

## Kyrgyzstan: a White Ship Amidst the Ice of Post-Soviet Authoritarianism <sup>1</sup>

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## SUMMARY

- Many, Russian politicians included, predicted that Kyrgyzstan's attempt to build a parliamentary system of government not typical for the Central Asian region would end in crisis, but this did not happen. The country successfully held a basically trouble-free parliamentary election in 2010 and then a presidential election in 2011. Political pluralism is in evidence and an opposition is starting to take shape. People are beginning to see themselves as participants in and not just objects of political life, and the authorities are now having to become more accountable to society.
- The economic situation in Kyrgyzstan remains very difficult, with low per-capita income, a large state debt and budget deficit, a low human development index, and widespread corruption, but in 2011, almost all economic sectors showed growth and the budget deficit decreased. How sustainable this trend will be will depend on political stability and the situation in the south of the country.
- The consequences of the ethnic pogroms that killed hundreds of people in 2010 will continue to affect the situation in Kyrgyzstan for a long time. Though the authorities are implementing a Concept for Ethnic Harmony, interethnic clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks continue in the south, ethnic Russians continue leaving the country, the use of the Russian language is on the decline, and there are very few Russians in the government bodies. Ethno-nationalism is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, causes of potential destabilization, and the Kyrgyzstani authorities are certainly aware of this.
- Kyrgyzstan pursues a multi-vector foreign policy, but its closest ties are with Russia, and this is acknowledged by all of the local leaders. President Atambayev's statement about the possible withdrawal of the Russian air force base from Kyrgyzstan looks more like a tactical move designed to balance the vague promise to close the U.S. base at Manas. Given that Moscow, like Washington, wants to see order in Afghanistan, and Bishkek reaps financial dividends from the American presence on its soil, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and the United States will ultimately reach a consensus, although before that there will be plenty more mutual accusations.
- Along with Russia and the U.S., China is the third main vector in Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy. Trade with China, involving tens of thousands of small and medium-sized businesses, automatically gives China political influence on the situation in Kyrgyzstan and makes Bishkek interested in maintaining stable relations with Beijing. China is not Russia's competitor in Kyrgyzstan, because each country has its own economic niche.
- Political pluralism uncharacteristic for the region, a complex ethnic mix, economic backwardness, and growing religious radicalism make Kyrgyzstan a potentially unstable place and the region's most vulnerable country. But although the country retains its clan-based organization and regionalist outlooks, and authoritarian views still persist, over the last two years it has functioned under a non-authoritarian system and has started moving in a different direction from that of its Central Asian neighbors.



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Each Central Asian country is unique in its own way. Independent Kyrgyzstan is unique in its recent political history. The country's first president, Askar Akayev, who was a scientist and intellectual, unlike his colleagues, all from the Soviet nomenklatura; an active society drawn to political pluralism; and two revolutions in the last decade have all made Kyrgyzstan an exception in the region.

Kyrgyzstan's uniqueness does not stop here. It is the only Central Asian country with a very distinctive south and north, relations between which are complicated and in some ways resemble the relations between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in Libya. The way these relations develop will be crucial for the country's stability and prosperity.

The make-up of Kyrgyzstan's population is complex and fast-changing. According to the 2009 census, of the total population of 5-5.5 million, Kyrgyz account for 71 percent (64 percent in 1991), Uzbeks for 14.3 percent (13.8 percent in 1991), and Russians for 7.8 percent (12.5 percent in 1991). In the south, Uzbeks account for 27 percent of the population (the figure is even higher in reality) and Russians for only 5.7 percent.

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**But there is a paradox:** Many analysts predicted that a crisis would follow the Kyrgyzstanis' attempt to build a parliamentary system of government after toppling President Kurmanbek Bakiyev in 2010, but this did not happen. The idea of parliamentary democracy in Kyrgyzstan drew skepticism, if not negative reactions, from the country's neighbors and in Moscow. President Dmitry Medvedev said quite clearly, "Our Kyrgyzstani friends have taken this (the parliamentary democracy) road, but I will tell you frankly that I fear this would be a disaster for Kyrgyzstan, and for Russia as well."<sup>2</sup>

The parliamentary election and then the presidential election that followed in 2011 were largely successful and trouble-free, however. The parliamentary election produced a coalition made up of the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SPDK), Ata-Meken, Ar-Namys, and the Republic party, and social democrat Almazbek Atambayev moved from being prime minister to taking the president's office. The SPDK has some dominance in the establishment. Its members include the president, Speaker of the Parliament (the Zhogorku Kenesh) Asilbek Zheenbekov, and former member and current Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov. At the same time, an opposition is emerging that includes one of the country's most influen-

tial political parties, Ata Zhurt, and the Butun Kyrgyzstan party, which did not make it into the parliament and is headed by ambitious politician Adakhan Madumarov.

