

Eurasia Overview

"The member nations of the Coalition must continue their concerted action to deny safehaven to terrorists; to destroy their financial, logistical, communications, and other operational networks; and to bring terrorists to justice."

*Joint statement on counterterrorism cooperation
US President George W. Bush and Russian
President Vladimir V. Putin, 24 May 2002*

Central Asia, which for years had suffered from Afghanistan-based extremism, saw no significant terrorist activity in 2002. The operations of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a group on the US Foreign Terrorist Organization list that seeks to overthrow the Uzbekistani Government and create an Islamic state, were seriously disrupted when some of its leaders and many of its members were killed in Afghanistan fighting with the Taliban against Coalition forces. Russia, however, continued to be the target of terrorist attacks in 2002, most of which were carried out by extremists fighting in Chechnya. The most significant was the 23 October takeover of the Dubrovka Theater in Moscow, where some 40 extremists held 800 theatergoers hostage and threatened to blow up the theater.

States in the region continued to provide overflight and temporary basing rights; share law-enforcement and intelligence information; and identify, monitor, and apprehend al-Qaida members and other terrorists. Countries in the region also took diplomatic and political steps to contribute to the international struggle against terrorism, such as becoming party to some or all of the 12 United Nations international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Enhancing regional counterterrorism cooperation has been a priority for the United States. Toward that end, the US Department of State's Coordinator for Counterterrorism hosted the Fourth Annual Counterterrorism Conference for Central Asia and the Caucasus in Ankara in June 2002. Counterterrorism officials from Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as observers from Russia,

Turkey, Afghanistan, China, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), discussed issues related to human rights, the rule of law, and combating terrorist financing. Throughout the conference, and in other bilateral and multilateral fora, the United States stressed that effective counterterrorism is impossible without respect for human rights, and that the rule of law is a formidable and essential weapon in the fight against al-Qaida and other international terrorist organizations. A policy exercise held on the last day of the conference helped reinforce key tenets of effective counterterrorism policy and operations.

The United States continues to work with the OSCE and other regional organizations to strengthen policing capability, encourage improved regional cooperation, and combat terrorist financing. The OSCE held a meeting on terrorist-financing issues in Prague in May, which addressed the 40 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations on money laundering and how to strengthen states' capabilities to implement these standards. Following the conference, OSCE participating states adopted a US proposal committing each state to complete the FATF self-assessment exercise by 1 September 2002, and virtually all of them did so by that date. In cooperation with the UN Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the OSCE is conducting training seminars in Central Asia on money-laundering and terrorist-financing issues to strengthen states' abilities to prevent terrorist organizations from obtaining access to funds. The United States was the major contributor to this project.

The European Union (EU) has also been deeply involved with both Russia and the OSCE in an effort to enhance counterterrorism cooperation throughout the region. At the November 2002 Summit, the EU and Russia reached agreement on a far-reaching framework for the fight against terrorism through more intensified cooperation. The framework sets out the shared values and

commitments in the fight against terrorism and identifies a series of specific areas for future EU-Russia cooperation. EU-OSCE cooperation also has advanced through close contact between the Personal Representative on Counter Terrorism of the OSCE and the Chairman of the OSCE. The objective is to maximize the abilities of both organizations to counter terrorism in the region, especially in Central Asia.

In August, the United States designated the terrorist group East Turkistan Islamic Movement under Executive Order 13224 on terrorist financing. The organization had been involved in several terrorist acts in eastern China, and some of its members had been caught trying to carry out an attack against US Embassies in Central Asia.

Azerbaijan

In 2002, Azerbaijan continued to be a staunch supporter of the United States in the war against terrorism. Since September 11, 2001, Azerbaijan has added to an already strong record of cooperation with the United States, rendering dozens of foreign citizens with suspected ties to terrorists. Azerbaijan's border guards have increased their patrols of the southern border with Iran, and the aviation department has increased security at Baku's Bina Airport as well as implemented recommendations of the international civil aviation organization on aviation security.

