

# Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER)

**No. 56, 7 May 2012**

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\* IIPER is written and edited by Dr. Gordon M. Hahn unless otherwise noted. Research assistance is provided by Sara Amstutz, Mark Archibald, Michelle Enriquez, Seth Gray, John Andrew Jones, Casey Mahoney, Anna Nevo, Daniel Painter, and Elizabeth Wolcott. *IIPER accepts outside submissions.*

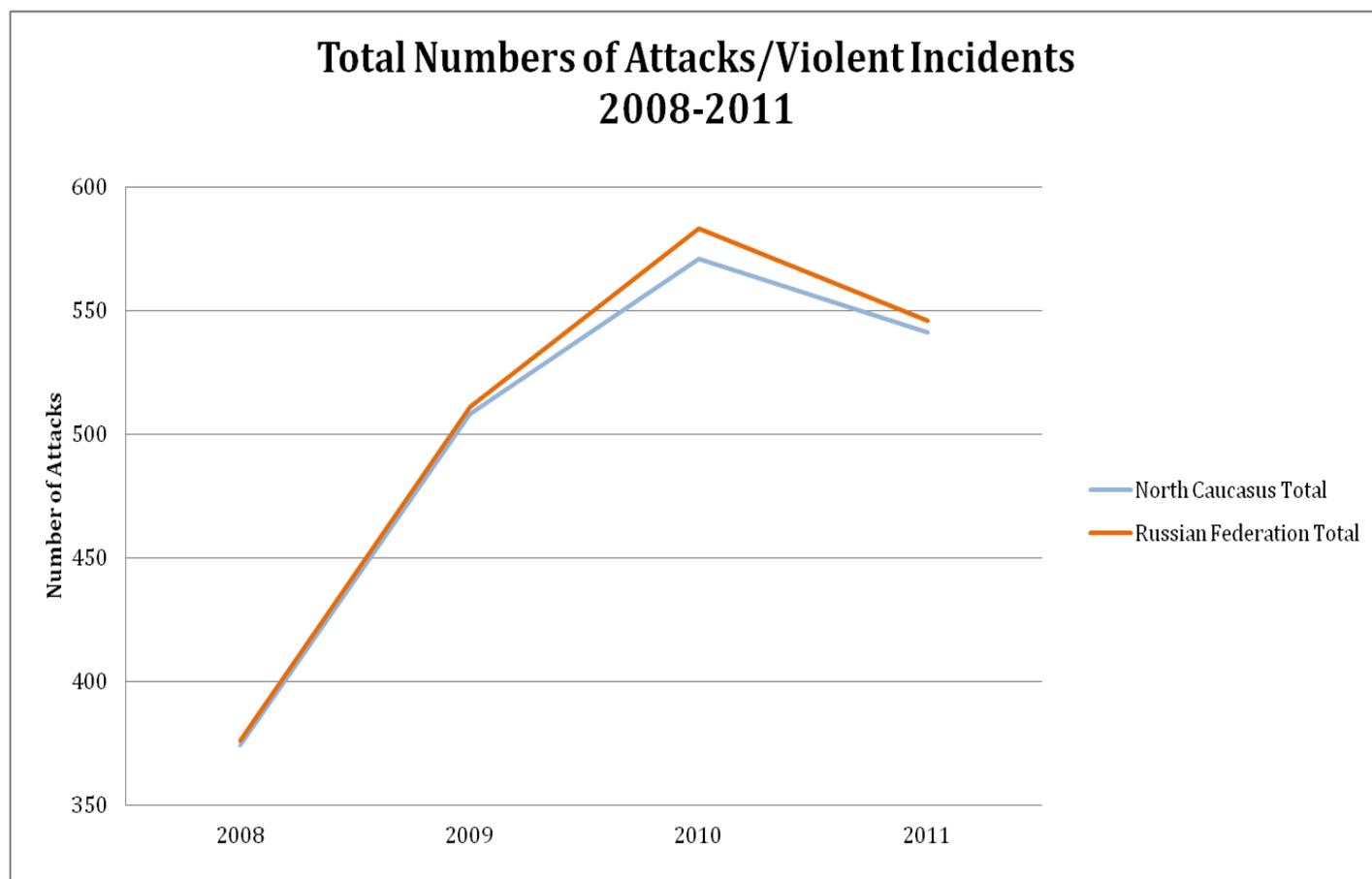
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## OPERATIONAL TREND LINES IN THE CAUCASUS EMIRATE'S TERRORIST INSURGENCY

By Gordon M. Hahn and Anna Nevo

The following graphs provide an overview of trend lines in Caucasus Emirate (CE) mujahedin terrorist and insurgent attacks and jihadi-related violent incidents during the first four full years of the CE's existence in 2008 through 2011.<sup>1</sup> FINISH FOOTNOTE Graph 1 shows the total number of attacks/violent incidents both in the North Caucasus (Caucasus Emirate) and in the Russian Federation as a whole (see Graph 1 below). The

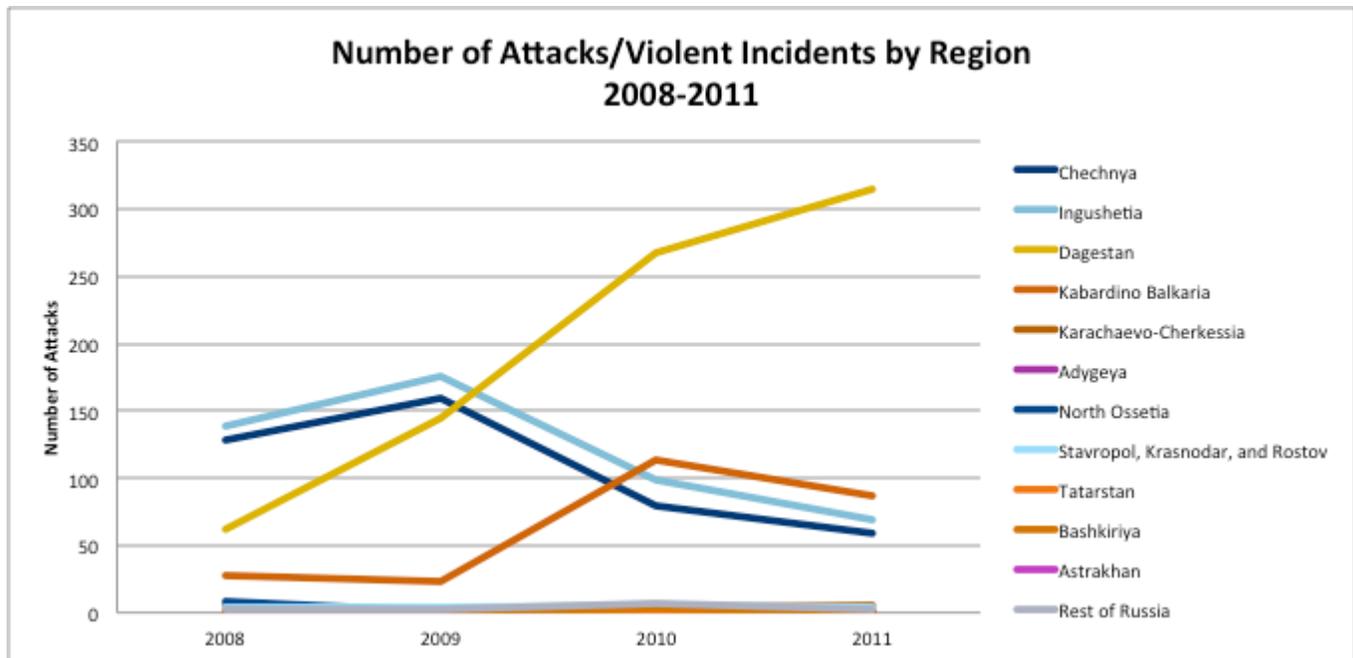
### Graph 1



number of attacks in the North Caucasus compared with those in Russia as a whole does not differ greatly, because almost all attacks occur in the North Caucasus. It reveals a sharp rise in the number of attacks from 2008 through 2010, with a slight decline in 2011. A more detailed breakdown by region is seen in Graph 2 below. It reveals that the

### Graph 2

<sup>1</sup> The following graphs are based on data presented in IIPER, Nos. 7, 8, 32, 33, 54, and 55.