Not all of these parties measure up to the classic standards. They are based in large part on regional groups and even family clans, and some of them can be characterized as more “southern” or “northern.” Nevertheless, political and clan pluralism is finding its expression through the modern institutions of parties and parliament. Some of the parties, such as the social democrats, have clearly formulated programs and lay claim to being parties of the country as a whole.

No matter how one regards the Kyrgyzstani elite today, no one can deny that it has a wealth of figures who stand out and that the country’s political stage is open, unlike that in most Central Asian countries. The country’s political landscape presents an impressionistic diversity and a varied assortment of colors, unencumbered by the dull tones of the closely welded corporate interests of the ruling class.

We should avoid two extremes in analyzing the situation in Kyrgyzstan: first, we should not see the clan and regionalism factors as absolute; second, we should not get euphoric illusions about Kyrgyzstani democracy. The system based on checks and balances taking shape in the country is still very fragile, but the very fact that it held up after

the tragic events in Osh and Jalal-Abad in 2010 shows its potential: Kyrgyzstan has been living under a non-authoritarian political regime for almost two years now.

It is also important to take a balanced look at the state of Kyrgyzstani society today. After two presidents, Akayev and Bakiyev, were toppled,

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a joke made the rounds in Bishkek: “What is revolution? Revolution is Kyrgyzstan’s national pastime.” There is a grain of truth in this joke, reflecting the Kyrgyz national character’s impulsiveness and outbursts of social and ethnic frenzy that in some cases

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spin out of control and even turn cruel. But one cannot deny that, unlike some of their neighbors, the Kyrgyz have overcome their inertness and developed a sense of self-worth and awareness that the “little man” is a subject and not just an object of political life.

This situation forces the authorities to become more accountable to society, which follows their actions closely. But at the same time, it is extremely difficult to govern a country in which people are living under constant stress.

**The economic situation** in Kyrgyzstan remains very difficult. With a per-capita GDP of \$2,162, Kyrgyzstan was in 14th place among the CIS countries in 2011, ahead only of Tajikistan (\$1,907), and behind Uzbekistan (\$2,959).<sup>3</sup>

The country's state debt comes to around \$3 billion.<sup>4</sup> Kyrgyzstan ended 2011 with a budget deficit of \$400 million.<sup>5</sup> Foreign debt had reached \$2.23 billion at the start of 2010. The shadow sector accounts for 60-70 percent of the total economy.<sup>6</sup> Official statistics put unemployment at 8.4 percent, but

Kyrgyzstan is in 126th place of 193 countries ranked on the human development index in 2011 (Russia is in 66th place, Uzbekistan in 117th, and Tajikistan in 127th).<sup>9</sup>

Corruption remains a problem in Kyrgyzstan. According to data from the country's Prosecutor General's Office, corruption cost Kyrgyzstan 24 billion soms (around \$500 million) in 2010.<sup>10</sup> Swedish researcher Johan Engvall, who specifically studied this issue, said that "corruption in Kyrgyzstan is inseparable from state institutions." In his view, the main problem in the energy supply situation, which has reached a critical point, is not the condition of the infrastructure itself but the theft of energy through various schemes. The country's traffic police operates as a business. "I have not seen any real changes in the style and goals of the new leadership," Engvall noted.<sup>11</sup> Reducing corruption will take time and effort in different areas, all the more so as any politician with business interests can turn out to be corrupt. No one has yet found the key to rooting out corruption in the post-Soviet space (Georgia has perhaps shown the greatest determination so far to resolve the problem).

