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POLICY BRIEFS

TAJKISTAN IN THE GLOBAL
SOUTH:
DEVELOPMENT DIPLOMACY, NON-
TRADITIONAL SECURITY AND
INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE

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*July
Bishkek 2015*

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JULY 2015



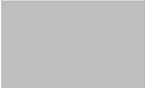
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PRESTIGE

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KEY POINTS

- In the past decade, the government of Tajikistan has become increasingly active in international institutions representing the interests of the developing world or Global South. These include specialized agencies of the UN system, traditional advocacy forums of “Third World” nations, and organizations that promote Asian regionalism and South-South cooperation. At the same time, these activities have evolved along with elite recognition of a security-development nexus in the post-civil war period, or the view that negative social, economic and environmental conditions might contribute to the reemergence of conflict.
- Recent policies suggest a possible link between development diplomacy and non-traditional dimensions of national security, as in recent years the identification of “soft threats” has become increasingly common in the defence concepts of former Soviet states. These factors have been further presented as prime correlates of international terrorism since the U.S./NATO intervention in Afghanistan beginning in October 2001. Economic downturn and increased instability since 2008 have further driven Tajik policymakers to seek support from and representation in Global South institutions, as well as to draw lessons from the experiences of other developing and post-colonial nations.
- However, the empirical record indicates that traditional “Third Worldist” opposition to the international political or economic status quo does not drive the identification of Tajik leaders with Global South positions and structures. Rather, it should be interpreted as an instrumental strategy to attract foreign technical assistance, financial aid and investment through bilateral and multilateral interactions with governments of developing countries and associated institutions. This in turn serves to

increase the international legitimacy and prestige of the Rakhmon regime, while providing a means of offsetting external criticism directed at its “hard” internal security policies.

INTRODUCTION

In September 2010, Tajikistan became the second former Soviet republic (following Turkmenistan) to join the Group of 77 (G-77) & China¹, an institution traditionally associated with “Third Worldism” and the movement to establish a New International Economic Order (NIEO) by developing nations during the 1970s rather than the post-communist space.² Yet, the acceptance of Dushanbe’s application for membership was preceded by a decade of substantial high-level diplomatic activity pertaining to contemporary international development issues by Tajik representatives within the United Nations (UN) and its specialized agencies. These efforts have included multiple engagements and policy initiatives by ambassadors, members of the presidential administration and ministers of foreign affairs on issues related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including sustainable growth, management of climate change, gender equality and energy conservation. Secondly, President Emomali Rakhmon was the only executive among the Central Asian states to sign the Declaration on The New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) at the April 2005 Asian-African Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, which established a series of objectives for revitalizing South-South cooperation in the 21st century³, while at the Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Havana, Cuba in April 2009, the Coordinating Bureau ratified the previous request submitted by Tajikistan for admission

- 1 Payrav Chorshanbyev, “Tajikistan joins G-77 and China”, Asia-Plus, October 1, 2010. <<http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-joins-g-77-and-china>> (Accessed April 19, 2014)
- 2 Ben Slay, “The “Rise of the South” and post-communist Europe and Central Asia”, UNDP in Europe and Central Asia, 14 November 2012. <<http://europeandcis.undp.org/news/show/87D85445-F203-1EE9-BBF1704483E89CCC>>
- 3 Republic of Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Declaration on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership.” The New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM), Jakarta, 12-13 October 2009. <<http://kemlu.go.id/Documents/NAASP/Hyperlink%201.pdf>>

with observer status.⁴ In addition, given its dependence on hydroelectric power and its position as a primary source of freshwater supplies in the Central Asian region (an estimated 60 percent⁵), Tajikistan has become a major player in global water resource policy, introducing resolutions such as the International Year of Freshwater 2003 and the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, as well as hosting prominent international conferences, most recently the High-Level International Conference on Water Cooperation in June 2013 and the Water For Life Conference in June 2015.

Previous analyses of post-Soviet Tajikistan have often focused upon its contributions to regional integration in Central Asia, or the role of organizations such as the Aga Khan Foundation and Development Network (AKF/DN) in financing and implementation of post-conflict reconstruction and sustainability programmes at the domestic level. Yet, few if any have examined the possible linkage between the participation of the Rakhmon government in institutions representing the interests of the Global South—the term used in contemporary international studies to refer to those geographic areas (Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America) formerly known as the “Third World”—and the maintenance of non-traditional (human, environmental, food and economic) dimensions of national security, as in recent years the identification of “soft threats” has become increasingly common in the defence concepts of former Soviet states.

The present policy brief examines this relationship by analyzing the origins and evolution of Tajik development diplomacy and soft security perceptions from the end of the civil war in 1997 to the present. It considers the hypothesis that

4 “Requests for admission as new members or observers”, Report By The Rapporteur-General On The Ministerial Meeting, Ministerial Meeting Of The Non-Aligned Movement Coordinating Bureau, Havana, Cuba, 27-30 April 2009, p. 4. <<http://nam.gov.ir/Portal/File/ShowFile.aspx?ID=42cf07b4-1909-4ed7-aa99-f19016b101ea>

5 Kamoludin Abdullaev and Shahram Akbarzadeh, *Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan*, Second Edition, Scarecrow Press, 2010, p. 4.

Tajikistan's pursuit of South-South cooperation has evolved in tandem with elite recognition of a security-development nexus in the post-civil war period, or the view that interrelated negative social, economic and environmental conditions may contribute to the reemergence of intrastate conflict. This has increasingly driven policymakers to seek greater support from and representation in these forums and structures, as well as to draw lessons from the experiences of other developing and post-colonial nations. In turn, the mutual recognition of these connections by external actors have brought resources to bear in Tajikistan that have otherwise been concentrated in regions such as Africa, Southeast Asia or the Caribbean.⁶ However, unlike other Central Asian states that have identified various types of non-traditional threats in their national security strategies, the Tajik military and intelligence services have focused primarily on issues such as counter-terrorism, drug trafficking, Islamist extremism and residual instability from Afghanistan (with significant support from the U.S., NATO and the OSCE since 2001), which involve essentially "hard" tactical responses combined with strong resistance to security sector reform.⁷ Thus, in addition to the attraction of foreign technical assistance and financial aid through bilateral and multilateral interactions with both individual developing countries and representative institutions, the identification of Tajik administrative elites with Global South programmes and structures may serve to increase the international legitimacy and prestige of the Rakhmon regime, while providing a means of offsetting external criticism frequently directed at its internal security policies associated with authoritarianism, suppression of popular dissent and violations of human rights, particularly in the context of increased domestic instability since 2008

