UMAROV OFFICIALLY RELEASES THE DISSenting CHECHEN AMIRS FROM THEIR COMMANDS

Once Umarov finished his brief announcement regarding the demolitions, his former and now restored naib, Supyan Abdullaev, spoke. Abdullaev rejected violating one’s bayat to the amir and declared that he and those sitting with him would not be doing so. He also said that at the Majlisul
Shura – a date for which has not been revealed – he said and was now reiterating that there was no sufficiently serious cause for any of the amirs to repeal their bayats. He emphasized strict observance of Shariah in everything. Amirs Hamzat and Islam were largely inaudible, but their comments seemed largely confined to a call to mujahedin to observe their bayat and Shariah law. Thye both spoke longer than Umarov and, up until then, Abdullaev. Abdullaev added a warning to the four dissenters to be careful because in violating their bayat they had committed a “great sin” and were at risk in some undefined way. He closed by calling for unity among the mujahedin.¹

Thus, we now know who the two amirs featured in a more recent video are and that there are at least three Chechnya amirs still loyal to Umarov: Abdullaev, Khamzat, and Islam. This means that the split runs not so much between the NV and the other CE vilaiyats but rather through the NV itself, dividing the Chechnya-based mujahedin into pro- and anti-Umarov factions. Since amir Khamzat was Gaziev’s naib in the Southwestern Front, it is likely he is its new amir, though Umarov did not announce this in the video. Up until now the only amir named ‘Islam’ in Chechnya that I have been able to identify is the amir of the Argun Sector under the NV’s Southeastern Front. Perhaps, Islam has been promoted to amir of the Southeastern Front, and Muslim has joined his brother among the dissenting Chechen amirs.

The amir of this front before the August split has been Hussein Gakaev’s brother, Muslim, who was the first CE operative to announce he had prepared suicide bombers after amir Umarov’s announcement in April 2009 that he had revived the Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs’ Brigade. This and the fact that the Jordanian Al Qa’ida operative Muhammad is among the Chechen dissenters cast doubt over the interpretation of the CE split as rooted in the Chechen’s rejection of global jihadism, as some experts assert, or of suicide attacks targeting civilians deep inside Russia, as Umarov claimed in more recent video (see IIPER, No. 24).

CE TERRORISM STATISTICS FOR AUGUST AND JANUARY 1 – SEPTEMBER 1, 2010

¹ “Prikaz Amira IK Dokku Abu Usman o pazzhalovanii amirov, narushivshchikh baiyat,” Hunafa.com, 20 September 2010, 2:14, http://hunafa.com/?p=4161. The video was also posted on Kavkaz tsentr but without a separate page. It was still available there as of 24 September 2010.
According to my count, August 2010 saw at least approximately 98 terrorist attacks and jihad-related violent incidents in Russia driven by the Caucasus Emirate jihad; the jihad-related incidents consisted of some 15 counter-terrorist special operations undertaken by law enforcement. These 98 attacks/incidents led to at least approximately 45 state agents (civilian officials and military, police and intelligence personnel) being killed and 90 wounded, 13 civilians killed and 40 wounded. This brings the total for the first eight months of this year to at least some 390 attacks/incidents, the overwhelming majority of which were attacks initiated by mujahedin. These 390 attacks/incidents have led to at least approximately 181 state agents being killed and 336 wounded, for a total of 517 casualties among state agents. On the civilian side, 90 have been killed and 274 wounded, bringing the total number of civilian casualties to 364. The total number of killed among civilians and state agents resulting from CE activity is 271, and the total number of wounded is 610. The estimated total number of all casualties among state agents and civilians so far this year is therefore 881. These figures do not include the May 26th car bomb explosion in Stavropol, which killed 7 and 41 civilians but which cannot confidently be attributed to the mujahedin since it targeted ethnic Chechens in the predominantly ethnic Russian region.

The Russian Prosecutor-General’s Office released terrorism statistics on September 16th for the North Caucasus Federal District (SKFO) but did not specify whether those statistics covered the first six, seven or eight months of the year. According to those statistics there were 246 “crimes of a terrorist nature” and 37 “diversionary terrorist attacks” for a total of 283 attacks; this comprised 76% percent of such attacks in all of Russia for the same period. Those attacks had killed 149 personnel of the police, military and security departments and wounded 384.2

With 167 attacks so far this year through August, Dagestan’s mujahedin have a clear lead over their fellow jihadists in the other Muslim republics of Russia’s North Caucasus. The Dagestani mujahedin have carried out out more than a third more attacks in the republic than they had by this time last year, not including the two Dagestani female suicide bombers they sent to attack the Moscow subway system in March.  

