Norden needs NIAS (more than ever!)

by Helge Hveem, Chairman of NIAS's Board

Since 2000 NIAS has gone through a period of substantial change. It has consolidated its financial position after parts of its semi-permanent funds were terminated. It has adjusted to the new regulations on organisational structures and procedures introduced by the Nordic Council of Ministers. It has hired new senior personnel to fill all but one of the permanent research fellowships. And it has recruited a very promising new director after the former was offered a permanent top position in one of the national aid agencies, Sida.

The period when all this happened may — to some of our partners — have appeared as one of stagnation. That impression, if it exists, is actually very far from the truth. During the period NIAS has managed to maintain and even, in some areas, increase its activities. It has successfully negotiated and started up a major research programme in collaboration with an Asian partner (CIEM in Vietnam) and financed by Danida. And the Board has laid down an elaborate new strategy for the coming years. The strategy aims to expand NIAS’s research capacity and scope of activities and confirm its position as a leading international research centre focusing on modern Asia and providing extensive research support to Nordic users in academic and non-academic institutions. (See Director Jorgen Delman’s presentation of the strategy in NIASnytt no. 1, 2002.)

NIAS’s usefulness to Nordic academic environments over the years is a well-established fact. Large numbers of “alumni” — students who have made use of the travel grant, researchers who have been at the institute for a brief or a longer period, civil servants who have visited NIAS on an “internship” arrangement, former employees and directors — are living testimonies of that. As indicated above, NIAS’s relationship to ministries and aid agencies has developed into a profiled centre of social sciences, it will maintain an element of historical, cultural and linguistic studies to complement the profile. This should make NIAS an extremely useful partner to all those university departments, ministry offices and corporate strategic planning units who need to build competence on Asia but do not themselves have the means to do so.

This has been NIAS’s role in the past, and it should be increasingly so in the future. One aspect in NIAS’s profile that adds to its usefulness for Nordic partners is its extensive networking with Asian research centres and scholars. We have a high profile among academics and indeed civil servants in East and South East Asia, illustrated by the fact that ambassadors of countries from the latter region, at the initiative of some Asian scholars, sent a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to emphasize the vital importance that NIAS has to them.

The potential for increased ‘Norwegian usefulness’ is very large indeed. We would like to mention just a few areas where the respective entities in the various Nordic countries may find it useful to draw upon the research training courses for PhD students and intensive updating courses on the competence of NIAS to build or complement their own:• to conduct research training courses for PhD students...
INTRODUCTION

Svanse E. Cornell

A year ago, the world was shaken by the terrorist attacks in Washington and New York. Within hours, specialists on and observers in Central Eurasia understood that their geopolitical realities were about to undergo a dramatic change. Indeed, from having been a backwater, Central Asia was suddenly brought into the limelight of international politics. Countries like Uzbekistan became known in living rooms throughout the world as American troops set up shop there, and the region experienced an unprecedented influx of foreign journalists—who, in the process, emptied the foreign currency reserves of Tajikistan in a week. Forces in the region hoped that this increased international attention would bring foreign investment and aid, thereby alleviating the difficult economic situation in Central Asia. Moreover, it was hoped that pressures on authoritarian governments to democratize would increase. On the regional arena, Central Asia by mid-2001 seemed to have become trapped in a Russo–Chinese condominium over the region, institutionalized in the Shanghai Cooperative Organization (SCO), which clearly aimed at minimizing the influence of other powers, especially the United States. September 11 changed this overnight, breaking Central Asia’s isolation and opening up new opportunities for the states in the region.

Among the changes that have occurred in Central Asia since September 2001, the most significant ones have taken place in the situation in Afghanistan and in the geopolitical alignments amongst Central Asia. In addition, the changes have affected democratisation, raised attention to the poorly understood question of Islam’s role in Central Asia, and reshuffled the conditions for the regional illicit drugs trade. In these three areas, however, it is difficult to discern whether the situation has changed for the better or for the worse.

The most dramatic change took place in Afghanistan, whose civil war and Taliban regime had posed the largest security threat to the post-Soviet Central Asian republics, as well as urged their opening up trading contacts with the outside world. This changed dramatically as the Taliban regime was swiftly swept away by American military intervention. The very centrality of Afghanistan has been determined in part by the political and economic conditions in Central Asia points to the incorrect understanding of the term “Central Asia” that has dominated since the break-up of the Soviet Union, an understanding that sees the region as encompassing only the five post-Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. As the past year has shown so well, Afghanistan is not only politically and economically linked with Central Asia; it is historically, as well as presently, the heart of Central Asia, its gateway to the world and its connection to the rest of Asia. However, Afghanistan’s deep malaise has not been resolved through the simple imposition of a new interim government. As Rahimullah Yousufi in details his contribution to this issue, Afghanistan is still in deep crisis. Though the large tribal council or Loya Jirga that took place in June managed to appoint a new government, the country is torn by warlordism, instability is rampant, and the risk of a renewed civil war is not distant at the international community.

New subscribers are also always very welcome.
Afghanistan after the Loya Jirga
by Rahimullah Yousafzai

From Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN Secretary General's special representative to Afghanistan, to transitional President Hamid Karzai, everyone is talking about the insecurity that haunts the war-ravaged country. Lawlessness is the number one problem in the past Taliban period, and all efforts to provide a sense of security to the Afghan people over the past eight months have faltered.

Both Brahimi and Karzai want deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), presently confined to Kabul, in the rest of the country to improve security. Rawan Farhadi, Afghan ambassador to the UN, has said she would be happy if the ISAF was deployed in just one more city, Mazari-Sharif, to show the commitment of the international community toward the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Such is the seriousness of the security situation that one can imagine the Afghan government functionary is almost daily demanding an extension of the ISAF mandate beyond Kabul. Defense Minister Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim, who initially refused to allow ISAF deployment even in Kabul, Usbek warlord Abdul Rashied Dostum, and Haji Din Mohammad, who succeeded his slain brother and Vice-President Haji Abdul Qader as Governor of Nangarhar, have all voiced support for stationing the foreign peacekeepers in areas under their control.