But the economic collapse predicted by many has not come about. At his first press conference on December 29, 2011, President Atambayev said that "GDP is growing, we have held inflation in check, and the rumors of an imminent default

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unofficial data put it at as high as 20 percent.<sup>7</sup> According to UN data, around 1 million people in the country face food shortages all year round. The World Food Program sent aid worth \$17.5 million to the country in 2011.<sup>8</sup>

proved unfounded.”<sup>12</sup> In reality, Kyrgyzstan’s GDP grew by 5.7 percent (it posted a drop of 0.5 percent in 2010), with growth in almost every economic sector.<sup>13</sup> The inflation rate decreased by around 4 percent. Finally, the budget deficit, which had reached \$460 million in 2010, also decreased by \$60 million.

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**Kyrgyzstan’s political, social, and economic problems** are particularly serious in the context of the chronic ethno-political crisis in the south. People remember the bloody events in Osh in 1990, and the events of 2010 now add a new tragedy to their memories – the massacres by Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh and Jalal-Abad that left 476 people dead and hundreds wounded.<sup>14</sup> Social and economic problems and political provocation all played their part, but the extreme cruelty of these events had its roots in interethnic hostility, which is especially persistent and hard to overcome.

The investigation of events in Osh and Jalal-Abad continues. That an investigation is needed is clear, but at the same time, attempts to establish the “one and only true version of events,” mutual accusations, and constant incidents at the court hearings only serve to further fan

the flames of hatred. In February 2012, Prosecutor General Aida Salyanova, speaking at a meeting of the Zhogorku Kenesh, said that after questioning 48 politicians, including current President Atambayev and former President Otunbayeva, she had come to the conclusion that “they did not carry out their duties adequately, even though they themselves did not commit crimes.”<sup>15</sup>

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The government drafted a Concept for Ethnic Harmony, based on the principle of coexistence of different ethnic groups. Eleven new apartment blocks had been built by the end of 2011 to house people who lost their homes in the 2010 violence. Atambayev said that the Kyrgyzstani authorities “should build modern towns and not one big Osh village,” but people have been trying to move into these apartments following ethnic lines. The authorities have been making an effort to cleanse the media, especially the electronic ones, of materials that could provoke interethnic strife and have built four

memorials to the victims of the ethnic violence, including one that was given the name “A Mother’s Tears.”

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But interethnic clashes have not ceased. The country’s Interior Ministry lists 147 potential hotbeds of conflict, while the State Council for National Security names “only” 29 such trouble spots. In the view of Tatyana Vygovskaya, director of the public foundation Egalite, 350,000-370,000 people in the country – around 10 percent of the population – are involved in interethnic confrontation (in a normal situation, this share would not be more than 2 percent of the population in any country).<sup>16</sup>

Not only Kyrgyz and Uzbeks are caught up in interethnic conflict; Tajiks and people from the Caucasus are also drawn into it, although the greatest tension is between the two largest ethnic groups. Parliament member Azamat Arapbayev said, “there is no friendship between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbeks,” and in the best traditions of black humor, proposed passing a law under which “the penalty for inciting interethnic hatred would be death.”<sup>17</sup>

There are problems with the Russian community too. Ethnic Russians continue to leave Kyrgyzstan, not just for economic reasons, but also out of fear for the country’s stability and the increase in ethno-nationalism. Over the twenty years since Kyrgyzstan became independent, 485,000 people have moved permanently to Russia.<sup>18</sup>

Use of the Russian language is shrinking in Kyrgyzstan, even though its equal status with the Kyrgyz language is enshrined in three articles of the country’s constitution. Article 10, for example, states that “the Russian language is an official language alongside the Kyrgyz language in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.” Use of Russian is on the decline, not only in the south, but also in the Naryn, Talass, and Issyk-Kul regions, where it used to be as commonly used as Kyrgyz.

When she visited the Batken region in the south of the country and met with students there, Irina Karamushkina, a parliament member from the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, discovered that “they understand Russian, but cannot speak the language now.”<sup>19</sup>

The media noted an episode that took place in the Osh City Court, when relatives of the victims in the case verbally attacked defense lawyer Tatyana Tomina, shouting “This Russian should go home to her own country!”<sup>20</sup>

Russians have almost no representation in government. The Cabinet

confirmed in December 2011 does not have a single Russian member. President Atambayev admitted that he is sorry to see this.<sup>21</sup> His regrets are understandable, if only because Russian-speaking voters in Bishkek gave him their support. Curiously, however, no one in the government itself, or in the parliament, seems to have noticed the absence of Russians. The kind of ethnocracy that has formed runs counter to the authorities' declared policy of building a democratic system of government.

