

Central Asia news update

December 2014/January 2015

MIDDLE
EAST
STUDIES
FORUM

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CITIZENSHIP & GLOBALISATION

Recent Developments

Economic

Kyrgyz authorities are [investigating](#) how 13 tons of fuel was stolen from a Russian Airbase in early November.

A [member](#) of the Kazakh President's extended family will open Kazakhstan's first McDonald's restaurant in 2015, despite pressure from Russia.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have [forged](#) an agreement guaranteeing Kyrgyzstan with an energy supply for the 2014-2015 winter. The terms of the deal are unknown.

The Russian Duma approved an [agreement](#) on November 21 that would enable further economic cooperation with Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan's proposed accession to the Eurasian Economic Union will purportedly be discussed on December 23.

The Kyrgyz president [announced](#) on November 11 that Turkmenistan is willing to provide Kyrgyzstan with 1000 kilowatt hours of electricity if Uzbekistan will facilitate the transit.

[According](#) to International Monetary Fund estimates, economic growth across the Caucasus and Central Asia will slow on average by one percent in the coming year.

China [pledged](#) \$40 billion to the 'Silk Road Fund' to develop infrastructure, economic links and natural resources that will help connect Asian countries more closely.

The governor of Henan province in China [agreed](#) to invest \$800 million in the Tajik agricultural sector.

Politics

A Former-Kazakh official, [Yerzhan](#) Utembayev, will be released on parole after serving an eight-year prison term for murdering a Kazakh opposition leader, prompting questions about the independence of the judiciary.



A regional [court](#) at the oil-rich Kazakh province of Atyrau sentenced associates of the former-governor to jail for corruption on November 14.

The former-Kazakh Prime Minister, Serik Akhmetov, was [charged](#) with corruption and is now under house arrest.

Kazakh journalists are [concerned](#) about the impact of the Russian propaganda on the Ukraine crisis that is currently being aired in Central Asia.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have [accused](#) journalists reporting on incidents of terrorism of propagating terrorism.

The Kazakh, Turkmen and Iranian presidents officially [inaugurated](#) the new Ozen-Bereket-Gorga railway line which now connects the three countries.

At least two Tajik conscripts have [been](#) killed and one was left paralysed in hazing incidents within the Tajik military in 2014. Human rights groups have urged the government to compensate the conscripts' families.

UN experts [urged](#) the Kyrgyz Parliament to withdraw a homophobic bill on November 26.



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A Kazakh governor who had been found [guilty](#) of fraud on November 26 was released after requesting forgiveness from President Nursultan Nazarbaev.

A court in Kazakhstan [shut](#) down an independent magazine that had accused Kazakh authorities of corruption and human rights violations.

The Presidents of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan met in Astana on November 20 to [discuss](#) bilateral relations.

A report by Privacy International [alleged](#) that western and Israeli companies have helped Central Asian governments spy on citizens and domestic political competitors.

The Turkish [President](#) met his Turkmen counterpart on November 6 during his first visit to a Central Asian country. They discussed furthering bilateral cooperation.

Afghanistan's new first lady Rula Ghani [told](#) the BBC that she hopes to see greater respect for women in Afghanistan.

A Kazakh activist who was [jailed](#) for organising protests on worker's rights in 2011 has been released from jail.

The former-Kyrgyz Prime Minister's [son](#) was arrested on charges of espionage.

Security

The US and Afghanistan finally [signed](#) an agreement to extend the role of US troops in Afghanistan beyond the December 2014 deadline.

Tajik authorities arrested 46 Tajik [nationals](#) on suspicion of planning to travel to Syria to fight in the conflict.

Russia is [planning](#) to establish a unified air defence system across all its allies in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

Kazakh authorities have banned a video that [allegedly](#) shows children preparing to fight in Syria.

Uzbekistan has agreed to [extend](#) Germany's lease on the Termez air base close to Afghanistan border. The details of the deal were not made public.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is [considering](#) granting admission to Kazakhstan and Afghanistan. The negotiations on Kazakhstan are thought to be nearing completion.

The presidents of Uzbekistan [and](#) Kazakhstan stressed the importance of bilateral relations in regional security during a meeting in Astana on November 25.

Kazakhstan's intelligence agency has [estimated](#) that almost 150 Kazakh women are fighting for Islamic State (IS) group in Iraq and Syria.

The Kazakh President [signed](#) a bill into law on November 3 that will enable authorities to shut down any organisation designated as an extremist or terrorist group.

The Kazakh President [met](#) with other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on November 5 to request a tightening of antiterrorism measures.

Kyrgyzstan's parliament has [passed](#) a controversial law on 'Foreign Agents'. Under the new law, non-governmental organisations receiving funds from abroad could be considered 'Foreign Agents'.

A court in Uzbekistan has [sentenced](#) a Kyrgyz national to 10 years in prison for spying.

Tajik authorities have [announced](#) that 300 Tajiks are now fighting in Syria.

Tajik NGOs are [concerned](#) about the new legislation adopted in November 18 which restricts their access to foreign grants.

Tajik authorities [arrested](#) 12 men suspected of recruiting fighters for the Syrian conflict in a northern Tajik province.