The KBR has seen the second largest number of attacks, 76, and if one adds in the three attacks this year in Karachai-Cherkesia (KChR), then the mujahedin of the CE’s United Vliaiyat of Kabardia, Balkaria, and Karachai (OVKBK) have carried out not just one more attack than the Ingushetian mujahedin but four more. Chechnya remains the laggard of the four main vilaiyats, having carried out just 60 attacks in the first eight months of 2010.

According to my count 74 mujahedin were killed in the North Caucasus by pro-Moscow and Russian forces in August. Three more were killed in Bashkortostan; it remains unclear whether the Bashkirs killed had ties with the CE. The total number of mujahedin killed by Russian law enforcement so far this year is at least approximately 183, according my estimate. FSB chief Aleksandr Bortnikov reported to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on August 28th that “more than 30” mujahedin had been killed in August.\(^4\) Subsequent reports from Russian media and officials included another 9-13 mujahedin killed, bringing the total to approximately 41. In addition, one suicide bomber killed himself in the August 17th suicide bombing in Prigorodnoi raion, North Ossetia, and there were a reported seven suicide bombers involved in the August 29th attack on Tsentaroi in Chechnya, according to Russian law enforcement (see below).

According to non-jihadi Russian sources, in the first six months of 2010 Russian security and police forces have killed as many as 215 mujahedin, wounded 4-6, and captured as many as 120 mujahedin, approximately. Over two hundred facilitators have been captured approximately. Chechen law enforcement claims to have killed 49 mujahedin, facilitators and recruiters and captured or received surrender of 170 in the first half of this year.\(^5\) Thus, extrapolating to Russian reports, security and law enforcement forces have killed more than 256 mujahedin this year, since these two Russian figures do not include those mujahedin killed in July. The Russian Prosecutor-General’s Office’s terrorism statistics released on September 16th showed 167 mujahedin “neutralized” and 298 captured mujahedin.\(^6\)

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Dagestan continues to be the most deadly republic for state agents, with at least approximately 93 killed there through August of this year compared to some 39 in Chechnya, 22 in Ingushetia and 21 in the KBR. Regarding overall casualties among state agents, the Dagestani mujahedin are also the most deadly, having inflicted 217 as compared to 123 in Ingushetia, 116 in Chechnya, and 49 in the KBR. Civilian casualties have been highest in Dagestan as well with at least approximately 75 (27 killed, 48 wounded) this year, followed in descending order by 42 in the KBR (6 killed, 36 wounded), 36 in Ingushetia (12 killed, 14 wounded), and 11 in Chechnya (1 killed, 10 wounded). Moscow leads in the number of civilian casualties as a result of the March 29th subway bombing that killed 40 and wounded more than 100. Overall casualties were highest in Dagestan with approximately 292 (120 killed, 172 wounded), followed by 149 in Ingushetia (34 killed, 115 wounded), 127 in Chechnya (40 killed, wounded), and 91 in the KBR (27 killed, 64 wounded). Thus, Dagestan’s mujahedin have inflicted more than a third of the overall number of casualties, 292 out of 881 and well over a third, indeed nearly half of the casualties among state agents, 217 out of 517.
The CE continues to show a capacity to carry out operations over a larger geographical area than in recent years, moving beyond its usual theatre of operations in Dagestan, Ingushetia, Chechnya and to some extent in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya (KBR). As noted in IIPER, No. 16, the CE has expanded its activity in the KBR this year to an unprecedented level, and that level remains high as compared with past years. The unprecedented number of attacks in Kabardino-Balkaria, the March 29th Moscow subway suicide bombings, possibly the first attack in Bashkortostan (March) ever, and possibly the first in many years carried out in Stavropol (May and this month) all demonstrated before August a more expansive reach. There have been attacks now in Karachai-Cherkessia in August, and this month’s car bomb explosion in Stavropol appears to have been perpetrated by the Ingush mujahedin with the automobile traced back to Ingushetia. Another attack in Stavropol saw the perpetrators retreat back to Karachai-Cherkessia (KChR). This the mujahedin appear to be trying to extend their reach and establish a bridgehead in the KChR as a springboard to operations in what they call the ‘Nogai Steppe Vilaiyat’ which includes Stavropol and Krasnodar Krai; the latter’s resort city of Sochi on the Black Sea will be the venue for the 2014 Olympic Games. In addition, the Ingush mujahedin claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing in Progorodnoi raion in North Ossetia (see below). Plus there was a law enforcement operation against alleged mujahedin in Bashkortostan, reinforcing the impression made by the apparent jihadi attacks there in March. The CE’s suicide martyrs’ unit, the Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs Brigade, took responsibility for the August 11th small bombing that occurred in front of GazProm’s headquarters in southwest Moscow, claiming it had been ordered by CE amir Abu Usman Dokku Usmanov and was a demonstration of their capacity. The brigade promised more attacks deep inside Russia, including in Moscow and St. Petersburg.7

