



ANALYSIS OF TERMINATION OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UZBEKISTAN AND THE USA

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ABSTRACT

The political and military relations between Uzbekistan and the United States was at the peak during the period of 2001 through 2005. At the initiative of the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, the military airbase in southern Uzbekistan was leased out to the US for free use as a military base for its antiterrorist operations in Afghanistan. It is important to study the sudden end of the strategic partnership and cooperation between Uzbekistan and the United States in 2005. Because the study of the reasons for the termination of the agreement can be useful in the future in the development and continuation of foreign relations of both countries. The changing security environment, US strategic interests, domestic unrest, Islamic threats, presidential leadership, economic instability conditions and the resistance of Russia, economic assistance, alternative airports and local problems of K-2 variables have been analyzed and descriptively illuminated. The bandwagoning theory was used to explain this historical phenomenon. Bandwagoning occurs when a weaker state decides that the cost of opposing a stronger power exceeds the benefits. That is, weak states must comply with rules and standards in order to receive assistance from strong states. If they do not comply with rules and standards, there will be no bandwagoning and the strategic partnership will end.

KEYWORDS: *US-Uzbek relations, the termination of strategic partnership, security relations, military base, Russia*

INTRODUCTION

Since independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan has pursued international relations with various countries, Russia, India, Iran, China, and the United States are among them. While Uzbekistan has occasionally been successful in its political, economic and cultural relations with less experienced and younger states, some international relations have been and remain important lessons in its history.

The political and military relations between Uzbekistan and the United States was at the peak during the period of 2001 through 2005. At the initiative of the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, the military airbase in southern Uzbekistan was leased out to the US for free use as a military base for its antiterrorist operations in Afghanistan.

This politico-military action of these two states was a Strategic Partnership and Cooperation and could be example for military cooperation or alliance. According to the strategic partnership, the US military should have been involved in democratic reforms in Uzbekistan, assisted in economic development, market relations, invested in economic growth, boosting

military capabilities of Uzbekistan, and jointly responding to the country's domestic and foreign security. However, some of the above conditions were not been fully implemented or led to the disintegration of the military regiment, and the study of this has become an important topic for deeper analysis of history.

It is important to study the sudden end of the strategic partnership and cooperation between Uzbekistan and the United States in 2005. Because the study of the reasons for the termination of the agreement can be useful in the future in the development and continuation of foreign relations of both countries. All factors that led to the termination of the strategic partnership and cooperation have not been thoroughly studied in any academic research. These factors have been deeply analyzed and learned in most studies: the sudden withdrawal of the US military base was largely due to the lack of democratic openness and development, a lack of protection of human rights in Uzbekistan, and the cut of economic assistance by the congress to Uzbekistan.

The cut of economic assistance of the USA was one of important factors of the termination of the



Strategic Partnership and Cooperation. But, in particular, economic relations between the United States and Uzbekistan, Russia and Uzbekistan, and China and Uzbekistan in 2001-2005 and importance of these ties have not been compared.

The fact that the US military air base in Kyrgyzstan and the difficulties and inconveniences created by K-2 in the lives of the indigenous people also played an important role in the end of strategic partnership cooperation so these factors too should be studied in this context.

The main questions of the thesis will be as followed:

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

What were the reasons for the termination of Strategic Partnership and Cooperation between Uzbekistan and the US? Why did Uzbekistan reunite with the Russian Federation? Was the Andijan massacre an important factor for the withdrawal of US troops from Uzbekistan?

The main purpose of the study is to find answers to these questions and analyze the important conditions that led to Uzbekistan's strategic partnership with the United States and the factors that led break up of this strategic partnership and it's reuniting with Russia.

In the scientific work, the resistance of Russia, economic assistance, alternative airport, and local problems of K-2 variables were analyzed and descriptively illuminated.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A state can decide either to independently build strong arms (internal balancing) for its national security, or to create a formal alliance with other states. Both options have relative benefits and costs and based on a rational decision directed towards most cost-effective alternatives. A state determines its best option.

The domestic and foreign policy changes that came in the wake of its independence were shaped under the strong influence of its security problems. Specifically, the security of the political regime, the struggle against fundamental activities, and the desire to prevent regional civil wars from spreading over Uzbekistan became the most important political priorities. After becoming an independent state this policy of the Uzbek administration is clearly observed in the bilateral relations they established with the international actor such as the USA.

