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KYRGYZSTAN: Reform and Change Unlikely Amid Rising Authoritarianism

Summary: Ethnic tensions, democratic shortcomings, and corruption will probably facilitate a strong authoritarian government. This government will almost certainly seek to quell ethnic tensions, impede democratic reforms, and continue corrupt practices to maintain the status quo during times of political unrest.

Kyrgyz Turmoil: The former soviet republic has a long history of ethnic tensions, democratic failures, and corruption. Ethnic tensions between the majority Kyrgyz and minority Uzbek demographics had de-escalated in the previous decade, but regional tensions between Northern and Southern Kyrgyz have remained high. Previous governments in Bishkek sought to prevent rising nationalism spurred by anti-Uzbek pogroms in the southern region of Osh. Kyrgyzstan historically fails to transfer power peacefully between successive regimes due to unstable democratic procedures and lack of reform.

Ethnic Tensions: Japarov's authoritarian government will almost certainly view ethnic tensions as a threat to maintaining an autocratic regime. Bishkek may also fear pressure from international human rights organizations if ethnic tensions increase. Kyrgyzstan probably fears that a conflict between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz would result in retaliation from a Russian-backed Uzbekistan. The government may seek to avoid the devolution of ethnic tensions into widespread armed conflict.

Failures of Democracy: Japarov's government will probably view substantive democratic reform as a threat to the establishment of a strong authoritarian government in Bishkek. The Kyrgyz Constitution prohibits Japarov from becoming the full-time president, but he promised to revise the constitution, allowing him to seize power. Japarov took an important step towards this goal with a 22 October parliamentary decree that postpones elections until Bishkek amends its constitution. Kyrgyzstan's parliamentary democracy does not have a strong tradition of reliably transferring power. As such, Kyrgyzstan has tended towards authoritarianism that stifles political opposition to maintain power.

Corruption in Kyrgyzstan: A history of corruption and calls for presidential eligibility reform indicate the probable retention of corruption practices. Kyrgyzstan's political turmoil in October stemmed largely from perceived electoral fraud. Oligarchs who benefit from corruption often use their influence to back the political parties of their choosing. Weeks after becoming acting president, Japarov gave amnesty to officials accused of using their position in the government for personal financial gain. This prompts instability in the government and unrest within the populace which then fuels further political opposition.

Outlook and Implications: Japarov will almost certainly seek to temper inter-ethnic and regional tensions to avoid further domestic instability and international condemnation. However, he will probably also use connections with the Kyrgyz oligarchs that he gained during his time as

anti-corruption commissioner to bolster his power and limit dissent. Attempts to gain the formal office of the presidency will hinder any progress towards political reform if he seeks to establish a strong authoritarian government in Bishkek under the guise of constitutional and parliamentary reform. However, if even Japarov fails to establish himself as dictator, the status quo of parliamentary shortcomings and political unrest will probably remain.

Bishkek will likely remain unable to implement democratic reforms due to Japarov's impending constitutional revisions, widespread political unrest, and rampant corruption within the Kyrgyz government. Democratic reform will probably devolve further if Japarov's constitutional revisions result in public protests or opposition within the government.

Ethnic and regional tensions will likely stagnate despite growing political instability. Japarov and the opposition-led coordination council will probably seek to keep religious and regional tensions quelled to minimize conflict in the already destabilized country. Due to Japarov's popularity and political connections to Kyrgyz Oligarchs, regional tensions between the northern and southern Kyrgyz may increase amid political turmoil but will probably not devolve into widespread armed conflict.

Kyrgyzstan's tradition of corruption will also almost certainly continue, but an authoritarian ruler and strong coalition will use this corruption to their gain. If Japarov takes control of the government, infighting may undermine his authority. As such, he will likely negotiate with oligarchs to maintain control and restrict political opposition. Japarov's willingness to pardon corrupt government officials and his history as anti-corruption commissioner shows a willingness to work with Kyrgyz oligarchs to gain control of the government.

[Max Olson and Ethan Theobald]

LEBANON: Former Prime Minister May Return to Power Despite Opposition

Summary: Despite Beirut's Christian groups' refusal to back former Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri for a new premiership, support from Muslim groups may secure his return to office.

Development: On 17 October, Lebanon's largest Christian political party, the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) announced a decision to not re-nominate Hariri for a new premiership. Hariri's resignation from office on 29 October 2019 provoked political uncertainty and left Hezbollah and its ally, Amal, at the helm of the Lebanese government despite the groups' aim to remain independent of government oversight. Hariri seeks to return to power and stated a desire to lead a reformist government with the help of international aid from France and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Despite Hariri's optimistic outlook, Beirut's most prominent Christian parties, FPM and Lebanese Forces, refuse to back Hariri who remains the prominent Sunni Muslim politician. Gebran Bassil, leader of the FPM, stated the FPM would not back Hariri due to French President Emmanuel Macron's desire for a reformist government.

Analysis: Despite the opposition of FPM and Lebanese Forces to Hariri's potential premiership, the Shi'ite groups Hezbollah and Amal may provide Hariri parliamentary backing substantial enough to ensure his return to office. The national and international pressures on Beirut's political factions may spur the support of Hezbollah and Amal in spite of the groups' long opposition to Hariri and governmental oversight. Hariri's return may allow the groups to wield influence without the responsibility of governing. In exchange, Hariri may gain the groups' cooperation on debt restructuring and economic reforms which may satisfy Paris and the IMF.