The month of August saw no failed and at least one successful suicide bombing, the first successful since June 30th attack in the Chechen capitol, Grozny, by a male suicide bomber, who killed 1 and wounded 6 MVD militia and 2 civilians (see IIPER, No. 17). The successful August attack occurred on August 17th on the North Ossetian side of the border with Ingushetia near the Cherem border post in Prigorodnyi district, which is the object of dispute between Ingushetia and North Ossetia. The Ingushetia mujahedin claimed responsibility for the attack four days after that attack. The attack occurred when the suicide bomber was stopped near the border checkpoint and was asked to produce his identification document. He detonated a suicide belt killing one MVD militiaman and wounding three traffic policemen. This was the first suicide bomb attack in North Ossetia since the 6 November 2008 suicide attack on a bus in Vladikavkaz that killed 12 civilians.


THE CE’S AND NOKCHIKHO VILAIYAT’S LATE SUMMER SUICIDE BOMBINGS

In a period of 22 days the CE and apparently its breakaway Nokchicho Vilaiyat mujahedin in Chechnya emabarked on a series of suicide attacks, with each prong in the now bifurcated if not divided North Caucasus jihad movement highlighting different strategies in the process. The four attacks: the August 17th suicide bombing in Prigorodnyi, North Ossetia and the August 29th attack on Tsentroqi in Chechnya noted above, plus the September 3rd truck bombing of the Russian military base at Buinaksk, Dagestan, and the September 9th suicide bombing in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia - expended 10 suicide bombers. One was expended in the August 17th suicide bombing in Prigorodnyi raion, North Ossetia. Seven more were expended on August 29th when a group of some 20 or more mujahedin attacked Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov’s home town of Tsentoroi perhaps with the goal of killing him. According to Russia’s Investigateve Committee under the General Prosecutor’s Office, the attackers included 7 suicide bombers (smertniki) dressed with radio controlled bombs that detonated and killed them after they were wounded. It is possible that their task was to charge and penetrate

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Kadyrov’s home and kill him. Another 5 mujahedin were also killed in the battle along with 6 killed MVD personnel and 18 wounded MVD personnel and 7 civilians. Early reports stated that 5 civilians were killed in addition to the 6 MVD personnel, but Kadyrov soon denied that report’s veracity.\textsuperscript{10}

On September 3\textsuperscript{rd}, a ninth suicide bomber commandeered a car loaded with explosives onto the Russian military base at Buinaksk in Dagestan, killing 5 soldiers and wounding 40. On September 9\textsuperscript{th} a tenth shahid exploded a car bomb in the central market in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia killing 17 and wounding more than 160 civilians. Adam, the amir of the of the CE’s Ingushetia-based mujahedin, the so-called G’alg’aiche Vilaiyat (GV), announced on the GV’s website \textit{Huna\textja.com} that the CE’s Riyadus-Salikhin Martyrs’ Brigade (RSMB) carried out both this and the August 17\textsuperscript{th} Prigorodnyi attack as part of its “jihad with Ossetian infidels on occupied Ingush territory,” according to G’alg’aiche Vilaiyat amir Adam.\textsuperscript{11} Thus, it appears the RSMB retains a close tie to the Ingush mujahedin as it did during the time of Sheik Said Abu Saad Buryatsii’s activity in Ingushetia. Buryatskii was killed on March 3\textsuperscript{rd} in Ekazhevo, Ingushetia.

