



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Centre in Bishkek (CiB)

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**Parliamentary Conference on “Addressing security challenges for the OSCE region and beyond: the role of parliamentarians in fostering regional cooperation”**

Speech of Ambassador Sergey Kapinos

**SESSION 1**

Regional security, fighting against terrorism,  
trafficking in human beings: the role of the OSCE  
and regional cooperation

11:00 – 13:30 WEDNESDAY, 16 September 2015

**Excellencies,**

**Parliamentarians,**

**Dear Colleagues and guests,**

Half a century ago, a Professor of meteorology at MIT- by the name of Edward Lorenz- suggested that the flap of a butterfly’s wings might have widespread and large consequences in a distant place, potentially causing a hurricane, or, for all we know, prevent one.

This fascinating concept- while often misused- laid the ground for a deeper understanding of the unpredictability between cause and effect in the intrinsically chaotic realm of natural phenomena.

In contrast, it seems plausible to argue that in the realm of human actions, determined and predictable cause-effects paths can be pursued, for example to advance peace and stability, globally and regionally.

The countries of Central Asia region are mutually dependent in terms of resources, share a common historical past and in many cases face similar problems. The national security of the individual Central Asian countries strongly depends on general regional security; instability in one corner of the region has immediate repercussions on other states. Frequently, solutions to these problems demand common efforts by the governments involved.

I will highlight some of the key features of the major security threats not only regionally but also globally - terrorism and trafficking in human beings. Money laundering and drug-trafficking should be certainly added.

**Terrorism** as transnational threat touches upon all three security dimensions dealt by the OSCE. But not only.

Kyrgyzstan remains vulnerable to transnational threats, especially in the south where unresolved border issues with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and insufficient capacity for border control may facilitate the establishment of terrorist safe havens. The government, in particular, is concerned about the potential for an **influx of terrorist elements from Afghanistan**.

**The situation is more aggravated by the use of the state of the art technologies, of which the Internet is a significant part.** Social media are widely used and, in some cases, terrorists have proved to be early adopters of new forms of technology, which are mainly used to recruit new fighters. For instance, Kyrgyzstan's growing domestic problems related to terrorist threats were confirmed further by ISIL's July

27, 2015 video, disseminated through the Internet, urging Kyrgyz citizens to move to the “caliphate created” by ISIL militants in Iraq and Syria.

Government agencies report the number of **Kyrgyz citizens directly or indirectly involved in combat operations in Syria is up to 500**. Still, according to certain estimates the real figure is much higher. The challenge posed by foreign terrorist fighters is complex and multifaceted. It may affect all regions and participating States, even those placed far from conflict zones.

**Countering ISIS becomes even more challenging given the ever changing nature of its strategy.** There is a well-established international network fostering recruitment of combatants and mobilisation of resources. Not all newly arrived foreign fighters for terrorism are immediately sent to the battle field. More and more of them are sent to the training centres for two-three months and then are forwarded back to their respective countries with the task to create terrorist “*sleeping*” cells. These cells are to be used on the centralised signal for creating chaos, disorder and fear among the population of their country of origin and to facilitate ISIL/ISIS in the final run to expand the territory of the “caliphate.”

Obviously, such a complex setting requires a comprehensive approach, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

- preventing radicalization that lead to terrorism;
- suppressing recruitment;
- inhibiting foreign terrorist fighter travel;
- countering violent extremism;
- countering incitement to terrorism;
- promoting political and religious tolerance, economic development and social cohesion and inclusiveness;
- ending and resolving armed conflicts;

- facilitating the reintegration and rehabilitation of returning foreign terrorist fighters, and
- **disrupting financial support to foreign terrorist fighters.**

Indeed, not only is terrorism a well organised global activity; it is also well financed. A number of studies have proved a strong correlation between the financing of terrorism on one side, and **money laundering and drug trafficking**, on the other.

It is estimated that billions of US dollars are cashed out annually through the various **money laundering** mechanisms in Central Asian countries.

**Central Asia still remains a transit region for drug-trafficking from Afghanistan**, the profits from which are subsequently largely used to finance terrorist networks based there or elsewhere. Despite the presence of relevant legislation to curb these threats, the issue of combatting money laundering and financing terrorism remains essential for security and economic sustainability in the region. In this regard, it is important for the countries to strengthen integrity of their financial systems through collaboration, timely exchange of information constant implementation of the Financial Action Task Force recommendations, as well as to enhance the border control and cross-border cooperation through the establishment of the Integrated Border Management practice.

**The problem of trafficking in human beings**, nearly unknown in Central Asia during the Soviet period, is one of the most serious yet underestimated security challenges affecting the whole region. The weaknesses of existing systems of border control, uneven socio-economic situations and wealth distribution including high levels of unemployment in some Central Asian countries are push factors exploited by criminal networks.

At the same time, the complexity of the phenomenon is reinforced by the fact that smuggling of migrants gets frequently blended with human trafficking when at the destination migrants end up in exploitation and trafficking nets.