[Sinclare Hardy]

SYRIA: Anti-France Protests Likely to Increase Tensions and French Support for Rebels

Summary: Protests against France and military presence in Syria will likely increase tensions between Damascus and Paris, potentially prompting further French support for rebels and direct military presence.

Development: On 26 October, the French-backed opposition group People's Protection Units (YPG) opened fire on protesters in the Deir Ezzor region of Syria, injuring four civilians. Damascus considers the YPG a terrorist group and an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers' Party. The people protested French President Emmanuel Macron and perceived Islamophobia that exists within France. Protestors also disagree with the publishing of anti-Islam caricatures in French magazines. The Syrian protestors called for the withdrawal of French soldiers in the Deir Ezzor region with the support of many other Middle Eastern countries that began boycotting French products because of Macron's perceived hostility toward Muslims. Protests sprung up in Syria, Libya, and the Gaza Strip along with boycotts in Kuwait, Jordan, and Qatar.

Analysis: Uprisings against French involvement in the Middle East will likely increase tensions between Damascus and Paris, probably including an increase in French support for Syrian Rebels and increased French military presence. Already backing the YPG, Paris may also start proactively supporting other opposition groups in Syria because of the attention produced by the current situation. Increased awareness of French-backed opposition will almost certainly capture the attention of Damascus, causing tensions to rise. The resistance to its already-present soldiers might also cause Paris to bolster its military presence. Paris will likely hold its ground against protestors because similar events have occurred since 2006 without making significant concessions. The growing awareness of French persistence in Syria may then prompt Damascus to formally bring diplomatic attention to French support of "terrorist organizations."

[Tianna Sardelli]

CHINA: India and Taiwan Trade Discussions Likely to Inspire Military Buildup

Summary: Trade discussions between India and Taiwan may lead to India's official recognition of Taiwan. India's recognition would almost certainly heighten tensions between New Delhi and Beijing.

Development: On 20 October, Beijing opposed India and Taiwan's trade talks following a military standoff with India at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and invasion drills near Taiwan. Beijing strongly discouraged New Delhi from signing any official documentation with Taiwan, as Beijing considers Taiwan under its sphere of control through the One-China Principle. China's disagreement with India and Taiwan's actions led to militaristic intimidation and the introduction of a new hypersonic missile.

Analysis: Beijing may ramp up its military intimidation tactics if New Delhi establishes official ties with Taiwan. Beijing's increased militancy, including military drills and weapon advancement near Taiwan, indicates its intentions to intimidate Taiwan. Tensions at the LAC would almost certainly increase if New Delhi officially recognizes Taiwan. Beijing almost certainly sees Taipei's interest in establishing trade relations with other nations as threatening its control over the region, which would escalate tensions.

[Savannah Gallop]

BELARUS: Monetary Award to Opposition Leader May Further Unrest

Summary: The European Union (EU) awarded Belarusian opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya \$59,000, which will likely encourage the continued opposition to President Alexander Lukashenko and may lead to larger and deadlier protests.

Development: On 22 October, the EU presented Tikhanovskaya with the Sakharov Prize, commending the push for human rights in leading the opposition movement against Lukashenko's regime. Lukashenko's forces retaliated against the protests with water cannons and rubber bullets. Tikhanovskaya has called for action from the EU after her exile from Belarus. Tikhanovskaya describes the protesters facing torture, harassment, and rape, which violate human rights standards. The EU imposed sanctions against Belarus in response and called on the opposition movement for political change against Lukashenko, who has threatened to use lethal force against the massive rallies. Tikhanovskaya warned of a nationwide strike if Lukashenko did not announce his resignation by 25 October, prompting mass strikes on 26 October.

Analysis: Tikhanovskaya will likely utilize the funding to create bigger rallies and better protection against the lethal force that Lukashenko threatens. Protests will probably grow in size and violence with encouragement from the funding. Violent retaliation against the protesters will likely occur, especially due to the strikes following Tikhanovskaya's warnings and Lukashenko's refusal to resign. The EU will almost certainly intervene, following the increase in protests and potential human rights violations. Many may see the funding from the EU as approval for the protests, further spurring both opposition forces and government officials toward conflict.

[Damon Reyes]

UNITED KINGDOM: Russian Attacks Possibly Publicized Due to Allied Support

Summary: London likely divulged Russian cyber-attacks on the postponed 2020 Olympics following similar actions from allies taken against Moscow.

Development: On 19 October, reports announced that Moscow had backed the cyber-attacks on the 2020 Olympics and Paralympic Games in London before the postponement of the games. Moscow's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) utilized cyber reconnaissance against officials and participants in Olympic organizations with the hope of sabotaging the Games. Officials tied the attack to previous attacks on the 2018 Winter Games, which were also credited to the GRU. The European Union (EU) had placed sanctions on Russian officials on 15 October, following the poisoning of opposition party leader Alexei Navalny.

Analysis: The exposure of Moscow's cyber-attacks on the postponed 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games may relate to recent action taken against Russian officials. EU sanctions placed on officials likely emboldened London officials to release the report attributing the attacks to Russian officials. Without the sanctions and support from allies, London may not have publicized the reports, preferring to instead monitor the attacks discreetly.

[Jesse Hix]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency and Office of the Director of National Intelligence, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Riley Coder, a senior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708.

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