The attack in Tsentoroi, Chechnya seemed to underscore the Nokchicho Vilaiyat’s opposition to attacks against deep inside Russia or against civilians, as claimed by CE amir Umarov, by focusing on the on the leader of the local regime’s leader rather than the far enemy or civilians. At the same time, the RSMB’s sudden turn to attacks in predominantly Christian Orthodox North Ossetia, especially the one in Vladikavkaz against civilians, along with its claim for the explosion near Gazprom’s Moscow headquarters and threats to attack St. Petersburg and Moscow (see IIPER, No. 24), seemed to underscore CE Umarov’s intent to strike against civilians inside Russia or certainly farther from the Muslims of the Caucasus.

These four attacks, at least three of which were carried out by the CE and perhaps one – the Tsentoroi attack – carried out by the breakaway Chechen mujahedin of the Nokchicho Vilaiyat, brings the total number of suicide attacks carried out by CE-tied jihadists this year as of September 10\textsuperscript{th} to 11 if one


counts the two Moscow subway bombings as two separate attacks. There were also three interdicted attacks in May. The 11 successful attacks have used 13 suicide bombers, killed 27 state agents, wounded 92 state agents, killed 60 civilians, and wounded 274 civilians. The mujahedin have used 13 suicide bombers in these attacks. Adding the seven suicide bombers used in the attack on Tsentoroi brings the total number of expended suicide bombers this year to 20.

The website of the Russian human rights organization ‘Memorial’, Kavkaz Uzel, calculated that since the first suicide bombing on 15 May 2009 after CE amir Abu Usman Dokku Umarov declared he had revived the suicide martyrs’ unit, the Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs’ Brigade, there have “25 terrorist attacks aimed at peaceful civilians” by the CE mujahedin.12 Some suicide attacks during this period targeted government and military targets.

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PROFILE OF ‘SEIFULLAH’ ANZOR ASTEMIROV, PART 4: CONCLUSION - ASTEMIROV’S LEGACY

With his martyrdom, the weight of Astemirov’s legacy appears to be growing within the CE jihadi movement and beyond. Astemirov is now the icon of the OVKBK and one of the most important for the CE. Acknowledging Astemirov’s death, Islamdin.com published a letter praising his ability to combine the “Sword and Knowledge”, “wisdom, knowledge of the Sunna and Tawhid, moderation in devotion, talent as a recruiter, and good qualities as a commander, organizer, and amir of mujahedin.” It emphasized that “(t)hanks to his efforts” (and because “Allah showed the truth to our amir Dokku Umarov”), the Muslims of the Caucasus rejected fighting for the secular, non-Muslim (tagutskie) attributes of freedom and independence, purged their devotion of innovations and non-believers’ convictions and united under the Islamic banner of Monotheism.” This turn and the declaration of the CE, inspired by Astemirov, ended the Caucasus jihad’s declining fortunes in 2006-2007. Contradicting the CE’s return to suicide bombings against civilians, the message claimed that Seifullah taught as Maqdisi does the value of sticking to “targeted attacks on the most inveterate apostates and enemies of Allah” and “avoidance of attacks against that layer of troops which is not undertaking active operations in the struggle with Islam and Muslims.” However, the message stressed that surgical tactics are rejected not because it is wrong but because it is expedient due to “the misunderstanding and rejection of these actions by simple, ignorant Muslims.” It also credited Astemirov with helping the OVKBK win the support of “an important”, unidentified “part of

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the population.” Astemirov’s killing has taught “a lesson for the future,” the message concluded, that the mujahedin should protect leaders like Seifullah, noting that he was killed while walking openly through the city streets and such leaders are not allowed to be exposed to such danger on other fronts in the global jihad.13