However, most of the 20 countries that make up the 5,000-member strong ISAF have rebuffed all requests to contribute more troops for deployment outside Kabul. Escape Islamic Turkey, the remaining countries represented in the ISAF are all Western and Christian. They have no appetite to send more soldiers to a place as difficult and unpredictable as Afghanistan and expose them to risks. Britain was unwilling to send more ISAF personnel beyond six months and Turkey reluctantly replaced it after negotiating a deal under which the U.S. promised financial support and weapons for the Turkish troops sent to Afghanistan. That the U.S. was willing to bankroll the Turkish peacekeepers in Afghanistan was on account of its belief that the Afghans, always wary of foreigners, would welcome fellow Muslim Turks.

The ongoing U.S. military campaign, which began in Afghanistan on October 7, is also a hurdle in extending ISAF deployment. The U.S. wants to focus on its anti-terror fight until al Qaeda is destroyed and its founders, Osama bin Laden, is killed or captured. It has refused to contribute troops to the ISAF or to put pressure on European countries to make available more soldiers so that the peacekeepers could be deployed in cities other than Kabul. The U.S. also doesn't want to give a free hand to the ISAF. Instead, the ISAF is re-quired to work under the command of the U.S. military.authorities waging war on al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

It is debatable whether the deployment of the ISAF in places like Mazari-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar or Jalalabad would make much of a difference. The ISAF was unable to prevent the daylight murders of Afghan Vice-President Haji Abdul Qader and Civil Aviation Minister De Abdul Rahman in Kabul. In fact, Rahman was killed in the presence of ISAF personnel at the Kabul airport. The ISAF was expected to provide security to ministers and other important members of the Karzai government. But the two murders prompted Karzai to seek the protection of American rather than ISAF or Afghan bodyguards. The ISAF presence in Kabul may have prevented chaotic and sectarian battles and served as a deterrent but the incidence of crime, human rights abuses and political intimidation is still a matter of routine. Many Kabulis admit that crime has increased and the security situation deteriorated since the collapse of the Taliban regime.

The situation outside Kabul is even more dangerous. Brahimi recently told a UN meeting in New York that security in northern Afghanistan had declined markedly. He and other UN and NGO officials have been asking the Karzai government to initiate steps to improve security in the north to enable the smooth running of relief and reconstruction activities. The recent gang rape of a female Western aid worker near Mazari-Sharif prompted the withdrawal of women staff from the area and triggered warnings of a halt to all relief and rehabilitation work. Despite the chilly working relations between the Taliban and the UN and the NGOs, the aid workers never faced such security risks during the Taliban's six-year rule.

The suicide for power between Dostum, his Tajik rival Atta Mohammad, and Shiste Haqata, the new military commander Mohammad Mohaqiq in northern Afghanistan...
The United States, Afghanistan, and Central Asia

The peace of American involvement intensified in the 1990s when well-staffed embassies were set up throughout the region. As independent 'Central Asia-Caucasus Institute' was established in Washington in 1995–96. In 2001 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee set up a 'Central Asia--Caucasus Sub-Committee', and in that same year 'Silk Road Project' was established in the House of Representatives. The U.S. government's 'Silk Road Act' provided for a wide range of contacts, while American investors outpaced all others in their involvement with Central Asian agriculture, mining.

While the Clinton administration adhered to the old habit of viewing the region through Moscow's eyes, the Bush administration immediately began to bring Central Asia into focus for its own sake. It increased aid to Afghanistan in the spring of 2001 and began reorganizing governmental agencies to deal with this emerging world area. In separate initiatives, Americans established a private university in Kyrgyzstan and created large-scale educational exchanges throughout the region. The American-based Eurasia Foundation invested tens of millions of dollars in the region, as did the Central Asia Enterprise Fund. Dozens of well-funded NGOs began working in areas as diverse as democratic development, public health, AIDS prevention, drug control, and internet access. Also, American scholarship led the world in analysing conditions in China's Turkish province of Xinjiang. Finally, on the eve of 11 September 2001, the U.S. Congress had nearly completed work on a new 'Silk Road Act' that would provide generous resources for fundamental economic and social transformation through Central Asia.

This brief survey indicates that American involvement with Afghanistan and Central Asia as a whole did not begin with the terrorist attacks of 2001. On the contrary, a highly diversified effort involving both governmental and private initiatives had been underway since the 1970s and 1980s, and had reached a crescendo during the 1990s.
study prepared for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and publicly published in January 2001 identified Afghanistan as the primary security concern of the entire Caucasus-Central Asia zone. It proposed a 'concert' of all neighboring powers, including China, Pakistan, Russia, India, Iran and Turkey, as well as the U.S. and Japan, to consult regularly so as to forge a region's ability to secure its own defense and to limit external meddling and the conflicts to which such meddling could give rise.

This, in synopsis, was the situation on the eve of 11 September 2001. The immediate impact of the terrorist attacks was the decision by the U.S. to strike the al Qaeda organization in its Afghan strongholds and to attack the Taliban government which, although weak, was not completely in control of the entire country. 

In support of this view it cites President Bush's own admission that the regime was a threat to the nation and that, as the Pakistani prime minister, it was responsible for the September 11 attacks.

A second benefit of the US military intervention in Afghanistan is the reduction of the Taliban's hold on the country. This is not surprising, given the Taliban's strong support for the new government in Kabul.

America's goal is not to proliferate the number of foreign troops in the region. On the contrary, it seeks to help the Central Asians and Afghans to secure their own borders and, over time, to make the presence of all foreign troops, including America's, unnecessary. For this to happen, all the countries of the region, and especially Russia and China, must be convinced that the region is growing more secure and politically, and economically.

