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Post-War Exclusion and Violence in Tajikistan: Politics of Aid, Institution-Building, and the Emergence and Consolidation of an Oligarchy

Introduction

Exclusion and violence persist in many post-conflict states, even where international engagement in conflict resolution was deemed successful. Frequently, post-war power structures build on wartime divisions, whereby the former opposition continues to be excluded from decision-making, regardless of power-sharing arrangements. Post-war violence, though usually lower in intensity than civil war violence, can also pose a significant challenge to peace implementation: the rise of organized crime, state repressions, and gang violence are common phenomena in post-conflict states.

The literature on peace building emphasizes the restoration of security is the priority for external assistance in post-conflict states, via disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants (DDR), security sector reforms (SSR), or transformation of armed groups into political parties (Call and Stanley 2002, Downs and Stedman 2002). Yet this security-centric focus does not necessarily provide a sufficient condition for durable peace: the peace process can still collapse after security is restored, elections are held, and an interim government is put

in place through large-scale international interventions (e.g., Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, and Timor-Leste).

Tajikistan represents the case of the dual outcome—a success in restoring security and a failure in establishing inclusive political and economic development. The peace accord included an agreement to allocate 30% of government posts to the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), but it was never fully implemented. Emomali Rakhmonov, incumbent president since 1992, won flawed elections in 1996, 1999, and 2006, and in addition, the 2003 referendum amended a constitutional limit on presidential terms, allowing him to stay in power until 2020. Former opposition leaders and presidential advisors have been arrested and sentenced to long jail terms after publicly criticizing the president. Although macroeconomic indicators are gradually improving, the growth is not based on productive assets or capacities within the country. The two main sources of capital flow are drug trafficking and remittances from labor migration to Russia and Kazakhstan, each generating annually an estimated amount of \$1 billion, almost 50% of GDP, which is a much larger scale than international aid at approximately \$250 million a year on average.

A review of the Tajik peacebuilding process reveals that security restoration was not the result of successful DDR, SSR, or the democratic transformation of armed groups. Rather, it owes to the distribution and redistribution of economic resources controlled by a small group of individuals associated with the government that had ascended to power during the civil war. Furthermore, the recentralization, consolidation, and monopolistic ownership of these assets took place in the context of aid and institution building supported by international organizations. By the time the peace agreement was signed, the foundation of institutional arrangements for post-war economic structures was already in place, with the assistance of international financial institutions. The opposition leaders and commanders were reintegrated into, and subsequently purged from, the government apparatus with a much smaller scale of peace dividends than the level of access these regime associates held onto the state prerogatives.

This paper summarizes the findings of five-month research in Tajikistan, the aim of which was to map out the process of power consolidation by the incumbent regime. Research in Tajikistan was compounded by the absence of reliable and public data. Statistics collected by government agencies are often manipulated for political reasons (e.g., reporting figures close to or exceeding production targets rather than actual outputs), while institutions classified as special assets, such as the Tursunzade Aluminum Smelter Plant (TADAZ) and national airline and railway, do not disclose any information on their operations. Even within international organizations, such as the UN Peacebuilding Office (UNTOP), OSCE, and UNDP, there are no archives or systems of storing institutional records, due in part to the frequent personnel rotation, especially among international professional staff. In order to identify the emergence and consolidation of an oligarchy in Tajikistan, this study thus developed (a) a registry of government appointments since the onset of the war and (b) a list of the former commanders, both UTO and the pro-government militia, the Popular Front of Tajikistan (PFT), and their post-war status. Comprehensive lists of these kinds have never been available.

Relevance and contribution to field

Exclusion and violence persist both despite or in the absence of institutional frameworks deemed conducive to reconciling warring parties, such as quotas, federalism, or electoral pacts. To account for the failure of peacebuilding, some underscore the shortcomings of international aid. Aid can be too little or too late, or lack in strategic coordination among donors, or remove

incentives for local actors to democratize (Anderson 1999, Fortuna 2006, Jones 2001). Reflecting on these lessons, the UN Peacebuilding Commission, Support Office, and Fund were established in 2006 to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development.¹ Yet even multidimensional peacekeeping operations with extensive civilian components, including electoral assistance, human rights monitoring, and institution building—which are essentially all peacebuilding strategies—have had little, no or negative effect on democratization (Fortuna 2006). This indicates a larger problem with international assistance to post-conflict institutional change.