Astemirov’s legacy is also strongly evident in the OVKBK’s use of propaganda videos. All Islamdin.com videos now open with video of him reading his lecture ‘On Tawhid’. OVKBK amirs are replicating the jihadi propaganda methodology, in particular the extensive use of videos pioneered by Astemirov (and Buryatskii) in the North Caucasus. In June and July numerous new video declarations featuring calls to jihad by previously unknown amirs appeared on Islamdin.com. In late June two previously unknown OVKBK amirs, Abdul Jabbar and Abdul Gafur, sitting with their Kalashnikovs and dressed in gray combat fatigues, appeared the first 15-minute video from the wooded mountains. Each amir speaks for some 7 minutes in a soft and calm voice, calling on Muslims living on the virtual OVKBK’s territory (the KBR and KcHR) to join them in the forest and carry out their ostensible Islamic obligation to undertake jihad.14 One mujahed, Zakariya, produced a 15-minute lecture on the call to Islam and jihad. Clad completely in black from hooded turban down and accompanied by the obligatory Kalashnikov rifle while leaning on a white wall behind him, he lectured in a similarly clam fashion, reciting several long passages in Arabic. He promises that the mujahedin will kill the infidels, noting that death is more terrible for the infidel because the mujahed sees death as an inspiration.15

Astemirov now has some status within the global movement. Astemirov’s death prompted Maqdisi to issue a eulogy in which he expressed great esteem for his fallen protégé. He recalled Astemirov’s “fine education” and requests for fatwas from him and other scholars. He promised never to forget Astemirov’s own “messages,” “detailed fatwas,” and decision regarding Zakaev.16 Through his alliance with Maqdisi, Astemirov played a pivotal role.

in the North Caucasus mujahedin’s integration into the global jihadi revolutionary movement.

With that integration, however, has come the incorporation of global jihadists’ penchant for mass terrorism, including the use of weapons of mass destruction against the ‘infidel’, despite Maqdisi’s teachings about restraint and targeted violence. This development should be of deep concern not only to Moscow but to the entire international community. With the progressive radicalization of the Caucasus jihadists since the declaration of the CE in October 2007, including the declaration jihad against the U.S. and the West in general that accompanied the announcement of the CE’s creation, and last spring’s decisions to target Russian civilians and resume suicide bombings, the CE’s justification for using WMDT marks a real new threat to the West. This threat is more likely to be actualized given the growing ambitions among the younger generation of CE operatives and ideologues, which sees the extreme radicalism of leaders like Astemirov and Buryatskii as their model. This and the CE’s increasing operational capacity suggest that the CE or elements within it could seek to secure and deploy or help others deploy WMD in the coming years against Russian and/or Western targets inside or outside Russia. Should this come to pass, Astemirov will have played a key role in building the road leading to that event.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gordon M. Hahn Interview with RosBalt


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NEW NON-PROLIFERATION/TERRORISM STUDIES MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE AND TERRORISM STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

The Monterey Institute for International Studies has recently opted to combine its very popular and highly regarded M.A. International Policy Studies degree specializations in Terrorism Studies and Nonproliferation Studies into a combined new M.A. Program in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies, a program that

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will now have an even higher profile and greater institutional autonomy. Apart from combining two of the Institute’s strongest academic programs, this will ensure that students take the introductory courses in both subjects but will also allow them to concentrate primarily on either terrorism or nonproliferation (or, if they prefer, to focus on both subjects equally, e.g., on CBRN terrorism). As you may already know, our students have an exceptionally high success rate getting jobs in these specialized fields.

The Institute is also introducing a new one-semester (or one-year) Certificate in Terrorism Studies for professionals or students who wish to obtain specialized academic training in this subject without spending an entire two years in residence. Prospective students can be admitted into this Certificate Program without meeting the somewhat stringent language requirements that regular students must meet.

If you know of any students or professionals who might find this new program of particular interest, or who wish to obtain outstanding preparation for careers in these fields, or who wish to obtain further specialized training before going on to obtain a doctorate, it would be very much appreciated if let them know about our new program.

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ABOUT IIPER

Islam, Islamism and politics in Eurasia report (IIPER) is a project of the Monterey Terrorism and Research and Education Program (MonTREP) at the Monterey Institute for International Studies (MIIS), Monterey, California. It focuses on all politically-relevant issues involving or bearing on Islam and ethnic Muslim communities in Russia and Eurasia writ large. All issues of IIPER can be found at http://www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report.

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IIPER welcomes submissions of 1,500-6,000 words on any aspect of Islamic politics in Eurasia and financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER’s mailing list, please contact
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