Parallel with this, America will continue to be actively involved in the region's economic, social, and political development. In an important speech at the Virginia Military Academy, General George C. Marshall's alma mater, President Bush declared America's support for a Marshall Plan for Afghanistan. Since the original Marshall Plan was directed not at Germany or France but at all of Europe, it is clear that America's aid and development assistance will contribute to the future of the entire Central Asian region. Such aid will not only help the Central Asian region but also the rest of the world.

In the future, the region's security and development will be closely linked to the region's economic, social, and political development.
THEME: Central Asia one year after.

The Shanghai Cooperative Organization: A Post-Mortem
by Stephen Blank

In the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and Central Asia the Shanghai Cooperative Organization (SCO) has played no role. This failure confirms its lack of utility as a security provider and adds to a long list of abortive attempts to reorganize Central Asia under Russian leadership or to form viable regional organizations for mutual cooperation. Thus the SCO illustrates the problems besetting the construction of viable regional organizations in Central Asia. The SCO emerged out of post-Soviet states' normalization of ties with China. Russia and the Central Asian states, having become sovereign, inherited ongoing Sino-Soviet negotiations over borders. The Shanghai Treaty that they signed in 1996 ratified and consolidated the Central Asian and Russian borders with China, normalized their mutual relationships, and provided valuable confidence-building and disarmament for all the parties. Thus the SCO originated as a confidence-building mechanism that could also be used to resolve disputes over borders, troop dispositions, and trade.

This situation did not satisfy China and Russia who became increasingly alarmed that the United States and NATO were trying to usurp their influence in the area and encircle them strategically while dispossessing them economically from vital economic sectors. In addition, home-grown insurgency, aided and abetted by Afghanistan and Pakistan, threatened Central Asian security and their own territorial integrity. Therefore after 1997 Moscow and Beijing increasingly tried to hijack the SCO for their purposes. This enabled proclaiming it a model of Asian interstate relations in contrast to the American alliance system with Japan and South Korea; using it as a platform to denounce American policies regarding missile defense, limitations on state sovereignty and humanitarian intervention; and supporting Beijing's policy regarding Taiwan.

Moscow and Beijing tried to inflate the SCO into a truly collective security system. Moscow pressured Uzbekistan to join and there was much talk of adding Iran and India to it. Russia and China also actively promised that, if asked, they would send forces to defend other states from terrorism, spoliation, secessionism, separatism, etc. This represented the first time China had ever formally pledged in a treaty to project military power beyond its borders, a major precedent in its polices.

The SCO's failure Yet the SCO failed in the crucial for the following reasons.

First, U.S. military cooperation with Uzbekistan was already an established and proven asset.

Second, China and Russia had a decided checkered record in dealing with terrorism. China and Pakistan had always been allies – China had analysed U.S. missiles fired in 1998 for the Talibans, and was supporting Maoist guerrillas in Nepal and Sri Lanka. And Russia had shown support to the Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan (IMU).

Third, Moscow's and Beijing's hegemonic policies and ambitions in Central Asia were well-known to local leaders and each other and duly executed. Today Russian policymakers convey blanket hints that they should interpret their support for Western military presence in Central Asia as signifying joint Russo-Western concern about China's policy goals there and joint interest in Central Asia.

Fourth, despite such pretensions, neither Russia nor China could provide effective military support against terrorism.

Fifth, Central Asian states themselves were torn by their own intersecive struggles, many of which revolved around Uzbekistan's equally hegemonic pretensions and highhanded energy, water, and border policies toward its neighbors. Uzbekistan's neighbors also fear potential Uzbek efforts to cause their Uzbek neighbors to secede and form a single large Uzbek state. In the absence of Sino-Russian help, they all soon acted unilaterally to reach a settlement with Afghanistan, showing themselves unable to devise effective or unified responses to the Taliban and the terrorism that it sponsored. This failure reflected the breakdown of regional cooperation e.g. political ambivalence, rivalries, and incompetence. Ironically Uzbekistan too openly suspected Russian hegemonic ambitions and resisted efforts to make the SCO into an anti-American alliance or an effective military-political bloc. It was purely an instrument of cooperation and nothing more according to President Islam Karimov.

Sixth, despite Russian hegemonism, support for separation in Caucasus, and ambiguous dealings with terrorists in Central Asia, Russian policy has been and remains unpredictable regarding the CIS and the Transcaucasian. Therefore states cannot be sure if Russia will ensure or threaten their security and integrity. That hardly augurs well for a viable collective defense or collective security alliance under the guise of the Tajik-Tajur Trouble. The SCO.

Seventh, despite carefully cultivated friendship, mutual pretensions in the Sino-Russian relationship hampered, and still impede, genuine bilateral cooperation in Central Asia and beyond. As these clashes cover important, if not vital, interests between its major members, this caused the members plagued the SCO from the outset, the members failed to devise a common approach to fighting terrorism and each state increasingly went its own way. Although a consistent geopolitical approach outlining what all these states opposed existed, apart from their own security there was nothing that they were commonly committed to achieving.

Eighth and lastly, neither Russia nor China was prepared or able to invest heavily in security in the region. Consequently no true strategic alliance was possible.

Uncertain China

All these factors evidently became clear to Moscow after September 11, just as a Chinese delegation was ironically signing a trade agreement with the Taliban in Kabul. Whereas Russian President Putin promptly promised enhanced intelligence cooperation with Washington, he was beyond the existing level (which according to some may have included secret military plans to attack Osama bin Laden). Jiang Zemin merely promised America support for a dialogue among major states on how they would combat terrorism. Jiang's conversations with Putin, although blandly reported, also displayed a gulf between them in thinking about an appropriate response to the crisis. Chinese officials stated that they would only support reprisals against the terrorists if this was voted by the Security Council (giving China a veto) and if legal standards of evidence proving bin Laden and the Taliban's guilt were brought forward. Beijing also broadly hinted that in return for this rapid support of Washington it wanted support for its attempt to suppress unrest in Xinjiang which it now claimed was linked to bin Laden. Moreover, it attached conditions against intervention in other states' internal affairs and that innocent civilians not be harmed, and they tried to do this in conjunction with Iran.