This study further investigates the nature and effect of international assistance, hypothesizing that the current peacebuilding approaches have not only failed in bringing about sustainable institutional change, but also tended to result in *status quo ante*—restoring and legitimizing government institutions that build on wartime divisions. Regardless of how civil wars end (third party intervention, mediation, or one-side victory), rarely has there been a regime change in the aftermath of conflicts. Moreover, despite external assistance for power sharing, reconciliation, and democratization, the incumbent government often strengthens its grip over state administration by developing virtual one-party systems, co-opting and/or prosecuting the former opposition, and repressing the independent media and civil society. To seek an alternative explanation for these particular outcomes of peacebuilding, this study explores the patterns of resource distribution and redistribution. As the literature on the political economy of civil war highlights, conflicts generate particular networks of interests, capital, and violence for profit extraction and accumulation inside and outside formal state structures, especially for those who have means to expand personal wealth and continue instigating warfare. Post-war governments will inevitably reflect the strength of these warlords, either by incorporating them in the government or by establishing legal-bureaucratic edifices that protect their interests. Yet these “warlord politics” do not necessarily account for peacebuilding outcomes in entirety. In many post-conflict states, those who won in the battlefields are not necessarily the ones most benefiting from post-conflict institutional change. In Tajikistan, war economies provided warlords with unregulated sources of income, including narcotic and arms trafficking and forceful confiscation of land and properties. While some of them were able to retain these assets after the end of the war, most of these resources were transferred into the hands of the small group of presidential associates in the context of privatization, state reorganization, and the prosecution of the warlords.

An emergence of an oligarchy is common in post-Soviet transitions. Yet Tajikistan presents several deviations that are characteristic of civil war legacies. First, the literature on post-Soviet transitions underlines a continuation of elites, especially in the economic sector: the former state managers with formal and informal access to government resources are often in a position to design and profit from privatization. In the civil war contexts, on the other hand, there are often discontinuations—or at least attempts for discontinuations—in the composition of elites because the control of the state is one of the causes and contentions of the conflict. In Tajikistan, although the elites who ascended to power during the war originated from the communist party, the power balance within the ruling coalition shifted due to the conflict. During the Soviet era, elites from Leninabad (later renamed to Sogd) occupied influential positions, but the civil war replaced them with those from Kulyab who were previously considered as junior partner of the government.² Second, during the war, the Tajik state managers did not possess exclusive

¹ For the mandate of the Commission, see <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding>.

² According to several reports, the market reform in Tajikistan was delayed for this reason. It was first launched by the Leninabadi elites who came from the industrial region in the north and were therefore committed to the reform the

control over economic assets. Commanders of the armed groups occupied land and properties by force in the early phase of Tajikistan's post-independent transition. Though the state managers maintained some level of control over major economic assets throughout the war period, the consolidation of their power took place at a later stage—after the signing of the peace agreement—as they managed to co-opt, reintegrate, and then dismiss those warlords. Third, given that public expenditures in post-conflict states are in large part financed by multilateral and bilateral organizations, aid has a critical role to play in the design and implementation of post-conflict governance structures.

Similar to post-Soviet transitions, peacebuilding encompasses the simultaneous reform of the polity and the economy. International peacebuilding assistance, however, continues to be divided and compartmentalized into humanitarian, development, macroeconomic, and political mandates, without the analysis of its combined effects or unintended consequences. For instance, policy and academic debates on peacebuilding increasingly emphasize the importance of reforming and strengthening state institutions to enhance “national ownership” for reconstruction, coordinate international aid, provide social services, and generate employment in the public sector (2003). Yet donors continue to prioritize such measures as privatization, decentralization, or ad hoc and localized delivery of social services that can constrain—rather than strengthen—the capacities of the state to regulate and monitor the allocation and reallocation of income.

This study explores the interaction of violence, patterns of inclusion and exclusion in decision-making—particularly those related to the distribution and redistribution of resources—and international aid at the specific juncture of institutional change that follows the signing of peace agreements, which involves local—both armed and civilian—and external actors. Locating Tajikistan comparatively in other civil war contexts, it argues that the post-war emergence and consolidation of an oligarchy is not necessarily the result of historical-institutional legacies, but can be explained by the nature of international engagement during and after the civil war.

Methodology

To identify and analyze the post-war emergence and consolidation of an oligarchy in Tajikistan, this study tracked down government appointments and dismissals, especially for state institutions responsible for economic and financial management, including ministries, committees, and state enterprises. This traces the rotation of elites from 1994 to 2006. It also investigated the ownership of major industries in Tajikistan, among them cotton, aluminum, and energy sectors. This included large-scale banks, cotton ginneries, and unitary state enterprises, such as the Tursunzade Aluminum Smelter Plant (TADAZ).