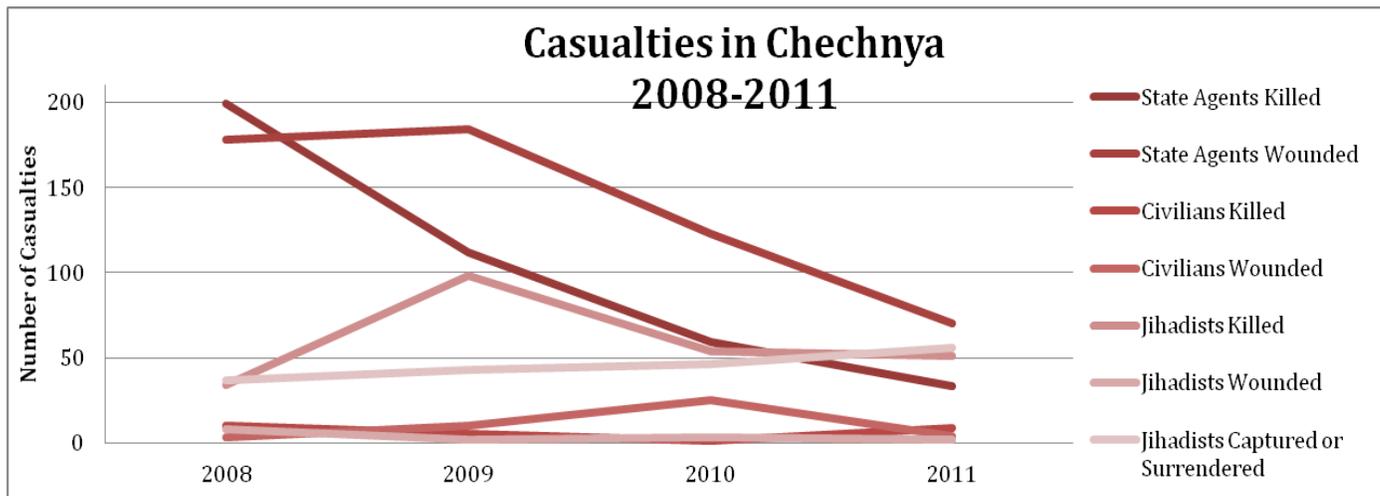


number of CE attacks and other jihadi-related violent incidents have followed the exact same trend in the republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia, what the CE calls its Nokchicho Vilaiyat (NV) and Galgaiche Vilaiyat (GV), respectively (see Graph 2 below). In both republics/vilayats, the number of attacks slightly increased in 2009 from 2008, and then radically decreased in 2010 and 2011.

In 2008 and 2009, the number of attacks in the republics of Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkariya (KBR), what the CE refers to, respectively, as its Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV) and its United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya, and Karachai (OVKKB or simply KBK), which also includes the republic of Karachai-Cherkessiya (KChR), was significantly lower than in either the NV's Chechnya or GV's Ingushetia, but has been on a rapid increase since then. Beginning in 2010, however, the number of attacks nearly doubled in Dagestan and tripled or even quintupled in the OVKKB's KBR from previous years. In 2011, the DV continued its rise in operational capacity, while the OVKKB saw a slight decline as compared to 2010. The biggest anomaly in Graph is the OVKKB's Kabardino-Balkaria where the number of attacks was low and remained stable in 2008 and 2009 but has risen sharply since 2010, with a slight in 2011 as compared with 2010.

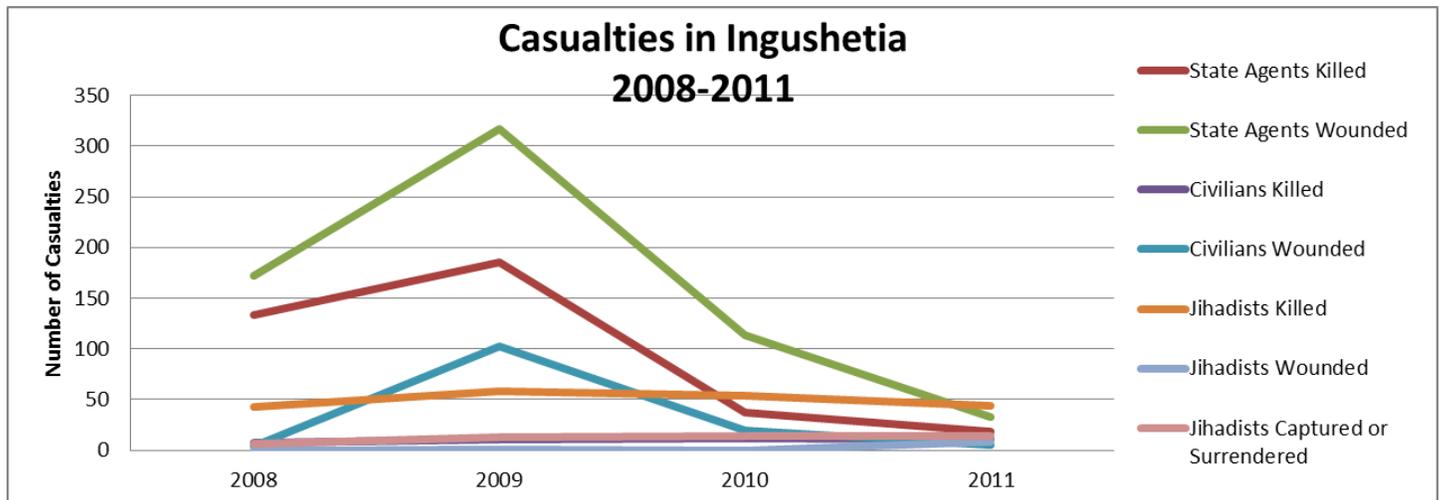
The decline in the number of attacks/violent incidents in Chechnya during 2008-2011 is matched by a similar decline in the number of casualties inflicted by the Chechen NV during the same period, as illustrated by Graph 3 below. The number of state agents of state agents (police, intelligence, security, military, and state

**Graph 3**



civilian personnel) killed and wounded is much greater than numbers of civilians killed and wounded. But casualties among state agents has been in sharp decline over the period, while jihadits killed, wounded and captured has been on a gradual incline and civilian casualties have remained relatively stable. The same can be said for Ingushetiya as well (see Graph 4). The other two republics where the CE maintains permanent