Putin must have seen clearly that he could neither coerce Central Asia – given Uzbekistan's independence – nor rely upon China as a partner against terrorism. Given the proximity in time of the attacks against the US and the assassination of Ahmed Shah Massoud, the leader of the anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan, Putin believed that they were part of a broader plan linking the Taliban with international terrorism on a global scale. China's efforts to buy off the Taliban clearly clashed with Putin's understanding of Russian interests. Moreover, not only were the Central Asians ready to accommodate the

United States' military presence because Washington directly addressed their misgivings about Moscow and Beijing, but Washington seemed to me abundantly clear that it would override any Russian objections to its presence in Central Asia. All this led Moscow to recognize that, September 11 demonstrated the extreme vulnerability of modern countries to new threats. We lack reliable mechanisms to counter them or to prevent new acts of terror, or to keep weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists.

The Role of the U.S.

In other words, the SCO was useless. Subsequent efforts to reinstate it do not promise much. But the advent of U.S. forces and the new America-Russian partnership do suggest the possible emergence of a new mechanism for more genuine internationally guaranteed cooperation. Evidently only such a regime can provide Central Asia with security from external violence so that governments can begin to make essential internal reforms. Then the external provision of security will become the leaver by which internal security can also improve.

This record underscores the difficulties involved in forging an authentic regional cooperation in Central Asia, whether in military or economic terms. But it also underscores the necessity for anyone who undertakes to provide this public good of actually delivering on that commitment and forging a regional consensus. If an American-led cooperative security regime is to be sustained, then Washington must stay the course in Central Asia. While that need not mean an open-ended military presence, it does entail a continuing military presence,

Continued on p. 30

NIAStrat no. 3, 2002

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China and Xinjiang after September 11

by Niklas Swanström

The aftermath of the September 11 bombings created a new situation for the minorities in China’s western Xinjiang province, who are primarily Muslims, and for the Chinese government’s policies towards Xinjiang. Political developments in the region and internationally after September 11 increased the possibilities for China to put more pressure on the separatist struggle in Xinjiang, with expanded international and regional support. Given strong international reluctance to support any Muslim group, or part of it, that has been branded as terrorist, it is clear that China now has far more possibilities to intensify pressures on the Muslim minorities than has previously been the case. What is less clear is how long the international condemnation of fundamentalist groups will remain, and if keeping pressure on Xinjiang at the current level will satisfy China or if the pressure will intensify. The answer to a large extent depends on China’s relations with the Central Asian states and the position of the U.S. in Central Asia.

The relations between China and the Central Asian states have been under a great deal of strain due to domestic problems in Xinjiang. The problem, however, is not between the government in the region and China, but rather a popular support in the Central Asian states for the Uighur liberation struggle in Xinjiang. The government in the region, on the contrary, are supportive of the struggle against Islamic radicalism and terrorism, and they cooperate with China to suppress cross-border separatism and terrorism. On the positive side, cross-border trade has increased dramatically since the independence of the Central Asian states in 1991, and the black market trade has likely expanded even quicker than the official trade. However, there are major problems that need to be solved before China can ease cross-border trade in Xinjiang.

Significantly, Xinjiang is historically, culturally, religiously and ethnically the eastern part of Central Asia, as is obvious from the name ‘Eastern Turkestan’ used by Uighur separatists. It is also the most recent ascension to China, hence the Chinese name Xinjiang, ‘New Territories’ (lit. ‘new border’). The international community has heavily criticized China for its actions in Xinjiang, actions that have included executions of separatists, suppression of religious practice, and a heavy influx of Han Chinese immigrants. However, international criticism of these policies has softened since the September 11 bombings and the U.S. war against terrorism. Uighur and other Chinese minority militias were trained by bin Laden and fought in Afghanistan and Kashmir for what they consider to be the Islamic cause. When the U.S. and the world were determined to quickly resolve the terrorism threat, the Uighur militias were condemned as terrorists. In August 2002, the U.S. included the East Turkistan Islamic Movement in its list of terrorists. China has more than eagerly accepted the task of eliminating the alleged terrorists that were supposedly trained and supported by bin Laden and the Taliban. China has also increased its pressure on Xinjiang as a whole. This has been seen in official pressure on students and officials not to fast during the holy month of Ramadan, and in the new edict that the Uighur language will be prohibited in first- and second-year courses in the universities. The Chinese government claims this measure is intended to protect the minorities and give them equal work opportunities after their university education, but Uighurs see it as an attempt to eliminate their cultural awareness and belonging. There are understandable reasons for the Chinese to reverse the teaching in Mandarin since books at higher levels of education in the Uighur language are non-existent, and future employment is dependent upon knowledge of Mandarin. Nevertheless, whether the intentions are good or not, the effect is that the identity and language of the minorities are compromised. This is reinforced by an increased tension between Chinese immigrants and Muslim populations in Xinjiang. The Uighurs are the largest non-Han group in Xinjiang, with roughly half of the region’s population. It is the figure we can’t ignore. 90% fifty years ago. Pressure on smaller minorities like the Tajiks is even stronger.