Uzbekistan's foreign relations with the US or Russia were mainly driven by the interests of Islam

Karimov's regime. When either the US or Russia threatened Uzbekistan's independence, Karimov's regime or its quest to establish its dominance in Central Asia, Tashkent quickly launched close cooperation with the other of the two. In this regard Uzbekistan fulfilled the role of the holder of balance as described in the realist theory of the balance of power.

According to Morgenthau, the balance of power can be understood as a situation or as a policy. Alliances are "historically the most important manifestation of the balance of power." In this case, alliances can be either a policy aimed at changing, maintaining or re-establishing the balance. For example, "nations A and B, competing with each other ... to maintain and improve their relative power positions ... can add to their own power the power of other nations, or they can withhold the power of other nations from the adversary".¹

According to the realist theory, states are the central political actors and their actions are governed by perceptions of sovereignty, national interest and security. Realism is primarily concerned with the protection of the state and the survival of the state as a discrete actor.

Building alliances is not the only tactic states have; there are other strategies also. Balancing and bandwagoning can lead to formation of alliances. When confronted by an external threat, states may either balance or bandwagon.

Balancing is defined as allying with others against the prevailing threat. States can balance in a variety of ways. Waltz (1979) distinguished between two kinds of balancing. States could attempt to balance threats with their own resources. This is called internal balancing. Alternatively, they can seek out other states that share their fear and ally with them. This is known as external balancing.

A fundamental objective of creating a system of Balance of Power is to protect the security and independence of the particular nations. No single entity within the system should be allowed to gain dominance over the others. Thus Balance of Power becomes an analytical device.

States form alliances with stronger ones to counterbalance security threats. Bandwagoning with the source of the threat to evade the attack is called defensive bandwagoning, or to share the booty of the powerful is called aggressive bandwagoning. That is, when choosing an alliance partner, states may either

¹ Morgenthau, J., Hans. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985.



balance or bandwagon. Especially weak states facing an external threat tend to ally with the most threatening power, as discussed in the power transition theory.²

The bandwagon effect is a phenomenon whereby the rate of uptake of beliefs, ideas, fads and trends increases the more that they have already been adopted by others. In other words, the bandwagon effect is characterized by the probability of individual adoption increasing with respect to the proportion who have already done so.³

Bandwagoning in international relations occurs when a state aligns with a stronger, adversarial power and concedes that the stronger adversary-turned-partner disproportionately gains in the spoils they conquer together.⁴ Bandwagoning, therefore, is a strategy employed by states that find themselves in a weak position. The logic stipulates that an outgunned, weaker state should align itself with a stronger adversary because the latter can take what it wants by force anyway.⁵ Thucydides' famous dictum that "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" captures the essence of bandwagoning.⁶

A large proportion of states in the international system are small. Despite their lack of potential, they are much more likely to explore more avenues that will enable them to take part in the global activities in different ways. The key role of small states which know they lack the resources and capacity to influence the international system is likely to be one of bandwagoning rather than balancing with powerful countries by the desire for gain.⁷ Drawing on the idea of bandwagoning in small states literature, they suggest that many small states are willing to pursue "strategies of accommodation" with bigger states. Uzbekistan's choice of signing an agreement with a comparatively powerful country, United States reflects the strategy of bandwagoning.

This strategy helped Uzbekistan to ally with a great super power, United States. The reason why Uzbekistan adopted this strategy underlines the natural fear it had of the Islamic threat and terrorism in the region. This is the situation in which Uzbekistan's engagement with the US coined the idea that states, in particular weaker states chose the strategy of aligning with a great power. In our case study Uzbekistan's decision is a good example of explaining the bandwagoning behavior of small states. The manner in which Uzbekistan handled external threats reflected its ability to react strategically to external conditions. Its roles could be reflected through Walt's explanation that small states are more likely to bandwagon with an aggressive great power than balance against it.⁸ This suggests that the external environment that prevailed at the end of the 1990s was more constraining for Uzbekistan.

So, what made Uzbekistan choose US to bandwagon? According to Waltz, bandwagoning occur only under certain identifiable conditions.⁹ The first factor that affects the propensity for states to bandwagon is the weaker the state, the more likely it is to bandwagon rather than balance. Uzbekistan expected the US to provide security. According to Waltz, "because they will be the first victims of expansion, because they lack capacities to stand alone, and because a defensive alliance may operate too slowly to do them much good, accommodating a threatening great power may be tempting."¹⁰