6 Jos Boonstra and Natalia Shapovalova, Thinking security, doing development? The security-development nexus in European policies towards Tajikistan, EUCAM Working Paper No. 12, December 2012, p. 8. <http://www.fride.org/download/EUCAM_WP12_Tajikistan.pdf>

7 Jos Boonstra, Erica Marat and Vera Axyonova, Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: What Role for Europe?, EUCAM Working Paper No. 14, May 2013, pp. 9-10. <http://www.fride.org/download/EUCAM_WP14_SSR_Kazakhstan_Kyrgyzstan_Tajikistan.pdf>

and the counter-insurgency operations in the Rasht Valley and Gorno-Badakhshan subregions from 2010 to 2012.

ELITE RECOGNITION OF “SOFT THREATS”: 1997 TO PRESENT

Evidence for the acknowledgment of non-traditional security threats among Tajik political elites can be located in the immediate period following the conclusion of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in June 1997, in which severe social, economic and climatic conditions continued to affect the population, despite the relative success of the reconciliation process. These were reflected in official assessments sponsored by the foreign aid community that identified an interactive relationship between the level of human security and factors such as poverty, food shortages, natural disasters (floods and droughts), climate change, and gender inequality.⁸ In interviews with international observers, then Minister of Labor and Social Protection Rafika Musaeva reported that after the first demobilization of rehabilitated United Tajik Opposition (UTO) insurgents serving in the national armed forces in August 2000, only roughly 37 per cent of a total 4,000 troops had been released from duty, while of these at least 40 per cent had not found employment in the civilian sector. While the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other specialized agencies had provided funding for vocational training programs, the level of existing outlays had proven inadequate. Chronic unemployment thus could serve as a strong potential motivation for participation in irregular armed groups. Further, the estimated 50,000-100,000 fatalities resulting from the five-year civil conflict left many families without breadwinners, while women

8 United Nations Development Programme, Tajikistan: Human Development Report 2000, pp. 80-97. <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/tajikistan_2000_en.pdf>

were disproportionately affected by joblessness, constituting over half of the total female population.⁹ In response to these concerns, in 2002 Musaeva participated in the first and second Africa/Asia Parliamentarians Forum on “Human Security and Gender: The Role of the Legislature” organized by UNDP, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for the Advancement of Women (DESA/DAW) and UNESCAP and hosted by the governments of Morocco¹⁰ and Thailand.¹¹

A similar linkage is suggested in the statement delivered by former Deputy Prime Minister Kozidavlat Koimdodov at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, which expressed the government’s conviction that poverty served as a primary enabler of social problems such as demographic instability and interethnic disputes. He recommended that for their successful resolution in Tajikistan and other developing and transitional countries, the international community should devote more serious attention to introducing mechanisms for transmission of foreign aid to support sustainable growth, as previously established by the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development.¹² In a subsequent statement to the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in September 2005, President Rakhmon identified Tajikistan as “vivid and positive proof” of the interconnection between security and development, in which advances in the national

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- 9 International Crisis Group, *Tajikistan: An Uncertain Peace*. ICG Asia Report No. 30, Osh/Brussels, 24 December 2001, pp. 18, 20-21. <<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/central-asia/tajikistan/Tajikistan%20An%20Uncertain%20Peace.pdf>> (Accessed April 19, 2014)
 - 10 List of Participants, *Africa/Asia Parliamentarians Forum on Human Security and Gender*, Marrakech, Morocco, 24-26 March 2002. <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/meetings/forum/AfricaAsia/Participants.pdf>>
 - 11 *Second Asia/Africa Parliamentarian Forum on Human Security and Gender “The Role of the Legislature”*, Bangkok, Thailand, 6-8 December 2002: Report.
 - 12 *Tajikistan: Statement by His Excellency Dr. Kozidavlat Koimdodov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 04 September 2002*. <<http://www.un.org/events/wssd/statements/tajikistanE.htm>? (Accessed April 29, 2014).

social and economic welfare were essential to preventing a recurrence of internal conflict.¹³

The generation of soft security discourse has also extended beyond the upper echelons of the regime to government-affiliated intellectuals and representatives of minority political parties in the Supreme Assembly (Majlisi Oli). In the year following the landmark legislative elections of February-March 2000, Muhiiddin Kabiri, then deputy chairman of the moderate Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (Hizbi Nahzati Islomii Tojikiston/HNIT), maintained that the persistence of dire socio-economic conditions among its supporters in the central Garm/Rasht Valley subregion posed a high risk for radicalization, which could seriously challenge post-war stability.¹⁴ Similarly, political analyst and former United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan/Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding (UNMOT/UNTOP) official Rashid Ghani Abdullo, and former presidential adviser and chief negotiator Ibrahim Usmon asserted that despite an increase in gross domestic product (GDP) by 8.5 per cent between 1997 and 2001 and the reassertion of control over the national territory by the central government, the preservation of peace was endangered by the fact that 80 per cent of the population continued to subsist below the poverty level. This was exacerbated by political and economic disparities between the northern and southern areas of the country and a three-year cycle of drought and flooding that resulted in crop damage and severe food shortages in southwestern Khatlon province (viloyati mukhtor), which had played a prominent role in the armed resistance.¹⁵

Yet, the U.S. intervention in neighboring Afghanistan in

13 Permanent Mission Of The Republic Of Tajikistan To The United Nations, Statement by H.E. Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, September 14, 2005, United Nations Headquarters. <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/WVS05_taj050914eng.pdf>

14 International Crisis Group, *Tajikistan: An Uncertain Peace*, pp. 8, 21, n143.

15 Rashid Abdullo, "Poverty is Biggest Threat to Peace", Institute for War & Peace Reporting Central Asia, Issue 27, June 2002. <<http://iwpr.net/report-news/poverty-biggest-threat-peace>> (Accessed April 16, 2014)