In addition, a list of the former commanders and their post-war institutional affiliations was drawn to the extent possible, as a basis of comparison between the levels of economic incentives provided to these armed groups and those maintained by the oligarchs. No comprehensive and publicly available records were kept on these appointments, either by the government or by international organizations mandated to monitor political and economic developments in the country. The lists of cabinet appointments and the former commanders were thus developed based on news articles, internal documents from some of the embassies and international organizations, and interviews. Structured and targeted interviews were

economy. When the Kulyabi elites took over the government apparatus, however, they opposed to economic liberalization and reversed several of progressive policies adopted by the previous administration.

conducted in Dushanbe with the former and current staff of UN agencies and other multilateral and bilateral donors, such as the World Bank, IMF, the Asian Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, USAID, and selected embassies. To ensure the credibility of information provided, interviewees were selected based on their institutional affiliations, seniorities, and educational backgrounds. These included: (a) government agencies involved in privatization or anti-corruption, such as the State Committee on Property, the Tax Police, the Agency for Financial Control under the President's Office, and the Prosecutor-General's Office; (b) the opposition parties; (c) research institutes in Dushanbe; (d) the diplomatic community; (e) the local media and academy. Additional interviews were carried out in the cities of Kulyab, Kurgan-Tube, and Sharitus in the Khatlon *oblast*, with a particular focus on (1) the reintegration of refugees and the former combatants during the 1990s and (2) the ownership of cotton farms and facilities in the area.

Summary of research findings and preliminary conclusions

Political Economy of the Conflict

Tajikistan disintegrated into the civil war shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Violent clashes between the communist government and a coalition of opposition groups, which later came to be called UTO, claimed the lives of approximately 50,000-100,000 persons, and forced another 1.2 million people—out of the total population of 6 million at the time—to flee their homes. The significant part of these casualties and refugee flows took place from late 1992 to early 1993, indicating the rapid escalation and intensity of violence that ravaged the mountainous country.³

There has been little documentation of the Tajik conflict. No oral or archival accounts of the conflict by local, national, international actors involved in decision-making at the time exist yet. It appears though that the conflict was caused by a combination of: (a) post-independence realignment of power for control over state administration; (b) ethno-regional identity; (c) competition over land; (d) demographic change (forced migration and assimilation during the Soviet era); and (e) regional dynamics and the availability of external support for warfare (e.g., Afghanistan). Many of these factors were interrelated. For instance, many from the Rasht Valley and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) were transferred to the cotton-growing lowlands of Khatlon in the 1950-60s. Some evidence suggests that these so-called mountain Tajiks were economically better off than many of the locals, especially those of Kulyab origin, which crystallized ethno-regional identities and accelerated local antagonism toward the new settlers. It is perhaps no coincidence, therefore, that full-scale fighting started in Kurgan-Tube, an agriculturally rich and most ethnically mixed area of Khatlon, between the opposition and PFT in June 1992.

Accordingly, some scholars emphasize the ethno-regional dimensions of the conflict. There is also a tendency within the scholarship on Central Asia to view power struggle as the phenomena of “clan politics.” While ethno-regional affiliations may explain to some extent the

³ The post-independent communist government at the time was composed by the Leninabadi elites, and they had agreed to share power with the opposition groups through the Government of National Unity in May 1992. The government also armed several militia groups from Hissor, Kulyab, and Kurgan-Tube, which formed the PFT in October 1992, and the PFT captured Dushanbe with the support of Russia and Uzbekistan toward the end of 1992. Summary executions of people considered to be from GBAO or Rasht, or opposition supporters, ensued. In November 1992, an extraordinary session of the Parliament selected Rakhmonov, then a little-known director of a collective firm, as Speaker of the Parliament and head of the state.

basis of mobilization for civil war violence and post-war reorganization of power structures, this study instead focuses on the agency of local actors, the dynamics of their interaction within and beyond clan affiliations, and institutional contexts that shape their interests and behaviors. First, clans are not necessarily homogenous or coherent political or military units in Tajikistan. There were multiple individuals within each of the ethno-regional grouping considered to be their leader, who competed against each other, changed alliances, or even undermined rivals within their own networks. These include Rakhmonov and Ubaidollyev among the Kulyab politicians, Safarov, Salimov, and Mirzoyev among the Kylyabi PFT commanders, Abdullajanov, Azimov, Khamidov among the Leninabadi politicians, Kenjaev, Mansorov, Alimardonov among the Hissori politicians, Boimatov and Khudoiberdiev among the Hissorian PFT commanders.⁴ Second, despite the “Kulyab-zation” of post-war power structures, Kulyab remains one of the poorest areas of the country without public investment into basic services and utilities, such as electricity. Third, some of the long serving presidential associates are not from Kulyab. Though the fact that Rakhmonov’s extended family members occupy some of the most lucrative state positions cannot be discounted, it appears that dynamics within a small circle of individuals play a significant role no less than territorial or kinship-based identity.

Furthermore, the use of violence shifted over time during the civil war—from an instrument of political contest to the regionalization of the conflict and finally as the means of profit accumulation. It started as the opposition groups began calling for the dismissal of the communist-era government officials in March 1992, thus as a part of democratization process rather than an ethnic war. As several local observers noted, no clear ethnic boundaries existed among the people participating in either anti- or pro-government demonstrations in Dushanbe: many from Kulyab and Isfara (in the Sogd oblast) were part of the opposition groups. According to a former teacher in Sharitus, who led a group of refugees to Afghanistan in 1992, political tensions stemming from the capital did not escalate into ethnic violence at the local level immediately. After a while, suddenly the weapons became available and abundant, and individuals from particular social groups (e.g., respected village personalities of Kulyab or Leninabad origin) became the target of assassinations, the circumstances and perpetrators of which remain unclear to date.