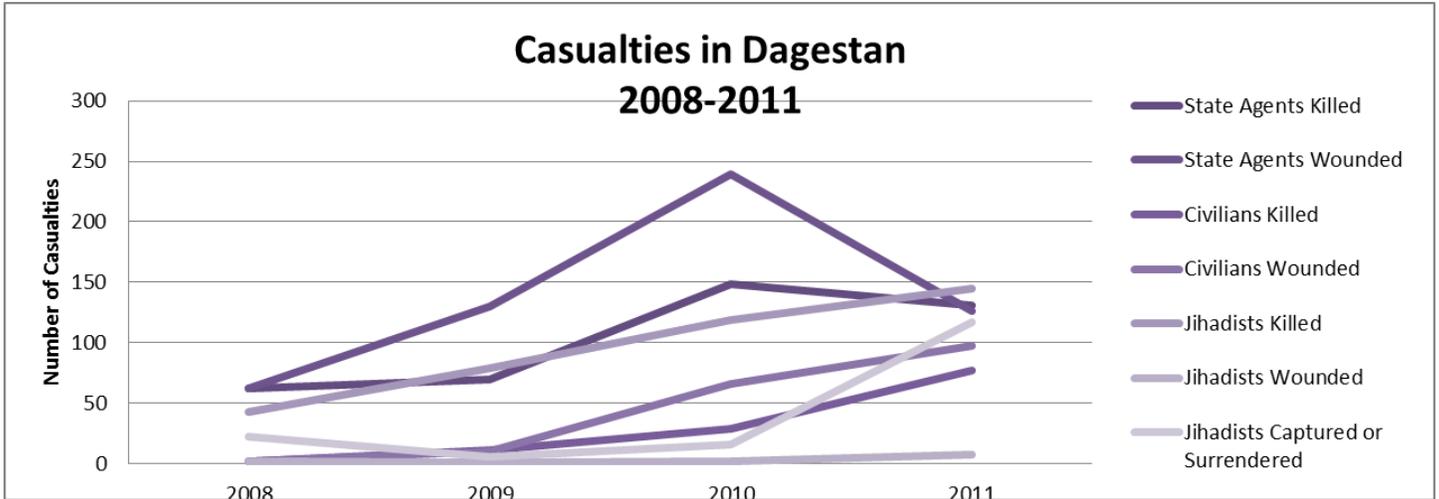
**Graph 4**



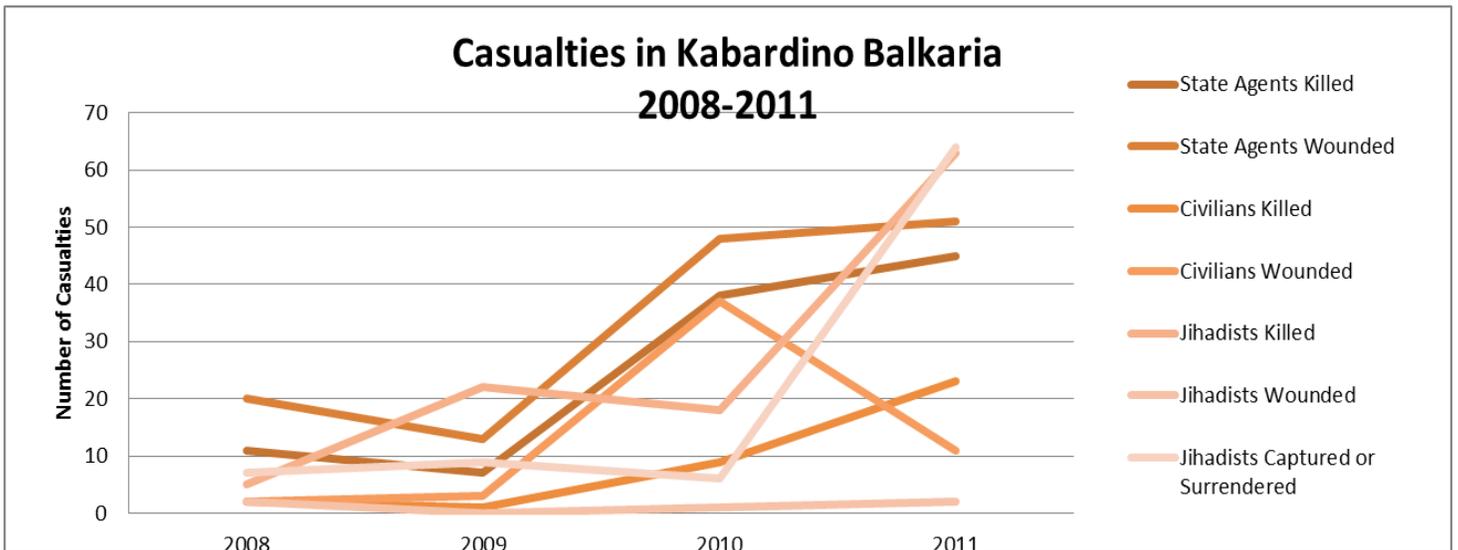
networks are a very different story, however.

Both Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkariya have seen sharp rises in jihadi-related violence since 2010, with CE's Dagestani network, the DV, becoming the epicenter of the North Caucasus jihad (see Graph 5).