Next, "states will have little choice but to bandwagon when would-be allies are limited in number or unavailable altogether". Or in Walt's words, "states will be tempted to bandwagon when allies are unavailable."¹¹ In the late 1990s, Uzbekistan could not find another state like the US in the international system that it could trust for defense or external affairs matters. As a new independent country, rather than seeking support from Russia, Uzbekistan consistently emphasized creating strategically important relations with the US with the hope that it would mobilize resources on behalf of Uzbekistan. Levy says, "Great powers balance against potential hegemony, whereas weaker states in the proximity of stronger states do what is necessary to survive, which often involves

² Hwang, Yong Bae, 1995, "Gun Sa Dong Maeng eui Ji Sok Seong: Se Ryuk Gyun Hyeong Ron Gwa Se Ryeok Jeon I Ron (The Stability of Alliance: Balance of Power versus Power Transition)," Han Guk Jeong Chi Hak Hoe Bo 29(3): 333-358.

³ Colman, Andrew (2003). Oxford Dictionary of Psychology. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 77

⁴ Mearsheimer, John J. (2001). The Tragedy of Great Power Politics. New York: W.W. Norton and Company (published 2003). ISBN 978-0-393-07624-0.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Waltz, K. N. (1979). Theory of International Politics, 1. New York: McGraw-Hill.

⁸ Walt, S. M. (1987). The origins of alliance. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

⁹ Waltz, K. N. (1979). Theory of International Politics, 1. New York: McGraw-Hill.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Walt, S. M. (1987). The origins of alliance. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.



bandwagoning with the strong instead of balancing against them.¹² Walt's idea is that if weak states see no possibility of outside assistance, they may be forced to accommodate the most imminent threat.¹³

Lastly, it is understood that bandwagoning occurs in exchange for mutual benefits between the weaker and stronger states. The empirical evidence of mutual trust over providing security to Uzbekistan in exchange for base facilities to the US military illustrates this principle. The interchanging for facilities between the weak and strong usually appears through the exchange of common benefits such as territorial gains, security and protection or agreements. Both parties profit; however, the small state gains more profits in the short and the long term. Uzbekistan was more likely to do so.

The key benefit of alliances is clearly security, but many non-security benefits may also result from them. Security benefits in a common defense alliance include mainly a decreased probability of being attacked, greater strength in case of attack as a defense and interference of the ally's alliance with one's enemy. The main costs are the increased risk of war and decreased freedom of action that are included in the duty to a partner. Alliances mainly involve assistance from other nations to avoid a common threat or to seek change in the status quo, but they can reduce a nation's security by provoking opposition or tying security to an ally's ambitions.¹⁴

FACTORS THAT SERVED FOR THE TERMINATION

By the end of 2005, the US-Uzbekistan military-strategic agreement had ended. There were a number of reasons for ending of this agreement which served for changing of the foreign relations of both countries.

First of all, Uzbekistan's main neighbors, the regional powers of Asia, Russia, China had opposed the agreement from the beginning. These countries did not want the US to open a military base in Asia and to play a strategic role in the region. Since 2003, the United States has decreased its economic assistance to

Uzbekistan, while Russia and China significantly increased their economic assistance. Another reason for the decline of K-2 air base for the US was the Manas Airport in Kyrgyzstan. However, being farther from Afghanistan than K-2 this airport was at an equal level as an American military substitute for K-2.

Disruptions and regional problems created by the K-2 military base in southern Uzbekistan on the lives of local people also affected the closure of the base by the Uzbek government.

Russian Resistance; China Together

Today all these interests are under attack, and the U.S. policy in Central Asia is embattled and under siege. Moscow and Beijing, as well as Tehran to a lesser degree, view America's political and strategic presence in Central Asia with unfeigned alarm. Indeed, Russia and China suspect America's desire for bases there.¹⁵ Despite Russo-Chinese protestations of support for the US war on terrorism, in fact they wish to exclude America from the area and fear that the US means to stay there militarily and in other ways, indefinitely. In this campaign, Moscow has taken the lead, with Chinese and Iranian support. Russia has sought with great consistency and success to establish a gas cartel under its leadership. Russian President Vladimir Putin started calling for this in 2002 and has moved steadily since then to achieve this goal, under the guise of an energy club, which he reiterated at the most recent summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Russia has also waged a stubborn campaign to prevent Central Asian states from affiliating either with the U.S. or Western militaries. It seeks to gain exclusive control of the entire Caspian Sea and be the sole or supreme military power there, while states like Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan rely upon Western assistance, especially US, to help them develop forces to protect their coastlines, exploration rigs, and territories from terrorism, proliferation operations, and contraband of all sorts.¹⁶

As part of this drive, Moscow now demands a veto power over other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) members' defense ties to the

¹² Levy, J. S. (1989). The causes of war: A review of theories and evidence. In P. E. Tetlock (Ed.), Behavior, society and nuclear war (pp. 209-333). New York: Oxford University Press.