October 2001 and the early willingness of the Rakhmon government to provide logistical support for Operation Enduring Freedom and the Global War on Terror (GWOT) introduced a new dynamic, as the domestic economy benefited from an influx of direct monetary credits by Washington and Paris, and guarantees of increased foreign assistance by the World Bank, IMF and EBRD.¹⁶ As American and European involvement in the region deepened with the full deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in October 2003, the official association of terrorism with new security challenges and the role of development aid in neutralizing them was reinforced, as exemplified in the address delivered by economist and former foreign minister Talbak Nazarov before the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC):

“In our view, one of the priority tasks is deprivation of terrorism of its social basis by means of rendering active support to the economies of developing countries. It is well known that poverty in combination with attendant social problems such as illicit drug trafficking, high unemployment level and illegal migration of population is [the] extremely rich soil for spreading international terrorist forces. We suppose that these reasons are the dangerous destabilizing factor[s] for [the] regional stability.”¹⁷

Similarly, in October 2007, current Minister of Foreign Affairs and former UN Ambassador Sirodjidin Aslov made an explicit association between the national contribution to counter-terrorism policies and the need to address its “root causes” in poverty, negative consequences of globalization, the illicit drug trade and organized crime.¹⁸ Finally, as a

16 Emma Sandström, *Afghanistan and Central Asia After September 11—the Security-Political Development*, FOI Swedish Defence Research Agency, March 2003, pp. 51-52. <http://www.foi.se/ReportFiles/foir_0821.pdf> (Accessed May, 2014)

17 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Address by Talbak Nazarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan at the Meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs*, 4 June 2003. <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-60BD84A50BE26CFF/natolive/opinions_20466.htm?selectedLocale=en> (Accessed April 29, 2014)

18 *Statement by Sirodjinin Aslov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations in the General Debate of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly*. <<http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/62/2007/pdfs/tajikistan-en.pdf>> (Accessed May 1, 2014); Hamrokhon Zarifi, *Tajikistan and the OSCE Regional Security System*, Dushanbe, Irfon, 2013, pp. 121, 136.

corollary to its cooperation with regional security institutions such as the OSCE, the Tajik foreign policy establishment has also identified a role for the country as a protective bulwark or shield for Europe and Eurasia against traditional and nontraditional threats, including the risk of escalation of the Afghan conflict, spread of international terrorism, drug-trafficking, uncontrolled migration and arms smuggling. Thus, towards the end of the past decade, the Rakhmon government had forged a security doctrine that implied direct compatibility between its hosting and facilitation of Western-led counter-insurgency operations, and the agenda of achieving sustainable development through foreign assistance.

However, the ten-year period of general stability fostered by gradual economic recovery combined with a repressive state apparatus was eventually interrupted by several circumstances. First, the global economic recession in 2008-2009 produced a sharp decline in remittances from Tajik migrant laborers in the Russian Federation which provide a major source of income (as much as 40 to 52 per cent of GDP), combined with a breakdown of energy supplies during the harsh winter season. These conditions threatened to produce mass unemployment among the younger population, with limited capacity for small and medium-size enterprises to absorb future shocks.¹⁹ The common state-sponsored practice of labor migration also performs two significant security-related functions: it constitutes an informal welfare system for impoverished families, while the seasonal departure of a large proportion of the young male population relieves pressure on public services and infrastructure as well as removes a potential source of participation in political opposition activities. The parallel migrant labor economy is further facilitated by state-owned transportation companies and banks, which generate

19 Chatham House, REP Roundtable Summary, Tajikistan's Domestic and Regional Priorities and Challenges, 15 October 2009, pp. 2-3. <<http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/151009tajikistan.pdf>>

additional revenues for national elites.²⁰

Secondly, a wave of internal violence and social unrest emerged beginning in February 2008 with an armed incident between Special Purpose Police Unit (OMON) and Regional Directorate for Control of Organised Crime (ROBOP) personnel led by a former UTO commander in Gharm/Rasht. This was followed in June by rare mass demonstrations in Khorog, provincial capital of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) populated by the Pamiri ethnic minority, in response to the deployment of security personnel against a purported alliance of criminal syndicates and former armed opposition leaders. From May-July 2009, special forces were deployed to halt an incursion by a group of alleged Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) insurgents across the Afghan-Tajik border and attack on a government facility at Tavildara led by former UTO commander Abdullo Mullo. During August-September 2010, further counter-insurgency operations were launched after a prison outbreak of IMU fighters in Dushanbe was followed by the country's first recorded suicide bombing at a police station in northern Khujand, and an ambush of a National Guard convoy in the Kamarob Gorge that killed nearly thirty troops.²¹ Finally, the 2008 Khorog incident saw a sequel in July-August 2012, when the assassination of General Abdullo Nazarov, head of the local branch of the State Committee for National Security (GKNB) followed with a massive retaliation by the National Guard, Interior Troops, Mobile Forces and snipers under the guise of an anti-drug trafficking operation, resulting in over a dozen civilian casualties including several demonstrators. The local cycle of violence has continued with anti-government protests following a gunfight between a police unit and drug traffickers resulting in civilian deaths during May

20 International Crisis Group, Tajikistan: On The Road To Failure, Asia Report N°162 – 12 February 2009, pp. 10-11.

21 International Crisis Group, Tajikistan: On The Road To Failure, Asia Report N°162 – 12 February 2009, pp. 6-8; Tajikistan: The Changing Insurgent Threats, Asia Report N° 205 – 24 May 2011, pp. 5-7.

2014.²² These negative indicators of the state's continued ability to maintain control have posed an additional political challenge for the central government. While providers of personnel training and security assistance such as the U.S. and NATO may continue to sanction necessary countermeasures against extremism and terrorism, the discrepancy between overt reliance on heavy-handed military tactics versus the prioritization of "soft threats" in its public diplomacy may result in external criticism of the regime's domestic policies, thus increasing pressures to maintain credibility in the eyes of the international community. This contradictory dynamic may serve to further reinforce the linkage between elite threat perceptions and the pursuit of greater moral and material support from prominent states and international organizations in the developing world that may identify with such problematic conditions in their own post-colonial national experiences. The empirical substance of these relationships is presented in the following sections.

