

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

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## **RUSSIA**

### **THE RISE OF ISLAMISM AND JIHADISM IN TATARSTAN: The Rise of Jihadism**

Jihadi terrorism and its most powerful Eurasian proponent, the Caucasus Emirate mujahedin, have come to the Tatarstan. There are several causes that are most salient for explaining this development. Socio-economic deprivation seems the least robust factor, since Tatarstan is in the middle ranks of Russia's regions when it comes to standard of living, economic development, and social integration with the rest of the country. Instead, domestic political factors and the influence of and infiltration by the global jihadi and Salafist revolutionary movements are most salient. As I noted in my book, *Russia's Islamic Threat*, then President Vladimir Putin's dismantling of Russia's albeit hyper-federative system and Tatarstan autonomy was marginalizing the moderate Tatar nationalism and Euro-Islam or jadidism fostered by then Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaimiev and his top advisor Rafael Khakimov. The Shaimiev-Khakimov or 'Tatarstan model', though hardly a picture of real democracy and markets, had succeeded in limiting inter-ethnic and inter-confessional tensions in the region in the 1990s and early 2000s. I suggested that the defeat of Tatarstan autonomy was radicalizing Tatar nationalism and risked growing Islamism – represented both by local radicals like Rafik Kashapov and the global Islamist 'Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami' (HTI) – and even jihadism. I stressed that in such conditions radical nationalism tinged with radical Islamism, rather than jihadism, would pose the main threats to Tatarstan, though violent Islamism – that is, jihadism – could not be excluded.<sup>1</sup> That potential has now gone kinetic.

Moreover, *Russia's Islamic Threat* documented the first cases of cooperation between Tatarstan's radical nationalists and the Caucasus jihadists. There is some evidence that the radicalization of the nationalists and Islamists into Islamists and jihadists, respectively, is facilitating a potentially potent nationalist-Islamist-jihadist alliance; one that the CE jihadists in the North Caucasus not only have missed out on but have condemned.<sup>2</sup> This, as some local observers have recently stressed, raises the specter of a dangerous Arab Spring-style revolutionary coalition on Tatar soil.<sup>3</sup> At present, such a broad movement is in a rather embryonic form; able to muster at best one thousand demonstrators as it did back in April.

However, in our transnational, globalized world, it would be a reductionist methodology indeed that limited explanation of a complex 'extreme' phenomena like Islamism and jihadism to domestic factors alone, no matter how much weight structural factors such as socioeconomic 'relative deprivation', repressive political regimes, and historical grievances might have. Radicalization is being fed from abroad by increasingly revolutionary umma and the attendant global jihadi revolutionary alliance and global Islamist revolutionary movement. Moreover, the emergence and mid-to-long-term survival, not to mention the success of any radical or revolutionary movements, require more than a structure of grievances. The grievances must be operationalized by effective leadership, organizational, ideological, mobilizational, propaganda, training, military, and resource-gathering methods. The global jihadi revolutionary alliance – that includes groups like Al Qa`ida (AQ), Taliban elements, Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), Lashkar-i-Toiba (LiT), the Caucasus Emirate (CE), and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), among other groups – has provided local nationalist effective methods in these spheres: a relatively potent theo-ideology resonant among a few dedicated Islamist revolutionaries, decentralized and flexible network organizational structure, a complex leadership model that allows innovation and leaders to emerge at all levels of the network, effective propaganda methods using the

<sup>1</sup> Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia's Islamic Threat*, (London and New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 175, 215, 227.

<sup>2</sup> Hahn, *Russia's Islamic Threat*, pp. 202-09.

<sup>3</sup> Rais Suleimanov, "Al'yans vakhkhabizma i national-separtizma v Tatarstane i 'russkii vopros' v regione," *Rossiiskii Institut Strategicheskikh Issledovaniy (RISI)*, [www.kazan-center.ru/osnovnye-razdely/13/279/](http://www.kazan-center.ru/osnovnye-razdely/13/279/).

Internet as the communications infrastructure, training and operational know-how, tactical diversity ranging from military to insurgent to terrorist methods, and personnel, weapons and financial resources. These methods and resources have been and continue to be exported by the global jihad to regions where aggrieved and ambitious radicals willingly import them, usually by downloading them from the Internet. One new such region is Tatarstan.

As noted in IIPER No. 59, on the morning of July 19<sup>th</sup> two assassination attempts were carried out against the leadership of Tatarstan's official Islamic organization, the Muslim Spiritual Administration of Tatarstan or DUMT. In one attack the car of DUMT chairman, Tatarstan's chief mufti, Ilduz khazrat Faizov, was attacked by bombing killing one but leaving Faizov injured but alive. In the second attack, Faizov's deputy and chief of the DUMT's Studies Department, Valiulla Yakupov was killed by multiple gunshots. Yakupov were strong opponents of Islamism and had been leading an effort to cleanse all DUMT organizations and operations of radical Islamist elements. Faizov was elected by the DUMT to be its chairman in April 2011 and immediately began a purge of Islamist Salafi-oriented clerics that infiltrated the DUMT, and yakupov had been an opponent of the more tolerant policy towards 'Wahabbis' enacted by Faizov's predecessor Gusman Iskhakov. Russia's Investigative Committee (IC) detained five suspects, Rustem Gataullin, 57, who owned the company 'Idel-Haj' that organized hajj pilgrimages, 39-year old Murat Galleyev, who heads a mosque in Tatarstan, 41-year old Airat Shakirov, 31-year old Azat Gainutdinov, and 36-year old Uzbekistan national Abdunozim Ataboyev.<sup>4</sup> On the day before the attacks security forces had begun a training exercise under a scenario of capturing terrorists.<sup>5</sup> This could have spooked the Islamists, prompting them to action in fear that the training exercises were cover for actual operations.

As I noted in IIPER, No. 59, Faizov had replaced Iskhakov as DUMT chief mufti because of a rise of Islamist sentiment in Tatarstan and within the DUMD specifically, which he was suspected of sympathizing with or at least permitting without much resistance. Faizov had moved to remove several mullahs in an attempt to return several mosques taken over by alleged Islamists to Tatarstan's jadidist- and kadimist-dominated traditional Hanafi Islam. Idel-Haj Chairman Gataullin and Murat Galleyev were likely holdovers from the Iskhakov administration. Gataullin's Idel-Haj had landed the contract for haj travel from the DUMT by Iskhakov, but Faizov had transferred the contract for the DUMT's quota of 1,600 pilgrims – whether for theo-ideological or business reasons or both – to a different organization, Tatarskii Delovoi Mir or TDM (Tatar Business World/TBW), which belonged to a DUMT official, according to the Russian daily *Kommersant*.<sup>6</sup> Thus, this attack appears to have been the result of a tussle over resources based on theo-ideological differences between Tatarstan's traditional Muslims and radical Islamists who had infiltrated its DUMT. Subsequent events since IIPER 59's publication suggest that the attacks have seriously undermined political stability in the republic, in particular by raising tensions between Tatarstan's religious and political leaderships, on the one hand, and the Salfist community, on the other hand, and that a jihadist movement has emerged in this relatively peaceful republic.

First, a jamaat of Tatarstani issued a video appeal on the day of the attacks and a week later its amir claimed responsibility for them. The jamaat is likely ethnic Tatar-dominated if not entirely. The first video, posted on July 19<sup>th</sup> by one Marat Khalimov shows a self-described amir of "the mujahedin of Tatarstan," calling himself Mukhammed, along with six armed and masked mujahedin sitting before the traditional black and white

<sup>4</sup> Nikolai Sergeev, "V raspredelenii khadzh-turov nashli priznaki terrorizma," *Kommersant*, 20 July 2012, 10:57, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/1984193](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1984193) and "Russian prosecutors say 5 suspects in killing of Muslim cleric, wounding another, detained," AP, 20 July 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Olga Loginova, "Uslovnyi terrorist za 100 tysyach rublei," *TatMedia*, 18 July 2012, 18:50, <http://tatmedia.com/ru/component/k2/item/49400-uslovniy-terrorist.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Nikolai Sergeev, "V raspredelenii khadzh-turov nashli priznaki terrorizma," *Kommersant*, 20 July 2012, 10:57, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/1984193](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1984193).