There is also a great fear in Xinjiang that the Chinese aiding and supporting the repression of the Uighur separatists will spill over into the region where China hasan interest. Xinjiang from the populations of the Central Asian states, especially since many remember the atrocities from Xinjiang after the overthrow of the Russian Tsar. For the East Turkistan republic in the 1940s. The Chinese government, on the other hand, enjoys the support of the Central Asian governments against the alleged terrorists in Xinjiang, especially in the face of their own governments with religious fundamentalism. This contradictory situation has been complicated by increased trade between Xinjiang and the Central Asian states. Trade has increased to the extent that the Chinese government claims that many of the people that moved out in the late 1940s and early 1990s are moving back into China to take advantage of the economic boom that is ongoing in Xinjiang. Whether this assertion is correct is doubtful, since by 1990s the Muslim minoritites and their descendants that fled China are still suspicious of the Chinese government’s intentions. However, it is clear that the influx of traders to and from Xinjiang has increased tremendously. This influx has not only been positive for the peaceful development of the region, but religious extremism, terrorism, and even more extreme movements have accompanied these positive effects of trade. The drug trade to Xinjiang has steadily increased, with a rising number of addicts, and as a result, HIV has become a serious problem especially among the minority groups. The growth of transport traffic has further destabilized the region. China and the Central Asian states have attempted to decrease the terrorist activities over the borders through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization by applying harder measures against alleged terrorists and tighter border controls. This attempt is too recent to have had any effects at this stage, but harder measures have proven, both in Central Asia and in China, to further increase Islamic radicalism and separatism among minorities. The situation in Xinjiang is not only important for internal security reasons and the peaceful development of all ethnic groups in China, but it is also the future highway of the black gold – oil. Xinjiang has its own oil, and it is the other important natural resources, but depletion threatens the Chinese oil wells and the future route for oil through Xinjiang, and from Xinjiang, China has invested greatly in Karakalpak and is prospecting and investing in oil and gas in all states in the region, excluding Tajikistan which has such resources. The Chinese government and Chinese companies have proposed a pipeline from Iran to the Chinese coast and the plan of a pipeline from Kazakhstan to China is already in progress. The oil can, however, only be transported through Xinjiang, and a volatile region would complicate the crucial import of oil from Central Asia. China’s possibilities to stabilize the region are either to exterminate all the minorities – clearly an impossible solution – or to decrease the separatist tendencies in Xinjiang by peaceful means. The September 11 bombings may have created new opportunities for suppression, but very few opportunities for dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

The American presence in the region has made China determined to quickly resolve the terrorism/separatist questions without U.S. involvement, through the SCO which has established a regional anti-terrorist center in Bishkek. These attempts are nevertheless fairly new, and the efforts that the figure we can’t ignore. The cooperation between China and Central Asia has also increased in support for the liberation struggle in Pakistan. It is clear that China will have to engage more countries in the region in the war against terrorism and separatism. Whether or not China is comfortable with it, the U.S. military presence is there to stay until President Bush or the U.S. Congress decides that it is an unnecessary involvement abroad, which is unlikely to happen in the near future. Can then China cooperate with the U.S. in the war against terrorism, and separatism? This is more problematic since China would react very strongly if the U.S. engaged Chinese subjects and captured them for interrogation in Cuba or any other location. The destruction of Uighur militants is acceptable and supported in Xinjiang, but China regards them as terrorists, but the capture and detention of Chinese subjects would be regarded as an affront of Chinese sovereignty. A possible alliance between China and the U.S. would therefore be fragile and the Chinese preoccupation with national sovereignty would be the limiting factor.

The situation for China and the minorities in Xinjiang has dramatically changed since the September 11 bombings. China’s manpower and military has increased, and the Central Asian states cooperate with China in their suppression of separatism in Xinjiang, and so they can suppress their own Islamic radicals and out of fear. China is, however, uncomfortable with the U.S. presence in the region, and would conceivably prefer internal turmoil rather than having the U.S. military machinery literally on the other side of the border, as was the case in the Vietnamese and Korean Wars.

Continued on p. 30
Human Rights and Democratization in Central Asia after September 11
by Anita Tabashlyeva

With a new war against terrorism led by the U.S., the positions of democratic forces and presidents have changed in each Central Asian country. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, harboring the military bases of the United States and coalition countries, have been immediately distinguished from their neighbors. International attention generated many hopes for improving the human rights record and the democratization process in Central Asia. But in practice, the authorities in Central Asia use terrorism as an excuse for the concentration of political power, to suppress domestic opposition, to restrict freedoms and use violence to suppress democratization of civil society. At the same time, the leadership in each country is concerned to have a good image as a ‘democratic state’ in the region to gain legitimacy in the donor community. Under pressure from the U.S., the Ministry of Justice of Uzbekistan registered a leading human rights organization in March 2002 before President Islam Karimov’s trip to Washington. In a similar vein, the Kyrgyz leadership declared a ‘year of human rights’ rule after a skirmish in the south of the country.

Travelling across Central Asia, one is surprised by the contrast of modern post-Soviet countries, only ten years ago part of one huge empire. If Kyrgyzstan is accepted as a facade of democratization in Central Asia, Turkmenistan is recognized as a darkest backyad of unlimited one-man rule and restriction of all freedoms. The striking difference between the freer political and economic system in Kyrgyzstan and the most oppressive regime in Turkmenistan illustrates a rapid fragmentation of the region, but also an impediment to regional cooperation and democratization. Although any criticism of any government is persecuted to various extents in all five countries, the situation in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan is clearly better than in the rest of the region. Both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have stricter control over political and economic life than do Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, the first reformers in Central Asia.

Since September 11, President Islam Karimov’s term has been extended by an additional two years by the Oliy Majlis (parlia-
ment) and by referendum, meaning that in the next five elections, he could be elected for seven more years. If in Uzbekistan all presidential candidates have fled the country long ago, a new spiral of government repression and use of the judiciary to eliminate political rivals to the president is under way in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Politically motivated cases have been increasingly portrayed as state struggles against corruption: Felix Kulov, the main opposition leader and head of the Av-Namys (Dignity) Party in Kyrgyzstan, was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2002 on embezzlement charges, while Mirkutub Alyabov and Galmshan Zhaparyev, leaders of Kazakhstan’s Democratic Choice Movement, faced charges of financial corruption and ‘illegal entrepreneurial activity’ in July 2002.