**Graph 5**

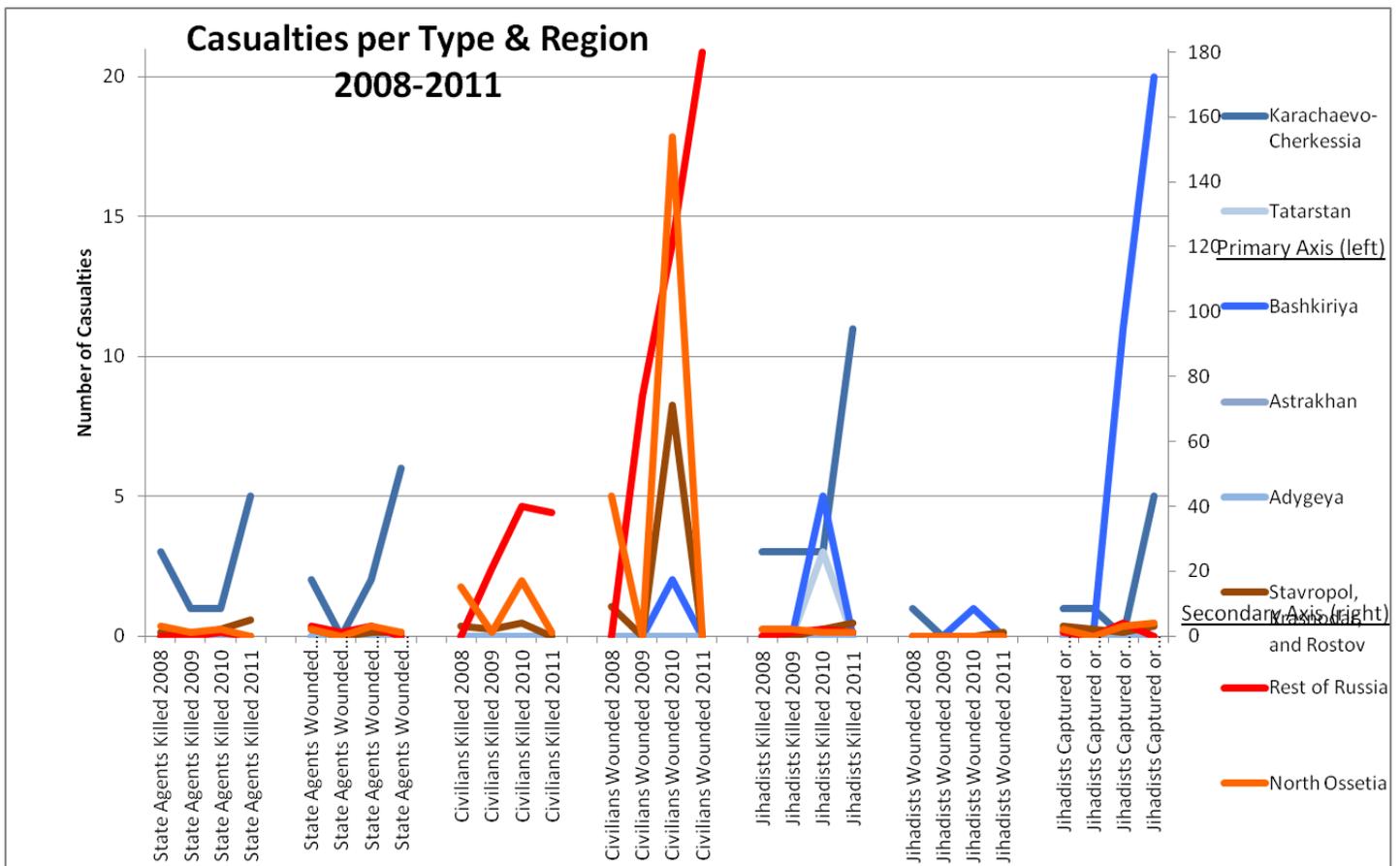


**Graph 6**



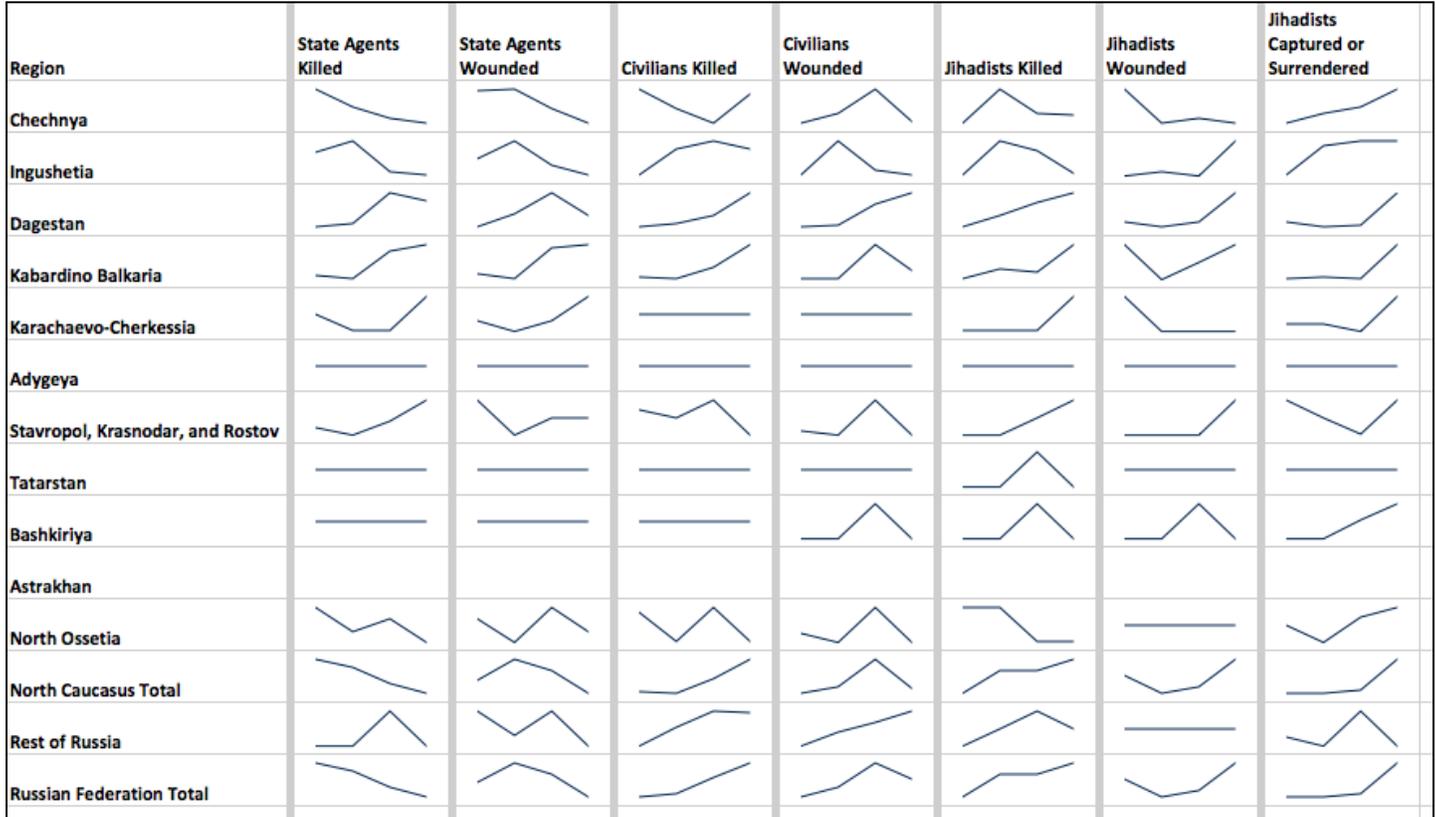
The level of jihaid violence in the rest of the regions of the North Caucasus and Russia as a whole is negligible, with one exception – Moscow. This is illustrated by the red line in Graph 7 below representing all attacks and violent incidents which occurred in the ‘rest of Russia’ outside of the North Caucasus and the other individually indicated regions listed in Graph 7. Although Moscow has seen only a handful of attacks in this period, several were large-scale bombings that inflicted mass casualties among civilians such as the March 2010 twin Moscow subway suicide bombings, the January 2011 Moscow Domodedovo suicide bombing, as well as the November 2009 attack on the Moscow-St. Petersburg high-speed ‘Nevskii Express’ commuter train. This explains the high and rising casualty rates among civilians in the ‘rest of Russia’ category from 2008-2011. Other important spikes include that in the number of civilian casualties in North Ossetia and mujahedin in Bashkiriya (see graph 7 below).

**Graph 7**



Graph 8 depicts separately the trend lines from 2008 through 2011 for each factor and region.

### Graph 8



In sum, the most outstanding trend lines from 2008 through 2011, the first four full years of the CE' existence (founded in October 2007) are the sharp rise in jihadi violence in Dagestan and lesser so in Kabardino-Balkariya, the decline in jihadi-related violence in both Chechnya and Ingushetiya. The sharp rise in civilians killed and lesser so wounded across Russia during 2008-2011 also stands out. Smaller increases in violence are registered in Karachai-Cherkessiya, Stavropol (most attacks in the Stavropol, Krasnodar, Rostov category occurred in Stavropol), Bashkortostan, and Tatarstan. Finally, the number of mujahedin killed is on the rise in about half the regional categories, and on the decline in the other half, but the number of mujahedin captured is on the rise across Russia, suggesting a growth in the size of the CE terrorist insurgency or greater susceptibility to capture due to better counter-jihadism policies and/or less willingness on the part of the mujahedin to go to their death rather than surrender.