As the oppositions retreated to the eastern mountain areas and continued guerrilla warfare against the government, certain individuals in both UTO and PFT discovered and seized particular opportunities emanating from war economies, such as arms and drug trafficking, kidnapping and ransoms, and confiscations of land and properties. Many of the UTO field commanders had close ties to groups operating in Afghanistan, including the Northern Alliance (its commander Massoud was a Tajik himself) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (whose leader, Namangani, had a base in Tajikistan until 2001). Refugees who fled Tajikistan to Afghanistan in 1992-1993 were temporarily settled in three main locations, each controlled by different Afghan warlords, and some of them developed particular networks and relationships with the Afghans: according to an UN official, drug routes shifted towards the corridors of Khatlon, coinciding with the return of refugees.

Although the opposition excelled in military training and equipment at the onset of the war, eventually one that controlled more resources—hence able to afford more weapons from Russia, Uzbekistan, or elsewhere—won the war. By 1993, the PFT overwhelmed the opposition, albeit without a decisive military victory. While the scope of external financing for

⁴ For the background of some of the warlords, see Kirill Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the nation or robber barons? Warlord politics in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (2005).

the war remains unknown,⁵ internal sources of financial compensation for PFT warlords were created in part by privatization. In 1991, despite the escalation of the civil war, the government launched partial leasing and privatization of small- and medium-scaled state enterprises. No accounts of this early phase of privatization exist, but it appears that vouchers were issued for the purchase of these properties. The public remained largely uninformed of this process, and most of the vouchers were instead used to fill the shortfall of pension funds. Yet PFT commanders who had forcefully occupied properties during the war were able to legalize their control of these assets through this scheme. In Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tube, many local observers recall the sudden and dubious change of ownership for shops, bazaars, factories, land, and cotton farms. An expert on the cotton sector in Kurgan-Tube noted that some of these commanders grabbed land and used profits from cotton production to acquire more assets being made available from privatization.

Top-ranking PFT commanders, including Boimatov, Khudoiberdiev, and Mirzoyev also sought to control TADAZ, the largest industrial facility in Tajikistan located near Kurgan-Tube in the western part of Khatlon. The revolts of Khudoiberdiev, an Uzbek officer of the Soviet Army based in Kurgan-Tube, against Rakhmonov in 1996 and 1997 derived from the control of TADAZ and cotton.⁶ Some suggest that Khudoiberdiev sought to maintain Kurgan-Tube under his control as a reward of his contribution to the government victory, but the government preempted this plan by combining Kurgan-Tube and Kulyab (which were separate administrative territories during the Soviet era) into a single Khatlon *oblast*. When he moved the Rapid Reaction Brigade to Dushanbe in 1996 in protest of the Kulaybi domination in the post-war government (at the exclusion of Hissari and Uzbek wartime allies), one of his demands was to break the Khatlon oblast into the two regions again. Rakhmonov agreed to dismiss some of the Kulyabi officials (though they were later reappointed to other influential positions, such as the case of the former premier and now the Mayor of Dushanbe, Ubaidolloyev) and appointed Kudoiberdiev to First Deputy of the Presidential Guard, but quietly buried the plan to redraw Khatlon.

The case of Khudoiberdiev illustrates the constraints of political, economic, and military control that state managers faced for several years after the breakout of the war, the influence of other influential actors within the government apparatus, and the dependence of regime authority and capacities on such an unstable alliance of these individuals. Rakhmonov was called, as one of the observers put, “President of the Rudaki Avenue” during this time. Yet these wartime elites began to disappear by the end of the 1990s: many of his military and political rivals are now dead, in prison, or overseas. Thus, the emergence and consolidation of the oligarchy in Tajikistan materialized in the context of international assistance that arrived in Tajikistan in the mid-1990s.