The traceability of **labour migrants** reaching destination countries in search of jobs is very low.<sup>1</sup> The migrants' vulnerability is also increased by insufficient knowledge of national migration laws and provisions regulating the stay of a migrant in the destination country. Thus, this category of migrants irreversibly turns into an "invisible workforce" on the foreign market and to the authorities of destination countries. A considerable part of labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan and other Central Asian countries are employed illegally. Experts estimate the rates of trafficking for labour exploitation to be high. In addition to labour trafficking affecting men, currently the predominant form of exploitation of Kyrgyz citizens outside of the country, human trafficking of women inside and outside of the country continues to be an underestimated threat.

There is evidence that heavily exploited migrants, especially employed illegally, are easy targets for recruitment networks of ISIS terrorists.

Push factors for **human trafficking nets** include lack of socio-economic stability, limited education opportunities, family violence, unequal access to the labour market, gender-inequality and some others.

To date, **the number of criminal cases in Kyrgyzstan** prosecuting human traffickers or smugglers remains low. As a matter of fact, ISIL/ISIS became one of the important destination territory for smuggling and trafficking in persons.

Thus, the need for an informed analysis of new patterns and trends remains crucial, and also in line with the recent declaration of the 21<sup>st</sup> Ministerial Council on the

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<sup>1</sup> Visa free regimes also hamper a full access to the number of migrants entering the destination country. In addition, in the majority of the cases, this type of migrants reaches the destination country without due information on the existing work opportunities, therefore opting for unregulated informal work which often turns into debt bondage with the employer and/or intermediary.

OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014)<sup>2</sup>.

Overall, Central Asia remains equally an origin and transit route for smuggling and trafficking in persons to Russia and West Europe. Yet more, the conflict in Syria and the subsequent refugee crisis have some potential to increase migration routes via Central Asia in general, and via Kyrgyzstan in particular.

While commenting on the refugee crisis in Europe, I would like to say that no one can rule out that the migration inflow may comprise potential or real terrorists who have to do with ISIS/ISIL. The same can be said about other migration flows, covering large areas, including Central Asia.

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Over a number of years, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek has been providing assistance to the Kyrgyz Parliament and Government in strengthening and making sustainable national anti-terrorism and anti-trafficking capacities. Assistance provided took various forms – legal drafting and consultancy, capacity and institution –building, technical support and other. Such assistance enabled both the Parliament and Government to increase their capabilities in preventing and responding to terrorist activity in a manner consistent with international norms.

Due to such efforts, in 2014 the Kyrgyz Republic was **removed from the “Grey list” of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and from the EAG “Monitoring list”**. But whatever the achievements may be in concrete areas the overall progress can be achieved through systematic and coherent efforts at national and regional levels, through the efforts that by and large have a cross-dimensional nature.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.osce.org/node/130546>.

Combating terrorism should be accompanied by war on organised crime in Central Asia, a comprehensive, judicial and security sector reform aimed at providing a breakthrough improvement in the system of governance in law enforcement, which inevitably will result in an impressive crackdown on corruption.

**Regional cooperation** is the key in addressing these and other existing common threats. Still, such cooperation continues to be a problem.

It is crucial to establish **effective flows of information** at the national and international levels in the implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions (i.e. Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), and Security Council resolution 1373 (2001)) and OSCE commitments.

Efficient **cooperation between national parliaments and governments in the region and beyond** is essential. This cooperation is hampered/conditioned by the political, economic and social differences between Central Asian countries, different State authorities' perception, assumption and attitude towards existing risks, absence of political will to develop further mechanisms of organized crimes counteraction, difference in legislation, unresolved border issues. The role of parliaments may and should be not only in enhancing and harmonising relevant national legislation but in encouraging closer cooperation between national law enforcement systems.

Finally, the **cooperation between the OSCE field missions and the OSCE institutions, including the Parliamentary Assembly**, as well as between the OSCE and other international organisations **can certainly improve**.

Central Asia is in direct neighbourhood of **Afghanistan**, where, unfortunately, the situation remains precarious and challenging. Some scholars even argue that Afghanistan is a part of Great Central Asia. This proximity conditions certain

exposure to security risks and potential spill-overs of instability there. Despite this, there is NO dedicated research centre on Afghanistan and Central Asia anywhere in the region. Kyrgyzstan is a perfect place to host such Center; moreover, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek provides for perfect premises. What is needed is a start-up funding amounting for slightly more than 1 mln for 3 years.

**The OSCE Research Centre for Afghanistan-Central Asian Relations at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek** will undoubtedly further foster the regional security cooperation in the region.

**Finally, I would like to thank our host, Mongolia, the state, which became the 57th jewel in the OSCE crown of participating States.** With the same occasion, I would like to stress that our Center is already successfully cooperating with Mongolia.

