theoretical approach is also questionable when utilized to explain export control development in Uzbekistan. While Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian states may have drafted democratic constitutions and made grandiose proclamations about adhering to the norms of the liberal community, in reality, only Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have developed any semblance of democratic institutions. Uzbekistan continues to effectively remain an authoritarian, one-party state despite the cursory existence of “opposition” parties. Indeed President Karimov has long sought to present the illusion to the West that he was integrating, albeit slowly, into the liberal community of states. For example, Uzbekistan has long been a staunch supporter of the U.S. when voting in the United Nations. Along with Israel, it has been one of the only states to vote in favor of continuing sanctions toward Iran and Cuba. Prior to 1997, it was one of the most pro-American states in the United Nations and according to Bryan Johnson, only voted against the U.S. position on 24% of U.N. resolutions. As

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193 Opposition groups such as Birlik and Erk have been outlawed and their leaders and supporters either imprisoned or exiled. The remaining “opposition” parties almost always fall in line with the President’s position.

previously noted, Karimov has also been an outspoken champion for the development of the CANWFZ.

However, Andijan along with the continued, stubborn refusal to implement any kind of market reforms have shown Karimov and his top deputies’ true nature. Rather than identifying with the liberal western community, it now appears that their actions were more of a deliberate calculation to distance themselves from Moscow’s influence while simultaneously reaping the benefits provided by the West in return for promised reform. 9/11 strengthened Tashkent’s ability to extract maximum benefits from the West because it allowed Karimov to greatly overhype the threat posed by Islamic radicals. Karimov could continue to be courted by the West while staunchly refusing reform in the name of protecting the country from being overtaken by Islamic fundamentalists. As long as Tashkent was willing to provide the West with strategic access to the region, Washington and her allies were willing to ignore Uzbek transgressions and intransigence toward reform. The increased internal repression and realignment toward Moscow in the eighteen months following Andijan have revealed Karimov’s belief that the costs of dealing with the West have become too great. The Uzbek leadership’s calculus now appears to be that Moscow and Beijing can provide benefits with fewer strings attached.

The expectations for export control behavior derived from this approach also do not seem to fit with regard to Uzbekistan’s export control actions. Uzbekistan’s significant interaction with the United States on this issue could be expected to have resulted in a more developed export control system. For reasons stated above, it seems that this repeated interaction was aimed more at extracting maximum resources from donor states than a real commitment to export control development. A second
expectation is that states that routinely interact on export control issues could be expected to develop a common group identity with regard to this issue. While Tashkent did enjoy repeated interaction with Washington on this issue, it is difficult to conclude that any common group identity was formed. Obviously, discerning the nature or extent of a common identity is a problematic endeavor at best. However, judging by the extent to which Tashkent has distanced itself from Washington following Andijan, it is hard to conclude that any such group identity had ever developed in the first place. A third expectation is that states that are developing liberal norms and institutions would be expected to have better developed systems. Again, gauging one’s sincerity to such commitments is difficult. Nevertheless, based on above evidence, one can conclude that Tashkent’s sincerity was highly dubious at best. The last expectation is also not borne out because Tashkent has never shown a willingness to control the transfer of items to illiberal states. Based on these circumstances, it is difficult to give credence to the liberal identity approach with regard to Uzbekistan.

The Domestic Political Approach

Similar to the liberal identity approach, most of the expectations derived from the highlighted domestic political approaches yield little insight with regard to the Uzbek case. As previously discussed, Uzbekistan’s political structure is highly personalized with power highly concentrated in the hands of President Karimov and a few key deputies, particularly those who control the Interior Ministry and the state security services. Many key positions have been filled with members of Karimov’s Samarkand clan. To prevent any official from developing an independent power base, officials are
routinely sacked or reshuffled. As a result, the various state bureaucracies remain inherently unstable as there rarely exists coherent leadership to independently guide the various government organs.

Further complicating matters is the fact that the bureaucracies had to essentially be built from scratch following independence. While Moscow had previously utilized well-trained, competent Russians to head these agencies during Soviet times, most of these Russian bureaucrats, fearing persecution after the republic’s independence, emigrated back to Russia. As a result, the mid and lower level Uzbek bureaucrats suddenly found themselves tasked with jobs for which they were unprepared. Knowing no other alternatives, the new Uzbek bureaucracies were typically developed on their old Soviet models with their characteristics for intransigence and a lack of independent decision-making. Testing the expectation that export control systems will be more developed if the agency tasked with those functions exerts more power over governmental decisions than competing agencies is a futile task, given the lack of independence and stability in these agencies along with the highly secretive nature in which governmental decisions are made.