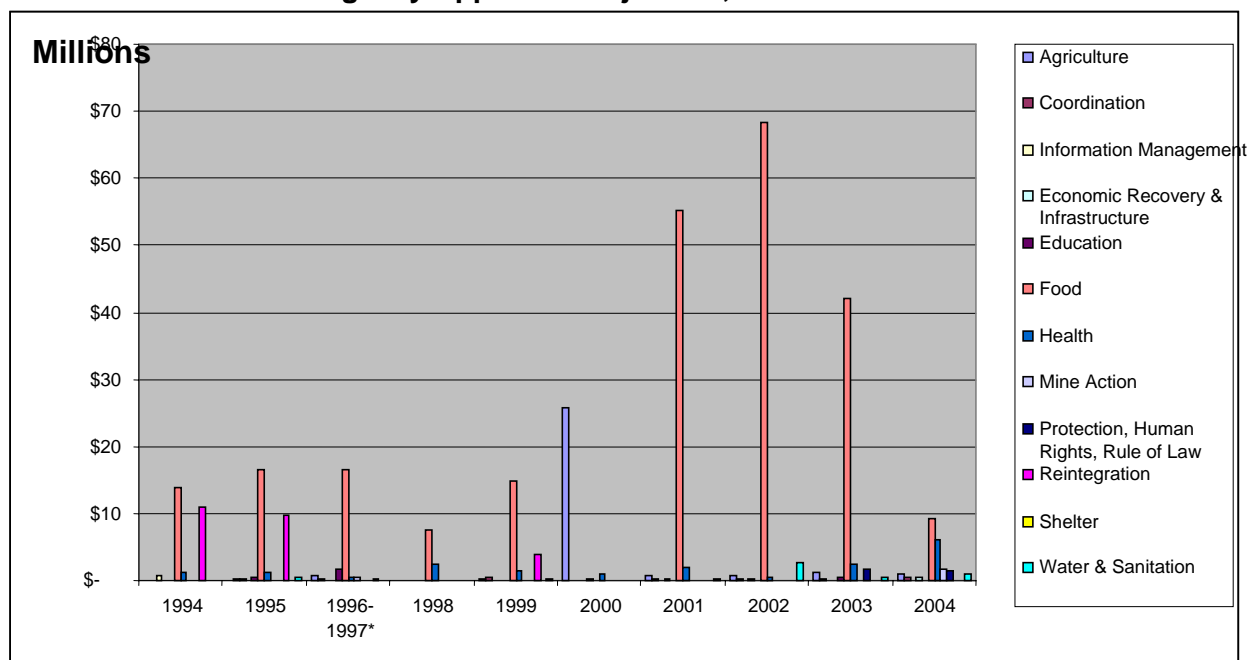
Privatization, land reform, institution building

⁵ One of the international observers noted, for instance, that it is unclear which groups in Uzbekistan provided support to the PFT—whether security agencies, such as the former KGB, or paramilitary groups—and the precise nature of their motives for involvement (e.g., economic, security, Islamic).

⁶ In September 1992, he stole four tanks from the Russia’s 201st Motorized Rifle Division and entered the battle on the side of the government. After the successful 1996 revolt, Khudoiberdiev again moved his forces in 1997 from Kurgan-Tube to Tursunzade and took control of TADAZ, but this time he did not succeed and fled to Uzbekistan, where he launched another unsuccessful revolt in 1999, occupying the north but was defeated by the coalition of the government and the former opposition forces.

International assistance to Tajikistan during and after the civil war focused on humanitarian assistance and macroeconomic reform. The World Bank was one of the first donors to arrive in Tajikistan. The World Bank organized the first Consultative Group Meeting in Tokyo in October 1996, anticipating the negotiated settlement of the conflict. The meeting resulted in aid pledges of US \$185 million to assist in the implementation of the peace accord, but the deterioration of security prompted many donors to suspend aid programs. The second Consultative Group Meeting was held in May 1998 in Paris, resulting in the pledges of US \$280 million, including \$60 million for humanitarian assistance. Of the total of \$280 million, \$260 million were loans from multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank, IMF, ADB, EBRD, Islamic Development Bank (IDB), and the EU. Approximately 58% of these resources were allocated for balance of payment support, followed by 34% for foreign investment and 8% for technical assistance (1998a). The World Bank's credits, totaling U.S. \$95 million, were designated for structural reforms, including the privatization of state enterprises and collective and state farms and the restructuring of the civil service (1998b).

UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Tajikistan, 1994-2003



*1996 Appeal extended to December 1997. Source: Financial Tracking System (<http://www.reliefweb.int/arfts/index.html>)

Despite the emphasis on structural reforms, Tajikistan's three main industries—cotton, aluminum, and energy—remain under the monopolistic control of a few individuals or the state. Out of the total value of Tajikistan's exports (\$770 million) in 1996, the share of aluminum was 30% (\$263 million), cotton was 20% (\$157 million), and energy was 23% (\$175 million). The state has the full control of the aluminum and energy sectors through the state unitary enterprise, TADAZ and Barqi Tojik. According to an undisclosed audit by an international consulting firm in 2000, more than 98% of aluminum products are exported to customers incorporated overseas, the ownership of which is unknown. The company is governed solely by its director who reports only to the president.