While Azerbaijan had previously been a route for international mujahidin with ties to terrorist organizations seeking to move men, money, and materiel throughout the Caucasus, Baku stepped up its interdiction efforts in 2002 and has had some success in suppressing these activities. Azerbaijan has taken steps to combat terrorist-related funding by distributing lists of suspected terrorist groups and individuals to local banks. In November, a platoon of Azerbaijani soldiers joined the Turkish peacekeeping contingent in Afghanistan.

On 25 January, President Bush waived section 907 of the Freedom Support Act for 2002, thereby

lifting restrictions on US assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan. The waiver cleared the way for the United States to deepen its cooperation with Azerbaijan in fighting terrorism and in impeding the movement of terrorists into the South Caucasus. The waiver also provided a foundation to deepen security cooperation with Azerbaijan on a common antiterrorist agenda.

Azerbaijan has also provided strong political support to the United States and to the global Coalition against terrorism. In May, President Aliyev instructed his government to implement UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1368, 1373, and 1377. The Government also approved changes to the criminal code that increased the maximum penalty for acts of terrorism from 15 years to life imprisonment and added a provision making the financing of terrorist activities a crime. In October, Baku hosted a US-sponsored seminar on money laundering and financial crimes, including terrorist financing. The United States is working with the Government of Azerbaijan to develop a plan to combat financial crimes.

In April, the Justice Ministry revoked the registrations of two Islamic charities—the Kuwait Fund for the Sick and the Qatar Humanitarian Organization—for activities against Azerbaijan's national interests. In November, Azerbaijan froze the bank accounts of locally registered Benevolence International Foundation (BIF) pursuant to UNSCR 1373. The Justice Ministry subsequently revoked BIF's registration.

In April, the Government sentenced six members of Hizb ut-Tahrir, an extremist political movement that wants to establish a borderless, theocratic caliphate throughout the entire Muslim world, to up to seven years in prison for attempted terrorist activities. In May, Azerbaijan convicted seven Azerbaijani citizens who had received military and other training in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge and who had intended to fight in Chechnya. Four received suspended sentences, and the others were

sentenced to four to five years in prison. Members of Jayshullah, an indigenous terrorist group, who were arrested in 2000 and tried in 2001 for planning an attack against the US Embassy, remained in prison.

Azerbaijan is a party to eight of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Georgia

Georgian officials, including the President, issued repeated statements condemning terrorism throughout 2002 and supported the United States and global Coalition against terrorism in international fora, in word and deed.

The United States has encouraged Georgia and Russia to work together to promote border security within their respective territories and to find negotiated, political solutions to their many disagreements. The presence in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge of third-country international terrorists with links to al-Qaida and significant numbers of Chechen fighters, nevertheless, accounted for the most significant Georgian counterterrorism issue of 2002.

In 2002, the United States strongly urged Georgia to regain control of the Pankisi Gorge where third-country terrorists with links to al-Qaida had established themselves. These extremists threatened Georgia's security and stability, as well as Russia's.

Georgia has deployed troops from the Ministries of State Security and Interior into the Pankisi Gorge to establish checkpoints and root out Chechen fighters and criminal and international terrorist elements. The efforts signal Georgia's commitment to restoring Georgian authority in the Pankisi Gorge and dealing seriously with international terrorists linked to al-Qaida.

The United States assisted Georgia in addressing this internal-security problem through assistance and cooperative programs, including the



Masked Georgian soldiers participate in an anticrime operation, 30 August 2002, in the Pankisi Gorge, Georgia, where hundreds of Chechen rebels are located.

four-phase Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP). The program is intended to help the Government of Georgia eliminate terrorists, secure its borders, reassert central control over its territory, and deny use of its territory to foreign militants and international terrorists. Headquarters and staff training began in late May 2002 with 120 students receiving classroom instruction. In early June, additional staff training for the Land Forces Command began and ended with a successful command-post exercise. By September, US trainers had begun conducting unit-level tactical military training of Georgia's Ministry of Defense and other security forces to strengthen Georgia's ability to fight terrorism, control its borders, and increase internal security. In December, the first Georgian battalion completed GTEP training.