The virtual non-existence of independent interest groups in Uzbekistan means that the pluralist approach is of little use for test purposes. No independent interest groups that seek to influence export controls even exist. Perhaps the only true independent groups that have any substantive influence independent of the government are the IMU, Hizb-ut-Tahir, drug cartels, and the various other mafia types. Until Tashkent relaxes its rigid control over the whole of civil society, Uzbekistan will continue to prove an unfertile testing ground for this approach.
With regard to the institutional approach, we would expect that “strong”, centralized states would have more developed export control systems than “weak”, fragmented states. Comparatively, in Central Asia, Uzbekistan along with Turkmenistan would undoubtedly be located on the “strong” end of the “strong-weak” state continuum. Conversely, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan would be at the “weak” end while Tajikistan would be placed somewhere in between. As stated, all economic and political decision-making remains in the vice grip of Karimov and his inner circle. The utter recalcitrance to any market-based reforms in the economic sector further reinforces the fact that the Uzbek government remains highly centralized with comparison to their Kazakh and Kyrgyz counterparts who have already shifted their economies toward a more Western orientation. Based on the institutional approach, we would expect the “strong” states of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to have more developed export control systems than the “weak” states of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. However, in reality, the opposite is true, as all available evidence indicates that Almaty and Bishkek’s systems are more developed than those of Tashkent or Ashgabat. As a result, the institutional approach holds little explanatory power for this case.

The domestic approach that yields perhaps the greatest insights for this case is the elitist approach. As noted, President Karimov wields extreme control over the levers of power in Uzbekistan. State policy is shaped by his desires, beliefs, and interests. Moreover, his preferences essentially define Uzbekistan’s national interests. Publicly, Karimov has indeed shown a commitment to nonproliferation norms and goals and a commitment to develop a capable export control system. Cooperation on export controls between the West and the Uzbek government would never have begun without
Karimov’s explicit approval. Nevertheless, the sincerity of Karimov’s commitment is difficult to gauge. Does he really believe that a developed export control system, one that could potentially inhibit trade with partner states that remain pariahs in the West, is in the national interest of the state? The cynical observer would argue that his nonproliferation actions have been undertaken based on a calculated attempt to extract maximum benefits from the West with as few strings attached as possible. Indeed, in contrast to assistance from multilateral institutions such as the World Bank where strict conditions must be met for the aid to flow, most of the Western assistance targeted for export control development has come with few, if any conditions attached. Unfortunately, his secretive nature makes it difficult for even the best intelligence agencies to discern his true intentions.

The Rational Institutionalist Approach

Although again relying on limited and often anecdotal evidence due to the secretive nature of Uzbek government decision-making, the rational-institutionalist approach offers perhaps the best insights into Uzbek motivations for export control development. The general expectation derived from this approach is that states will have more developed export control systems if they believe the benefits derived from such a system will outweigh the costs associated with implementing it. The publicly available evidence suggests that Uzbekistan perceives export control development to be in the state’s national interest and that the associated benefits derived from dealing with the West outweigh the risks of interacting with them on this issue. This point is especially important given the schism that emerged between the two sides following Andijan.
Intuitively, one would think that the Uzbek government would no longer want to interact with the West on nonproliferation issues after Andijan, given the fact that interaction has virtually ceased on most other major issue areas. Surprisingly however, available evidence indicates that nonproliferation and export control cooperation was not only the most productive area of cooperation, but also the only significant area of cooperation that appears to remain between Tashkent and the West in the aftermath of Andijan.\(^{195}\) Thus even though they have become a virtual pariah in the West, the Karimov regime appears to believe the benefits of export control cooperation continue to outweigh the costs of doing business with the West on this issue.

With regard to a commitment to the rules and norms of the nonproliferation regime, Uzbekistan has been a vocal proponent. The fact that they championed the development of the CANWFZ indicates that they feel constrained by the rules and norms of the nonproliferation regime.

Another benefit of cooperating with the West on export controls is the benefit of access to Western technologies that it brings. Again, the derived expectation is that states will develop export control systems if the benefits of access to Western technologies outweigh the costs of doing business with the West. For Uzbekistan, which is the only Central Asian state to have a technological/industrial base that is in any way comparable to the West, the cost/benefit calculus appears to be of special importance. Based on their continued interaction with the West on export controls, even after Andijan, available