Formal and informal state control also remains strong in the cotton sector, which generates 11-12% of its GDP. One of the first World Bank credits in 1996 was dedicated to the reform of the agricultural sector, due in part to the concentration of poverty in cotton-growing areas. The outcome of the reform, however, was not the privatization of farmland per se, but the reallocation of land tenure rights to a group of farmers working on the land. Thus, land still belongs to the state, and the management structures of the newly created *dehkan* farms remain in large part same as those of the collective or state farms. Local governments instruct the *dehkan* farms to cultivate cotton at least in 60% of the land allocated and impose annual cotton production targets. It remains unclear which state agencies are ultimately responsible for these government policies on cotton. The Ministry of Agriculture supervises only the quality of seeds. It appears though those cotton-related decisions originate from the highest level of political echelon: the presidential appointments and dismissals of personnel involved in various aspects of cotton production and export since 1994 underscore the strategic choice of individuals based on personal connections to him, not technical or professional merit. As such, the details of the cotton sector are considered politically sensitive and therefore hidden from public scrutiny. Local observers, especially in Kulyab and Kurgan-Tube, also argue that because of the government intervention, donors shy away from getting involved in the cotton sector, except for technical assistance by ADB and the World Bank to the legal aspects of land reform.

When collective and state farms were 'privatized,' debts accumulated during the Soviet era in the sector—estimated to be \$125 million, equivalent to the half of the country's annual budget at the time—were transferred to *dehkan* farms, because the government had no means of repaying these debts. Moreover, a new form of debts appeared as a result of agricultural reform in 1996. With the World Bank's technical assistance, a system was established in which foreign investment (from Paul Reinhardt, a Swiss cotton financier) was channeled first through the National Bank of Tajikistan (where 6% interests incur) and second the AgroInvest Bank to a group of local investors. The latter came to be known as "futurists," because they provided equipment, seeds, oil, and other inputs for cotton production based on the contract of future cotton harvests. Many of these futurists also gained the ownership of cotton ginneries. By 2000, 23 ginneries were privatized, five of which were controlled directly by the futurists and the remaining 15 partially owned by the state (the government maintained the 25% of shares). According to an ADB specialist, out of 40-50 ginning factories, five largest companies control 74% of cotton production, the biggest of which are the Somoni 21st Century and Khima. These futurists provide farm inputs and cotton ginning at above-market prices, the result of which is further debt accumulation. According to the 2004 World Bank estimate, price distortions in cotton ginning and input financing have led to the loss of \$63-105 million annually, or 4-7% of Tajikistan's GDP.

Cotton financing has gradually shifted to domestic sources. According to a donor representative, the number of foreign investors grew to 10 by 2006 (among them from Russia, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, and the US), who provide 60-65% of funds, and the rest is financed by domestic actors. Although the details of these internal sources are not publicly disclosed, local and international experts point out the overlap of ownerships between the cotton and the banking sectors. Khima is co-owned by the Chair of the National Bank (with one of the former prime ministers), and the Somoni 21st Century is owned by Rakhmonov's brother-in-law who also owns the Orion Bank. Banks in Tajikistan were gradually privatized since 1992. There were 28 banks as of 1997, but five of them controlled 90% of the total credit available. In 1999, the number of banks declined to 17 and to 14 in 2003 and to 10 in 2006. While many of these banks were closed due to non-performing loans, international technical assistance to the

remaining banks and other types of lending institutions (such as micro credit loans) have not reduced the concentration of the assets. The largest four banks still control 85% of the total credit, the biggest one being the Orion Bank. With the monopolistic control of the cotton sector in progress, most of the former commanders who had occupied farmland have lost control and disappeared from the market. They may not have had business or legal skills to survive in the sector, but most importantly, they did not have an access to the capital at the level of the Somoni 21st Century and Khima. According to an international expert on the cotton sector, the Somoni 21st Century appeared around 2002-2003 and expanded its operations quickly, now occupying 20% of the marketplace alone.

These shortcomings of privatization were not the result of lacking donor leverage. Rather, many local and international observers argue that donors had a significant level and scope of influence during the 1990s. A former staff in the Prosecutor-General's office recalls an episode in which the Parliament adopted in 1998 an IMF recommendation on cotton ginnery reform within 24 hours, as the legislation was one of the preconditions for the forthcoming credit to privatize 500 state enterprises into open joint stock companies. Several local staff who worked for the World Bank structural adjustment program in 1998 also witnessed senior government officials (including the Chair of the National Bank) calling on a number of their friends and family members to participate in auctions, offering large discounts, so as to meet the Bank-imposed deadlines.

The government agency responsible for privatization is the State Committee on Property, the management of which has been firmly controlled by the president. Since 1994, there have been three individuals appointed to the Chair of the Committee, two of them from Dangara (Rakhmonov's hometown in Kulyab) and one of them married into the president's family. They both moved to other senior positions responsible for financial and economic management (the current chair, also from Kulyab, is from the National Bank). Most of the presidential associates who were involved in the privatization of state farms and enterprises during the 1990s acquired a significant amount of wealth from this process. Most of these oligarchs have been in power since 1994, including the Chair of the National Bank, Chairs of the State Committee on Property, Chair of the State Committee on Trade and Contracts, and Heads of the Executive Apparatus. As the incomplete process of privatization strengthened their oligarchic control in cotton, financial, and energy sectors by the end of the 1990s, Rakhmonov also began to consolidate his legal-bureaucratic control of the economy through formal institutional changes. In 2001, he issued a decree to integrate several agencies, including the Committee for Special Supplies, National Tourism Company, State Committee on Trade and Contracts, Ministry of Economy and Foreign Economic Relations, Agency for Support and Development of Small Entrepreneurship into the new Ministry of Economy and Trade. The aforementioned Chair of the State Committee on Trade and Contracts, a Kulyabi, was reappointed to head the new ministry, who later became Minister of Finance and the head of Tax Committee. In addition, the Administration of State Financial Control was established in 2001, headed by the former Chair of the State Property Committee. ASFC would be responsible for the management of national and local budgets, state funds, internal and foreign debts, external loans, and humanitarian aid, and directly report to the president. In 2002, Tax Committee and Customs Committee were integrated into the Ministry of State Revenues and Tax Collections, and the former State Advisor on Economic Policy, from Sogd, was appointed to Minister (who later became Minister of Development and Economy).