22 Jim Nichol, Tajikistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests, Congressional Research Service, September 25, 2013, pp. 5-6.; Farangis Najibullah, "Explainer: What's Going On In Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan?", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 29 May 2014. <<http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-explainer-gorno-badakhshan/25403342.html>>



TAJKISTAN AND GLOBAL SOUTH DIPLOMACY: FROM 2000 TO PRESENT

The pursuit of diplomatic associations with the institutions of the Global South by Tajik leaders has sought to address the various global, regional and internal issues facing the country in the post-civil war era, which it has been unable to resolve independently.²³ This activity has been further facilitated by the pursuit of the “open door” foreign policy (xorici siyesati darxoi boz) strategy first publicly introduced by President Rakhmon in December 2002. This concept was originally defined as a shift from heavy reliance upon Russian security assistance during the first decade of independence toward an equal level of defence and economic cooperation with the U.S. and the European Union. More recently, the executive has identified it as a response to the prevalence of threats in the current global climate such as “arms races, international terrorism, political extremism, fundamentalism, separatism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” by pursuing “relations of friendship, disinterested and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries of the world.”²⁴ The opportunities for expanded foreign relations created by the entry of the Western powers into the region after September 2001 were thus gradually extended to the pursuit of multilateral engagements with a larger set of partners representing the interests of developing countries.²⁵ This activity has been directed toward three principal areas:

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- 23 Mehrali Toshmuhammadov, “Civil War in Tajikistan and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation”, Hokkaido University Center of Slavic Researches, 21st Century COE programme “Making a Discipline of Slavic Eurasian Studies: Meso-Areas and Globalization”, Sapporo, 2004, p. 19. http://scr-h.slavhokudai.ac.jp/pdf_seminar/040607tasmuhammadov_eng.pdf
- 24 Jim Nichol, Tajikistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests, Congressional Research Service, September 25, 2013, pp. 12-13.
- 25 Lena Johnson, Tajikistan in the New Central Asia: Geopolitics, Great Power Rivalry and Radical Islam, I.B. Tauris, 2006, p. 178.

1) deliberative organs and specialized agencies of the UN system (UNDP, UNCTAD, UNESCAP, ECOSOC), 2) traditional advocacy forums of “Third World” states (OIC, G-77, NAM), and 3), organizations that seek to promote Asian regionalism and South-South cooperation (AAPP/APA, ICAPP, AFPPD, AMED, ACD). Each of these provide different types of avenues through which Tajik elites advertise and seek to receive external assistance to address the perceived development-security nexus, with a prominent role by the Asian and African department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The nature of Dushanbe’s interactions with each of these structures is summarized below.

THE UN SYSTEM

Tajikistan’s intimate relationship with the UN is rooted in the extensive involvement of international aid agencies, financial institutions and intergovernmental organizations in the country that was set in motion during the 1992-1997 civil war. This orientation was further solidified by its commitment to the UN Millennium Declaration that established the eight MDGs in September 2000, which linked domestic economic reform and development policy objectives to the UN system via successive progress reports, the first of which was published in 2003.²⁶ The domestic-international interface was reaffirmed in the National Development Strategy (NDS) and its adjoining Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which was officially released in 2006.²⁷ As a result of its inherently asymmetric relationship with the donor community, in the first years of the 21st century the Tajik foreign policy establishment adopted a classical “Third Worldist” platform

26 Progress toward the Millennium Development Goals: Tajikistan 2003. UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. <<http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Tajikistan/Tajikistan%20MDG.pdf>>

27 National Development Strategy Of The Republic Of Tajikistan For The Period To 2015. State Committee on Investments and State Property Management of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, August 2006. <http://amcu.gki.tj/eng/images/stories/nds_en.pdf>

in advocating debt relief for the lower-income nations, which would allow for reinvestment in domestic economies and the rebuilding of social infrastructure, as well as criticism of the lack of recognition of the necessity for policy reform among creditors and lending institutions.²⁸ These views were echoed by President Rakhmon, who emphasized the failure to acknowledge the debt burden of post-conflict countries among donor states such as the G-8, and the need to introduce innovations such as “debts cancellation in exchange for sustainable development”.²⁹ In a subsequent statement to the 60th session of the UN General Assembly by Talbak Nazarov in September 2005, these arguments were extended to an insistence on increases in the provision of foreign aid to the level necessary for Tajikistan to fulfill its status as a test case for the attainment of the MDGs.³⁰ As a result of this bargaining position, its eligibility for assignment to the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) category (shared only by Cambodia) was granted by the IMF in December 2005.³¹

The intensification of Dushanbe’s associations with the Global South at the turn of the last decade has also coincided with advances in public diplomacy via facilities such as South-South News (SSN), a World Wide Web-based multimedia platform of the International Organization for South-South Cooperation (IOSSC) established at the 16th Session of the UN High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation

28 Permanent Mission Of The Republic Of Tajikistan To The United Nations, Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Academician Talbak Nazarov at the 59th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, September 30, 2004, New York.

29 Statement by H.E. Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, paragraph 8.

30 Permanent Mission Of The Republic Of Tajikistan To The United Nations, Statement by Academician Talbak Nazarov, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the 60th session of the UN General Assembly, New York, 20 September 2005, pp. <<http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/60/statements/taji050920eng.pdf>> (Accessed April 19, 2014)

31 International Monetary Fund Republic Of Tajikistan, Staff Assessment of Qualification for the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, Approved by David Owen and Juha Kähkönen, December 8, 2005. <<http://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2005/TJK.pdf>>

in February 2010, in which Tajikistan was the only former Soviet republic to participate.³² SSN has organized interviews and events featuring officials such as former Prime Minister Oqil Oqilov, Deputy Prime Minister Rukiya Kurbanova, UN Permanent Mission First Secretary Idibek Kalandarov and current Minister of Foreign Affairs Sirodjidin Aslov (who in December 2011 was also appointed ambassador to Cuba³³), to promote the Rakhmon government's development-related activities and policy goals. In April 2011, Aslov signed a cooperation agreement with UN Ambassador John W. Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, which currently holds the High-Level Committee presidency.³⁴ In September 2014, Prime Minister Kokhil Rasulzoda accepted recognition by South-South Awards on behalf of President Rakhmon for his work in "promoting and highlighting the importance of clean water for sustainable development, and advocating for water security as a component of the post-2015 development agenda".³⁵

The scope of Dushanbe's policy objectives behind these activities can be further discerned from its participation in the 10th Annual Ministerial Meeting of Land-Locked Developing Countries in September 2011. Seeking support for Kyrgyzstan's candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the 2012-2013 term, Deputy Foreign Minister Dinara Kemelova referred to "the weak voice of the land-locked developing countries in international affairs",