jihadi flag.<sup>7</sup> The fact that this video appeared on the same day on which the attack occurred cannot be emphasized enough. This suggests that the mujahedin and Khalimov must have been in the know regarding the impending terrorist attacks. In the video amir Mukhammed is unmasked and is the only one to speak in the short one minute video, declaring his bayat or loyalty oath to CE amir Dokky ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov. He claims that he began his activity in 2007 when the CE was declared by Umarov and is now moving his efforts into the active phase.<sup>8</sup> Director of the Russian Strategic Studies Institute’s Volga Center for Regional and Ethno-Religious Research Rais Suleimanov claims that the amir spoke with a Mishar accent, suggesting that he is an ethnic Tatar from Tatarstan.<sup>9</sup> Another source tentatively identified him as one Rais Mingaleev or Mingaliev.<sup>10</sup>

Photo from Video: **Amir Mukhammad and Six Mujahedin**



In the second video, lasting 1 minute and 29 seconds and posted on August 4<sup>th</sup>, amir Mukhammad claims responsibility for both July 19<sup>th</sup> attacks, claiming he “the operations against the Allah’s enemies,” declares them successful, and promises more such “acts against Allah’s enemies.” He also warns Tatarstan’s “imams” to “cease propagandizing traditional Islam and reading like an infidel”, “to stop observing the law of *taghut*” (man-made, that is, non-Islamic law), “to stop propagandizing elections,” and “to let the doors of the mosques remain open at all times.” “If imams are unwilling or unable to fulfill this point of Shariah law, then they should abandon their positions in which case they will be protected from the mujahedin,” he closes.<sup>11</sup>

On August 20<sup>th</sup> four alleged radical Islamists were killed when an IED exploded in a car they were traveling on a highway 10 miles from Kazan in Zelenodol’sk district, Tatarstan. The explosion allegedly occurred as the men were preparing the bomb. The four men have been identified so far only as 27-year old and

<sup>7</sup> See the video at “Obrashchenie mudzhakhedov Tatarstana,” *You Tube*, 19 July 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvIAq9zwudc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvIAq9zwudc), last accessed 27 July 2012.

<sup>8</sup> See the video at “Obrashchenie mudzhakhedov Tatarstana,” *You Tube*, 19 July 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvIAq9zwudc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvIAq9zwudc), last accessed 27 July 2012.

<sup>9</sup> “V Tatarstane poyavilis’ lesnyie modzhakhedy,” *Interfax.ru*, 27 July 2012, 15:57, [www.interfax-religion.ru/islam/?act=news&div=46658](http://www.interfax-religion.ru/islam/?act=news&div=46658).

<sup>10</sup> Ivan Kirichenko, “3000 tatarskikh vakhkhabitov zhdut svoego chasa,” *Svobodnaya pressa*, 7 August 2012, <http://svpressa.ru/society/article/57617/>.

<sup>11</sup> “Tatarstan: Amir Mukhammad vzyal na sebya otvetsvennost za podryv muftiya Faizova i likvidatsiyu ego pomishnika,” *Hunafa.com*, 4 August 2012, <http://hunafa.com/?p=9929>.

24-year old ex-convicts and residents of Kazan, a 32-year old citizen of Uzbekistan, and 27-year old resident of Tyumen Oblast. A Kalashnikov rifle was found at the scene. Initially, police claimed they were involved in the July 19<sup>th</sup> bombing, but this claim was later retracted, though the authorities maintain that the deceased were Islamic extremists, several were already being watched by law enforcement, and that their involvement in the assassination of the muftis was still under investigation.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Tatarstan narrowly averted what may have been yet another jihadi terrorist attack, if this report is accurate. It remains to be seen whether any or all of these men were among those in the first video issued by amir Mukhammad.

It appears that we now have good reason to suspect that a CE-tied jihadi jamaat, likely calling itself the Idel-Ural Vilaiyat (IUV) has been established in the republic and that it has supporters among the open and clandestine Islamist elements within the republic.

### Pre-History of Jihadism in Tatarstan

This new attempt to establish a jihadi movement is only the most recent in several by the CE, its predecessor organization the Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya (ChRI), and/or local Tatar CE admirers to establish a jihadi movement in Tatarstan. In 2004, when present CE amir Dokku ‘Abu Usman’ was still only a front commander in the ChRI underground, he called for creating Volga and Far East Fronts. In 2005, the notorious Shamil Basaev promised the ChRI would “cross the Volga” that year. In 2006, in one of his first acts as then ‘president’ of the then Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, the CE’s predecessor organization, Dokku ‘Abu Usman’ Umarov created Volga and Urals Fronts and even named their amirs. But even several years had passed after the formation of the CE in October 2007, little developed in the way of jihad in places like Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, which came under those fronts’ purview. Even before all this there were many official and expert warnings about the growing Islamist and ‘Wahhabi’ threat to the region and several attacks on gas pipelines in the republic in 2003-05, and an ‘Islamic Jamaat’ was uncovered in 2005.<sup>13</sup>

However, in November 2010 a jihadi-oriented Hizb ut-Tahrir Islami (HTI) cell was destroyed in combat with security forces in Tatarstan; it was suspected of an attempted assassination attempt against the head of the Tatarstan MVD’s Anti-Extremism Center.<sup>14</sup> The group was said by an MVD spokeswoman to be likely part of HTI. FSB and MVD troops conducted a special counter-terrorist operation killing three armed men, who locked themselves up in a house in Nurlat raion or district, located just 20 miles from Kazan.<sup>15</sup> The three alleged mujahedin – 34-year old Ruslan Spiridonov, 30-year old Albert Khusnutdinov, and 26-year old Almaz Davletshin – were previously on the federal wanted list. Spiridonov was wanted for attempting to blow up a police car in Chistopol weeks earlier on November 11<sup>th</sup>. On November 24<sup>th</sup> he fired on a hunter who recognized him in a forest in Nurlat. On the morning of November 25<sup>th</sup> over 500 police and FSB forces arrived in Nurlat and tracked down the three terrorists in an abandoned house near the village of Staroe Al’metevo where they were killed.<sup>16</sup> The CE website *Kavkaz tsentr* reported that “a diversionary group of the mujahedin of Tatarstan engaged (its) first battle” in covering the event, adding that the group had been involved in a series of clashes over several weeks including one on November 23rd.<sup>17</sup> The CE’s Galgaiche (Ingushetia) Viliyat’s

<sup>12</sup> Andrei Smirnov, “Vakhkhability vzorvalis’ vne rozyska,” *Kommersant*, 21 August 2012, 20:28, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/2006104](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2006104).

<sup>13</sup> Hahn, *Russia’s Islamic Threat*, pp. 210-12.

<sup>14</sup> Sergei Tarasov “Tseloe pokolenie ekstremistov,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 3 March 2011, [www.ng.ru/regions/2011-03-03/6\\_extremism.html](http://www.ng.ru/regions/2011-03-03/6_extremism.html).

<sup>15</sup> “Likvidirovannyye v Tatarstane terroristy byli islamistami,” *Regnum.ru*, 25 November 2010, 14:48, [www.regnum.ru/news/fd-volga/tatarstan/1350137.html](http://www.regnum.ru/news/fd-volga/tatarstan/1350137.html).

<sup>16</sup> “Sotrudnikami militsii v Nurlatskom raione likvidirovany troe vooruzhennykh prestupnikov,” *Regnum.ru*, 25 November 2010, 14:14, [www.tatar-inform.ru/news/2010/11/25/247030/](http://www.tatar-inform.ru/news/2010/11/25/247030/).

<sup>17</sup> “Ozhestochenoi boi v tatarstane: Troe modzhakhedov stali Shakhidami (inshaallah),” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 25 November 2010, 18:16, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/11/25/76773.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/11/25/76773.shtml).

(GV) website, *Hunafa.com*, hailed the “growth of the territory of the Jihad.”<sup>18</sup> In addition, 2010 saw the emergence of several jihadi cells, with some ten mujahedin were killed and captured in neighboring Bashkortostan. That republic sees several arrests of HTI cells annually.

In January 2011 more signs of jihadi stirrings in the Idel-Ural or Volga-Urals area emerged, and it appeared that they might be connected to the CE’s efforts. A group calling itself “the Vilaiyat Idel-Ural of the Caucasus Emirate” issued a “Statement on the Borders of the Vilaiyat Idel-Ural” posted in January on the CE’s main website, *Kavkaz tsentr*. The self-described ‘Idel-Ural Vilaiyat’ or IUV declared:

(A)ll territory of today’s Russia, which is actively being dismantled, that is not the Caucasus Emirate or other vilaiyats of the Caucasus Emirate....from here on, Allah willing, is the territory of the Vilaiyat Idel-Ural of the Caucasus Emirate.