In July, Georgia extradited Adam Dekkushev to Russia for his suspected involvement in the bombing of apartment buildings in Moscow and Volgograd in 1999, blasts that resulted in approximately 300 deaths and for which no one has yet been convicted. A second suspect in the same bombings, Russian citizen Yusef Krymshamkhalov, was extradited to Russia in December. In October, Georgia extradited five individuals accused of terrorism and/or terrorist-related activities to the Russian Federation. They

were among 13 Chechen fighters captured by Georgian authorities along the Russian-Georgian border in August. Georgia determined that two of those captured were Georgian nationals whom it will not extradite to Russia. Of the remaining six, three have pending Georgian court appeals on their extradition to Russia. Before extraditing the other three, Georgia has requested further documentation from Russia.

In 2002, Georgia became a party to the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Georgia is now a party to six of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Kazakhstan

The Government of Kazakhstan continued to be outspoken and supportive in the fight against terrorism. In 2002, President Nazarbayev and senior Government officials have consistently spoken out against terrorism and have taken concrete action to support the international Coalition against terrorism.

In July, the Government signed an agreement to use Almaty Airport as an alternative airfield for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Kazakhstan has allowed more than 800 US overflights in support of OEF since December 2001.

When the US Embassy has requested increased protection, the Government of Kazakhstan has repeatedly deployed rapid-reaction antiterrorist teams and elite police units to respond to changing security circumstances at US Government facilities. It has also continued to be responsive to requests to increase security at major oil facilities with US private investment.

In 2002, Kazakhstan became a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism Bombings; Kazakhstan is now a party to 11 of the 12 international terrorism conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. The 1979 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear

Material is in the process of being ratified, undergoing the second round of interagency review. On 27 February, after approval by the Parliament, President Nazarbayev signed into law the two remaining conventions—the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf.

Kazakhstan has also strengthened its antiterrorism legislation. In February, the Government adopted tougher penalties and more precise definitions of terrorist acts. In October, the National Bank issued orders to freeze the assets belonging to an individual identified on the Executive Order 13224 terrorist asset-freeze list who had held shares in a local bank.

Kyrgyz Republic

Since September 11, 2001, President Akayev has repeatedly demonstrated his strong support for the war against terrorism. Following the September 11 events, the Kyrgyz Government immediately offered assistance and allowed US and Coalition combat and support aircraft to operate from Ganci airbase, located at Manas International Airport in Bishkek.

(On 3 January 2003, the Legislative Assembly [lower house of Parliament] ratified the International Convention Against Terrorist Financing and forwarded it to the People's Representative Assembly [upper house of Parliament] for ratification. The International Relations Committee of the People's Representative Assembly recommended the Convention for ratification. The next People's Representative Assembly session was to begin on 1 March 2003, and ratification was to have been on its agenda.) The Kyrgyz Republic is a party to six of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

The Kyrgyz Republic is a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, launched in June 2001 and grouping China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. President Akayev has also announced his country's support for China's stand against the terrorist forces of the East Turkestan Independence Movement (ETIM), which the United States has designated pursuant to Executive Order 13224. The ETIM was responsible for planning and executing a series of terrorist acts within and outside China.

The Kyrgyz Government has been working toward creating a new Drug Control Agency that is designed to stifle cross-border shipments of drugs and arms related to terrorism.

Several thousand members of Hizb ut-Tahrir, an extremist political movement that wants to establish a borderless, theocratic caliphate throughout the entire Muslim world, are present in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Hizb ut-Tahrir pamphlets, filled with anti-US propaganda, have been distributed throughout the southern region of the country and even appeared in Bishkek. There is no evidence to date that Hizb ut-Tahrir has committed any terrorist acts, but the group is clearly sympathetic to Islamist extremist objectives.