32 United Nations, Report of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation Sixteenth session (4 February 2010), General Assembly Official Records Sixty-fifth Session Supplement No. 39, p. 15. <<http://ssc.undp.org/content/dam/ssc/documents/HLC%20Reports/HLC%20Report%2016th%20Session.pdf>>

33 Avaz Yuldoshev, "Tajikistan's Permanent Representative to UN Appointed Tajik Ambassador to Cuba", Media group/Tajikistan Asia-Plus, 20 December 2011. <<http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-s-permanent-representative-un-appointed-tajik-ambassador-cuba>>

34 Connor Schratz, "Tajikistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Sign Diplomatic Agreement: New relationship ties together Central Asia, the Caribbean", South-South News, 12 April, 2011. <<http://southsouthnews.com/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?NewsId=e6b92680-6f4a-4bec-9bf1-7b08e1c18b17>>

35 South-South News, H.E. Mr. Kokhir Rasulzoda, Prime Minister of Tajikistan, South-South Awards – 2014. <http://www.southsouthnews.com/special-coverage/2014-south-south-awards-reception/player/150/3374>

and the need for greater representation in international institutions. In contrast, Tajik Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zarifi referred only to increasing the volume of trade through development of transport routes, communication services and energy infrastructure in Central Asia, the potential for free movement of goods, labor and capital to play a positive role in fighting global crises, and the importance of promoting regional trade and economic cooperation in accelerating achievement of the MDGs.³⁶ This distinction suggests a more conventional focus by Tajik elites upon promoting localized economic concerns and their possible contribution to global governance, rather than unity of purpose among developing nations in altering the international status quo. This serves to demonstrate the variation in motivations for affiliation with Global South positions across former Soviet states.

36 UN-OHRLLS, Report of the 10th Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries, United Nations Headquarters New York, 23 September 2011, pp. 7-8. <<http://unohrlls.org/UserFiles/File/LLDC%20Documents/10th%20ministerial%20meeting%202011/Report%20of%20the%2010th%20LLDCs%20ministerial%20meeting.pdf>>

“THIRD WORLDIST” FORUMS

In the early 2000s, Tajik bilateral diplomatic engagements began to branch out to include a wider range of Asian and African countries, which subsequently fostered greater involvement in international advocacy forums of developing nations. The trend was initiated with mutual state visits with representatives of Indonesia (a founding member of NAM) in October 2003, which gradually deepened interactions between Dushanbe and Jakarta. In addition to delivering an address at the 2005 Asian-African Summit, President Rahmon also conducted sideline meetings with major Global South figures such as Indonesian President Susilo Yudhoyono, People’s Republic of China (PRC) Chairman Hu Jintao, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, President of Pakistan Parviz Musharraf, and Iranian Vice-President Riza Arif.³⁷ Similarly, the precedent for the participation of Tajik representatives in NAM occurred in the context of a state visit to Tehran by Hamrokhon Zarifi during the 15th Ministerial Conference on “Solidarity for Peace and Justice” in July 2008³⁸, in which the accompanying head of the foreign policy agency attended the opening and closing ceremonies as a guest.³⁹ Following admission with observer status at the 15th NAM Summit of Heads of State and Government in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in July 2009, President Rakhmon delivered a statement which directly addressed the role of international organizations in preserving international security through alleviating economic crisis:

“No institution or... [regional] alliance of countries are capable of resolving main problems that have appeared in major fields of global economic relations... [In] this area, Tajikistan supports the idea of uniting cooperation of the South with South, the strengthening of political solidarity in the conditions of globalization of international relations, the liberalization and deepening of mutual dependence of the global economy...The member states of NAM should take] urgent and long-term counter-measures to lessen the adverse

37 Tajikistan Diplomacy: The past and the present. Volume 1, Hamrokhon Zarifi ed. Dushanbe: «Irfon», 2009, p. 123.

38 Ibid, p. 139.

39 Report Of The 15th Ministerial Conference of The Non-Aligned Movement, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 29-30 July 2008, p. 2. <<http://nam.gov.ir/Portal/File/ShowFile.aspx?ID=7357f879-8386-46a4-8818-21ff4baf21f0>> (Accessed April 19, 2014)

effects of the global economic crisis especially on the poor strata of the population. Our priority task is to set up a world order that will eliminate the existing threats and prevent the emergence of new ones and thus become a guarantor of peace at all levels.”⁴⁰

Despite not seeking full membership, Tajik officials have continued active participation in NAM conventions in subsequent years. First Deputy Foreign Minister Abdullo Yuldoshev (who was recently appointed ambassador to Saudi Arabia) attended the Special Nonaligned Movement Ministerial Meeting (SNAMMM) on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development in Manila, Philippines on 17-18 March 2010, while President Rakhmon received an invitation to the high-profile 16th Summit in Tehran in August 2012, where he met Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Most recently, Sirodjidin Aslov participated in the general dialogue of the 17th Summit in Algiers in May 2014, in which he expressed support on issues such as nuclear weapon free-zones, Palestinian statehood, Afghan reconstruction, UN structural reform, African peacekeeping operations, achievement of the MDGs, and South-South cooperation, and held bilateral meetings with Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Ziror Ahmad Usmani, UN Deputy Secretary General Susanna Malcorra and the representative of the World Food Programme.⁴¹ Tajikistan has also been an active participant in the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) since becoming a member in December 1992, which in addition to cooperative management of religious affairs promotes sustainable development among Muslim-majority and minority states. On 25 September 2003, an international conference of 150 investors representing the OIC Islamic Development Bank (IDB) member states convened in

40 BBC Monitoring Central Asia Unit, “Tajik leader urges NAM summit to take counter steps to offset crisis impact”, 17 July 2009.