... We call on you, brothers and sisters in Islam, to unite around the Caucasus Emirate and its amir and, relying on our Creator, to take the causes for victory over the worst of the creatures. We have one land and one war, and after the fall of Russia, God willing, under our active participation, the center of our state will become our present flagman of Jihad, the Caucasus Emirate.<sup>19</sup>

Days later a letter with an appeal for assistance arrived at *Kavkaz tsentr* from the Idel-Ural mujahedin signed by one Umar Bashkirskii. The letter, titled “An Appeal of the Mujahedin of Idel-Ural to the Mujahedin of Caucasus Emirate,” requested that a CE Shura be convened immediately to address the following questions for “rendering comprehensive assistance to the Idel-Ural Jihad.” First, the CE should send to Idel-Ural a group of Caucasus mujahedin experienced in carrying out terrorist and especially complex operations towards implementing intelligence and terrorist operations and studying the situation on the mountain ridge of the Southern Ural mountain region. Second, the CE should send assistance for establishing military camps (*Ribat*) in the Ural mountains. Third, the CE should provide for training for IUV mujahedin in these southern Ural mountain camps to increase the “terrorist-combat effectiveness of the Ural-Volga mujahedin.” Fourth, the CE should assist in the carrying out of more difficult operations. Fifth, the CE should establish strategic military interaction between the Caucasus and Urals mujahedin.<sup>20</sup> The appeal’s emphasis on the southern Urals mountain region suggests the organization may have initially focused on establishing itself in Bashkortostan rather than Tatarstan. However, it should be recalled that ethnic Tatars make up one-fourth of Bashkortostan’s population and have experienced some discrimination in the region by Bashkirs. Therefore, the Idel-Ural Vilaiyat could very well consist of both Tatars and Bashkirs and already be trying to establish itself along or at least on both sides of the border between these two key Muslim republics. Weeks later an “Appeal to the Youth of Idel-Ural” by one Yagafar Tangauri was posted on *Kavkaz tsentr*, calling Bashkir and Tatar youth to jihad.<sup>21</sup>

As reported in IIPER 46, months later the IUV issued a statement specifying which Volga-Urals area regions of Russia were included in its still virtual territorial claim. Posted on the CE’s main website *Kavkaz*

<sup>18</sup> Mukhammad Ts’echo, “Obzor,” *Hunafa.com*, 11 December 2010, 5:05, <http://hunafa.com/?p=4009>.

<sup>19</sup> “Zayavlenie o granitsakh vilaiyat Idel-Ural,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 26 January 2011, 21:12, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/26/78553.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/01/26/78553.shtml). The statement was also posted at “Zayavlenie o granitsakh vilaiyat Idel-Ural,” *VilaiyatIU.wordpress.com*, 25 January 2011, <http://nameofrussia.net/blog/uralcenter/1213.html> and <http://vilayatiu.wordpress.com/2011/01/25/%d0%b7%d0%b0%d1%8f%d0%b2%d0%bb%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b5-%d0%be-%d0%b3%d1%80%d0%b0%d0%bd%d0%b8%d1%86%d0%b0%d1%85-%d0%b2%d0%b8%d0%bb%d0%b0%d1%8f%d1%82%d0%b0-%d0%b8%d0%b4%d0%b5%d0%bb%d1%8c-%d1%83%d1%80/>, accessed 26 January 2011.

<sup>20</sup> “Pis’mo v redaktsiyu: Obrashchenie modzhakhedov Idel-Ural k modzhakhedam Imarata Kavkaz,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 1 February 2011, 00:03, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/01/78726.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/01/78726.shtml).

<sup>21</sup> “Pis’mo v redaktsiyu: Obrashchenie k molodezhi Idel-Ural,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 12 February 2011, 21:11, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/12/79144.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/02/12/79144.shtml).

*tseentr* in July, the IUUV claimed sovereignty over 21 regions of Russia including Tatarstan and Bashkortostan and noted the existence of an Idel-Ural Emirate (IUE) group. Whereas the first IUUV statements did not mention an amir or any other figure tied to the formation, this one identified one ‘Seifullah’ as its amir. The statement noted that the two groups had simultaneously formed in 2009 and that the question of which group would represent the Idel-Ural’s jihadists was now before a group of unidentified Islamic scholars.<sup>22</sup> This division may represent a dispute over whether the Tatar-Urals mujahedin should subordinate themselves to the CE, to another global jihadi group, or maintain independence within or some autonomy from the global jihad and related groups. It may be that amir Mukhammad’s emergence represents the result of the Islamic scholars’ decision and related infighting.

Although there were no more violent incidents in 2011, the year 2012 was not long in producing one. On January 12<sup>th</sup> a potential jihadi terrorist was killed in Nurlat Raion. The incident occurred after a citizen of Uzbekistan, 37-year old Rustam Yusupov, accidentally detonated a bomb he was constructing on December 10<sup>th</sup> in Memdel’ in Vysokygorsk Raion, setting off a fire in a house where two elderly Uzbeks lived. When police arrived, they found a technology for explosive devices and remote detonator, which tipped them off as to the possible terrorism-related nature of the incident. When the devices were handled, another detonation occurred severing the hand of a police sapper. Police questioning revealed that the elderly Uzbek couple’s son had arrived on a visit along with his wife and two children on January 7<sup>th</sup>. The family abandoned the house after the incident. The police tracked down Yusupov two days later, when he allegedly met them by stabbing one officer several times. Yusupov was shot and killed, and the policeman was hospitalized with wounds to the throat. Yusupov’s wife Leniza was arrested and turns out to be a native of Nizhnekamsk, a growing Salafi hotbed.<sup>23</sup>

Four months later, an April 21<sup>st</sup>, Rustam’s father Abdulla Yusupov, blew off both his hands allegedly also while making an IED, and police found three completed IEDs in the house. Yusupov’s neighbors described him as a member of HTI and claimed that cars often came to the house from which boxes and packages. Neither Abdulla nor other family members worked, yet Yusupov regularly traveled to Kazan by taxi and bought goods at the local market.<sup>24</sup>

CE amir Umarov has never acknowledged the existence, no less recognized either the IUE or IUUV as part of the CE. However, as noted in IIPER 37, he has called upon the Tatars and other Muslims across Russia to join the jihad, reminding them that this was obligatory for them according to Shariah law. For example, in March 2011 he issued a statement declaring: “I also want to appeal to Muslims who live on territories of Muslim lands occupied by Russia (perjorative ‘Rusnya’ used) – Idel-Ural, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and all of Russia where Muslims live. Do not forget that Jihad is a sacred *fard ain* (obligation) for you today. Do not forget that we are one Ummah.”<sup>25</sup>

In sum, it appears that a jihadi cell tied to the CE has emerged in Tatarstan, though the history of its formation remains cloudy in particular as regards the relationship of the IUUV, IUE, Nurlat jamaat, and Yusupovs to the new jihadi jamaat. The IUUV and/or IUE are certain precursors and perhaps even predecessor

<sup>22</sup> “Idel’-Ural: Modzhakhedy Idel-Urala sdelali poyasneniya otnositel’no statusa Idel’-Urala,” *Kavkaz tseentr*, 31 July 2011, 13:09, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/31/83983.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/07/31/83983.shtml).

<sup>23</sup> Anton Shishkin and Aleksei Sorokin, “Terrorizm respublikanskogo masshtaba,” *Kazan Week*, 13 January 2012, 09:45, <http://kazanweek.ru/article/189/> and “Terrorist po schastlivoi sluchainosti,” *Gazeta.ru*, 13 January 2012, 18:59, [www.gazeta.ru/social/2012/01/13/3962001.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/social/2012/01/13/3962001.shtml).

<sup>24</sup> Eduard Minnibaev, “Vakhkhabitskaya ‘Koza Nostra’,” *Russkaya narodnaya liniya*, 3 August 2012, [http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2012/08/03/vahkhabitskaya\\_koza\\_nostra/](http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2012/08/03/vahkhabitskaya_koza_nostra/).