1. In particular, in March 2015, the CiB facilitated the participation of the Kyrgyz delegation in the Code of Conduct workshop conducted in Ulan-Bator, Mongolia.
2. The Mongolian delegation took part in the regional summer school on Yssyk Kyhl, where regional security issues were discussed, the event, jointly supported by the UN, NATO and the OSCE.
3. Moreover, the Mongolian students are invited to apply for *scholarships* at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek to study and for *fellowships* to teach. I encourage all of you to spread the word.

We have started already discussing potential cooperation in the parliamentary assistance, public administration and local governance, [etc.] We believe that Mongolia will be interested in establishing and developing cooperation with Central



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Asian countries in the field of anti-terrorism and the combatting of trafficking in human beings.

**FOR REFERENCE****Examples of Efficient Cooperation**

- 1) With our support, Kyrgyzstan becomes an **international platform** for a dialog on practical tools for combating terrorism. This platform is the Annual Conference of the experts of Anti-Terrorist Centres of the OSCE pStates and partners for cooperation. Other international anti-terrorist agencies participate as well. This year the forum was held for the fourth time and was attended by almost 50 participants. The idea of conducting such a Conference belongs to the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and this event is always strongly supported by the Centre and is highly praised by the participants.
  
- 2) This year, the CiB provided significant support to a joint Kyrgyz-Tajik border exercise (“Barrier-2015”) which developed procedures for effective interaction between border services, police agencies, and emergency response facilities across the international border. The CiB will work further to better coordinate and cooperate with the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, in particular in border areas where both have a presence and can collaborate more effectively on implementation of activities.

This support builds up on the previous activities and success. Two border provinces - the Batken (Kyrgyz) and Sughd (Tajik) – have signed the Action Plan in late 2014, to promote cooperation between the two neighbouring provinces in order to improve relations and prevent conflicts. In this framework, CiB supported a number of events including a youth exchange (November 2014) and a meeting of veterans (February 2015).

Furthermore, the OSCE CiB actively supports the development of early warning situation rooms at border detachments in South of Kyrgyzstan, which allow direct interaction between government structures and municipal leadership during crisis situations.

- 3) The Russian MoD donated to the MoD of Kyrgyzstan a **mobile ammunition demilitarisation facility (MADF)** installed in the south of the country. The Centre in Bishkek enabled delivery of the facility equipment from Bishkek to the final destination, and supported training of the technical personnel of the MADF by experts from the manufacturing company.

Tajikistan has recently expressed its interest in making use of this installation and expertise to destroy the surplus of ammunition in Tajikistan. This is a good example of productive cooperation between neighbouring countries in arms control.

- 4) During a recent Media conference, a **Kyrgyz-Tajik regional Media Forum *Friendship Border*** was proposed as an exchange platform for Kyrgyz and Tajik journalists with the aim to improve the reporting on conflict-sensitive events in a professional, neutral, peaceful and respectful form. The OSCE FOs in both Dushanbe and Bishkek pledged preliminary support.
- 5) On the other side, the OSCE CiB is a faithful supporter of the OSCE Center in Astana multi-year initiative – **Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN)**.

### **Examples of our successes**

1. The Kyrgyz Ministry of Interior has recently, in 2015, created the new **State Department of Witness Protection** within its structure. A positive step on the way of combatting organised crime is a result on multiannual joint effort of the government and our Centre. We are glad that this pilot initiative in the region has received already attention in such countries as Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.
2. Yet another example of OSCE CiB activities in the field of insurance of public safety and security is the **Community Security Initiative Project (CSI for short)**, operating in Kyrgyzstan since 2011. The CSI project has become an experimental base for approbation of police reform's initiatives on establishment of police and local communities' partnership and increase of local police professional level. This project seems particular relevant to the areas with multi-ethnic population, like Osh in Kyrgyzstan.
3. Within our SALW project, efforts focused on **creating necessary conditions for destruction of SALW**, including development and/or improvement of the normative legal framework and purchase of equipment for destruction, including unplanned/urgent destruction of SALW and CA.
4. With the support of the CiB, a **bi-monthly meeting THB Platform of Action** has been established this year in Kyrgyzstan. Representatives of key Ministries get

together in Bishkek once every two months to discuss the situation in THB. Among the topics discussed are support to inter-agency working group in the development and implementation of national provisions at policy level to prevent and combat THB.

5. Engaging foreign representations of destination countries of CA victims of trafficking (VoTs); the CiB already for the second year is gathering consulates from countries like Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Iran, etc. so that they exchange information on prevention and protection measures (as well as sharing contacts)
6. **Engaging** so-called “**non-traditional anti-trafficking stakeholders**” such as religious leaders and community leaders in consideration of their enormous potential for outreach of anti-trafficking and safe migration information;
7. Continuously research the ever-changing nature of the phenomenon (through focus-groups, bilateral and multi-lateral meetings, surveys, etc.) and especially how it interacts with other crimes such as smuggling of migrants, drug trafficking, weapons smuggling.
8. Ensure that the results of **research work** (also OSCE-wide produced studies) are fed into **training curricula** for law enforcement but also for the judiciary and legal practitioners so that the practice reflects trends and is not monolithic in its approach.