\(^{195}\) These findings are taken from a recently released (January 2007) report by the RAND Corporation on the effectiveness of Western assistance to Uzbekistan (along with four other states). A main conclusion is that Western assistance to Uzbekistan has been largely unproductive in altering the behavior of Uzbekistan. The notable exception that is highlighted is that of export controlling programs, which the report argues have had the greatest success and continue to be one area of cooperation that has survived the post-Andijan era. See Seth G. Jones, Olga Olicker et al. (January 2007) “Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S.
evidence would point toward Uzbekistan perceiving the benefit of continued access to Western technologies (associated with nonproliferation) to outweigh the costs of interacting with a hostile West. This fact is supported by anecdotal evidence from the EXBS advisors to Uzbekistan who have reported that Uzbekistan, even after Andijan, remain especially keen to getting access to Western nonproliferation technologies.196

A New Way Forward (Or Potentially Backward)

The question that has yet to be answered is why nonproliferation cooperation would continue to remain the main area of cooperation between the West and Uzbekistan after Andijan. The rational institutional approach of a cost versus benefit calculus appears to provide the most insight into Uzbek decision-making. As has been reported, Uzbekistan after independence was keen to assert its sovereignty and thus distance itself from Russia. In desperate need of international assistance to support its fledgling state, the only states capable and willing to give viable support were the United States and its Western European allies. Aid came pouring in with too few strings attached. In return for Western assistance, the Uzbek government would make repeated pledges to enact democratic and market reforms. Even when reforms never came, the aid continued to flow because of the desire by the West to gain access to this previously off-limits energy-rich region.

196 This is not to say that cooperation did not become more difficult after Andijan. While the Uzbek government remained open to nonproliferation cooperation after Andijan, cooperation became more difficult as the Uzbek bureaucracy developed more hurdles that must be jumped through. This is in contrast to other forms of cooperation, such as for example market reform, NGO development, or human rights issues, which ground to a virtual halt following Andijan. Interviews with Fred Fetty and Dimitry Bityutskiy, EXBS advisors to Uzbekistan, Tashkent, May 2005.
Knowing that they could continue to extract benefits that would far exceed the
costs of doing business with the West, the Karimov regime became masters of extracting
the greatest amount of aid with the fewest requirements attached. The West, for its part,
has been culpable enablers by not attaching more stringent requirements to its aid and
assistance programs. In an all too familiar pattern, the aid continued to flow with only
the promise that reforms would come. Even after years of promises that were unfulfilled,
Western donors continued to believe the standard Uzbek government refrain that reforms
were coming but must occur gradually.

After 9/11, the urgency in the West to further engage Uzbekistan became apparent
to all involved. The Karimov regime was all too aware that the West was even more
ready to throw massive amounts of aid in Tashkent’s direction in return for assistance in
the “War on Terror.” They were thus well positioned to continue to extract massive
amounts of assistance while providing nominal returns. Far from this assistance
encouraging the Uzbeks to enact serious governmental reforms, much of the post-9/11
aid now appears to have aided in entrenching the Karimov regime’s absolute grip on
power. Any semblance of an opposition has been essentially eradicated.

The governmental massacre perpetuated at Andijan finally awoke the West from
its malaise, providing even the most skeptical allies with enough concrete evidence that
the Karimov regime was not the trustworthy partner that it claimed to be. So why then
would the West continue to engage the Uzbek government on nonproliferation export
control programs if the Uzbeks have time and time again proven to be unreliable
partners? The answer lies in the fact that even after the events of Andijan made the costs
of other assistance programs outweigh the benefits, for both Uzbekistan and the West, on
the issue of nonproliferation, the risks of discontinuing cooperation still outweigh the
costs of discontinuing cooperation. Unlike cooperation on market or democratic reform,
nonproliferation cooperation presents no inherent risks to the continuation of the
Karimov regime. Indeed, Karimov continues to face a credible, albeit diminished, threat
from Islamic fundamentalists who would like nothing more than to topple his regime.
Uzbekistan continues also to remain a major smuggling route for illicit materials, and the
potential remains high for sensitive technologies to be either smuggled out of or through
Uzbekistan. If this were to somehow occur, the Karimov regime would likely face
international condemnation and isolation far outweighing that which it received following
Andijan. If Russia and China were to sever relations, the very existence of the Karimov
regime would be in peril.

Similarly, the West clearly sees that the risks of ending nonproliferation
cooperation would outstrip any benefits that may be gained from doing so. For the West,
the risks associated with a terrorist group or a pariah state such as Iran or North Korea
acquiring sensitive materials from Uzbekistan or using Uzbek territory as a transit route
far outweigh any benefit that might be accrued from discontinuing cooperation with an
undesirable regime. The threats associated with proliferation in the Central Asian region
make engagement with undesirable regimes a necessity.