Ethno-nationalism is one of the main reasons, if not the biggest source, of potential destabilization, and the authorities are well aware of this fact. It is unlikely, however, that the interethnic tension that is holding the country back could be overcome in the near future. Meanwhile, the ethnic card is there as an easy trump in the hands of any ambitious politician, common opportunist, or even criminal.

**Like the other Central Asian countries,** Kyrgyzstan pursues a multi-vector foreign policy. The question is, however, to what extent does the country risk becoming hostage to this very policy? In the near future, Kyrgyzstan will inevitably become dependent on foreign actors and on its neighbors. Neither the political elite nor society in general have any illusions here. The question is, what form will this dependence take, and to what extent will it limit the country's sovereignty? Dependence on out-

side players is a sensitive issue for any government for obvious reasons. As Atambayev said, "It is in the interests of some to have us on our knees and begging for money... We must be a sovereign country."<sup>22</sup>

Kyrgyzstan's strongest ties are with Russia, and none of the country's leaders dispute the need to preserve these ties. In Bishkek I heard people say that Vladimir Putin is more popular in Kyrgyzstan than he is in Russia. Moscow is involved in all of the big projects underway in Kyrgyzstan,

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including construction of the Kambaratin hydroelectric power station, which will be the largest in the country, and the Naryn hydropower cascade. Russia is Kyrgyzstan's biggest source of imports (33.4 percent) and is the country's third-biggest export market (18.2 percent).<sup>23</sup> Russian direct investment in the Kyrgyzstani economy more than doubled in 2010, coming to \$95.9 million.<sup>24</sup> Russia provides Kyrgyzstan with direct financial and material assistance. In January 2012, for example, it delivered military equipment worth \$16 million to Kyrgyzstan's border guards.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, various estimates put the number of Kyrgyzstani citizens working in Russia at 700,000 to 1 million (the latter figure seems too high), who send home \$2 billion every year, and if this figure is correct, then this is more than the country's entire budget, which comes to around \$1.8 billion.

Kyrgyzstan's leaders are genuinely interested in developing cooperation with Russia. This can be seen in Bishkek's willingness to join the Customs Union and its positive view of the common economic space and even the Eurasian Union that Russia and Kazakhstan are establishing (the benefits of which for Kyrgyzstan have yet to be proven). Aside from purely pragmatic motivations for taking part in these organizations, the political outlook on them is also colored by emotional attitudes. "Many of us had

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our fathers and grandfathers fight for the Soviet Union, and if only for the sake of their memory we need to create this common economic space," Atambayev said.<sup>26</sup> This view is a bit exalted, perhaps, but seems completely sincere, although in my

opinion it only further confirms the Kremlin's belief in Kyrgyzstan's inevitable dependence on Moscow.

The way some senior Kremlin officials see Kyrgyzstan as practically just another part of the Russian Federation is already creating problems in the two countries' relations. Bishkek's offended reaction to this view is understandable, although it sometimes takes an infantile form in its expression. Atambayev brought grins to faces in Moscow when he said, "I will not ask for a cent from Russia. The time will come when it will be us who helps them."<sup>27</sup>

There was a bit of a chill in relations between the two countries in late 2011-early 2012. Head of the Presidential Administration Sergei Naryshkin did not come to Atambayev's inauguration (the Kremlin sent a low-level official instead), probably because Moscow's nemesis, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, was attending the ceremony. Some experts think Atambayev's working visit to Moscow at the start of 2012 was a failure, and some even consider it a complete disaster.<sup>28</sup> A planned agreement transferring 50 percent of the shares in the Dastan defense industry plant in Issyk-Kul to Russia was not signed after Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov refused to accept the shares in exchange for writing off \$190 million of Kyrgyzstan's debt. A loan of \$106 million from Russia via the Eurasian Economic Community was not con-



firmed; the question of preferential prices for Russian fuels and lubricants remains unclear; talks on selling the Kyrgyzgaz company to Gazprom still drag on; the projects to build several hydroelectric power stations on the Naryn River are going nowhere at the moment; and the future of plans to carry out joint oil exploration in Jalal-Abad remains unclear.