41 “Intervention of Mr. Sirodjidin Aslov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, during General Debate at the 17th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, 30 May 2014. <<http://mfa.tj/en/speeches-articles-interviews/intervention-of-the-minister-of-foreign-affairs-during-general-debate-at-the-17th-ministerial-conference-of-the-non-aligned-movement.html>>; “Meetings of the Foreign Minister on the sidelines of the Conference of Non-Aligned Movement”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, 30 May 2014. <<http://mfa.tj/en/news-and-events/meetings-of-the-foreign-minister-on-the-sidelines-of-the-conference-of-non-aligned-movement.html>>

Dushanbe, which resolved to establish an Investment Holding with a Charter Fund totaling 200,000,000 USD. By 2004, these had provided loans and grants totaling 60,000,000 and nearly 2,000,000 USD respectively. From 2001 to 2003, IDB also provided 52,000,000 USD in credit and technical aid in support of a three-year development program in the health, transport, education, and energy sectors, as well as an additional 64,000,000 USD for multiple hydroelectric power, precious metals mining and transport infrastructure projects.⁴²

The ratification of the second OIC Charter approved the previous year at the 11th Islamic Summit in Dakar, Senegal by the Tajik Supreme Assembly in April 2009 set the stage for deepened cooperation.⁴³ In May of the same year, Abdullo Yuldoshev also served as chairman of the 2nd OIC Business Forum/13th Private Sector Meeting for the Promotion of Trade and Joint Venture Investments among Islamic Countries.⁴⁴ The meeting resulted in the Dushanbe Economic Declaration, which included recommendations for the contribution of foreign direct investment and lines of credit by IDB and its subsidiary Islamic Corporation for the Development of Private Sector (ICD) and Investment and Export Credit and Insurance (ICIEC) to the Tajik business and financial sectors. Importantly, in May 2010, Dushanbe hosted the 37th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers—the first Central Asian member state to do so—under the motto “Shared Vision of a More Secure and Prosperous Islamic World”. In an unprecedented show of support for a long-standing Third Worldist platform, in

42 Mehrali Toshmuhammadov, “Civil War in Tajikistan and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation”, 2004, p. 19. <http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/pdf_seminar/040607tasmuhammadov_eng.pdf> ; Geoffrey F. Gresh, “The Rise of Islamic Banking and Finance in Central Asia”, *Al-Nakhla: The Fletcher School Online Journal for issues related to Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization*, Fall 2007, p. 8. <http://fletcher.archive.tusm-oit.org/al_nakhlah/archives/Fall2007/Gresh_AN.pdf>

43 Avaz Yuldoshev, “Parliament ratifies new Charter of OIC”, *Asia-Plus*, April 8, 2009. <<http://news.tj/en/news/parliament-ratifies-new-charter-oic>>

44 Report of the 2nd OIC Business Forum - 13th Private Sector Meeting for the Promotion of Trade and Joint Venture Investments among Islamic Countries, Dushanbe-Republic of Tajikistan 14th May 2010, p. 6. <<http://www.comcec.org/UserFiles/File/26.%C4%B0sedak/Kurulu%C5%9Flar%20Ar/6.ICCI%20-%20Report%20on%20Private%20Sector%20Meetings-ar.pdf>>

October of the same year, Aslov delivered a statement on behalf of the OIC to the 6404th Meeting of the UN Security Council which criticized Israeli policies toward the occupied Palestinian territories, Gaza, and the Golan Heights.⁴⁵

Finally, Tajikistan's entry into the G-77 & China is directly linked to its promotion of water resource management policy. Its public involvement was initiated with an address on behalf of then G-77 chairman UN Permanent Representative of Yemen Abdullah M. Alsaidi at the International High Level Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 in Dushanbe in June 2010.⁴⁶ Since gaining membership, Tajik representatives have delivered a total of twelve high-level statements aligned with G-77 positions in summit meetings and in the UN General Assembly: Sirodjiddin Aslov on universal access to drinking water, energy and gender equality⁴⁷; head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Asian and African department Khusrav Noziri pertaining to sustainable growth, universal access to energy and women's empowerment⁴⁸; Hamrokhon Zarifi on water use and

45 United Nations Security Council Sixty-fifth year, 6404th meeting, Monday, 18 October 2010, 3 p.m. New York Provisional, pp. 12-13. <<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Lebanon%20SPV%206404%20res%201.pdf>>

46 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, International High Level Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015. Edited by Hamrokhon Zarifi Dushanbe, "Irfon", 2010, pp. 32-34. <http://mfa.tj/files/kitobkhona/kitobi_ob_rus_eng/kitobi_ob_eng.pdf>

47 United Nations Sixty-eighth General Assembly, Second Committee, 29th and 30th Meetings (AM & PM), General Assembly President Calls Financial Resources 'Lifblood' of Race to Meet Development Targets, 5 November 2013. <<http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/gaef3383.doc.htm>>

48 United Nations Sixty-sixth General Assembly, Second Committee, 4th Meeting (AM & PM), "Europe Hardest-Hit in 'Great Recession', Second Committee Told as It Holds Dialogue with Heads of United Nations Regional Commissions", 4 October 2011. <<http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/gaef3306.doc.htm>>; United Nations Sixty-sixth General Assembly, Third Committee, 11th & 12th Meetings (AM & PM), 11 October 2011, p. 9. <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Document1_66.pdf>; United Nations Sixty-seventh General Assembly, Third Committee, 12th & 13th Meetings (AM & PM), "Too Many Children Being Left Behind Due to Poverty, Malnutrition, 'Unpardonable Discrimination', UN Children's Fund Head Tells Third Committee", 17 October 2012. <<http://www.un.org/press/en/2012/gashc4042.doc.htm>>

sustainable development⁴⁹; Idibek Kalandarov on climate change, and Mahmamin Mahmaminov on efficiency of energy supplies, regulation of labour migration, the post-2015 development agenda, and the need to address the conditions faced by land-locked developing countries (LLDCs).⁵⁰

ASIAN REGIONALISM AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

One of the earliest precedents for Tajik participation in cross-regional diplomacy was its involvement in the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP), precursor to the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) since its inaugural meeting in

49 Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan at the 36th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Group 77 and China (New York, September 28, 2012), Embassy of Tajikistan to Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Mission to EU, NATO, UNESCO. <<http://www.tajikembassy.be/content/statement-minister-foreign-affairs-tajikistan-36th-meeting-foreign-ministers-group-77-and>>