<sup>25</sup> “Obrashchenie Amira IK Dokku Abu Usman k musul’manam Kavkaza i Rossii: ‘Srazhaites’ s vragami vezde, gde dostanet vasha ruka!,” *Kavkaz tseentr*, 3 March 2011, 23:40, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/03/79721.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/03/03/79721.shtml).

organization(s). The HTI, Nurlat jamaat, and Yusupovs may or may not have been tied to these groups or the July 19<sup>th</sup> attacks. However, they are part of the larger Islamist pond from which jihadists can recruit, and have shown a tendency to cross over from Islamist activity to jihadi violence.

### **Tatarstan, Idel-Ural, and the Global Jihad**

Given this emerging perhaps CE-tied jihadi project, it is hardly surprising that Al Qa`ida (AQ) and other global jihadi groups have shown an interest. In December 2010, the AQ-affiliated website and discussion forum *Ansar al-Mujahideen*, which announced “the Start of a New Campaign in Support of the Caucasus Emirate,” noted with hope the emerging signs of jihadism in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.<sup>26</sup> Months later, the AQ-tied Islamic Jihad Union’s (IJU) media department 'Badr At-Tawhid' sent a seven-minute video message to the CE mujahedin from the IJU’s amirs and the 'land of Horosan', Afghanistan. Of the three amirs who spoke – Abu Abdallah, who speaks first, followed by Salahudin, and finally Ubaydullah – the first two greeted the Muslims of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan explicitly in greeting and calling upon all of Russia’s Muslims to join the CE’s jihad.<sup>27</sup>

Any Tatar Islamist-jihadi ties with South Asian-based groups like AQ and the IJU likely were established or run through the so-called Bulgar Jamaat or Bulgar-Uighur Jamaat. The Bulgar Jamaat, like the IJU, is based in Northern Waziristan in Pakistan’s FATA along the Afghanistan border, a refuge for AQ and Taliban operatives and fighters. It is a group of Tatar Muslim who performed the hidzra and abandoned the republic and Russia, regarding them as the abode of the infidel, and went to the AfPak region, regardin it as the abode of Islam. The Bulgar Jamaat has its own website, conducts occasional operations in AfPak, and has called for jihad against Russia. A recently published interview with a purported member of Tatarstan’s jihadist/Islamist underground conducted by Avraam Shumlevich at the *Agentsvo politicheskikh novostei*, includes possible insight into this and other aspects of the Tatarstan’s new jihadi challenge. According to Shumlevich his interviewee is a North Caucasian named Salyaf living in “central Russia” and a Caucasus Emirate “functionary.” Salyaf notes it includes some 400 fighters who are deciding now whether or not to return to Tatarstan and are presently located – in whole or in part he does not say – in Syria and Yemen and that its first amir was an ethnic Avar from Dagestan. Syria and presumably Yemen, can be used as a training ground or “training conveyor” before their return to their homeland.<sup>28</sup> One Tatarstan source claims Nizhnekamsk police have information that indicates that “quite a few” residents from the city are fighting in Afghanistan and Middle Eastern countries.<sup>29</sup>

#### *The Caucasusization of Tatar Youth*

Deputy mufti Yakupov, expert Suleimanov and others point to the growing “Caucasusization” of Tatarstan, especially among its youth, who are increasingly attracted to the audiotaped lectures of the late Buryat-Russian CE suicide bombing ideologist and operative Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii, who IIPER

<sup>26</sup> “Announcing the Start of a New Campaign in Support of the Caucasus Emirate,” *Alqimmah.net*, 5 December 2010, [www.alqimmah.net/showthread.php?t=21139&goto=nextoldest](http://www.alqimmah.net/showthread.php?t=21139&goto=nextoldest), last accessed on 26 May 2011.

<sup>27</sup> “IJU: Message from the Mujahideen of the Khorasan to the Caucasus Emirate,” *Kavkaz Jihad Blogspot*, 14 March 2011, <http://kavkaz-jihad.blogspot.com/2011/03/message-of-mujahideen-from-khorasan-to.html> and “Video Badr at-Tawheed "Mensaje de los mujahidines del Jorasán al Emirato del Cáucaso,” *Jihad-e-Informacion*, March 2011, <http://jihad-e-informacion.blogspot.com/2011/03/video-badr-at-tawheed-mensaje-de-los.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Avraam Shumlevich, “‘Skoro stanet zharko.’ Intervyu iz islamistskogo podpolya,” *Agentsvo politicheskikh novostei*, 9 August 2012, [www.apn.ru/publications/article27003.htm](http://www.apn.ru/publications/article27003.htm).

<sup>29</sup> “Ekstremizm po-nizhnekamski,” *Vnizhnekamske*, 1 December 2011, [www.vnizhnekamske.ru/prensa/34-pr/2461-art.html](http://www.vnizhnekamske.ru/prensa/34-pr/2461-art.html).

readers would know well, and the still living Sheikh Abu Umar Sasitlinskii, whose videos are gaining increasing popularity among the mujahedin today.<sup>30</sup>

## 7<sup>TH</sup> SUICIDE BOMBING OF 2012 KILLS DAGESTAN'S LEADING SUFI SHEIKH

The seventh suicide bombing of 2012, the fifth suicide bombing plot of the year, occurred on August 28<sup>th</sup> and killed Dagestan's most influential Sufi sheikh, 74-year old Said Atsaev Afandi Chirkeiskii (born Said Atsaev), and six others. The suicide bomber has been identified by her remains – her head – as Aminat Saprykina, a resident of Makhachkala, Dagestan's capitol and the wife of a mujahed ([www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211828/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211828/)). Makhachkala is the locus of one the strongest jihadi jamaats under the Caucasus Emirate's Dagestan network, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV).

Chirkeiskii is an ethnic Avar who has some 10,000 committed student followers (murids), and some 150,000 people reportedly attended his funeral; all of this testifying to his great authority in Dagestan, a region with a population of slightly more than 2 million.

Saprykina entered Atsaev-Chirkeiskii's home in the village of Chirkei in Buinaksk, Dagestan, posing as a religious pilgrim. Chirkeiskii's wife and five other civilians were killed as a result of the explosion, along with Chirkeiskii himself. Two more civilians were wounded ([www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211820/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211820/)).

This attack is likely to exacerbate intra-Islamic relations in Dagestan and across Russia, coming on the heels of the May 3<sup>rd</sup> suicide bombing in the wake of the Sufi-Salafist negotiations and agreements in April as well as on the heels of the July 19<sup>th</sup> car bomb and shooting in Tatarstan that killed that republic's deputy chief mufti and severely wounded its chief mufti, for which a CE-tied Tatar jihadi jamaat claimed responsibility. It is clear that the conflict between traditionalist and Russia-loyal Islamic clergy, on the one hand, and the radical Islamist Salafis and the jihadis is now becoming a fact of life across the country or at least its southern Muslim republics; a sure sign of the growing influence of the global jihadi revolutionary alliance and global Islamist revolutionary movement in Russia.

The jihadists seem intent on blocking any rapprochement, which would perhaps reduce their prospects for recruiting among the Islamists. Indeed, the situation was already sharpening beginning in late June. On August 18<sup>th</sup> two masked men entered a Shiite mosque in Khasavyurt firing on Muslims, killing one and wounding seven. Later a bomb with the power of 40 kilograms of dynamite was defused just outside the mosque ([www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211413/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211413/)). The CE and other mujahedin have a special hatred for Shiites. This attack may have been carried out by the perpetrators of another recent attack; one against the former imam of a mosque in the village of Enderei in Khasavyurt district, Dagestan on August 8<sup>th</sup>. The imam was wounded in the skull. The MVD reported, however, that the alleged perpetrators of these attacks were Elbrus Butaev and Rasim Nikiev of the Khasavyurt jamaat ("diversionary-terrorist group"), who were misidentified as having been killed in July. Nikiev had been appointed the jamaat's amir earlier in the month, according to police ([www.kommersant.ru/doc/2005606](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2005606)). On June 29<sup>th</sup> Magomedkamil Gamzatov, the imam of a mosque in Karamakhi, and another mosque-goer were killed by gunfire ([www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/208899/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/208899/)). Gamzatov is reported by Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee to have been a fierce opponent of the mujahedin ([www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/208924/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/208924/)).