Despite frequent violations of political freedoms and the indiscriminate use of force, political opposition parties were banned several years ago and have no work in exile or underground. If in Uzbekistan all presidential contenders have fled the country, a new spiral of government repression and use of the judiciary to eliminate political rivals to the president is under way in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Politically motivated cases have been increasingly portrayed as state struggles against corruption: Felix Kulov, the main opposition leader and head of the Av-Namys (Dignity) Party in Kyrgyzstan, was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2002 on embezzlement charges, while Mirkutub Alyabov and Galmshan Zhaparyev, leaders of Kazakhstan’s Democratic Choice Movement, faced charges of financial corruption and ‘illegal entrepreneurial activity’ in July 2002. In Kyrgyzstan, the chairman of the parliamentary committee on judicial reforms, Azimbekbekov, severely criticized the President, especially over a border agreement with China, and was promptly charged with abuse of power while a pro-
vinicial prosecutor several years ago. Current Central Asian

political opponents, including Kalov, Akezhan Kizhegeldin (former prime minister of Kazakhstan), and Boris Shikhn-
mukhamedov (former interior minister of Turkmenistan), are all former top officials that have been either jailed or expelled from their countries. In Uzbekistan and Turkmenista-

nian, the only way for opposition politicians to live safely and to escape severe punishment is to go abroad. In recent months, many Turkmen high officials have fled their home country, seeking asylum in the West or in Russia. Besides elite power-sharing deals, a new type of mass social protest has taken place in the remote province of Jalal-Abad in the south of Kyrgyzstan. An unexpected grass-root demonstration was complicated by an improper reaction by law-enforcement forces, who killed five and injured 61 protesters in March 2002. Recently, a granite monument erected in the words ‘Fallen at the hands of the authorities’ has been erected at the place of the clashes. These bloody events led to a new law on public demonstrations, impeding protests, being adopted by the Kyrgyz government.

In all five countries the independent and opposition media, the target of repression and control, try to survive in such a difficult political and financial situation. State censorship in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan continues to restrict freedom of speech and press. A relatively free press exists in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, although some repression has taken place there after September 11. On the positive side, the Tajik opposition newspaper Chorug Boz is moving from Moscow to Dushanbe and a couple of new independent newspapers (Oliy Kapital in Bishkek and Fergana in Jalal-Abad) are circulated in Kyrgyzstan.

On the whole, citing the danger of terrorism, leaders in Central Asia attempt to restrict access to international sources of information, including the Internet. Thus, after Radio Liberty covered the mass riots in the Jalal-Abad region, Kyrgyz President Akayev characterized the station as ‘one of the fundamental threats to our state’, terming its broadcasting ‘tendentious and one-sided’ and ‘information terrorism directed against the Kyrgyz Republic’. A round table with the opposition on 26 July 2002.

Since September 11, all radical Islamic groups have been linked with international terrorism. In Uzbekistan, the persistence of human rights violations is alarming. Thousands of Muslims are still in prison only because of their political and religious beliefs. Government repression and the lack of dialogue with various religious groups in the country contribute to their anti-government agenda. Increasing poverty, especially in remote rural areas, and the subsequent radicalization of unemployed young men are creating a fertile soil for anti-government movements with either religious or democratic programs.

Both the Hizb-ut-Tahrir Party and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), two radical Islamic organizations, call for a just society in accordance with Islamic tradition. Despite well-organized underground work and external aid, the number of members and the threat of Hizb-ut-Tahrir are often exaggerated. Imposed Hizb-ut-
Tahrir ideas are unlikely to seriously change the religious situation in the Central Asian region. Yet it appears that for many followers, it is the only opportunity to channel social and political protest. Another alarming trend is that Hizb-ut-Tahrir members boycott elections and any participation in public life. Governmental repression and

imprisonment of active members of this organization only add to the atmosphere of noteworthy criticism of the current leaders, severely isolated and serenely intolerant attitude to members of Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan has led to strengthening underground networking there, whereas in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, activism of this movement are often delayed after detention. The military opposition group, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, has been expelled from its own country and collaborated with the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Thanks to the U.S.-led anti-terrorist operation after September 11, the major units of the IMU have been destroyed. Remaining elements are probably preparing a new attack under the religious slogan of Jihad. The IMU should be considered a subregional anti-government movement rather than an ideological religious and political association. Members of the IMU are united by repression in Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, and proclaim their aim to overthrow the ruling elite in Uzbekistan and to create an Islamic Caliphate.

Thanks to external aid, the goals of the IMU have been broadened to include a regional agenda.

Despite government condemnation of the IMU and Hizb-ut-Tahrir, views in the poor villages in the Ferghana Valley are varied. Some poverty-stricken people, disillusioned with the lack of economic opportunities and the increasing fragmentation of Central Asia, including restrictions in labour migration and cross-border trade, may support the calls for social justice, regional unity and anti-government criticism that both radical movements offer. One reason that part IMU railed focused on Kyrgyzstan’s political liberals, new public-
licity, which could not be obtained in Uzbekistan. Thanks to

Continued on p. 23

NIISepet no. 3, 2002
Radical Islam in Central Asia: Hype or a Real Threat?
by Svante Cornell

With Central Asia's independence in 1991, a debate emerged on the risk of Islamization of the region. Political Islam, it was feared, would engulf Central Asia, and the civil war in Tajikistan corroborated these fears and inflated them further, legitimizing authoritarian measures in the rest of the region. However, the threat of a radical Islamic wave did not gain immediacy until the summer of 1999, when militants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) launched military operations on the territories of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. These attacks were repeated a year later. In addition to the IMU, a globally active Islamic group, the Hizb-ut-Tahrir'Al-Islami (HuT) has spread in southern Central Asia since the late 1990s. Both groups have closely similar goals: the destruction of the current regimes and states in Central Asia, and the creation of a new, Islamic state that would be the restoration of the Caliphate that existed immediately after the Prophet Muhammad's death. However, the means by which they aim to achieve this objective differs, with the IMU being decidedly violent and HuT adhering to peaceful though-subversive means. The increased activity of these groups in the region prompts several questions. First, if radical Islamic currents are gaining ground in the region, why is this the case? Second, is there actually a considerable threat from radical Islamic movements in the region?