Russia

The past year saw a continuation of the US-Russian counterterrorism cooperation that emerged following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

At the Presidential Summit in Moscow in May 2002, Presidents Bush and Putin agreed to expand the scope of the United States-Russia Working Group on Afghanistan, co-chaired by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov. It is now known as the US-Russia Working Group on Counterterrorism. This interagency working group met for the first time under its expanded mandate on 26 July 2002 in Annapolis, Maryland, and again in Moscow on 22-23 January 2003.

But even as the United States and Russia cooperated in the global war on terrorism on all fronts in 2002, Russia faced terrorist acts that struck at the heart of its national security.

Russia continued to be subject to a number of terrorist events in 2002, many connected to the ongoing insurgency and instability in Chechnya. The continuing conflict, which began in late summer 1999, has been characterized by widespread destruction, displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and human rights abuses by Russian servicemen and various rebel factions. At least three rebel factions, which consist of both Chechen and foreign—predominantly Arabic—mujahidin fighters, are connected to international Islamic terrorists and have used terrorist methods. (They have been designated, in 2003, as terrorist organizations for asset freeze under Executive Order 13224.) Russian forces have continued to conduct operations against Chechen fighters but also draw heavy criticism over credible reports of human rights violations.

Extremist groups and individuals seeking to create an independent Islamic state in the north Caucasus were responsible for dozens of terrorist attacks in 2002. Russian citizens were the victims



A rescue worker looks at the huge crater left after a bomb destroyed the government headquarters in Chechnya, killing at least 55 persons and wounding 123 on 28 December 2002.

Terrorist Kidnapping



Terrorists have long used kidnapping as a tactic to extort money and to advance their political aims.

In Latin America, the Marxist terrorist groups National Liberation Army in Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia conduct hundreds of kidnappings for ransom, often targeting foreign employees of large corporations, especially those in the petroleum industry. During the 1980s, members of the Lebanon-based Hizballah terrorist group were responsible for kidnapping dozens of US and other citizens from Western countries. The Abu Sayyaf Group is responsible for numerous kidnappings in the Philippines and the subsequent murder of some of the hostages. The group uses this terrorist tactic mainly for financial profit.

There is no clear trend. The frequency of kidnappings and hostage takings has waxed and waned over the years.

In October 2002, Chechen terrorists stormed a theater in Moscow and held more than 800 persons hostage, believed to be the largest incident of hostage taking. The terrorists rigged the theater and themselves with explosives, threatening to kill themselves and the hostages by blowing up the theater if their demands were not met. The Government of Russia refused to accede to the terrorists' demands. Faced with an extremely difficult dilemma, Russia launched an assault on the theater using a gas to immobilize the terrorists. All the hostage takers were killed in the raid—and prevented from detonating their explosives. Unfortunately, 129 hostages died during the assault from the effects of the gas.

For its part, the United States does not make concessions to terrorists. US Government policy is to deny hostage takers the benefits of ransom, prisoner releases, policy changes, or other acts of concession.



Moscow police wait outside of the theater that Chechen terrorists had stormed, taking some 800 persons hostage, 23 October 2002.

of frequent attacks with command-detonated mines, including one that killed 36 persons, 12 of them children, and wounded over 100 others attending a Memorial Day parade in Kaspisk, Dagestan.

But Russia's most serious terrorist event of 2002 occurred on 23 October when more than 40 armed militants took hostage 800 Moscow theatergoers to demand an immediate end to all Russian security operations in Chechnya. More than 120 of the hostages—including one US citizen (and a US Legal Permanent Resident)—died from a narcotic gas used during the rescue operation.

The terrorists, who included several female suicide bombers wearing explosive "suicide" vests, placed several mines throughout the theater and threatened to begin killing the hostages unless their demands were met. The leader of the attack was identified by the Chechen mujahidin news agency Kavkaz Tsentr, and later by Russian news agencies, as Movsar Barayev, commander of the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) of the Chechen State Defense Committee (Majlis al-Shura). On 24 October, the Arabic news agency Al-Jazirah identified the group as the previously unknown "Sabotage and Military Surveillance Group of the 'Riyadh al-Salikhin' Martyrs" (a.k.a.