Consequently, the task becomes how to tailor cooperation in a way that is
mutually beneficial, requires the Uzbek government to undertake concrete, verifiable
commitments, and prevents donated assistance from being diverted to other military

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197 Even after irrefutable evidence of Uzbek governmental complicity in the Andijan massacre was shown
to reach to the highest levels of government, the U.S. was one of the last of the Western powers to condemn
programs. Obviously, this is easier said than done. Relations between the West and Uzbekistan are at an all-time low but could continue to deteriorate precipitously if cooperation is ceased. Nonproliferation export control programs may only be one component of cooperation, but they are nevertheless vital ones and can serve as an area through which the West and Uzbekistan can begin to rebuild trust and cooperation. Based on this premise, several policy recommendations are listed that could better enhance nonproliferation cooperation.\textsuperscript{198}

1.) The United States must improve efforts at coordinating policies across agencies. For example, the State Department, the Commerce Department, and the Department of Defense have been working at cross-purposes. The U.S. has had many programs designed to encourage development of effective export controls in states such as Uzbekistan, but no overarching policy to guide those programs. Furthermore, no coherent policy strategy toward Uzbekistan has been publicly espoused by the U.S. government to date. The DoD has long provided Tashkent with “carrots” while the State Department has been responsible for wielding the “sticks.” As a result, the Uzbek government became overly cozy with DoD, who provided them with military assistance with virtually no strings attached while ignoring commitments it made to the State Department. In the absence of an overarching U.S. policy that clearly spells out what is required of both sides, Tashkent will continue its current policy of extracting as many benefits as possible while refusing to undertake many of its promised commitments.

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\textsuperscript{198} Several of these recommendations are similar to those espoused by Starr et al.
2.) The U.S. must develop a more comprehensive policy toward Uzbekistan because it has allowed narrow post-9/11 interests to overtake all other policy priorities. The Pentagon’s narrow interests of establishing a military presence in Central Asia and defeating the Taliban, while important, were allowed to dominate U.S. policy. All other cooperation was essentially taken for granted by Washington. Other priorities essentially were allowed to fall by the wayside. Furthermore, when Tashkent did not meet the U.S. expectations on other programs, Washington, while offering little support, was often quick to publicly castigate and chastise Tashkent, further entrenching a general recalcitrance toward reform in the various bureaucracies.

3.) The U.S. must reanalyze the internal dynamics of Uzbek politics. Simply put, the U.S. failed to account for what Starr terms the “kitchen politics” of Tashkent. In order to maintain power, Karimov, as is true of most other dictators, must keep multiple bases of power satisfied. Instead of working directly with the various government ministries that maintain the Uzbek power structure, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the state security services, U.S. policy has been overly reliant on working through various NGOs that were all too quick to condemn the brutality of the Uzbek government. While public criticism is often necessary in order to spur change, this sent the wrong signal to the bureaucracies that wield power in Tashkent. The US, rather than working with these bureaucracies to effect
gradual change, routinely condemned them as corrupt and inept. Consequently, rather than promoting change from above, these bureaucracies became increasingly hostile toward international cooperation because it came to threaten their positions of power. By alienating those who wield the power in Tashkent, Washington ensured that cooperation was bound to deteriorate.

4.) The U.S. fundamentally miscalculated Russia and China’s intentions in Uzbekistan and Central Asia. While the U.S. long believed that cooperation via Moscow was a key concern that should shape U.S. actions in Central Asia, Russia has long viewed the control over the region as a zero-sum game. As a result, when relations with the West began to falter, Moscow was eager to welcome Uzbekistan back into its orbit of influence, where Tashkent’s power bases would not be threatened by issues of democratization, market, or human rights reforms.

5.) Lastly, Washington has never highlighted business interests as playing a crucial role in Uzbek-American relations. As Starr has pointed out, neither Uzbekistan’s natural gas nor uranium deposits have been publicly highlighted as of being of concern. The Pentagon’s anti-terror campaign and the various agencies tasked with human rights reform became the principal lenses through which cooperation was viewed. Tashkent began to perceive these issues as being the only ones of importance to Washington. As a result, Tashkent eagerly cooperated with those programs which supplied the government with
economic aid while distancing itself in other areas of cooperation such as democratic and market reform.

Naturally, these are complex policy issues that will require a fundamental reevaluation of Washington’s priorities in Central Asia. Mutual trust between the two sides has been allowed to steadily deteriorate over the past decade, and is unlikely to be rebuilt quickly. However, for nonproliferation export control programs to be successful, the United States must reshape its priorities and goals. Export control cooperation has been one of the few areas of cooperation that has continued to survive in the post-Andijan era. The United States needs to publicly highlight the critical importance that Tashkent will continue to play for nonproliferation in Central Asia and use increased cooperation in this field as a cornerstone of a new policy that better addresses the concerns of the various power structures at play in Tashkent. The risks of doing nothing far override the distaste of re-engaging Uzbekistan’s authoritarian regime.
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