50 Statement by H.E. Sirodjidin Aslov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the UN at 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, New York, 28 February 2011; Statement by the Representative of Tajikistan at the Third Committee of the 66th session of UN General Assembly on advancement of women (agenda item 28), New York, October 11, 2011; United Nations, Sixty-sixth General Assembly, Second Committee, 30th & 31st Meetings (AM & PM), "Speakers in Second Committee Make Case for Third United Nations Conference on Urban Development as They Consider Work of UN-Habitat", 1 November 2011. <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/gaef3323.doc.htm>>; United Nations, Sixty-eighth General Assembly, Plenary, 25th and 26th Meetings (AM & PM), "Crucial Importance of Strengthening Link between Migrants, Post-2015 Development Agenda Stressed as General Assembly Adopts Declaration", 3 October 2013. <<http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/ga11434.doc.htm>>; Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the UN Ambassador Sirodjidin Aslov (November 5, 2013, New York); Statement by H.E. Mr. Mahmamin Mahmaminov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the UN, at G77 and China Summit (June 14-15, 2014, Santa Cruz, Bolivia); Statement by H. E. Mr. Mahmamin Mahmaminov before the Second Committee of the 69th Session of the UNGA, 13 October 2014; and Statement By The Head Of Delegation Of The Republic Of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Mahmamin Mahmaminov At The 2nd Second United Nations Conference On Landlocked Developing Countries (Vienna, 3-5 November 2014), Permanent Mission of Tajikistan to the United Nations.

Phnom Penh, Cambodia in 2000⁵¹, and acceptance as a full voting member at the First Plenary Session of the 3rd Annual Conference in Beijing in April 2002.⁵² At the same event, speaker of the upper house of the Tajik Supreme Assembly Makhmadsaid Ubaidullayev conducted a high-level meeting with Li Peng, then Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), in which they discussed post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan and cooperation in counter-terrorism and regional security.⁵³ During the 7th and final meeting of the General Assembly of AAPP in Tehran in November 2006, Assembly of Representatives vice-speaker Abdullo Dolatov held a bilateral engagement with Iranian Parliament Speaker Gholam Ali Haddad Adel, which emphasized the significant contribution of the Islamic Republic to economic aid and reconstruction in Tajikistan.⁵⁴ In November 2007, first deputy chairman of the Assembly of Representatives (Majlisi Namoyandagon) Safar Safarov led a delegation to the Second APA Plenary in Tehran, which produced the Tehran Declaration containing a Resolution on Economic and Sustainable Development and a Plan of Action on Alleviating Poverty in Asia.⁵⁵ Most recently, in February 2014 Assembly of Representatives chairman Shukurjon Zuhurov met with APA Secretary-General Mohammad Hadi Nejad-Hosseinian on the sidelines of the 9th Conference of the OIC Parliamentary Union to discuss cooperation on regional peace and stability, economic development and

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- 51 Dialogue and Research Monitor, "Building Sustainable Peace and Democracy for the New Millennium: A Challenge for Parliamentarians, Phnom Penh, 22-26 January", Japan Center for International Exchange. <<http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/Nov01/track1.html>>
- 52 "Li Peng Elected as AAPP Chairman", Xinhua News Agency, April 18, 2002.
- 53 "Li Peng Hopes AAPP Will Help Peace, Stability in Central Asia", People's Daily, 22 April 2002. <http://en.people.cn/200204/18/eng20020418_94318.shtml>
- 54 "Speaker Calls for Boost of Iran-Tajikistan Cooperation", Fars News Agency, 12 November 2006.
- 55 Tajikistan Diplomacy: The past and the present. Volume 1, Hamrokhon Zarifi ed. Dushanbe: «Irfon», 2009, p. 97. <http://mfa.tj/files/kitobkhona/tajikistan_diplomacy_the_past_and_the_present_1/tajikistan_diplomacy_the_past_and_the_present_en.pdf> ; Asian Parliamentary Assembly, Tehran Declaration 2007, Second Session of the Plenary, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 19 -20 November 2007. <http://www.asianparl.net/docs/Plenary/2007/Tehran_Declaration-v.2.pdf> (Accessed April 29, 2014)

environmental protection.⁵⁶

While representatives of the parliamentary minority Communist Party of Tajikistan (Hizbi Komunistii Tojikiston/HKT) and HNIT have attended the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) since the 2nd General Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2002, in recent years the ruling People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (Hizbi Khalqi-Demokrati Tojikiston/HKDT) has become an active participant, sending delegations led by deputy chairman Asror Latipov to the ICAPP Conference on Development and People's Access in Nanning, PRC in September 2011, and the special session on "Promote Green Development" in X'ian, PRC in May 2013. In addition, the Committee on Social, Family and Health Issues of the Assembly of Representatives became a member of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) in 2001, within which female lawmakers have been active in multiple conferences and programmes of the Asia-Pacific and East Asian countries related to gender and development.⁵⁷

Tajikistan further extended its southern and eastern vectors beginning with the Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED) in Singapore in June 2005 and the AMED II Ministerial Meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in April 2008, where Zarifi spoke on expanding trade and investment partnerships between regions, forged an agreement on strengthening diplomatic relations and economic cooperation with the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) and discussed issues such as Afghanistan and expansion of regional transport and communications networks.⁵⁸ President Rakhmon was also the only executive among Central Asian participants to serve as both vice chair and first addressee of the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF) Summit on "Water Security:

56 "Tajik parliamentary speaker meets APA SG in Tehran to discuss cooperation issues", Asia-Plus, 18 February 2014. <<http://news.tj/en/news/tajik-parliamentary-speaker-meets-apa-sg-tehran-discuss-cooperation-issues>>

57 "Tajik female MPs participate in forum of parliamentarians on population and gender problems", Asia-Plus, 13 November 2014. <<http://news.tj/en/news/tajik-female-mps-participate-forum-parliamentarians-population-and-gender-problems>>

58 Mavjouda Hasanova, "Tajikistan establishes contacts with Laos", Asia-Plus, April 7, 2008. <<http://www.news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-establishes-contacts-laos>> (Accessed June 9, 2014)

Leadership and Commitment” in Beppu, Japan in December 2007, followed by the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit “Water Security and Water related Disaster Challenges: Leadership and Commitment” in Bangkok, Thailand in May 2013. In May 2011, a Special Event of the World Water Development Report (WWDR) series was organized in coordination with UN Permanent Representative and Foreign Minister of Bangladesh A.K. Abdul Momen at the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Istanbul.⁵⁹

While Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian state to join the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) in 2003 and has played a predominant role in energy, transport, agriculture and financial cooperation projects, Tajikistan has increasingly sought to utilize it as a cross-regional policy platform since admission as a full member at the Fifth Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Doha, Qatar in May 2006. At the 1st ACD Summit in Kuwait in October 2012, President Rakhmon addressed the lack of comprehensive access to electrical power supplies and the need to prioritize energy cooperation, and extended a proposal for the establishment of a Provisional Secretariat in conjunction with Kuwait and Thailand⁶⁰, as well as a working group on recommendations which would serve to further institutionalize and strengthen ACD working mechanisms.⁶¹ Dushanbe assumed the ACD chairmanship in 2013, during which it developed the concept “Towards

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- 59 List Of Summit Participants Of The 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit, 4 December 2007. <http://www.apwf.org/archive/documents/summit/071204_List_of_summit_participants_of_the_1st_APWS_rev.pdf> ; “23.05.2011 - The Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) May 9-13th, Istanbul, Turkey.” <<http://www.unwater.org/news-events/news-details/en/c/207617/>>
- 60 Report of the 1st Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit, State of Kuwait, 15-17 October 2012, p. 3. <http://www.acddialogue.com/dialogue/ACDSummit/Report%20of%20the%20First%20Asia%20Cooperation%20Dialogue%20Summit_Lao%20PDR_24%20Jan.pdf> ; Statement by President of the Republic of Tajikistan H. E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon at the First Summit of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (Kuwait, 17 October 2012). <<http://www.acddialogue.com/upload/1st%20ACD%20Summit/Tajikistans%20statement.doc>>
- 61 Norafidah Ismail, “The Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD): Progress and Potential”, Middle East Institute (MEI), May 22, 2013. <<http://www.mei.edu/content/asia-cooperation-dialogue-acd-progress-and-potential>> (Accessed April 19, 2014)

Economic Growth, Stability and Prosperity in Asia through Sustainable Development”, which emphasized prevention of threats to regional security. The logic of this association is articulated by Hamrokhon Zarifi:

“Expanding regional cooperation within the framework of integration organizations, which provide opportunities for relatively comprehensive implementation of the national goals at the era of globalization, is considered as a part of Tajikistan foreign policy. Within this context, necessity of assistance in strengthening international security and stability, and expanding fruitful cooperation with foreign countries requires from Tajikistan to intensify its participation in activities of such organizations. In this context, participation of Tajikistan in the Asia Cooperation Dialogue creates favorable conditions in order to achieve these goals.”⁶²

Tajikistan also served as host of the 11th Ministerial Meeting that produced the Dushanbe Declaration, in which it proposed to add “Water for Life” to the ACD areas of cooperation, establishment of an ACD Coordination Network among Early Warning Centres and information-sharing mechanisms for natural disaster response, and extended an offer to host the 3rd ACD Energy Forum. Most recently, during a first state visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain in May 2014, President Rakhmon concluded a joint statement with King Hamid bin al-Khalifa on cooperation in combating terrorism in the framework of mutual participation in ACD as well as NAM and the UN.⁶³

These connections have further extended to the Tajik financial sector, as former chairman of State Savings Bank “Amonatbank” and current Minister of Labour and Social Protection Mahmadamin Mahmadaminov was an invitee (along with representatives of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) to the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) International Workshop on South-South Cooperation, co-sponsored by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in New Delhi during March 2012. The meeting established the strategic goals of attaining energy independence, decreasing censorship and food security, and an appeal for cooperation

62 11th ACD Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Hamrokhon Zarifi Ed Dushanbe: “Irfon”, 2013, p. 4. <<http://mfa.tj/files/kitobkhona/acd/acd.pdf>>

63 Ibid, pp. 5-7; “Bahrain-Tajikistan joint statement”, Bahrain News Agency, 29 May 2014. <<http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/619981>>

in these areas from other participating countries.⁶⁴ Tajikistan has also become increasingly active in the “triangular cooperation” development model, which pairs low and middle-income Southern states in information or resource exchange programmes financed and administered via a Northern institution. In the past few years, Tajikistan has partnered with the World Bank Institute (WBI) South-South Experience Exchange Facility for implementation of projects related to hydroelectric power, mining and information and communications technologies (ICT) with countries such as Laos⁶⁵, Brazil⁶⁶, and India.⁶⁷

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The above policy brief has sought to account for the burgeoning interactions between Tajikistan and the traditionally defined “Third World” or Global South, which has remained a highly understudied topic among post-Soviet specialists. Much attention by observers regarding the country’s orientation in international politics has concentrated upon its attempted diversification away from dependence on Russian largesse, versus the increasing but relatively limited penetration of the U.S. and Euro-Atlantic institutions in the Central Asian region. The present study has instead sought to present evidence of a linkage between Dushanbe’s evolving development diplomacy and

64 Report of the 1st IBSA Conference of Labour Ministers, IBSA International Conference on South-South Cooperation: “Innovations in Public Employment Programmes & Sustainable Inclusive Growth”, New Delhi, India, 1-3 March 2012, pp. 11-12.

65 Supporting Large Hydropower Project Design and Planning in Tajikistan, South-South Knowledge Exchange Hub, September 29th, 2011, pp. 1-5. <<http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/results-story/pdf/1046>>

66 Developing the Mining Sector in Tajikistan, South-South Knowledge Exchange Hub, August 10th, 2012. <<http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/results-story/pdf/1076>>

67 Fostering Information and Communication Technologies for Public Sector Reforms in Tajikistan, South-South Knowledge Exchange Hub, February 12th, 2014. <http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/results-story/pdf/1377>

the security perceptions of Tajik elites, which assumes a relationship between multiple non-traditional threats and the likelihood of civil conflict, extremism and terrorism. It concludes that the overall purpose of this policy is to attract greater recognition and resources from the international community beyond the domain of the former Cold War contestants, not only in order to promote domestic stability, but also to guarantee these commitments by building a positive reputation as a responsible contributor to global governance for the country abroad. At the same time, the empirical record indicates that the identification of Tajik leaders with Global South positions and structures is not driven by traditional “Third Worldist” motives to challenge or reform the international political and economic status quo. Rather, it should be interpreted as an instrumental strategy to maintain foreign technical assistance, financial aid and investment through bilateral and multilateral engagements with governments of developing countries and their representative institutions.