Despite these problems, which will probably be resolved, relations between the two countries are still strong. “Moscow does not want to deliberately worsen the situation in Kyrgyzstan, nor does it intend to pay for the country’s upkeep.”<sup>29</sup> It makes no sense for Moscow to lose a stable ally, and Kyrgyzstan too has nothing to gain from quarrels with Russia.

**In this situation**, the fuss over Atambayev’s talk of a possible Russian air force withdrawal from the base at Kant seems unjustified. This looks more like a tactical move designed to balance the promise to close the American base in Manas. The Kyrgyzstani authorities are so cautious in their statements on Manas that it is impossible to know for sure whether or not they will extend the agreement with the U.S. in 2014. “... The country’s previous authorities already did enough to spoil Kyrgyzstan’s image abroad with the biased attitude they took towards their international obligations,” Atambayev said. “In order to mend this image,

we simply have to fulfill the agreements already concluded... Our position is that...we will give the Americans six months’ advance notification on ending the agreement and its terms, and from 2014, the base will become a large international civil aviation hub” in which anyone can make an investment.<sup>30</sup>

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Washington has stayed calm overall on Manas. First, Russia is not generally going to insist on having the Americans leave, because the base is there above all in order to help maintain order in Afghanistan, which is something that Russia wants. Second, keeping the base benefits Kyrgyzstan, which has already earned \$1.411 billion from it so far.<sup>32</sup> The three countries will ultimately work out some form of consensus on the issue, though not without

throwing more mutual accusations at each other first.

**Beijing has also not expressed opposition** to the Transit Center, seeing the base as an instrument in combating the spread of radical Islam, and not perceiving the U.S. presence there as directed against China.

Along with Russia and the U.S., China is the third vector in Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy. Like the Russian vector, the Chinese one is gaining all-important significance. Trade with China is becoming one of the key areas in Kyrgyzstan's foreign economic ties today. Studies carried out by the Central Asian Free Market Institute show that of the goods at Kyrgyzstan's two largest wholesale markets, Kara-Suy and Dordoi – one of which is in the north of the country and the other in the south – 85 percent and 75 percent come from China.<sup>33</sup> Tens of thousands of people in the SME sector are engaged in trade with China, and these relations thus automatically take on a political dimension, because any disruption in them would inevitably affect all of these people and arouse their discontent. This circumstance reveals Beijing's latent political influence on the situation in Kyrgyzstan and explains the Kyrgyzstani authorities' desire to maintain stable relations with China.

China is not Russia's competitor in Kyrgyzstan because each country has its own economic niche. China shows respect for Russian interests

in the country, and Russia in turn accepts the expansion of Chinese goods onto the local market as a natural development. Kyrgyzstan differs little in this respect from dozens of other countries, including ones in Central Asia, where the shops are filled with Chinese mass consumer goods.

Beijing does not meddle in local political intrigues. None of the politicians in power in Kyrgyzstan dispute the need to develop relations with this powerful neighbor. In the late 1990s and the start of the 2000s, grumbling could be heard in some quarters in Bishkek about Chinese pressure on the country, in particular regarding the 1996 and 1999 treaties signed with China, under the terms of which Kyrgyzstan ceded almost 500 square kilometers of territory to China,<sup>34</sup> but this is all in the past now.

No matter how Kyrgyzstan's relations with outside actors develop, the country's future will ultimately depend on the political situation at home. While the country is attempting to build a parliamentary system not typical for the region, this does not automatically mean that it will succeed in eradicating authoritarian leanings and the psychological yearning for a "strong hand" and a charismatic leader, another "father of the nation," supposedly capable of rallying society and guiding it with a relaxed but at the same time firm hand through all of the difficulties ahead. And there are people in Kyrgyzstan willing to claim this role.

Nevertheless, for all its vulnerability, contradictions and mistakes, Kyrgyzstan, like a fiercely determined icebreaker, keeps plowing ahead in a new direction, trying to cut a new road through the ice of Central Asian authoritarianism.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Footnotes to the title are not common practice, but recall Chingiz Aitmatov's *The White Ship*. The associations are not direct perhaps, but they are there.

<sup>2</sup> <http://kremlin.ru/news/8882>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://trinixy.ru/64256-vvp-stran-posle-razvala-sssr-16-foto.html>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://kant.kg/2011-11-24/gosudarstvennyj-dolg-kyrgyzstana/>.