## CE AMIR UMAROV ISSUES VIDEO ANSWERING QUESTIONS

The amir of the Caucasus Emirate (CE) Dokku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov appeared in a video answering questions from “Caucasus journalists.” The video was posted on the CE’s main website Kavkaz tsentr answers on April 15<sup>th</sup> with a text accompanying the video.<sup>2</sup> Umarov begins by noting mujahedin from across the world greeted the news that the split in the CE’s ranks that occurred in August 2011 was patched up in summer 2011, but he added that the “opponents of the Caucasus Emirate both in Russia and the West have not given up attempts at provocations for inserting a split among the mujahedin.” Although he notes that for the umma as a whole the dissent and split within the CE was not so critical a question, he acknowledges that it was “painful” for “Muslims and the mujahedin of the Caucasus.” On the other hand, he praises Allah for the fact that the split did not lead to bloodshed and no side stepped beyond the point of no return. He also emphasizes that resolution of the crisis was made on the basis of the Koran and Sunna and that the opinions of Muslim scholars (alimy) played a major role in resolving the issue.<sup>3</sup> IIPER readers will recall that the prominent jihadist Jordanian sheikh Mukhammad Abu Aasem al-Maqdis and the prominent jihadist Syria-based sheikh al-Tartusi weighed in on Umarov’s side during the split and that when the split was patched up a video showed an unidentified, perhaps foreign mujahed reading from the Koran or Sunna on issues of dissent and splitting within the umma.

Umarov claims that all the amirs who broke from him in the August 2010 split renewed their Islamic loyalty oath of “*bayat*” to him as CE amir, not just those shown in the July 2011 video posted on the occasion of the announcement that the split had ended.

Umarov responded to a question regarding charges that he was given \$500 million by the Russian FSB to declare the CE and that the children of Umarov and CE ideologist Movladi Udugov are studying abroad in leading universities and are not participating in jihad made by London-based former Chechen rebel and information and foreign minister for the CE’s predecessor organization, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya (ChRI), Akhmed Zakaev. Refusing to mention Zakaev by name and calling “that person” an “idiot”, Umarov said the sum was so large to be as absurd and that one of the CE’s mujahedin captured by the Russian FSB was offered \$500,000 for help that led to the capture of Udugov. Umarov then asks why the FSB would give him \$500 million to declare the CE and pay \$500,000 for the capture of Udugov. He also notes that a reward for his own capture of \$5 million has been offered by the U.S. government since July 2011 in connection with the CE’s placement on the US State Department’s list of international terrorist organizations. More to the point, he notes that his oldest son is not even ten years old but that upon becoming an adult he will call him to jihad, which will become his higher education. Umarov adds tangentially that Udugov played no role in the decision to declare the CE, but rather that he consulted CE qadi and United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya, and Karachai (OVKBK, the CE’s network in Kabardin-Balkariya and karachai-Cherkessiya) ‘Seifullah Kabardinskii’ Anzor Astemirov as the “qadi of the Caucasus.”<sup>4</sup> IIPER readers will know Astemirov well; he was killed in late March 2010 in Nalchik, Kabardino-Balkariya.

Regarding a question on the situation in the Caucasus and the CE’s prospects, Umarov is uncharacteristically modest in his assessment. He notes that there is at present a “lull” in the Jihad, which he says is the result of mujahedin being “tired” and having “suffered many casualties.” IIPER readers will know that Russian security has gotten very efficient at killing amirs across the CE’s vilaiyats. Umarov seems to have in mind some difficulties with financing as well. He implies that the CE relies heavily on donations from Muslims in Russia by noting that Russia reached a financial peak in 2010-11, that jihad depends on finances,

<sup>2</sup> “Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otvety na voprosy,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

<sup>3</sup> “Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otvety na voprosy,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

<sup>4</sup> “Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otvety na voprosy,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

and that the North Caucasus is surrounded by infidel states, which also complicates financing. He says that he “considered the most important task for himself” is “to preserve Jihad in the Caucasus,” which he says he has achieved, though seems a rather defensive posing of the issue. Nevertheless, he says the overall situation “gladdens” him, pointing to the fact that mujahedin from all the Caucasus have rallied around the CE jihad, and adds: “The changes occurring in world in accordance with Allah’s also touch the Caucasus directly. We are always prepared to accept mujahedin who are prepared to go to jihad in the name of raising the word of Allah. We are a chain which will hand over this flag, the banner of jihad, to the next generation. Allah willing, we have preserved (Jihad), and Allah willing today’s youth, as if they have not tried to drag (it) into perversity, is (oriented) in Islamic values. They are growing and it is exactly they who support Jihad and are prepared at the first call to stand in the ranks of the mujahedin. This gladdens me very much, Praise to Allah.” He concludes this discussion by saying, “there will be results, there will be results in the spring campaign.”<sup>5</sup> Umarov’s restraint stands in sharp contrast to the starts of previous years and fighting seasons, when he has promised variously blood, tears, 50-60, or even hundreds of suicide bombers. The new modesty could be an attempt to lower expectations and avoid the excessive bravado, bluster and promises of previous years that proved difficult to fulfill.

The next question returns Umarov to the issue of the CE’s placement on the State department’s list of terrorist organizations and the \$5 million reward for information leading to his capture. Referencing the Koran’s 5th and 6th verses of Barak, he notes their warning that “the unclean ones, in essence, consider themselves the masters of the world, and they, you see, establish the world’s order.” He says that he regards the USA is “part of these unclean ones” and that “therefore they think they have the right to declare who they want to be a terrorist and for who they will announce a reward, since they think themselves the rulers of the world.” He also states that the U.S. decision has “two aspects.” The first was a strategic calculation to undermine the “unity” of the Caucasus mujahedin by “sending a message to those who fell into dissent” leading to the abovementioned August 2010 split within the CE’s Chechnya network, the Nokchicho Vilaiyat (NV). The message, according to Umarov was: “You see, we declared your amir Abu Usman a terrorist and that we also declared the Caucasus Emirate a ‘terrorist organization.’ If you want to be legitimate and if you want us to support you, then do not unify with him.” Umarov boasts this effort failed. The second aspect consists of the “Americans, knowing this illness” of the “Kremlin unclean ones to make any concessions at any expense for the sake of attaining their goals,” “made them a little gift”, for which Moscow “will pay or has already paid an enormous price.” He states he does not know and is not interested in the price for Moscow, but he thinks that these are the two causes of the American decision, whether it was in Russia’s or U.S. interests. He concludes this theme by emphasizing that he “is not worried” and, “Allah willing, is today an enemy of Allah’s enemies.”<sup>6</sup> Finally, asked what message he would like to send to Muslims and mujahedin of the Caucasus, Umarov answers:

I appeal to the mujahedin of the Caucasus and of the whole world with a wish for strengthening the footsteps on the path of jihad. Allah gave us the gift of Jihad. Glory to Allah that today we are mujahedin and that today are part of that army of mujahedin which is making Jihad in the name of raising Allah’s word. I swear by Allah that there can be no more worthy mission for us in this world. Allah gave us this blessing, and therefore we should be thankful to our Supreme Allah, glorified and exalted (*Subhananhu wa ta’ala*). Today Jihad is obligatory (*fard-ain*) for all Muslims, since today the Islamic Umma is suffering grave times. He who does not make Jihad risks falling into a very grave situation on Judgement Day. Allah willing, we should be proud that we are conducting Jihad today, and we should strengthen our faith (*iman*),

<sup>5</sup> “Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otveti na voprosy,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

<sup>6</sup> “Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otveti na voprosy,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

our faith in Allah, glorified and exalted, and give a prayer for our entire Umma and make it for each other and be concerned for each other.