¹³ Walt, S. M. (1988). Testing theories of alliance formation: The case of southwest Asia. *International Organisation*, 42(2), 275-316.

¹⁴ Snyder 1990, "Alliance Theory: A Neo-realist First Cut," *Journal of International Affairs* 44: 103-123

¹⁵ Moscow, Interfax, in English, November 22, 2005, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) SOV, November 22, 2005

¹⁶ Alexei Matveyev, "Triple Union: Baku, Tbilisi, and Istanbul Plan to Create a New Military Bloc Under the Wing of the United States," Moscow, *Voyenno-Promyshlennyi Kurier*, in Russian, June 1, 2005, FBIS SOV, June 1, 2005



West. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov stated that,

‘The countries of the region are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). And [if the countries of the region are] making a decision about hosting new bases on their territory, they should take into account the interests of Russia and coordinate this decision with our country.’¹⁷

Even in 2003, Ivanov claimed the right to intervene in these countries and more recently highlighted Russia’s anxiety about any potential political change in these states’ internal constitutions. Undoubtedly, military replies to such challenges are being considered.¹⁸ Similarly, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov threatened supposedly “disloyal” governments in the CIS with the use of “every conceivable economic pressure tactic.”¹⁹

Simultaneously, Moscow and Beijing have also waged an unrelenting campaign since 2002 to impose limits on the duration and scope of America’s presence on Central Asian bases and more generally in the region.²⁰ They succeeded in Uzbekistan, thanks to Washington’s misconceived policies there. For example, Washington failed to effectively counter Russo-Chinese propaganda, at both the presidential and public levels, that the United States was behind the revolutions of 2003-04 in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, and the Andizhan uprising of 2005.²¹

Most significantly, Moscow and Beijing have utilized the SCO as a platform for a collective security operation in Central Asia, sponsoring both bilateral and multilateral Russian and Chinese exercises with local regimes and with each other on an annual and expanding basis since 2003. Moscow and Beijing have waged substantive, comprehensive, and systematic efforts to undermine the American presence in Central Asia due to U.S. support for democratic reform. These even include rehearsal of counter-revolutionary

military operations. By doing so, they consciously strive to foreclose even the possibility of such reforms in Central Asia.

Economic Assistance: US vs Russia and China

Another important goal of Uzbekistan’s cooperation with the United States was economic assistance, and it hoped to receive enough for the development of the targeted sectors. In SOFA, it was specified in several paragraphs.²² Economic aid could have been a great help to the economically helpless people of Uzbekistan at that time. But the United States has not invested in Uzbekistan, it has not helped reform the economy as mentioned in SOFA. Economic aid, mainly for social and military purposes has also declined significantly since 2003.

Following 9/11 and Uzbekistan’s positive response to a U.S. request for use of the Karshi-Khanabad (K2) airbase, bilateral U.S. aid, according to the State Department inspector general, tripled to approximately \$162 million in FY 2002, with seven U.S. entities providing assistance to Uzbek police and military that year. The chart from the State Department’s Central Asia Bureau gives a higher number for total U.S. Assistance, and shows the decrease of the economic assistance to Uzbekistan during the following years.

¹⁷ Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty Newslines, from Radio Mayak, Moscow, October 11, 2005.

¹⁸ Sergei Ivanov, ““Russia Must Be Strong,” Wall Street Journal, January 11, 2006, p. 14; Federico Bordonaro, “Why Russia Must Be Strong,” Asia Times Online, February 24, 2006.

¹⁹ “Russia to Pressure Disloyal CIS Countries,” Nezavisimaya Gazeta, October 13, 2005.

²⁰ Goldstein, pp. 13-34; “Jiang Deplores Expansion of AntiTerror War,” The News, April 22, 2002 www.jang.com.pk/thenews/apr2002-daily/22-04-2002/main/main7.htm;

²¹ Ariel Cohen, “After the G-8 Summit: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” China Eurasia Forum, Vol. IV, No. 3, August 2006, p. 55

²² SOFA



Table 1. US Security assistance to Uzbekistan, 2000-2007

Years	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
In Dollars	2.500.000	8.000.000	69.000.000	22.000.000	6.000.000	5.000.000.	1.000.000	1.000.000

Source: *Security Assistance Monitor*

In the SOFA there had been no mention of the payments for the use of the Karshi - Khanabad airbase because the Uzbek side assumed that they would obtain enough financial support on the grounds of the alliance relations. However, this financial support was since 2003 frozen by the Congress because of the poor respect of human rights in Uzbekistan.