<sup>5</sup> V. Panfilova, "Moskva dast shans Bishkeku" ["Moscow will give a chance to Bishkek"], *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 20, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> N. M. Omarov, "Kyrgyzskaya respublika: Iskhodniye usloviya transformatsii" ["The Republic of Kyrgyzstan: starting conditions of transformation"], *Politichesky protsess v Tsentralnoy Azii [The Political Process in Central Asia]* (Moscow: 2011) p. 214.

<sup>7</sup> Documents from public discussion: "Unemployment: the threats and the possible solutions," <http://www.akipress.org>.

<sup>8</sup> International information agency Fergana, Dec. 29, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1495006.html>.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1484464.html>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ferghananews.com/article.php?did=7227>.

<sup>12</sup> International information agency Fergana, Dec. 29, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Information agency 24.kg, Jan. 7, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> A. Salyanova, "Pravda prevyshe vsevo" ["The Truth is above all things"], <http://www.report.kg/governance/8727/>.

<sup>15</sup> International information agency Fergana, Feb. 2, 2012.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ferghananews.com/article.php?did=7255>.

<sup>17</sup> Y. Ivashchenko, "Kyrgyzstan: deputaty ostalis nedovolny, kak vpolnyayutsya ikh postanovleniya po iyunskim sobytiyam" ["Parliament members are discontented with the implementation of their resolutions on June events"], International information agency Fergana, Feb. 2, 2012.

<sup>18</sup> International information agency Fergana, Dec. 22, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ferghananews.com/article.php?did=7249>.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, with headquarters in Washington D.C., is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to conducting independent policy research and advancing cooperation between nations. In 1993, the Endowment launched the Carnegie Moscow Center to help develop a tradition of public policy analysis in the countries of the former Soviet Union and improve relations between Russia and the United States.

In 2007, the Carnegie Endowment announced its New Vision as the first multinational and ultimately global think tank, adding operations in Beijing, Beirut and Brussels to its existing offices in Moscow and Washington. The Endowment uses its experience of research and discussion at the Carnegie Moscow Center as a model for its transformation into the first international think tank.

- <sup>20</sup> International information agency Fergana, Feb. 7, 2012.
- <sup>21</sup> <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1485285>.
- <sup>22</sup> International information agency Fergana, Dec. 29, 2011.
- <sup>23</sup> “Rossiysko-kyrgyzstanskoye sotrudnichestvo” [“Russian-Kyrgyzstani cooperation”], <http://www.cisnews.org/analytics/1810-rossiysko-kyrgyzskoe-sotrudnichestvo.html>.
- <sup>24</sup> Russian Federation Trade Office in Kyrgyzstan, [http://torgpredkg.ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1607Itemid=64](http://torgpredkg.ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1607Itemid=64).
- <sup>25</sup> International information agency Fergana, Jan. 18, 2012.
- <sup>26</sup> <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1481919.html>.
- <sup>27</sup> [www.gezitter.org/politic/8917/](http://www.gezitter.org/politic/8917/).
- <sup>28</sup> “Bishkek menyaet nastroyeniye” [“Bishkek changes its mood”]: Interview with Alexander Knyazev on Radio Golos Rossii, [http://rus.ruvr.ru/radio\\_broadcast/no\\_program/67009229.html](http://rus.ruvr.ru/radio_broadcast/no_program/67009229.html).
- <sup>29</sup> G. Mikhailov, “Snachala Dastan, potom – kredit” [“Dastan first, the loan next”], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, March 21, 2011.
- <sup>30</sup> Almazbek Atambayev, “Bazu VVS SShA vyvedyom v 2014 godu” [“U.S. airbase will be closed in 2014”], <http://www.rosbalt.ru/exussr/2011/08/12/878759.html>.
- <sup>31</sup> “Reshayushy khod vo vneshney politike” [“A decisive foreign policy move”], <http://www.gezitter.org/politic/9121/>.
- <sup>32</sup> International information agency Fergana, Dec. 21, 2011.
- <sup>33</sup> K. Riklton, “Kirgizia: ekonomicheskoye vliyaniye Kitaya vyzyvayet vozmushcheniye” [“Kyrgyzstan: China’s economic influence provokes anger”], <http://russia.eurasianet.org/node/58659>.
- <sup>34</sup> <http://www.freeas.org?nid=3779>.

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