I also want to appeal to the mujahedin of the Caucasus. A new year, 1433, the year of the Hijra, has come. Another year of Jihad has passed, and many brother mujahedin became martyrs (shakhidami), Allah willing. Let Allah accept their martyrdom. We hope that Allah joins us with them, and we will all enter the gardens of Paradise. Allah willing, we know how close they were to us and how we suffered from the loss of our brothers. But Allah knows better, and Allah called them to Himself. We do not know what kind of end we will have. We will make our prayers and pray to Allah that our end will be just as worthy as the end of our brothers. (And we will pray to Allah) that we will all enter the gardens of paradise, Allah willing. Glory to Allah, Ruler of the Worlds. Allah is Great!!!<sup>7</sup>

Umarov's return to the issue of losses among the mujahedin suggests that killings of leading amirs and operatives such as the OVKBK's Astemirov and Dzhappuev, Dagestan's Vagabov and Daudov, Ingushetiya's Taziev and Buryatskii, Umarov's naib Abdullaev and many other amirs, including foreign amirs, over the last two years is having an effect on the CE mujahedin's morale and even operational command, perhaps for Umarov himself. It should also be kept in mind that this is the time of year when Umarov and the CE amirs usually attempt to hold a shura to plan out the spring-to-fall campaign. As far as we know, no such shura has been held, and Umarov's video may be intended to fill the vacuum. Given the losses of amirs over recent years, the last thing the CE needs to do is risk gathering the entire top leadership in one place.

If this is the calculation, then things stand at a very different point than they did a short three years ago, when in April 2009 Umarov, as IIPER readers will recall, held a shura under the nose of Russian forces conducting a counter-terrorist operation in Chechnya and boasted about it. At that time he also announced the rebirth of the Riyadus Salikhin Martyrs Brigade (RSMB), which kicked off two years of suicide bombings – 16 successful attacks in 2009 and 14 in 2010. Last year saw the year end with only six successful suicide bombings, a small but not insignificant decline in the overall number of attacks from 2010, and an announcement in January 2012 that the CE was ceasing operations targeting the Russian civilian population, in which the RSMB's suicide operations played a key role. In sum, the trend lines are pointing somewhat down, and Umarov's mood seems to reflect this reality. Promising 'results' is a far cry from past threats of offensives, blood and tears. The summer campaign will demonstrate whether the CE will see another year of operational decline from the peak year of 2010.

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## **2012'S SECOND SUCCESSFUL SUICIDE BOMBING ATTACK IN RUSSIA: A DOUBLE ISTISHKHAD OPERATION IN DAGESTAN**

The second successful jihadi suicide bombing attack of this year occurred at 22:20 local time on May 3<sup>rd</sup> when a brother and sister team consisting, according to preliminary information, of 23-year old Rizvan Aliev and his sister Muslimat Alieva detonated bombs in sequence on a bridge in Dagestan along a highway linking Dagestan and Astrakhan.<sup>8</sup> According to preliminary reports, 13 were killed and 100 were injured in the two explosions. IIPER will have more details on this attack in its 57<sup>th</sup> issue. This attack should complicate security arrangements throughout Russia for the May 9<sup>th</sup> Victory Day celebrations as well as for the May 7<sup>th</sup> presidential

<sup>7</sup> "Amir Imarata Kavkaz Dokku Abu Usman: Otvety na voprosy," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 April 2012, 13:38, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/15/90012.shtml).

<sup>8</sup> Abdulla Alisultanov, "Predvaritel'no opaznan odin iz smertnikov, soverssivshikh dvoimoi terakt v Dagestane," *Kavkaz uzul*, 4 May 2012, 19:53, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/206071/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/206071/).

inauguration and accompanying festivities, especially in the wake of early March's news of arrests in Ukraine connected with a possible CE plot to assassinate outgoing prime minister and President-elect Vladimir Putin after the March 4<sup>th</sup> presidential election.

These second and third bombings of the year for Russia or the second and third of the year for the Republic of Dagestan as well; that is, all three suicide bombings that have occurred in Russia this year have taken place in Dagestan, the epicenter of the Caucasus Emirate jihadi network. For comparison, in 2009 there were 16 successful suicide bombings with one of them having occurred in Dagestan. In 2010 there 14 successful suicide bombings in Russia, with 6 of them occurring in Dagestan. In 2011, there 6 successful suicide bombings in Russia, with 3 of them occurring in Dagestan. Therefore, while the total number of successful suicide bombings in Russia this year could come to the fewest since CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov's revival of the Riyadus-Salikhiiin Martyrs' Brigade (RSMB) in 2009, the pace of such successful attacks in Dagestan is set to equal if not surpass its previous peak of 6 in 2010. IIPER readers will know that the CE's Dagestani branch, the Dagestan Vilaiyat, created its own Riyadus Salikhiiin Jamaat in late 2010 and that the legendary DV amir 'Seifullah Gubdenskii' Magomedali Vagabov strongly supported the use of suicide bombings.

## MORE TOP CE AMIRS KILLED

On March 27, 2012 Russian and local Kabardino-Balkaria Republic (KBR) security and police forces killed 'Ubaid' Alim Zankishev, the amir of the Caucasus Emirate's (CE) United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya and Karachai (OVKBK), the CE's mujahedin network in Russia's republics of Kabardino-Balkariya and Karachai-Cherkessiya (KChR). The OVKBK's official website, *Islamdin.com*, confirmed Zankishev's "martyrdom" on the same day.<sup>9</sup> Zankishev was trapped in an apartment building in the early morning hours. During the ensuing shootout the building caught fire, and Zankishev's body was found badly burnt.<sup>10</sup> Zankishev was appointed by CE amir Doku 'Abu Usman' Umarov to the position of CE OVKBK amir in September 2011. With Zankishev's death, Russian security and law enforcement have succeeded this year in killing the amirs of the CE's OVKBK, its Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV) in Dagestan, and its Galgaiche Vilaiyat in Ingushetiya.

In addition, security forces killed the amir of the DV's Shamilkala (Makhachkala, Dagestan's capitol) Sector, El'dos Zul'fugarov.<sup>11</sup> This was confirmed by the DV's official website, *VDagestan.com*, on the same day.<sup>12</sup>

## ACTING AMIR OF THE DAGESTAN VILAIYAT IDENTIFIED AS DV CENTRAL SECTOR AMIR 'ABU MUKHAMMAD (USMAN)' RUSTAM ASILDAROV

<sup>9</sup> "Oni srazhayutsya na puti Allakha, ubivaya i pogibaya...", *Islamdin.com*, 27 March 2012, [www.islamdin.com/kavkaz/1321-2012-03-27-17-53-59.html](http://www.islamdin.com/kavkaz/1321-2012-03-27-17-53-59.html).

<sup>10</sup> "Boi v Nalchike. Kafiry soobshchayut o Shakhade amira vilaiyata KBK Ubaida," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 27 March 2012, 11:26, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/03/27/89642.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/03/27/89642.shtml).

<sup>11</sup> "Boi v Shamil'kale: Shakhad Amira Shamil'kalinskogo sektora VS DF," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 12 March 2012, 21:15, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/03/12/89394.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/03/12/89394.shtml).

<sup>12</sup> "Boi v Shamilkale," *VDagestan.com*, 12 March 2012, <http://vdagestan.com/2012/03/boj-v-shamilkale/>.

A video posted on the main website of the CE's Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV) identifies amir Abu Mukhammad (Usman)' Rustam Asildarov as the DV's "acting amir." The video shows Asildarov renewing his Islamic loyalty oath to CE amir Doku 'Abu Usman' Umarov on behalf of himself and all of the DV's amirs and mujahedin.<sup>13</sup> IIPER readers will recall that the DV's amir 'Salikh' Ibragimkhalil Daudov was killed on February 14th. 'Abu Mukhammad' Asildarov was Daudov's first naib (deputy) and is amir of the DV's powerful Central Sector from which several recent DV amirs have hailed. It is likely that Asildarov's loyalty oath was a formality required before Umarov could appoint him as Daudov's successor.