The shift in the mutual relations between Russia and Uzbekistan already occurred in August 2003 when Vladimir Putin visited Islam Karimov in Samarkand. This was the first top level meeting since the arrival of the American troops.²³ During this visit, Putin and Islam Karimov signed documents on strengthening cooperation in oil and gas sectors.²⁴

Since then, Uzbek-Russian energy relations have significantly improved. For example, Russian giant gas company Gazprom has been expanding throughout the region, signing a cooperation agreement with Uzbekistan and entering into a strategic cooperation agreement with the reorganized Uzbek state gas company "Uzneftegaz" in December 2002. This agreement stipulated about Gazprom's investment of up to US\$ 1.5 billion in the development of gas-transporting system in Uzbekistan and its pledge to purchase up to 100 bcm of Uzbek gas annually during 2002-2012.²⁵

Additionally, the Uzbek government had developed a number of joint ventures in both oil and gas sectors with Gazprom subsidiary Zarubezhneftegaz.²⁶ In 2004, two additional projects were signed between Gazprom and Uzneftegaz. These projects included the renewal of gas production at the

Shakhpakhti deposits, with Gasprom's investment of US\$ 70.3 million and a gas field exploration and development project in the Ustyurt region.²⁷

Another Russian energy company LUKOIL has been active in Uzbekistan since 2004. In June 2004, Putin paid a visit to Uzbekistan, during which LUKOIL signed the US\$ 1 billion Production Sharing Agreements (PSA). This was a long-term, 35-year agreement, which involved development projects such as Kandym-Khauzak-Shady-Kungrad and Southwest Gissar.²⁸

In December 2005 the dollar debt of Tashkent toward Moscow was also finally settled, through joint Russo-Uzbek production of forty Ilyshin IL-76 strategic airlifters for China in the Tashkent Chkalov Aviation Production Association.²⁹

The above mentioned projects and agreements in the sphere of energy have generally been seen as rapprochement between Russia and Uzbekistan or Central Asia in general. In 2005, bilateral trade between Russia and Uzbekistan reached a figure of US\$ 1.8 billion, an increase by 26.1%.³⁰

²³ Horák, "(Ne)závislost Střední Asie na Rusku," 11-18.

²⁴ Andrew Monaghan, "Uzbekistan: Central Asian Key," in Russian Energy Security and Foreign Policy, ed. Adrian Dellecke and Thomas Gomart (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 127.

²⁵ Sergei Blagov, "Russia's Move on Energy Chessboard," Asia Times, 6 February 2006, Available at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/HB04Ag01.html. Accessed 11 August 2015.

²⁶ Martha Brill Olcott, Central Asia's Second Chance (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 194.

²⁷ For details see Gazprom website at: <http://www.gazprom.com/about/production/projects/deposits/uzbekistan/> or <http://www.zar-gaz.ru/en/operations/country/uzbekistan>. Accessed 11 August 2018.

²⁸ Monaghan, "Uzbekistan: Central Asian key," 127.

²⁹ John Berryman, "Russia and China in the New Central Asia: The Security Agenda." In Russia and China in the New Central Asia, edited by Roger E. Kanel et al., (Haundmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007): 152-167.

³⁰ Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia, President Vladimir Putin met with President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov, 12 May 2006, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/35534>. Accessed 10 September 2018.



Table 2.
Uzbekistan's Trade with Russia – import and export in 2000-2006 (millions of US dollars) Based on data from the International Monetary Fund, Directorate of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 2015

Year	Export (millions of US dollars)	Import (millions of US dollars)
2000	600	250
2001	500	400
2002	300	500
2003	500	600
2004	600	800
2005	1000	1000
2006	1250	1300

China's interests somewhat differ, as it is making efforts to prevent any power to get to the position of a regional hegemony in Uzbekistan. In Beijing's view, peace and stability in the region are necessary for its own development of Xinjiang, as it is preventing any spill-over effect and thus keeping its own periphery safe. Among other Central Asian states Uzbekistan is functioning as a source of various other resources vital for Chinese economy and industry, most notably cotton and minerals. Beijing also focused on investments in major infrastructure projects; it is building transportation corridors, oil and gas pipelines, roads and railroads.