The suicide attack on Sheikh Atsaev-Chirkeiskii puts the number of successful suicide bombings in 2012 at 7; one more than in all of 2011. There 16 in 2009 and 14 in 2010. This was the 44<sup>th</sup> successful such attack and 40<sup>th</sup> plot (four plots have been double suicide bombings) since the CE's formation in October 2007. This year's seven suicide attacks have killed 25 and wounded 71 state agents and killed 11 and wounded 51

<sup>30</sup> Rais Suleimanov, "Islamskii terrorism v sovremennom Tatarstane: vakhkhabizm na praktike," *Agentsvo politicheskikh novostei*, 25 July 2012, [www.apn.ru/publications/article26923.htm](http://www.apn.ru/publications/article26923.htm).

civilians. The five plots' seven bombings have utilized 4 male and 3 female suicide bombers. The geography has been 3 plots, including 4 bombings in Dagestan, 1 plot involving 2 bombings in Chechnya, and 1 plot including 1 suicide bombing in Ingushetiya.

## CE AMIR UMAROV ISSUES TWO VIDEOS, APPOINTS DAGESTAN VILAIYAT AMIR/VALI

CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov' issued two new videotaped statements as well as two decrees (omras No. 30 and 31) appointing a new amir and vali for the CE's most powerful network, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV) in Dagestan. The videos were posted on both the CE's official website, *Kavkaz tsentr*, and the DV's official website, *VDagestan.com*. The first video is a short Ramadan greeting to Muslims. It shows Umarov praying before he moves to the camera to issue his statement in which he calls on the "Islamic umma" to "open up its eyes, open up its heart," "wake up", stop living as "slaves" of the infidel, and join the jihad. He claims the umma stands on the "edge of the abyss" and asks that Muslims keep the mujahedin in their prayers.<sup>31</sup>

The second videotape in which Umarov announces his appointment of the new DV amir appears along with the text of Umarov's two decrees appointing him. Umarov appoints acting DV amir 'Abu Mukhammad' Rustam Asildarov as the DV's official amir as well as the DV's vali (governor). Perhaps revealing his concern that the DV amir's authority may exceed his own, given the DCV's status as the CE's center of gravity, Umarov reminds the DV mujahedin to remember that they are all part of one emirate and one umma.<sup>32</sup> Umarov's authority seems to remain intact, however. The DV's official website *VDagestan.com* published both the appointment and Ramadan videos as well as the text of the decrees (see <http://vdagestan.com/?p=6447> and <http://vdagestan.com/?p=6456>) on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The decrees were signed on August 6<sup>th</sup> but posted on *Kavkaz tsentr* and its affiliate Kavkaz TV only on August 25<sup>th</sup>, showing the long path Umarov's communications must go through before reaching the entire network. This is probably the result of security measures required to ensure his whereabouts are not discovered by Russian security.

### DV amir 'Abu Mukhammad' Rustam Asildarov

Abu Mukhammad, born Rustam Asildarov, had been DV amir 'Salikh' Ibragimkhalil Daudov's first naib putting him in line to succeed Daudov when he was killed on February 14<sup>th</sup> of this year. Asildarov also have been amir of the DV's powerful Central Sector, from which several DV amirs have emerged in recent years. A shura of the Caucasus Emirate's (CE) Dagestani network, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV), was convened on 16 April 2012 "under the leadership of amir Abu Mukhammad" (Usman) (born Rustam Asildarov. A videotape of the shura was posted on YouTube and various CE sites on May 19<sup>th</sup>. It shows Asildarov standing in a circle with 20 amirs, but there is no definitive statement that he is the DV's amir.<sup>33</sup> This suggested that Abu Mukhammad/Asildarov was assuming the status if not the official position of amir after having been identified as the "acting amir" a few weeks earlier, when he restated his loyalty bayat to CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov (see IIPER 56).

<sup>31</sup> As of August 27<sup>th</sup> the video had not been put on a separate Kavkaz tsentr page but on a sidebar from which it could soon become unavailable. It was available on *You Tube* on August 27<sup>th</sup> at "Amir IK Dokku Abu-Usman: Vspominaite nas v vashikh molivakh!, Ramada 1433 god (2102 u.)," *You Tube*, published 24 August 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=4PKxCnIAVfA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=4PKxCnIAVfA).

<sup>32</sup> "O naznachanii Amira Dagestanskogo Fronta, valiya vilaiyata Dagestan IK," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 25 August 2012, 11:31, [www.kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2012/08/25/92686.shtml](http://www.kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2012/08/25/92686.shtml).

<sup>33</sup> "Shura mudzhakhidov VD pod rukovodstvok amira Abu Mukhammada, 16 aprelya 2012 goda," *You Tube*, posted 19 May 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=Xn-WxCUcYVA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Xn-WxCUcYVA), last accessed 21 June 2012.

## AUGUST 6<sup>TH</sup> SUICIDE BOMBING IN GROZNY, CHECHNYA – 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 5<sup>TH</sup> SUICIDE BOMBINGS IN RUSSIA IN 2012

On August 6<sup>th</sup> two suicide bombers detonated their suicide vests on the outskirts of Chechnya's capital Grozny, killing three MVD troops and wounding three civilians. The bombs exploded near the Military Trade (VoenTorg) store in October district. The two suicide bombers were identified as Yusup Gekhaev (born 1990) and Ali Demilkhanov (born 1983), both of whom were on the wanted list for crimes they allegedly had committed previously.<sup>34</sup> Chechen authorities, as stated by president Ramzan Kadyrov, believe the attack was masterminded by the notorious Gakaev brothers, Muslim and Hussein. Kadyrov claimed the Gakaevs tend to use mentally challenged people as suicide bombers.<sup>35</sup>

These bombings were the fourth and fifth suicide attacks of 2012. As reported in IIPER 54, the first suicide bombing in Russia in 2012 occurred in Dagestan on March 6<sup>th</sup> when a female suicide bomber detonated her bomb in Karabudakhkent. Five policemen were killed, and two were wounded.<sup>36</sup> The shakhidka or female suicide martyr was identified as one Aminat Ibragimova (born in 1986) from the village of Khebda in Makhachkala Raion. According to a March 7<sup>th</sup> report, Russia's Investigative Committee (SKR) had determined that Ibragimova was the wife of the Zaur Zagirov, reportedly the amir of the Caspian sector or Jamaat of the CE's Dagestani network, the so-called Dagestan Vilaiyat. Zagirov was said to have been killed in a special operation carried out by the security services in February, according to the SKR statement.<sup>37</sup> An earlier report held that she was the wife of Magomedkhabib Daudov, the son of the late amir of the DV 'Salikh' Ibragimkhalil Daudov. Both Daudovs and Zagirov were killed together on February 10<sup>th</sup> in a special operation carried out by law enforcement and security organs.<sup>38</sup> A videotape of Ibragimova's final testament before her suicide attack was posted on the CE's main website *Kavkaz tsentr* on May 29<sup>th</sup> and briefly summarized in IIPER 58.<sup>39</sup>

The second and third attacks were a sequenced double suicide bombing carried out in Dagestan's capital Makhachkala on May 3<sup>rd</sup>; one much better executed than the combined fourth and fifth attacks carried out in Chechnya in August. As a result of the two explosions, 14 people were killed and more than 100 were wounded. There were 10 state agents among the 14 persons killed: 8 MVD policeman and 2 firemen. One fireman who was at the scene after the first bombing was still missing as of May 6<sup>th</sup>. Among the wounded were 57 MVD personnel.<sup>40</sup> The combined attack was a signature sequenced dual bombing typical of jihadi

<sup>34</sup> "Opoznyany telo smertnikov, sovershivshikh terakt v Groznom," *Kavkaz uzal*, 8 August 2012, 00:20, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/210872/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/210872/).

<sup>35</sup> Nikolai Sergeev and Musa Muradov, "Smertnik dozhdal zampolitov," *Kommersant*, 7 August 2012, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/199672](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/199672) and Svetlana Emelyanova, "Sovershit terakt mogli slaboumnyie," *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 7 August 2012, 09:55, [www.rg.ru/2012/08/07/reg-skfo/gakaev.html](http://www.rg.ru/2012/08/07/reg-skfo/gakaev.html).

<sup>36</sup> "Chetvero politseiskikh pogibli pri vzryve smertnitse v Dagestane," *Kavkaz uzal*, 6 March 2012, 23:05, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202523/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202523/) and "V Dagestane dlya ustanovleniya lichnosti smertnitsy naznachena geneticheskaya ekspertiza," *Kavkaz uzal*, 7 March 2012, 11:40, <http://southdistrict.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202550/>.