## **TURKISH AMIR KILLED IN SERGOKALINSK, DAGESTAN**

A Turkish among has been identified fighting among the CE mujahedin according to data from the Russia's National Anti-Terrorist Committee or NAK after a special counter-terrorism operation carried out on April 2-4 in which six mujahedin were killed in Dagestan's Sergokala District. On serviceman was killed in the operation. The Turkish amir of the jamaat was identified as Mukhanned or Sheikh Abdusalam, who along with his jamaat was said by NAK to have participated in "crimes of a terrorist nature, attempts on the lives and the murder of civilians, clergymen, servicemen and personnel of the police, as well in extortion."<sup>14</sup>

The jamaat's other five mujahedin were: 'Muaz' Rashid Gazaliev, his cousin Magomed Gazalaiev, and 'Khuzeif' Salman Budaichiev, who were killed in a shootout with security forces on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Yusup Khalimbekov (born 1995, native of the village of Burdeki, Sergokala District, and joined the CE mujahedin 5 days earlier) and Ruslan Kapiiev and 'Abdulaziz' Ilyas Zakar'yaev (both born in 1984 and natives of the village of Sergokala, Sergokala District). The latter three, along with Sheikh Abdusalam or Mukhanned, were killed in a shootout after they allegedly fired on servicemen of the MVD's Internal Troops on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and killed the serviceman. Kapiiev was reported by the NAK to have been involved in the murder on 2 May 2011 of the head of the Sergokala District MVD Nasrula Magomedov. Zakar'yaev was said to have been involved in that crime and the 4 May 2011 shooting of police cameramen which killed one of these police workers. According to NAK, Rashid Gazaliev was an active member of the jamaat, his cousin Magomed was a facilitator, and Budaichiev was recruited by the Gazaliev's when he came to Dagestan from Chelyabinsk for a wedding. Various weapons were found in the residences of the mujahedin after they were eliminated.<sup>15</sup>

## **CE-TIED JAMAAT UNCOVERED IN NOVOSIBIRSK**

In March an eleven-member jamaat tied to the Caucasus Emirate mujahedin was uncovered in a joint MVD-FSB operation in the southwestern Siberian region of Novosibirsk. According to press reports, all eleven members of the jamaat arrested were involved in the "direct financing" of the CE through theft, robbery, extortion. They also were involved in recruiting fighters for the CE. A large arsenal of weapons was found in

<sup>13</sup> "Amir Abu Mukhammad (IO amir DV) i mudzhakhidy VD obnovlayut baiat Amiru IK Dokku Abu Usmanu," *VDagestan.com*, 10 April 2012, <http://vdagestan.com/2012/04/amir-abu-muxammad-io-amira-ud-i-mudzhaxidy-ud-obnovlyayut-bajat-amiru-ik-dokku-abu-usmanu/>.

<sup>14</sup> "Opaznany lichnosti vsekh ubitykh v khode spetsoperatsii v Sergokalinskom raione Dagestana," 4 April 2012, 17:05, <http://dagestan.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/204264/>.

<sup>15</sup> "Opaznany lichnosti vsekh ubitykh v khode spetsoperatsii v Sergokalinskom raione Dagestana," 4 April 2012, 17:05, <http://dagestan.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/204264/>.

their residences. Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAK) withheld the names of the jihadists for purposes of the security of the investigation.<sup>16</sup>

## DAGESTAN'S CHIEF MUFTI AKHMAD-HADZHI ABDULAEV CALLS FOR RESTRAINT

Tension and violence persist in Dagestan and elsewhere in the North Caucasus between Sufi tariqats (brotherhoods) and pro-Sufi governments, on the one hand, and jihadists and non-violent Salafists, on the other hand. In March, the chief mufti of official Islamic organization in Dagestan, the Muslim Spiritual Board of Dagestan (DUMD), Akhmad-hadzhi Abdulaev issued a statement calling for mutual respect between the republic's various Islamic trends and restraint on the part of law enforcement in the republic. He urged Muslims to observe Shariah law's stipulations against slander and spreading rumors. Mufti Abdulaev called on Muslims "to weigh on the scales of Shariah law any suggestion that is ready to come from their mouths, for it can be decisive in the fate of even one Muslim." Noting that the DUMD had appealed to the population on numerous occasions to be "careful in statements and in accusations," he told Muslims "seeing a Muslim man with a long beard or a Muslim woman in a head scarf, whether black or white, do not to call them Wahhabis and do not insult one another even by a glance! He, who does not feel the pain of his brother, even if one is in the West and another is in the East, is not a Muslim."<sup>17</sup>

Abdulaev also denounced rumors that imams are handing over lists of Wahhabis to law enforcement, saying he does not believe this is so. Nevertheless, "since these rumors are being spread among the people," it is his duty to warn Muslims not to get involved in "gossip or informing." An imam, Abdulaev asserts, "is obliged to call people to Islam, spread Allah's word on earth; following his parishioners is not part of an imam's work, and he should warn others about the impermissibility of such activity." He recounts a hadith from the Prophet Mohammed and emphasizes straight away: "It is forbidden to inform and gossip according to Shariah law."<sup>18</sup>

Abdulaev then turns to "workers of the law enforcement organs: "You are always in a zone of risk. Today, courage and steadiness are needed to work in the organs, even as a common traffic police officer. The feeling that death is always next to one should especially strengthen a person's faith. You work for the sake of a peaceful life of innocent civilians. According to Allah's law, someone must preserve order. Allah created some to be doctors, others to be teachers, and each is obliged to fulfill his duty with honor and responsibility before the Supreme One! Probably among you there are many who have lost friends and relatives; however, antagonism and aggression are not ways out of the present situation. According to Shariah law, in order to punish a person, weight evidence of his guilt is needed, and if the punishment is just, then the judge waits a reward from Allah. But if the punishment is unjust and if using power admissions of guilt are beat out of people by torture and applying violence, then Allah will surely punish the one who has committed this violence. If

<sup>16</sup> "V Novosibirskye zaderzhana banda ekstremistiv i iz'yat bol'shoi arsenal oruzhiya," *Pervyi Kanal*, 3 March 2012, 18:03, [www.1tv.ru/news/crime/200479](http://www.1tv.ru/news/crime/200479) and "V Novosibirskye zaderzhany uchastniki elstremistskoi gruppy," *Regnum.ru*, 3 March 2012, 16:55, [www.regnum.ru/news/1505599.html](http://www.regnum.ru/news/1505599.html).

<sup>17</sup> Mufti Akhmad-khadzhi Abdulaev, "Obrashchenie mufti Dagestana," *RIA Dagestan*, 29 March 2012, 21:05, [www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/](http://www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/).

<sup>18</sup> Mufti Akhmad-khadzhi Abdulaev, "Obrashchenie mufti Dagestana," *RIA Dagestan*, 29 March 2012, 21:05, [www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/](http://www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/).

someone avoids punishment in this world, then it is unavoidable for all in that (next) world. No matter what, death exists both for believers and for non-believers and for those who are hypocrites!”<sup>19</sup>

Abdulaev’s remarks are clearly intended to stop the polarization in Dagestani society between Sufis and Salafi Islamists as a way of preventing the mujahedin from finding more recruits. However, his remarks seem defensive in that there is no condemnation of the Salafis’ extremist points of view. Missing from Abdulaev’s statement, however, is a strong condemnation of the CE mujahedin, who are the main perpetrators of violence and declare daily that their goals are the establishment of a Shariah law-based Islamist state as part of the global jihadi revolutionary alliance’s project to re-establish the Caliphate. At the same time, he clearly admonishes blood revenge and brutality on the part of the siloviki against sometimes innocent civilians committed in retaliation for terrorist crimes perpetrated by the mujahedin. Finally, Abdulaev’s repeated references to Shariah law seem to be part of an effort to co-opt its authority from the CE mujahedin, in particular the CE’s Dagestani network, the so called Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV), which is focused on parallel state building, including the establishment of Shariah courts and the appointment of qadis alongside amirs at various levels of the DV’s loose hierarchy.