Russian singer Iosif Kobson (L) and his assistant help a woman and her three daughters flee from the Moscow theatre, where they were held by Chechen rebels.

the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs). A group member said in a recorded statement, “Our demands are stopping the war and withdrawal of Russian forces. We are implementing the operation by order of the military commander of the Chechen Republic.” These two groups—Special Purpose Islamic Regiment and Sabotage and Military Surveillance Group of the ‘Riyadh al-Salikhin’ Martyrs—were among the three that the US Government designated as terrorist groups for asset freeze.

On 24 October, the Government of Russia immediately drafted and introduced UNSCR 1440 condemning the Moscow hostage taking as a terrorist act and urging all states, in accordance with their obligations under UNSCR 1373 (2001), to cooperate with Russian authorities in finding and bringing to justice the perpetrators, organizers, and sponsors of this terrorist attack. The resolution was unanimously adopted the same day.

On 1 November, Chechen rebel commander Shamil Basayev, in a letter to Kavkaz-Tsent, publicly claimed full responsibility for organizing the attack. Basayev said that the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs (RSMB) had been under his

direct command and that Chechen President Maskhadov had no prior knowledge of the event. Basayev then publicly resigned his positions as Amir of the Council (Majlis) of Muslims of Chechnya and Dagestan and as the Military Commander of the Islamist International Brigade, saying he would henceforth devote himself completely to the RSMB.

Less than one month later, however, Basayev was once again commanding mujahidin units in Chechnya, according to President Maskhadov’s official news agency, and warned that all “military, industrial, and strategic facilities on Russian territory, to whomever they belong” were legitimate targets for attack. Usama Bin Ladin also acknowledged the Moscow hostage takers in a November 2002 audiotape message, saying to the Russians, “If you were distressed by the killing of your nationals in Moscow, remember ours in Chechnya.”

Throughout 2002, Russia continued to take important steps toward strengthening its participation in the global war on terrorism, particularly by ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. By the end of the year, Russia was a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. Before 2002, Russia had signed but not ratified the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection. Russian officials were optimistic that official ratification of the 1991 Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection would soon occur.

The Government of Russia enacted domestic legislation and executive orders to enable its fight against terrorism in 2002. On 11 January, President Putin signed a decree entitled “On Measures to Implement the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1373 of September 28, 2001” that introduced criminal liability for anyone intentionally providing or collecting assets for terrorist use as well as instructions to relevant agencies on how to seize terrorist assets.

On 11 October, Russia was removed from the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) list of Non-Cooperating Countries and Territories, in part due to the establishment of a Russian financial intelligence unit, the Financial Monitoring Committee. A functioning financial intelligence unit is central to Russia's ability to cooperate internationally to combat money laundering, to its participation in the Egmont Group and FATF, and to track and freeze terrorist assets.

Although the Russia Federation maintains diplomatic relations with the seven states presently on the US Government's State Sponsors of Terrorism list, the Russian Government firmly opposes state-sponsored terrorism and supports international initiatives to combat it. The Government of Russia maintains that its relationships with such states serve as a positive influence that has—or may have—moderated or diminished the support these governments provide for terrorism.

In February, the Federal Security Service hosted an antiterrorism conference in St. Petersburg. They invited representatives from the law-enforcement and intelligence agencies of approximately 40 countries, including the United States.