<sup>37</sup> "SKR: smertnitsa podorvavshaya sebya v Karabudakhkente, byla suprugoi lidera kaspiskoi gruppy boevikov," *Kavkaz uzal*, 7 March 2012, 14:55, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202563/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202563/).

<sup>38</sup> "V Dagestane dlya ustanovleniya lichnosti smertnitsy naznachena geneticheskaya ekspertiza," *Kavkaz uzal*, 7 March 2012, 11:40, <http://southdistrict.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/202550/>.

<sup>39</sup> "Obrashenie Aminy Ibragimovoi k svoei sem'e," YouTube, posted 27 May 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIKwgeIQpas&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIKwgeIQpas&feature=player_embedded), accessed 29 May 2012 posted on first page of *Kavkaz tsentr*, 29 May 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Yuliya Rybina and Nikolai Sergeev, "Primirenje vzorvali dvazhdy," *Kommersant*, 6 May 2012, <http://kommersant.ru/doc/1929686?stamp=634719929655022383>; and Abdulla Alisultanov, "Predvaritel'no opaznan odin

organizations like the CE. The first explosion occurred when police stopped a Mitsubishi Charisma headed in the direction of Kizlyar at the police post ‘Alaska-30’ on the outskirts of Makhachkala, prompting the driver or a passenger to detonate a bomb with explosive power equivalent to 30-50 kilograms of TNT.<sup>41</sup> This first car bomb was driven, according to one report, by a female, who would have been Muslimat Alieva, and was supposed to drive into the police station but was prevented from doing so when stopped some distance away by police.<sup>42</sup> As police, emergency, and fire personnel were fighting to rescue the wounded, to put out the fires from several cars that resulted from the explosion and to set up a security perimeter, a second automobile identified as a Gazel drove into the thick of the scene from a side street detonating its bomb with a force equivalent to approximately 100 kilograms of TNT.<sup>43</sup> It appears that the bulk of the casualties occurred from this second bombing. According to the statements of law enforcement, the Makhachkala Sector of the Caucasus Emirate’s Dagestani network, the so-called Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV), was likely behind the attack. One report noted law enforcement claiming that the chief organizer was 24-year old ‘Khamza’ Khusein Mamaev.<sup>44</sup>

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## RUSSIA’S SIXTH SUICIDE BOMBING OF 2012 OCCURS IN MALGOBEK, INGUSHETIYA

Russia’s sixth suicide bombing of the year (fourth pplot, given two double suicide attacks) occurred in on August 19<sup>th</sup> in Malgobek, Ingushetiya at the funeral of a policeman, Ilez Korigov, who had been killed in a drive-by shooting in Malgobek in which a 14-year old girl was wounded as well.<sup>45</sup> **In the August 19<sup>th</sup> bombing seven policemen were killed and fifteen were wounded. Of the fifteen wounded, eleven were police and four were civilians.**<sup>46</sup> According to law enforcement, the bomber was 34-year old Khamzat Al’diev, and the attack was organized by an Ingush jamaat or cell headed by one Artur Getagazhev, who has been on the wanted list since June 2010. The Al’diev brothers were members of Getagazhev’s jamaat, according to law enforcement, which was all but completely destroyed in 2011 but rebuilt by Getagazhev.<sup>47</sup> No comment had appeared from any of these figures’ families as of August 20<sup>th</sup>. Al’diev reportedly was a resident of Sunzha, Ingushetiya and on the wanted list as a known member of the CE underground as is his brother.<sup>48</sup>

The command of the CE’s Ingushetiya network, the Galgaiche Vilaiyat (GV), issued a statement on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and posted on the GV’s website and the CE’s main website, *Kavkaz tsentr*, that claimed the suicide

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iz smertnikov, sovershivshikh dvoinei terakt v Dagestane,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 4 May 2012, 19:53, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/206071/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/206071/).

41 Rybina and Sergeev, “Primirenie vzorvali dvazhdy”.

42 Alisultanov, “Predvaritel’no opaznan odin iz smertnikov, sovershivshikh dvoinei terakt v Dagestane”.

43 Rybina and Sergeev, “Primirenie vzorvali dvazhdy”.

44 Rybina and Sergeev, “Primirenie vzorvali dvazhdy”.

45 “V Ingushetii skonchalsya ranenyi v Malgobeke politseiskii,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 19 August 2012, 07:50, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211419/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211419/).

46 “Chislo ranennykh pri vzryve v Ingushetii vozroslo do 15 chelovek,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 19 August 2012, 18:14, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211418/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211418/).

47 Nikolai Sergeev, “Za terrorist-smertnik otomstyat glavaryu bandy,” *Kommersant*, 20 August 2012, 11:12, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/2005246](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2005246).

48 “MVD: na pokhoronakh v Ingushetii sebya podorval Khamzat Al’diev,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 20 August 2012, 02:52, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211431/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/211431/).

bomber accidentally targeted the wrong person, hugging one Khizir Fragiev when detonating his suicide belt rather than the target of the istishkhad attack, Muzhahir Yevloev, head of the MVD department in Malgobek.<sup>49</sup>

IIPER readers will recall that the Caucasus Emirate's leading ideologist and operative of suicide bombing in the period 2009-2010, the Buryat-Russian 'Sheikh' Said Abu Saad Buryatskii (born Aleksandr Tikhomirov), was based in Sunzha, and over the years CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov has had a special relationship with the mujahedin of Sunzha.

**The casualties inflicted in this attack bring the total number of casualties that have resulted in Russia's six suicide bombings so far this year to 25 state agents killed and 71 wounded and 4 civilians killed and 49 wounded.** The geography of CE suicide terrorism is as follows: **3 suicide bombings (3 plots) in Dagestan, 2 suicide bombings (1 plot) in Chechnya, and 1 in Ingushetiya (1 plot).** **The six suicide bombers have included four males and 2 females.**

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## CENTRAL ASIA

### **KAZAKHSTAN: NINE ALLEGED TERRORISTS KILLED IN SPECIAL OPERATION**

On August 17<sup>th</sup> Kazakhstani security forces carried out a special operation in which 9 alleged terrorists were killed in Karasai district in Tausamala Oblast, Kazakhstan. The operation was part of a search and arrest action in the investigation of the July 11<sup>th</sup> explosion in Tausamala in Alma-Ata Oblast in which 8 people died, including 4 children. Authorities suspect that the July 11<sup>th</sup> explosion was a result of mishandling an IED someone in the house was preparing. In the recent August 17<sup>th</sup> special op, the alleged terrorists refused to allow security forces in or to surrender and instead opened fire sparking a deadly firefight.<sup>50</sup>

Jihadi terrorism came to Kazakhstan for the first time last summer when the Kazakhstani Waziristan-based and possibly IJU- and AQ-tied group 'Jund al-Khalifat' declared itself and took responsibility for two suicide bombings and several other attacks, as reported in IIPER, Nos. 42, 45, 46, 48, 49, and 50. It is of interest that some sources recently report that the IJU has replenished its forces with Caucasus mujahedin possibly from the Caucasus Emirate (CE) and Kazakhstanis have been turning up fighting with the CE. Thus, one Central Asia expert, Yelena Fadeeva, notes the former trend,<sup>51</sup> while a CE source of the groups' powerful Dagestani network, the Dagestan Vilaiyat, reported that the North Caucasus republics that have created so-called 'adaptation commissions' to draw fighters from the jihad and back to civilian life have failed, succeeding only in brining in a few yung men. The DV website reports that among those brought back into society in Dagestan were four Kazakhstan residents.<sup>52</sup> IIPER leaders will recall that Kazakhstani mujahedin first appeared on *Hunafa.com*, the website of the CE's Ingushetiya network, the Galgaizhe Vilaiyat (GV), and that the infamous suicide bombing theo-ideologist, propagandist, and operative Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii (born Aleksandr Tikhomirov), based with the GV, proselytized radical Islam in lectures in Kazakhstan befor he joined

<sup>49</sup> "Zayavlenie komandivaniya mudzhakhidov Vilaiyata G'alg'aiche ot 4 shavvalya 1433 g. (22 avgusta 2012 g.)," *Hunafa.com*, 24 August 2012, <http://hunafa.com/?p=10374>. See also *Kavkaz tsentr*, 24 August 2012, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/08/24/92674.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/08/24/92674.shtml).

<sup>50</sup> "Spetsoperatsiya pod Alma-Atoi: likvidirovany 9 terroristov prichastnykh k vzryvam v Tausamaly," *Regnum.ru*, 17 August 2012, 10:09, [www.regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/kazakhstan/accidents/1562172.html](http://www.regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/kazakhstan/accidents/1562172.html).