These institutional changes served several purposes. First, they abolished a number of posts allocated to the former opposition leaders appointed on the basis of the 30% quotas. These

included the Ministry of Economy and Foreign Economic Relations, National Tourism Company, and the Customs Committee. Second, they strengthened presidential control over economic and financial management (most notably through the AFSC). Third, these changes met donor requests to reduce the size of the civil service and increase tax revenues. For instance, the Tax Police was created in 1996 based on the IMF's recommendation, but because many of the biggest taxpayers at the time were the civil war warlords, the agency became a political instrument for the government to monitor the economic activities of the former UTO commanders and leaders.

Donors recognize these unintended consequences of their policies. According to the World Bank reports, for instance, the original goal of ASFC was to create and strengthen a parliamentary oversight of state resource management, but the agency was instead placed within the president's office. The audit of TADAZ was also one of the conditions set forth in the Structural Adjustment credit, but the government rejected several drafts prepared by the Bank-selected consulting firms. When the auditing of the plant failed to materialize, the Bank decided to forgo the requirement and shifted the component to another program, instead of canceling the credit. These evaluations highlight that consulting firms contracted by the Bank failed to engage the government, as the commitment of the latter to reform began to fade (the credit was originally negotiated in 1998 amid the excitement of war settlement).

Presidential appointments for posts related to privatization and revenue collection and reallocation resemble a game of musical chairs, in which a small group of the same players circles around (while amassing personal wealth at the same time). In the security sector, however, there was a more frequent rise and fall of elites. In other words, economic consolidation preceded the extension of state control in the security sector in Tajikistan.

Security sector reform and prosecution of political rivals

After the signing of the peace accord, some of the UTO commanders and their combatants were reintegrated into government structures, while the PFT commanders who had challenged Rakhmonov were removed from power, including Khudoiberdiev, Dostiev (Chair of the Supreme Council) and Salimov (Minister of Interior).⁷ Yet by 2002, many of the quota-based appointments for UTO leaders and commanders began to be reversed: most of them have been dismissed or transferred to marginal positions.

The 30% quotas were originally envisioned as a guarantee to ensure UTO representation in ministries (including the ones considered 'power ministries'—defense, interior, security, and foreign affairs), local governments and judicial and law-enforcement bodies. The government fulfilled only the ministerial quotas, including those of the power ministries, by creating the Ministry of Emergency Situations and appointing Mirzo Zioyev. According to an opposition leader, UTO would have gained more than 2,000 administrative posts at the national and local levels, but only 55 were appointed in 1997. Once integrated, the UTO commanders were tasked to remove their former comrades who continued to pose security threats, such as Mullo Abdullo and Rahmon "Hitler" Sanginov. Military action against Abdullo in 2000 was led by the UTO commanders, such as Iskandarov (leader of the Democratic Party and appointed to the

⁷ Khudoiberdiev is believed to be still in Uzbekistan and involved in the suppression of the Andijan event in 2005. Salimov was reappointed to the head of the Customs Committee in 1997 but fled to Moscow where he was arrested and extradited to Tajikistan in 2001 for allegedly plotting a coup with Dostiev against Rakhmonov in 1995. He was put to a closed trial and sentenced to 15 years in jail.

Committee on Emergency Situations but when Zioyev became the Minister of Emergency Situations, reappointed to Chair of Tajikcommuneservices), Adhamov (appointed to First Deputy Minister of Defense), and Nizomov (Chair of the Customs Committee). In 2000-2001, according to several sources, Zioyev was also put in charge of negotiating the withdrawal of Juma Namangani of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan from Tajikistan, whose presence in Tavildara was a liability to Rakhmonov because of IMU incursions into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (the Tajik government never admitted officially the presence of IMU in its territory).