At the United Nations, Russia circulated a draft General Assembly resolution calling for enhanced cooperation among all components of the UN system in the fight against terrorism. The resolution also noted the interconnection between terrorism, transnational organized crime, and drug trafficking. Russia is using its seat at the new NATO-Russia Council to emphasize counterterrorism cooperation. In December, Russia hosted a NATO-Russia conference on the Role of the Military in Combating Terrorism. At the most recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, held at the same time of the Moscow hostage crisis in October, President Putin's representative, Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, said that the Moscow crisis compelled "the countries that were to some extent reluctant to join in this coalition to more actively participate in

combating all signs of terrorism." The APEC summit generated a very strong statement against terrorism, including a decision to monitor the misuse of the Islamic alternative remittance *hawala* system.

In a much publicized statement on 11 September, President Putin asserted what he claimed was Russia's international right to take unilateral military action against Chechen fighters and other terrorists in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge (near the border with Russia) if Georgia did not carry out more active measures against the fighters. He followed his statement with a letter to President Bush, which he copied to the United Nations and world leaders. From 29 July to the end of 2002 there were at least five instances of Russian cross-border aerial bombardment of Georgian territory. During an attack on 23 August—witnessed by OSCE border monitors and confirmed through independent means—Russian bombs claimed the life of a Georgian civilian and wounded seven others.

The US Government has stated its unequivocal opposition to any unilateral military action by Russia inside Georgia and repeated its strong support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It has urged Georgia to address the security problems arising from the presence of Chechen and third-country extremists with connections to al-Qaida in the Pankisi Gorge. The United States has encouraged Georgia and Russia to work together to promote regional security within their respective territories and to find negotiated, political solutions to their many disagreements.

Tajikistan

The Government of Tajikistan continued to cooperate fully with US antiterrorism efforts throughout 2002.

In March, the Government submitted its report on counterterrorism efforts to the UN Security Council Committee created under UNSCR 1373.

Throughout the year, moreover, the government consistently supported antiterrorist efforts in the United Nations and the OSCE. It was also a signatory to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's June statement and its antiterrorism clauses.

Tajikistan continues to be extremely supportive of and cooperative in the global effort to end terrorism. During 2002, Dushanbe became a party to two international antiterrorist conventions—the 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (6 May 2002) and the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (29 July 2002). The Government of Tajikistan is now party to eight of the 12 international conventions and protocols against terrorism. Dushanbe has indicated its willingness to become a party to the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives. (It should be noted that Tajikistan is a landlocked country, and the remaining two conventions relate to maritime navigation and offshore platforms.)

Tajikistan conducted several significant antiterrorist operations during 2002, including the arrests of a number of suspected terrorists. Additionally, in October and November, Government security forces conducted a large counterterrorist operation in the central portion of the country. The Government had announced in November 2001 its agreement to the basing of US and Coalition troops and aircraft in Tajikistan, and throughout 2002, US and Coalition aircraft were permitted to carry out refueling operations at Dushanbe International Airport. The Ministry of Defense detailed four liaison officers to US Central Command Headquarters in connection with Operation Enduring Freedom.

Tajikistani security authorities, moreover, have stepped up border security and pledged to prevent escape attempts into Tajikistan by Taliban and al-Qaida members. The Government has been open to participating in US Government-supplied antiterrorism training and assistance. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance have also

cooperated with Washington's attempts to trace and freeze terrorist assets and have worked to tighten their financial controls.

Throughout 2002, Dushanbe continued its investigations into a number of incidents of domestic and international terrorism that had occurred in Tajikistan in 2001. In August, the Government announced the formation of a special investigation and prosecution unit to look into the assassinations of a number of high-ranking officials in 2001 and previous years. The effort included the killings of the First Deputy Minister of the Interior, the State Advisor to the President on International Affairs, and the Minister of Culture—as well as the Independence Day suicide bombing (which injured one other person) in September 2001 and the murder of two members of the Baha'i faith in Dushanbe in late 2001. According to public statements by the Deputy State Procurator-General (head of the special unit), arrests were made in several of the cases. The investigations continued. Convictions were obtained in some of the cases, including the murders of the First Deputy Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Culture; in both cases, those convicted received the death penalty.