In the 2005 SCO Joint Declaration China objected to the stationing of American troops in Central Asia.³¹ China and Uzbekistan signed the Treaty on Friendly and Cooperative Partnership during this visit, indicating strengthening of bilateral ties. China also offered economic assistance to Central Asia. The Chinese President Hu Jintao announced that China was going to offer soft loans to the amount of US\$ 900 million. By then, the representatives of Chinese Oil and natural gas companies had started frequent visits to the region promising funding to a wide range of projects. For instance, in May 2005, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and "Uzbekneftegaz" (Oil and Gas Company of Uzbekistan) signed deals related to 23 oil fields in Uzbekistan. Based on this

agreement, the CNPC decided to invest US\$ 600 million.³²

In July 2005, Wu Yi, Chinese Deputy Prime Minister, made an official visit to Uzbekistan. The main topic of Wu's dialogue with his Uzbek counterparts was trade and economic cooperation. During this visit, another Chinese company Sinopec signed an agreement with "Uzbek neftegaz" to set up a joint venture. Sinopec announced they would invest US\$ 100 million in oil exploration and development of existing fields in Uzbekistan.³³ During the conversation with Wu, Islam Karimov praised bilateral cooperation and called China as a trustworthy friend and an amicable neighbor. Both concluded that the governments would make serious steps to improve economic, political and military ties.³⁴

³¹ Kawato Akio "What is Japan up to in Central Asia," in Japan's Silk Road Diplomacy: Paving the Road Ahead, ed. Cristopher Len, Uyama Tomohiko and Hirose Tetsuya (Washington and Stockholm: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program, 2008), 25.

³² Eugene B. Rumer, Dmitriï Trenin and Huasheng Zhao, *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow, and Beijing* (New York and London: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 168.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Alisher Ilkhamov, "Profit, Not Patronage: Chinese Interests in Uzbekistan," *China Brief*, The Jamestown Foundation, 2005, 5 (20).

**Table 3.**

Uzbekistan's Trade with China – Import and export in 2000-2006 (millions of dollars). Based on data from the International Monetary Fund, Directorate of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 2015.

Year	Export (millions of US dollars)	Import (millions of US dollars)
2000	0	0
2001	0	30
2002	0	180
2003	0	200
2004	400	250
2005	450	300
2006	500	500

Manas – Alternative Airport

The U.S. increased its presence in the region after 9/11. In early October 2001, the United States signed a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with Uzbekistan. Yet, Uzbekistan only agreed to limited basing and did not allow U.S. refuelers, bombers and combat aircraft to be openly based outside the Karshi-Khanabad base. The U.S. Central Command therefore started its search for another military base in Central Asia that could be used to support U.S. and Coalition forces' combat operations in Afghanistan.³⁵ After having explored several Central Asian military airports, the survey team requested to assess Manas airport, Kyrgyzstan's largest civilian international airport located some 30 km northwest of Bishkek.

As Oliker and Shlapak noted, Manas also had the advantage of being located outside Uzbekistan. This was in line with the perception that the key American base in Central Asia should not be located in Uzbekistan due to its position of a regional power and various other regional political reasons.³⁶ Among the reasons that the Pentagon chose Manas was its 13,800-foot runway, originally built for Soviet bombers. The airstrip's geographical position was also of prime consideration — while Manas is 400 miles from Afghanistan, it is only 20 miles from Kazakhstan, and China is about 200 miles to the east. Manas also had better supporting infrastructure than Tajikistan's Kulob airbase in Dushanbe, which was briefly considered. The initial SOFA agreement was for one year, but it has been repeatedly extended.

³⁵ Deborah E. Klepp, *The U.S. Needs a Base Where?: How the U.S. Established an Air Base in the Kyrgyz Republic* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 2004), 4.

³⁶ Oliker and Shlapak, *U.S. Interests in Central Asia*, 45.

Kyrgyzstan received a wide variety of military and economic aid from the United States in return for its support to OEF. American assistance included military communications equipment, night vision capability, various other systems and reportedly also helicopters, border control aid, military medical assistance, facility upgrades, education slots at the Marshall Center and training for non-commissioned officers.³⁷ Overall, U.S. military aid to Kyrgyzstan focused on three main areas, namely: counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism, and border security.³⁸

Manas quickly proved to be a useful base for Afghan operations, as its 90-minute flying time to the war theater dwarfed the six to eight hours flight time from other potential launching areas, such as ships or U.S. bases in Saudi Arabia. Besides the U.S. forces involved in Operation Enduring Freedom, Manas hosted personnel from France, South Korea, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Australia and the Netherlands. Spanish, Dutch, Danish, and Norwegian C-130s flew cargo missions; France contributed six Mirage 2000s and two C-135 refuelers; Australia sent two Boeing 707 refueling aircraft; and Spain offered HT-211 Super Puma rescue helicopters. Within about six months of September 11, the Pentagon established 13 bases in nine countries in and around Afghanistan. By October 2001, U.S. combat aircraft had flown over 900 sorties and logged more than 4,200 combat hours.³⁹

³⁷ Oliker and Shlapak, *U.S. Interests in Central Asia*, 12–13.