The apparent increase in standing of these organizations in Central Asia has prompted a debate on the origins and support base of radical Islam. Most frequently mentioned is the argument that widespread and repressed expression of opposition and the lack of political participation in Central Asia has radicalized the population and pushed politically active individuals toward the radical, underground Islamic groups. However, the problem with this interpretation, which dominates the western media, is that Islamic radicalism only grew slowly in Soviet times, when political participation was equally blocked by authoritarian rule; also, it is difficult to prove a direct link between repression and increase in Islamic radicalism in other parts of the Muslim world. Extreme repression did not occur in Uzbekistan in Syria in the early 1980s, while the absence of repression against Islamic radicals in Pakistan for most of the 1990s only led to a strengthening of their clout. Repression may conceivably be playing a role in explaining the increase of radicalism in Central Asia, but it is unlikely to be as major a determinant as it is often argued. In fact, several other elements -- all of which do, unlike repression, mark a difference from Soviet times -- make up at least equally important factors. The former is the economic downturn that has hit Central Asia since independence, bringing widespread poverty and rampant unemployment. The increasing income gaps in the region, with high levels of corruption coupled with increasing unemployment -- and rapid population growth -- is creating a poor, disadvantaged strata in society. This group forms a logical recruiting base for Islamic radicals. Secondly, the end of the Soviet Union brought the collapse not only of a state, but also of a value system -- that of Communism, irrespective of how compromised it was. An ideological vacuum was created, and liberal democratic ideologies had a very poor basis to replace Communism. Nationalism was marginally more successful, but due to the weakness of national identities in Central Asia, it did not form the logical alternative that it did in the Caucasus, where national identities were strong. Hence Islam, with deep roots in the Southern parts of Central Asia, most prominently in Uzbek- and Tajik-populated regions such as the Ferghana valley, southern Tajikistan, Balkhara, and Samarkand, were areas where Islam was, alongside regional identities, the main contender for the formation of the identity of the population. The attraction of young, educated, middle-class people to radical Islam is partly explained by this factor. Thirdly, the external environment in the 1990s was one where the global Islamic revival was blossoming. Large-scale funding was available from semi-state and private actors in the Persian Gulf states, notably Saudi Arabia, which has sought to propagate its model, orthodox Saudi civilization to the entire Middle East. The precondition for and support base of these groups were gaining ground in the region, why is this the case? Second, is there actually a considerable threat from radical Islamic movements in the region? 

The IMU, in fact has a dubious record as an ideological movement. The IMU, therefore, is ineffective. The group operates on a small scale, propagating its ideas in remote areas of the region, and steadily gaining supporters in areas where the government is absent or unable to contain its spread. Recruitment mainly takes place through social connections, in neighborhoods, extended families, and friends of existing members. Thousands of alleged activists have been arrested throughout the region, but HuT seems to be able to withstand the onslaught and gradually increasing its clout. Whereas the IMU's violent approach has alienated large parts of the population, HuT's commitment to peaceful means seems to have increased respect and legitimacy. The diverse nature of the two main Islamic radical movements in Central Asia implies that they pose vastly divergent threats to peace and stability in the region. By virtue of its criminal nature, the IMU poses a more acute short-term threat to border security and to governments' territorial integrity. However, the IMU's operations in 1999 and 2000 displayed the poor state of the Kyrgyz military and, to a lesser degree, the lack of readiness on the part of the Uzbek military, as well as the total lack of the Tajik government's control over its territory, from which the central government's forces were stationed and launched. In this sense, incursions create instability in border regions, and provoke military clashes. Furthermore, although governments' law enforcement organs and displace population. Moreover, they can create friction between Central Asian states, for example between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as Tajikistan accuses its neighbors of being unable to protect its borders. Uzbek attachments on the territories of these states, in turn, may generate suspicion and dissonance then lead to accusations of Uzbek bullying. The drug trafficking that the IMU operates on is a lucrative and repulsive effect on the regional states at both the local and the national level, which weakens statehood if allowed to continue. However, given that it is a violent and mainly criminal organization, the IMU has a narrow popular base and therefore does not pose a long-term, grass-roots threat to the statehood and political systems of Central Asia. The worst-case scenario is if the IMU manages to delay governments control of parts of their territory for the trafficking, and perhaps in the future also the cultivation and production, of illicit narcotics. American military presence in Central Asia makes this a low-risk scenario in the foreseeable future. HuT, on the other hand, poses exactly the opposite type of threat to the region. In the short term, it poses no immediate threat to the stability of

NIAS/SAAS no. 3, 2002

NIA/SAAS no. 3, 2002
The Narcotics Trade in Central Asia and Afghanistan

by Tamara Makarenko

The seizure of 215 kg of heroin on the Afghan–Tajik border in early July may be heralded as a triumph by authorities, but does little to suggest that the Afghan drug trade is under threat. This record seizure merely highlights that the trade has successfully recovered from the 2000 opium ban announced and enforced by the Taliban. The Afghan drug trade has not been deterred by the war on terrorism or American military presence. Obsessious with the role of the Taliban and al Qaeda in the drug trade, security officials are actually sympathetic to the Taliban’s stance that the drug trade is necessary to support the insurgency. Indeed, the Taliban, al Qaeda and the CARC (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) all have sanction drug routes to support their activities. This has led to a deadly spiral of violence and bloodshed as the drug trade grows and becomes more lucrative.