In Tajikistan, DDR was largely a national process, with the UN holding an observer status rather than taking a leading role. There was some support from UNTOP, UNDP and the World Bank for reintegration of the former combatants in the Rasht Valley starting in 1999, but it was essentially a community-based area development program rather than DDR per se. The former combatants were provided with agricultural inputs and materials to reconstruct buildings (e.g., the MOI battalion in Garm had no premise for accommodation as of 2000). As the UTO combatants were reintegrated into security agencies, such as MOI and TBF in 1998-2001, their units in Garm (Rasht Valley) and Khorog (GBO) were almost entirely composed of the former opposition fighters. Yet most of them subsequently left those posts for a variety of reasons—lack of competency to carry on law enforcement duties or adequate compensations. By 2003, according to a former UTO commander and head of MOI unit in the Rasht Valley, only 40 were employed out of 740 former combatants in the area.

The peace accord provides an amnesty for crimes committed during the civil war, except for “serious crimes,” the definition of which is unspecified and therefore left to the discretion of the government. Law enforcement agencies, including MOI and the Prosecutor-General’s Office, maintain files on the former UTO commanders. Moreover, according to a few reliable sources, a special unit was established in 2002 within the MOI to investigate undisclosed crimes related to the civil war. Several opposition leaders, including Iskandarov and Nuri, have complained that their supporters have been arrested and imprisoned, despite the amnesty agreement. Most recently, in March 2007, former Deputy Prime Minister and member of the opposition Akbar Turajonzoda publicly asked the government to delete all files on the UTO, but the reaction from government officials has been discouraging.

With security agencies under control by 2002, Rakhmonov launched the prosecutions of the most influential UTO and PFT commanders, despite their contribution to security restoration and regime stability. In 2003, Iskandarov was fired from directorship of state enterprise Tajikgas. He retired to Tajikabod but after a meeting with Rakhmonov in 2004, he was arrested in Moscow in 2005 and transferred to Tajikistan under a dubious circumstance (the Russian authorities released him but two days later, he was in the custody of the Tajik government). In 2006, he was sentenced to 23 years in prison and the fine of approximately \$470,000 for terrorism and the illegal possession of weapons. In 2006, Gaffor Mirzoyev, former PFT commander and the former head of Presidential Guard received life imprisonment for plotting a coup, illegal possession of weapons, among other charges. Rakhmonov tried to dismiss him in 2004 but had to reappoint him to Director of National Drug Agency when he protested this decision. When he was arrested, the government confiscated many of his assets and properties, including the Olimp bank, factory, apartments, a casino, and shops, and sentenced one of his brothers to 12 years in prison for polygamy, illegal possession of weapons, and other criminal charges. Many of the commanders from both sides, including Mirzoyev and Zioyev, former UTO commander and Minister of Emergency Situations (dismissed in 2006), were most likely to have been involved in arms trafficking with the implicit approval of the government. Some suggest that their reintegration and appointments in the security sector—particularly to

posts with income potential from illegal and wartime economies—was one of the incentives that the government offered to these warlords, first of the PFT and later the UTO, as the means for their cooptation and used for their downfall.

Conclusion

This study highlights the post-war emergence of an oligarchy in the context of international assistance to peacebuilding, including privatization, land reform, and the reform of public administration. It is a story that many in Tajikistan, especially those reporting and analyzing local situations for embassies, the media, aid organizations, and government agencies to a certain extent are aware of, but cannot explore and publicize, considering the current political environment in Tajikistan. As the memories of the civil war begin to wane, the public has slowly but increasingly become critical of the government, particularly over its corruption and continued lack of basic public goods and services (e.g., electricity). Given the lack of open and fair opportunities for political and economic participation, public discontent is expressed through small-scale demonstrations or sympathy toward banned Islamic groups, such as Hiz-but-Tahir (HIT), particularly among the youth—including those with college level education—and women. Against this background, the government has tightened its control over security and aggressively cracked down on any signs of political dissent under the banner of counter-terrorism. Many of the civilian and security agencies, including Ministries of Interior, Security, Defense, and Foreign Affairs are occupied with those with former KGB backgrounds. Ministry of Emergency Situations, created to accommodate the opposition in 1997, was abolished and its head dismissed in 2006.

Therefore, peacebuilding outcomes may rather be defined by the extent and level of political control over economic assets by the elites associated with the incumbent government when the peace agreement was signed, particularly in the context of institutional change designed, afforded, and implemented with international assistance. A *restorative* approach to peacebuilding, particularly for security or the centralization of coercive power, and the *transformational* agendas of institution building may be inherently contradictory, and the failure of the latter may have to be tolerated for the sake of the former. Government legitimacy does not only emanate from the monopoly of the use of force, but institutions that provide for basic needs. Failing that, as we know, it is one of the root causes of conflict.⁸

⁸ *A more secure world: Our shared responsibility*, Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004), available at <http://www.un.org/secureworld/>; *Human Security Now*, Final Report of the Commission on Human Security (2003), available at <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/finalreport/index.html>; *The Responsibility to Protect*, Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001), available at <http://www.iciss.ca/pdf/Commission-Report.pdf>; *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*, Report of the Secretary-General (2005), available at <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/contents.htm>.

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