³⁸ For a critical report on U.S. assistance, statistics and more information on this topic, see Joshua Kucera, "U.S. Military Aid to Central Asia: Who Benefits?," *Open Society Foundations Occasional Paper Series*, No. 7 (September 2012).

³⁹ Department of the Navy, *Naval Historical Center*, July-August 2002



Manas Airport was important enough to replace K-2 Airport. Therefore, it can be said that the US government to some extent suspended the planned economic assistance to Uzbekistan without fear of losing K-2.

A further irritant in U.S.-Uzbek relations was the issue of 450 refugees from Andijan who fled to Kyrgyzstan and were eventually airlifted to Romania. After the loss of Uzbekistan, Manas moved to the forefront of U.S. military efforts to maintain aerial operations over Afghanistan. The loss of Karshi-Khanabad was significant—just 60 miles from Afghanistan in Qashqadaryo Province near the border with Tajikistan, the base's 416th Air Expeditionary Group averaged 200 passengers and 100 tons of cargo per day on C-130H missions, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom with scores of flights each month.⁴⁰

The Tulip Revolution also raised the rent for the Pentagon's use of Manas. Under the December 4, 2001 basing agreement, Manas cost a little over \$2 million a year. Bakiyev's new administration sought to increase the amount to \$100-200 million annually; presently, discussions continue on the topic.⁴¹

Local Problems of K-2 and the End

The village of Khanabad is located right next to the Karshi-Shakhrisabz highway. It is natural for every passer-by to see barbed wire flanking the village. The entry to the village was only through two special posts for K-2 security. This caused great inconvenience for villagers who work around the village and grazing livestock. At the entrance to the village, a military man in camouflage checked the people thoroughly, and he checked all of people's cars.

The village has 5,047 people, there are 716 homes. Carriers in the room were uncomfortable with visitors, and they all needed to come in and show their identity documents. In Uzbekistan, people do not carry their identity documents on themselves on a regular basis and some people did not have it at this outpost, that inconvenience was daily occurrence. There were two more outposts to pass through before the villagers could go to their homes.

From the dialogue with the villagers it was clear that there were many other inconveniences and difficulties too.

Obid Ochilov, chairman of the farm in 2001:

*"We have been farming for two years. In 2003, our land was surrounded by concrete walls. I got burned by the cost of landing and fertilizing. Two years have passed, and there is neither work nor money. Back then, it was necessary to fight international terrorism. Now that Afghanistan has its own government, there is relative peace. What are the flights from Khanabad doing? It would be a good idea for the visitor to think about returning. We would also be engaged in peaceful farming"*⁴².

In Khanabad many farmers suffered from the US military's arrival. They were innocent, and lost untold millions worth of assets off their arable lands because of the airbase. However, other villagers were also distracted by the inconveniences caused by heavy cargo flights.

*"The plane will pass over us, Sanobar Karshiyeva said, you cannot breathe cause of hot air that airplane made. The walls of our homes were cracked, roofs were broken. Fortunately, our government does not allow large aircraft to fly right now. Otherwise, it would be impossible to live in our yard in these hot days. If they had left soon to their country, our lives would have been better again"*⁴³.

This was the mood of Khanabad residents in those days. They had endured some temporary discomfort for the country's image and reputation in the international arena, and they waited for the departure of airfield from the countryside.

Before the announcement of the closure of the air base in the Kanabad village The Senate of the Republic of Uzbekistan had hosted a discussion on it. At this meeting, the Senate representatives noted the following resolutions.

The war in Afghanistan and widespread combat operations have ended in general, as evidenced by the statements made by officials in the United States and Europe and by the media.