<sup>51</sup> Shakar Saadi, "U novogo lidera IDU kriminal'noe proshloe: Teryaya soobshchnikov, IDU privlekaet terroristov izvne," *Central Asia Online*, 14 August 2012, [www.centralasiaonline.com/ru/articles/caii/features/main/2012/08/14/feature-01](http://www.centralasiaonline.com/ru/articles/caii/features/main/2012/08/14/feature-01).

<sup>52</sup> "Imarat Kavkaz. Rossisskie obshchestvennyie deyateli ishut prichiny rastushei tendentsii vykhoda molodezha na Dzhikhad," *Umma News*, 2 August 2012, 20:26, <http://ummanews.ru/news/last-news/8115-2012-08-02-19-42-49.html>.

the CE. Those video lectures are still available and viewed by young Muslims across the Russian-speaking world on *Hunafa.com*.

## EUROPE

### **TWO ALLEGEDLY AL QA`IDA-TIED CHECHENS AND ONE TURK ARRESTED ON TERRORISM CHARGES IN SPAIN**

On August 3<sup>rd</sup> Spanish authorities announced the arrest of two Chechens and one Turk on terrorism charges in Spain. All three were said to be working for Al Qaeda (AQ). The two Chechen arrestees are Eldar Magomedov (alias Ahmad Avar) and Mohamed Ankari Adamov. The Turk was identified as Cengiz Yalcin. It was reported that the men were arrested on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and “fiercely resisted.” They were found with explosives, had been training on paragliders, and were preparing to bomb targets using paragliders or large toy planes or ‘drones’ to deliver the bombs.<sup>53</sup> *ABC News* reported that the three had undergone training in Pakistan and that the plot raised concerns since AQ had recently put out a call for Spanish-speaking operatives. *ABC News* also cited Spanish law enforcement to report that the presence of explosives demonstrated that the cell was no longer sleeping or planning but in the operational stage, meaning an attack may have been imminent.<sup>54</sup> Spanish National Court judge Pablo Ruz, who oversaw the suspects’ arraignment, said that the alleged terrorists may have been planning to hit British and U.S. targets, while police said they were “ready to act in Spain and Europe.”<sup>55</sup>

*CNN* cited law enforcement personnel who claimed the men were most likely plotting to attack the joint U.S.-Spanish naval base at Rota or British targets in Gibraltar.<sup>56</sup> However, a subsequent report said that the suspects may have been targeting a Gibraltar shopping mall in an attack that was to be timed to occur during the London Olympic Games.<sup>57</sup> Another police source claimed the first target may have been in France, and French police were working with Spanish police on the investigation.<sup>58</sup> Magomedov and Yalcin traveled to France

<sup>53</sup> “Spain jails two Chechens over terror plot,” *AFP*, 5 August 2012, 10:23, <http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/14467515/spain-jails-two-chechens-over-terror-plot/> and “Judge in Spain takes statements from terror suspects,” *CNN*, 3 August 2012, [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world\\_europe\\_spain-terror-arrests\\_1\\_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world_europe_spain-terror-arrests_1_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police). See also [http://m.cnn.com/primary/cnnd\\_fullarticle?topic=newsarticle&category=cnnd\\_world&articleId=urn:newsml:CNN.com:20120807:spain-terror-arrests:1&cookieFlag=COOKIE\\_SET](http://m.cnn.com/primary/cnnd_fullarticle?topic=newsarticle&category=cnnd_world&articleId=urn:newsml:CNN.com:20120807:spain-terror-arrests:1&cookieFlag=COOKIE_SET); [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world\\_europe\\_spain-terror-arrests\\_1\\_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world_europe_spain-terror-arrests_1_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police); <http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/14467515/spain-jails-two-chechens-over-terror-plot/>; [www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/spain-charged-2-chechens-after-us-tip/463223.html](http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/spain-charged-2-chechens-after-us-tip/463223.html); [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-07/world/world\\_europe\\_spain-terror-arrests\\_1\\_spanish-security-spanish-police-rezwan-ferdaus](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-07/world/world_europe_spain-terror-arrests_1_spanish-security-spanish-police-rezwan-ferdaus); [www.foxnews.com/world/2012/08/11/spanish-authorities-suspected-al-qaeda-members-trained-for-plot-using-model/](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/08/11/spanish-authorities-suspected-al-qaeda-members-trained-for-plot-using-model/); [www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/5342](http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/5342); [www.globaljihad.net/view\\_news.asp?id=2342](http://www.globaljihad.net/view_news.asp?id=2342).

<sup>54</sup> See “Three Alleged Al Qaeda Terror Operatives Arrested in Spain,” *ABC News*, 2 August 2012, 00:51, <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/alleged-al-qaeda-terror-operatives-arrested-spain-16911057>.

<sup>55</sup> “Judge in Spain takes statements from terror suspects,” *CNN*, 3 August 2012, [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world\\_europe\\_spain-terror-arrests\\_1\\_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-03/world/world_europe_spain-terror-arrests_1_russian-chechen-chechen-men-spanish-police).

<sup>56</sup> “Judge in Spain takes statements from terror suspects”.

<sup>57</sup> Paul Cruickshank, “Spain ‘al Qaeda cell’ may have planned strike to coincide with Olympics,” *CNN*, 7 August 2012, [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-07/world/world\\_europe\\_spain-terror-arrests\\_1\\_spanish-security-spanish-police-rezwan-ferdaus](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-08-07/world/world_europe_spain-terror-arrests_1_spanish-security-spanish-police-rezwan-ferdaus).

<sup>58</sup> “Judge in Spain takes statements from terror suspects”.

before entering Spain in April or May this year. There they stayed in La Linea and took paragliding lessons paid for by Yalcin. The Chechens were heading back to France when police arrested them.<sup>59</sup> Police sources also said that the Chechens were stopped in Almuradiel, a town about midway between Madrid and the country's southern coast. The Yalcin was arrested in Cadiz province in southern Spain. CNN television also cited law enforcement that there were indications one of the Chechens had attended a Lakshar-e-Toiba training camp in Pakistan.<sup>60</sup> Magomedov and Adamov were jailed incommunicado and indefinitely until a date is set for court proceedings.<sup>61</sup> Spain's Interior Minister, Jorge Fernandez Diaz, said that the suspects were "extremely dangerous people," described the Chechens as suspected AQ members, and said that one was "a very important operative in Al-Qaeda's international structure."<sup>62</sup>

Judge Ruz, at least initially, did not agree with police that the evidence demonstrated the men were members of any organization.<sup>63</sup> Ruz later changed his decision because the Chechens "partially acknowledged" links to AQ.<sup>64</sup> The judge's statement noted that he approved the terrorism charges after seeing evidence provided by the U.S. Justice Department. The evidence included information from a witness under government protection, French judicial authorities, and the police in Gibraltar and Russia. Russian authorities linked Chechen suspect 'Ahmad Avar' Eldar Magomedov with international terrorist organizations and showed that he had been in Pakistan and Afghanistan in 2010, Ruz's statement said. The U.S. evidence seemed to concur by holding that Magomedov had been involved in terrorist activity in 2010 in Afghanistan and Waziristan, Pakistan and may have used the may have acted under the pseudonym of Muslin Dost.<sup>65</sup>

**Magomedov was later described by the Spanish paper *La Razon* as AQ's lead operative in Europe.** According to *La Razon*, citing Spanish law enforcement sources, Magomedov, who used the alias "Muslim Dost" is "one of the top 'military' commanders of Al Qaeda in Europe." Magomedov served in the former Soviet Union's special units, later trained in Al Qaeda's training camps in Waziristan, became an instructor, and joined the jihad in Afghanistan. According to *La Razon*'s sources, Western intelligence services regards him as "one of the most dangerous members of Al Qaeda," according to the report. He has mastered car-bomb techniques; terrorist attacks using planes, trains, and subways; and suicide bombings using explosive vests. AQ dispatched Magomedov to Europe as a "military leader" with "a mission to commit terrorist attacks." He traveled through Turkey and Greece to get to Europe and traveled across Europe with fake documents. The intelligence services, apparently in the know, issued an international alert, and his phone calls and contacts were traced. Magomedov's presence in Spain raised concerns that he was planning a major attack in Spain, France or other European countries. In March 2012 Magomedov traveled to France in an attempt, according to Magomedov's statement to police, to gain political asylum. Magomedov and Adamov arrived in La Linea in May where they moved in with Yalcin.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>59</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip," *The Moscow Times*, 7 August 2012, [www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/spain-charged-2-chechens-after-us-tip/463223.html](http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/spain-charged-2-chechens-after-us-tip/463223.html).