On 3 November 2002, the Government announced the extradition of 12 members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which the United States has designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization and also has designated pursuant to Executive Order 13224, to Uzbekistan for prosecution. The Tajikistani Ministry of Security captured the suspects during a security sweep, according to a public statement. While the United States currently does not have an extradition treaty with Tajikistan, Dushanbe has officially declared that multilateral instruments such as international conventions against terrorism or the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, when it enters into force internationally, could form a basis for extradition under Tajikistani law. In particular, the Government announced in September that those

arrested in the investigation of the murders of two adherents of the Baha'i faith were found to have links to Iranian-backed terrorist groups.

There were no prosecutions during the year of cases relating directly to terrorism, although several participants in the 1998 coup attempt led by Col. Mahmud Khudoberdiev were convicted on charges that included terrorism. The charges stemmed from their association with Khudoberdiev rather than from involvement in terrorist acts.

Ukraine

The Government of Ukraine supported US antiterrorism efforts throughout 2002. Since the beginning of operations in Afghanistan, Ukraine has allowed more than 5,000 overflights for aircraft participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and provided airlift assets for some Coalition forces participating in the operation. The Government also provided, at Washington's request, light weapons and kits to equip the equivalent of a brigade's worth of Afghan National Army troops. Ukraine has become party to all 12 of the United Nations conventions against terrorism, and it also has adopted legislation bringing it into legal conformity with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards. The Government of Ukraine has agreed to install US Government-funded nuclear portal monitors at 20 border crossings, airports, and ports to detect the transit of nuclear material and is working with us to implement technical upgrades for nuclear plant security. We are also working closely with the Ukrainians to implement a program to upgrade security at institutes whose biological agents could be used to produce weapons. The Ukrainian Rada (parliament) recently passed legislation tightening Ukraine's export-control laws to protect against the proliferation of weapons to rogue states.

President Kuchma has repeatedly made public statements supporting US Government efforts against terrorism. Ukrainian citizens were among the victims of the seizure of the Dubrovka Theater in Moscow on 23 October by 40 armed Chechen

extremists. Three Ukrainian citizens were killed in the incident.

Uzbekistan

The Government of Uzbekistan continued its unprecedented support of Coalition efforts in the war on terrorism during 2002. It has continued to make public statements condemning terrorist acts, and it has allowed basing of Coalition forces at Karshi-Khanabad and Termez and overflight by Coalition forces. The Ministry of Defense detailed five liaison officers to US Central Command Headquarters in connection with Operation Enduring Freedom. Tashkent agreed to all US requests to freeze assets of groups linked to terrorism financing.

Uzbekistan has continued to be extremely supportive of and cooperative in the global effort to end terrorism. The Government has continued to participate in US-led initiatives such as the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance Program, border-security and law-enforcement projects funded by the Department's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Customs export-control and border-security programs, and the Defense Department's programs on threat reduction and weapons of mass destruction.

Several thousand members of Hizb ut-Tahrir, an extremist political movement that wants to establish a borderless, theocratic caliphate throughout the entire Muslim world, are present in Uzbekistan. Hizb ut-Tahrir pamphlets, full of anti-US propaganda, have been distributed throughout the country. There is no evidence to date that Hizb ut-Tahrir has committed any terrorist acts, but the group is clearly sympathetic to Islamist extremist objectives.

The Government of Uzbekistan continues to go to extraordinary lengths to ensure security, especially during significant national holidays, against terrorist acts. Uzbekistan maintains relatively tight security on its borders and is working with the US



Uzbek President Islam Karimov and US Central Command Chief Gen. Tommy Franks shake hands after their meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 23 August 2002.

Government to upgrade its capabilities to detect items of concern related to the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Although no incidents were reported in 2002, Uzbek border guards have detected radioactive shipments on the border in previous years.

Tashkent remains vigilant against potential actions by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, despite the loss of its charismatic leader Juma Namangani and their former sanctuary with the Taliban in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan also plays an active role in the counterterrorism agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe, and the United Nations.

Uzbekistan is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.