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## PROMINENT RUSSIAN MUSLIM LAWYER DEMANDS SHARIAH LAW IN RUSSIA AND THREATENS JIHAD

Prominent Muslim lawyer Dagir Khasavov issued a demand that Shariah law be established in Russia and threatened that otherwise blood will be spilt across Moscow and Russia in an interview on Russia’s REN-TV television channel on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Khasavov said: “We (Muslims) consider that we are at home (in Russia). Maybe you (non-Muslims) are the aliens. We are at home, and we will establish those rules which suit us whether you want it or not. Any attempts to change this will lead to blood. There will be a second dead lake here. We will drench the city (Moscow) in blood.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, he seemed to be threatening jihad if Russia did not capitulate before Shariah law. The news of Khasavov’s statement caused a sensation, spreading like a wild fire across Russian media and the Internet.

Khasavov is an ethnic Kumyk. Kumyks are one of the larger ethnic Muslim groups in Dagestan, which is the epicenter of the CE jihad and the locus of a growing Salafist movement that forms a recruiting pool for the CE’s Dagestani branch, the Dagestan Vilaiyat. Khasavov is a prominent lawyer and has taken numerous cases filed by Turkish companies doing business in Russia. He has also been involved in cases involving the official Russian Islamic umbrella organization, the Council of Muftis of Russia (SMR). The SMR includes some 20 percent of Russia’s Islamic communities and is perhaps the most influential umbrella group. The chairman of the SMR, mufti Ravil Gainutdin, is a reformist-oriented Islamic clergyman, who has supported the expansion in Russia of the jadidist brand of reformist Islam, popular in pre-communist Russia, especially in Kazan Gubernia (today’s Tatarstan) and Central Asia. Gainutdin and apparently Khasavov have been involved in an effort to unite all of Russia’s Muslim umbrella organizations into a single entity. Khasavov was also involved in a dispute over the design of a new central mosque in Moscow.

On November 3, 2011 Khasavov announced plans for the creation of a Council of Imams of Russia (Sovet Imamov Rossii) and a Union of the Muslims of Russia, which he claimed was necessitated by the

<sup>19</sup> Mufti Akhmad-khadzhi Abdulaev, “Obrashchenie mufti Dagestana,” *RIA Dagestan*, 29 March 2012, 21:05, [www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/](http://www.riadagestan.ru/news/2012/3/29/134256/).

<sup>20</sup> Video of Khasavov’s interview is available for viewing on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfVH6YpCqLQ&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfVH6YpCqLQ&feature=player_embedded) and at “Shariatskii sud idet (VIDEO),” *Ekho Moskvyy*, 25 April 2012, 10:38, <http://echo.msk.ru/blog/echomsk/882136-echo/>, accessed 4 May 2012.

destruction of the Moscow central mosque. He said that “the imams are tired of the lie, they are not considered, and they feel uncomfortable before mosque-goers.” It was unclear whether this new structure is intended to unite all the Islamic umbrella groups and communities or is intended to be yet another umbrella organization that will add to the intra-Islamic competition for followers within the traditional Islamic camp in Russia.<sup>21</sup>

It appears that Khasavov’s remarks may have been instigated by his frustrations over the state of Muslim rights in Russia and in Moscow in particular, given the recent decision to dismantle Moscow’s old central mosque in favor of building a new one. In addition, his plans for a Council of Imams and Union of Muslims may not be receiving much support among Muslims, aggravating his frustration. So far, there has been no official or unofficial retaliation against Khasavov for his remarks. It remains to be seen whether he will be prosecuted under Russian laws that ban extremist statements or statements that create interethnic antagonism.

## **AZERBAIJAN**

### **APRIL 2012 BATTLE WITH CE-TIED ISLAMISTS IN GANJA, AZERBAIJAN**

In early April there was a battle between unidentified mujahedin and Azerbaijani security forces in Ganja, Azerbaijan’s second largest city which is located in the western part of the country. According to jihadi sources, a group of “Salafists connected with the Caucasus Emirate” (CE) engaged in armed conflict with Azeri security forces. One of the Salafists, Vugar Padarov (a resident of Zagatal Raion born in 1975), detonated a bomb as police tried to enter the residence where the Salafists were hiding out, killing himself and officer of the Azerbaijani National Security Ministry, Lieutenant Colonel Elshad Guliyev and wounding three others. The group of Salafists were said to have rented an apartment in Ganja and arrived a week earlier. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Azeri security forces surrounded the building, cordoned off the neighborhood, evacuated residents, and prepared to enter the building. In total, two security personnel were killed and three were wounded. Two of Padarov’s companions were captured: Amir Muradov, who was born in 1987, is a resident of Gusar District and lives in Sumgait and Faik Sultanov, a resident of Nezamin District in Baku and a student at the Physical Culture Academy. The group was said to be preparing a terrorist attack in Ganja. The incident was followed by a series of counter-terrorist operations in Sumgait, Baku, Kub, and Zagatal in which 17 Muslims were arrested and Islamic literature on jihad, pistols, machine guns, bullets, and explosives were discovered during these operations.<sup>22</sup>

As IIPER readers will know, the CE’s Dagestani network, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV), has had an Azerbaijan jamaat, and Dagestan borders Azerbaijan. Therefore, if the Ganja jamaat is tied to the CE, it is likely the connection begins with the DV and likely its Southern Sector bordering Azerbaijan.

These events occur in the wake of protest movements last year against the banning of the hijab in schools and pro-democracy demonstrations in northern Azerbaijan in early March of this year.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> “V Rossii planiruetsya sozдание Soveta imamov i Soyuz musul’man,” *Interfax*, 3 November 2011, 10:49, [www.interfax-religion.ru/islam/?act=news&div=42900](http://www.interfax-religion.ru/islam/?act=news&div=42900).

<sup>22</sup> “Azerbaidzhan. V gorode Gandzha prizosheol boi mezhd u alievskimi politseiskimi i salafitami, svyazannymi s Imaratom Kavkaz,” *Umma News*, 7 April 2012, 13:44, <http://ummanews.com/news/kavkaz/6377-2012-04-07-10-45-42.html> and “Boi v Gandzhe mezhd u salafitami i formirovaniyami alievskogo rezhima,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 7 April 2012, 16:31, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/07/89862.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/04/07/89862.shtml). See also “Armed incident ends with fatalities in Ganja – UPDATE,” *Today.Az*, 6 April 2012, 18:07, <http://today.az/news/society/104967.html>.

<sup>23</sup> “Situatsiya na severe Azerbaijana ostaetsya napryazhennoi,” *Regnum.ru*, 3 March 2012, 17:56, [www.regnum.ru/news/1505609.html](http://www.regnum.ru/news/1505609.html).



## **ABOUT IIPER**

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**IIPER welcomes submissions on any aspect of Islamic, Islamist, or Jihadist politics in Eurasia as well as financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER's mailing list, please contact:**

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