<sup>60</sup> "Judge in Spain takes statements from terror suspects".

<sup>61</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip".

<sup>62</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip" and "Spain jails two Chechens over terror plot".

<sup>63</sup> "Spain jails two Chechens over terror plot".

<sup>64</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip".

<sup>65</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip".

<sup>66</sup> J.M. Zuloaga, "Eldar Magomedov, alias 'Ahmad Avar' – Cae en Espana el jefe 'militar' de Al Qaeda en Europa," *La Razon*, 6 August 2012, [www.larazon.es/noticia/4732-cae-en-espana-el-jefe-militar-de-al-qaeda-en-europa](http://www.larazon.es/noticia/4732-cae-en-espana-el-jefe-militar-de-al-qaeda-en-europa) translated in "The Mastermind of Al Qaeda in Europe?," *Gates of Vienna*, 7 August 2012, <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2012/08/the-mastermind-of-al-qaeda-in-europe.html>.

Little information has appeared on Adamov. He is considered less important than Magomedov, whom he accompanied at all times, according to *La Razon*.<sup>67</sup> *The Moscow Times* reported that both Chechens were detained traveling by bus towards the French border from the southern city of Cadiz located very close to the large U.S. military base in Rota, alongside the Mediterranean. Both Chechen suspects lacked identification documents, but each is said to be known by several aliases, the judge's statement said.<sup>68</sup>

Spain's Interior Minister described the Turk Yalcin as the Chechens' facilitator who paid for their paragliding lessons in Spain. FOX News reported that a videotape confiscated by the police from the suspects showed them training to carry out attacks using large model planes. The video showed the model plane flying and then dropping an object on a target.<sup>69</sup> Yalcin, an engineer, had worked in Gibraltar's construction industry for years. He was charged with the possession of explosives and a device that could be used in a terror attack seized at his residence in Spain's southwestern city of La Linea, situated across the border from the British colony and U.S. naval base. Other evidence found with Yalcin included passport photographs of the Chechens and videos that suggested preparations for an attack.<sup>70</sup>

It remains unclear whether Magomedov and Adamov were originally from the Caucasus Emirate (CE). IIPER has emphasized and documented extensively the interactions between the Caucasus Emirate and AQ-affiliated groups like Islamic Jihad Union, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Kazakhstani Jund al-Khalifat, and other such groups based in Waziristan, including the crossover or exchanges of personnel, mutual propaganda support, not to mention identical theo-ideological orientations of strict tawhid and takfirism. **It seems highly unlikely that ethnic Chechens from Chechnya would not have joined the CE before moving on to sharpen their skills in Waziristan.**

**Thus, it seems likely that this plot is the fourth CE foreign operation uncovered in just the last two years.** The prior three include the 'Shariah4Belgium' plot uncovered in Belgium in 2010, the CE Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV) cell uncovered in the Czech Republic in 2011, and the CE DV plot to attack Eurovidenie music festival and other targets in Baku and elsewhere in Azerbaijan uncovered in April of this year. This Spanish plot also marks the continuation of a trend involving possibly autonomous or 'lone wolf' Chechens arrested and convicted on terrorism charges in Europe in recent years, including in France and Denmark.

## INGUSH TERRORIST ARRESTED IN BULGARIA FOR ATTACK IN INGUSHETIYA

On August 4<sup>th</sup> Bulgarian authorities arrested one Mohmad Gadamouri, who was described as a resident of the Republic of Ingushetiya, on an Interpol arrest warrant for terrorism charges. He was wanted by Russian authorities for an attack in which he allegedly participated in Ingushetiya in 2003. Gadamouri was attempting to cross into Bulgaria at the Danube Bridge border checkpoint.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Zuloaga, "Eldar Magomedov, alias 'Ahmad Avar' – Cae en Espana el jefe 'militar' de Al Qaeda en Europa," translated in "The Mastermind of Al Qaeda in Europe?"

<sup>68</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip".

<sup>69</sup> "Spanish authorities: Suspected Al Qaeda members trained for plot using model plane," FOX News, 11 August 2012, [www.foxnews.com/world/2012/08/11/spanish-authorities-suspected-al-qaeda-members-trained-for-plot-using-model/](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/08/11/spanish-authorities-suspected-al-qaeda-members-trained-for-plot-using-model/).

<sup>70</sup> "Spain Charged 2 Chechens After U.S. Tip".

<sup>71</sup> "Bulgarian Police Busts Turkish and Chechen Terror Suspects," *Standart* (Bulgaria), 4 August 2012, <http://paper.standartnews.com/en/article.php?d=2012-08-04&article=39729>.

**MIDDLE EAST****SON OF DECEASED CHECHEN TERRORIST RUSLAN GELAEV REPORTEDLY KILLED FIGHTING IN SYRIA**

International media have issued several reports of Chechens fighting in Syria. Although the numbers are small, one participant seems to have been confirmed and is of considerable interest. The Caucasus Emirate (CE) website confirmed that the eldest son of the infamous Chechen terrorist Ruslan Gelaev has “become a martyr (*shakhid*)” – that is, has been killed – fighting on the rebels’ side in Syria against the forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad. The report cites a Chechen diaspora website, Adamalla.com (<http://www.adamalla.com/showthread.php?t=4931&page=7>), and comes with what is apparently an after death photo of Rustam Gelaev. Rustam is said to have been born in 1988 and lived in Russia with his mother until just before the 1999 second Chechen war when he moved in with his father.<sup>72</sup> Rustam’s father was infamous for establishing a jumping off and transit point as well as refuge in Georgia’s Pankist Gorge for Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya fighters in the late 1990s and early 2000s. *Kommersant* reports that young Rustam went to Georgia, married a Georgian, then emigrated to Belgium before going to study islam in Syria. *Kommersant* also cited a relative saying that Gelayev had been killed trying to flee to Turkey from the violence in Syria not while fighting when he and several other Chechens from Shali were bombed in and killed while sleeping. His body was then brought through Turkey to Georgia’s Pankisi Gorge, where he was buried.<sup>73</sup> The jihadi sources report, however, that “some time ago” Rustam traveled to a Middle Eastern country for an “Islamic education” and early this summer joined the Syrian rebels. He was killed approximately on 12 August in battle with Syrian troops. His body, according to the CE report, was driven out of Syria to Chechnya where he was buried on August 17<sup>th</sup>.<sup>74</sup> The relative’s story could be true, bad information, or an effort to protect the family from reprisals by the Russian security forces.

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<sup>72</sup> “Syn chechenskogo Amira Gelaeva – Rustam Gelaev stal Shakhidom v Sirii,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 21 August 2012, 21:30, <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/08/21/92613.shtml>.

<sup>73</sup> Musa Muradov, “Syn chechenskogo komandira pazbombili v Sirii,” *Kommersant*, 22 August 2012, [www.kommersant.ru/doc/2006638](http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2006638).

<sup>74</sup> “Syn chechenskogo Amira Gelaeva – Rustam Gelaev stal Shakhidom v Sirii,” *Kavkaz tsentr*, 21 August 2012, 21:30, <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/08/21/92613.shtml>.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **GORDON M. HAHN'S RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND INTERVIEWS**

Interview with Gordon M. Hahn, Hamid Hamidov, "Gordon Khan: 'Iranskii vopros stal oslozhnyayushim faktorom kak v azerbaidzhano-rossiiskikh, tak i azerbaidzhano-amerikanskikh otnosheniyakh'," *INews.az* (Azerbaijan), 17 July 2012, 09:40 [www.1news.az/interview/20120717093826472.html](http://www.1news.az/interview/20120717093826472.html).

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## **ABOUT IIPER**

**Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER) is a project of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. It focuses on all politically-relevant issues involving or bearing on Islam, Islamism, and Jihadism in Russia and Eurasia writ large. All issues of IIPER will soon be permanently archived at <http://csis.org/program/russia-and-eurasia-program>. All back issues temporarily remain archived at: [www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report](http://www.miis.edu/academics/faculty/ghahn/report).**

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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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