⁴⁰ Kyrgyzstan's Manas Airbase: A Key Asset in the War on Terrorism, John C. K. Daly.
<https://jamestown.org/program/kyrgyzstans-manas-airbase-a-key-asset-in-the-war-on-terrorism/> (accessed December 20, 2018)

⁴¹ Kommersant, June 2, 2006

⁴² "Today's Troubles of Khanabad Residents"
 B.Norkobilov, "Khalq Suzi" (People's Word)
 newspaper, 2003

⁴³ Ibid



It is therefore legally justifiable that the agreement on the termination of the obligations undertaken on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan by the Uzbek side as a sovereign state in this agreement on the airfield "Khanabad".

The Senate of the Republic of Uzbekistan did not see any reason to continue the Khanabad airfield agreement signed on October 7, 2001, and considered it necessary to implement all established procedures for ending the US contingent.

In the meeting senators said that due to the end of hostilities in Afghanistan, the US air force must leave the Khanabad airport. Also, the American side has not incurred any material costs related to building infrastructure, protecting the facilities, compensating the environment and the population living near the airport. As a result, the US Air Force's use of the Khanabad airfield by citizens of Khanabad, Karshi, and Kashkadarya as a whole had adversely affected the district's ecology and caused significant damage to the area. Many complaints and appeals are received from the local population regularly due to the significant deterioration in the use of the military base.⁴⁴

For some time, the Uzbek side had repeatedly raised the issue of the full ratification of the agreement with relation to the status of American servicemen at Khanabad airfield. These issues snowballed starting in late 2002. The senators noted that the Uzbek side did not aim to break the ties with the most developed country in the world - the United States, but rather strive to strengthen ties between the two countries based on their national interests.

In addition, during the discussion, it was emphasized that the termination of the Agreement would contribute to enhancing regional security. The fewer military bases in the Central Asian region, the greater the contribution to peace and stability, the senators said.⁴⁵

Following the discussions, the Senators of the Supreme Assembly ("Oliy Majlis") adopted a statement regarding the withdrawal of US forces from the "Khanabad" airfield.⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

The bandwagon effect is a phenomenon whereby the rate of uptake of beliefs, ideas, fads, and

trends increases the more that they have already been adopted by others. The bandwagon effect is characterized by the probability of individual adoption increasing with respect to the proportion of who have already done so. The aspiration to follow the actions or beliefs of others can occur because individuals directly prefer to conform, or comply with rules, standards, or laws.

Bandwagoning in international relations occurs when a state aligns with a stronger, adversarial power and concedes that the stronger adversary-turned-partner disproportionately gains in the spoils they conquer together. Bandwagoning, therefore, is a strategy employed by states that find themselves in a weak position. In our case, in order to gain economic and security assistance Uzbekistan had to conform to the policies of the USA that was shown in the strategic partnership, especially to develop an open democratic system in the Uzbek government and society.

Near the end of US campaign in Afghanistan, the US government began to pressure Tashkent to implement democratic reforms, it sent NGOs and human rights groups to lobby the government to allow greater freedom in Uzbekistan. Karimov refused to accept this pressure, and said "We are deeply convinced that democracy and various types of so-called "open society models" are impossible to export... We stand for an evolutionary, consistent nature of reforms and transformations."⁴⁷ "Colored revolution" events in the region in late 2004 were not only seen as evidence of the threat constituted by democracy-promoting groups, but also the sinister hand of foreign powers. For instance, in Kyrgyzstan in February and March 2005 the Akayev government was removed by opposition elites, these efforts backfired in citizens' tragic life events and it was described by the Uzbek people as "those who wanted democracy in Kyrgyzstan got complete anarchy". That is why the Karimov government suspended American "democracy-promoting" programs in Uzbekistan.

The pressure of the 'colored revolutions' forced Uzbekistan to distance itself from the United States, as well as to clamp down on US-sponsored NGOs and political freedoms in Uzbekistan.

On the same day that American forces left Uzbekistan, 14 November 2005, the country allied itself with Russia. Uzbekistan's realignment with Russia in 2005 gave Uzbekistan the ability to extract

⁴⁴ "Khalq So'zi" (People's Word), political governmental newspaper. 2005, August 27.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Karimov, I. 2005. Speech by Islam Karimov President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Joint Session of the Legislative Chamber and Senate of Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of Uzbekistan, January 28, Tashkent.



greater benefits from its new alliance than with its partnership with the United States.

In short, Uzbekistan refused to comply with the democracy standards of the United States, that is, did not comply with the rules of the bandwagoning. The Uzbek government had good reasons not to continue bandwagoning, and as a result suspended the outcome dangerous strategic agreement with the United States. Karimov's strategy during the last 20 years has been to distance the country from intrusive external influence and a profitable balance between American and Russian geopolitical interests in order to achieve internal aims of security and stability.

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