Drug Trade Dynamics

The trade in illicit opioids is not new, and has been well-documented in the past. The current situation is characterized by a shift towards the production and distribution of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine. The trade is often transnational, involving multiple countries and networks.

The first group of drug cartels, operating in Afghanistan before the Taliban’s 1996 rise to power, identified their own domestic base and membership, normally restricted to specific class or ethnic groups. They consisted of the first of buyers in countries with a drug policy or a drug market.

The second group, criminal cartels, have controlled over production facilities and trafficking routes, and are still active in the trade despite recent developments. Insurgents and terrorists are the final two groups. Apart from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Taliban, these groups did not yield considerable region al control over the drugs trade. Groups such as the Taliban and al Qaeda involved because the trade existed. Al Qaeda involvement was extreme limited to ‘rogue traders’ – members who appeared to take advantage of the al Qaeda network to secure additional, mainly personal funding. The Taliban, on the other hand, primarily profited by collecting taxes – and not via large-scale, organized operations. It is equally important to note that members of the Northern Alliance appeared to have established direct control over aspects of the trade in their area of operation. Prior to losing territory to the Taliban, the Northern Alliance (NA) was linked to opiate production. By 2001, the NA was well positioned to capitalize on the Taliban ban. They raised the area under opium cultivation in Baddudshan province from 2,458 ha in 2000 to 6,342 ha in 2001; this has been further raised this year to an estimated 8,400 ha.

Considering the failure of the Western coalition to directly target the drug trade as part of the war on terrorism and re-construction efforts, it is not surprising that criminal networks contributing to secure production and trafficking operations – while poppies cultivated this year will produce between 1,900 and 2,700 tons of opium.

Sustained Afghan Production

Given the composition of the Afghan drug trade, it is evident that the new Afghan government is both weak and too compromised to have a significant impact on the drug trade. For one, President Karzai needs to find a way to assert political control over drug lords. As it currently stands, Karzai has appeared to respond to this challenge by incorporating ‘former’ drug lords into the government by offering govern-
THEME: Central Asia one year after

N/A Story no. 3, 2002

THEME: Central Asia one year after

N/A Story no. 3, 2002

...ment positions. As experience in other drug-producing countries dictates, such appointments do little to reverse their criminal involvement. Thus as in Colombia and Myanmar, drug traffics in Afghanistan have the opportunity to seize political power, in addition to the economic power secured from illicit opiate. This predicament is equally true for warlords who have been brought into the government, but who yield equal interests in the drug trade. This does not even consider warlords who continue to operate in regions where the Karzai administration has no control or authority.

The other problem that the current Afghan administration faces is equally daunting and complicated to address. Despite having leveraged their way back to Kabul by cooperating with the international coalition, the Northern Alliance Strongholds have enormous prosperity to attract. Although NA members are associated with raising opium production, they hold powerful positions with the Afghan government. Members of the NA, most ironically, have been appointed to the Ministry of Interior tasked with counter-narcotics initiatives. Furthermore, high-level officials in Kandahar and Helmand, and Ministry of Defense officials are also allegedly tied to the illicit drugs trade, a situation further exacerbated by several allegations that soldiers from the internal government forces have already been found guarding drug markets.

Given this reality, it may be safely concluded that counter-narcotics initiatives in Afghani-

Continued from p. 17

(Tabhshahiliava) the free press in Kyrgyzstan, local and world news agencies reported each step of the young militants, whereas in Uzbekistan state-controlled media has been prohibited from acquiring or publishing any information about IMU attacks and the demands of the organization.

In sum, despite repression of political opponents, along with the sacrificing of any movement or person criticizing the authorities, the number of Central Asians involved in political participation is increasing, as is international attention to the region. At the same time, except occasional events, no serious progress in democratization has been made in Central Asia since 11 September 2001. The domestic and international human rights communities frequently complain that the U.S. has failed to address the issue of the military logistics in Central Asia, and that western silence about anti- democratic trends and the rights violations encourages local leaders to disregard their commitments to the democratization and liberalization of society. More active political participation of Central Asians, together with western assistance, will play a crucial role in improving the human rights record and further democratization in the region.
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Staff News

Irene Niehland, Senior Researcher and Research Associate at NIAS will move to Hanoi to live there for at least a couple of years. Irene will remain associated with NIAS and work to develop new projects with NIAS partners in Vietnam.

Ruben Thingum is a member of 'Indonesian Conflict Studies Network', and was a visiting student at NIAS in May-August while writing his BA. Hon. thesis for Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies in Lund. The title of the thesis is 'Initiative, Frustration and Flexibility: Categorizing collective violence in contemporary Indonesia.'

Markka Heinonen will be Senior Researcher at NIAS from 1-9.2002 to 30.4.2003. He is on leave from the Unit for Policy Planning and Research in the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He will undertake a research project on Eurasian Geonomics; in particular he will look at political, economic and institutional implications of the Eurasian railway links.

Lotte Isager is an anthropologist who has joined NIAS to work on the CITEM-NIAS project with a survey of household resource mobilization. She is also working on an application for a Ph.D. project on development, environmental discourse, and state and community territorial strategies in Thailand.

Peter Gammeltoft, Ph.D. in international development studies, joined NIAS in July to prepare an application for a post-doc project within the area of IT and business sector development in South East Asia, with a focus on Indonesia.

Recent guests

Ms. Hoang Thu Hua, Director of the CITEM Information and Documentation Centre (wildlife), and Ms. Tran Hong Minh, Librarian at CITEM Information and Documentation Centre (right), visited NIAS during 3-14 June. Photographed here together with Marianne Nielsen, Head of NIAS Library.
Indo–Pakistani Wars and War Scares
Stig Toft Madsen
During the first six months of 2002, the tension between India and Pakistan reached new heights. This article compares the recent crisis to earlier periods of tension as regards the progression from crisis to war, crisis management, and the length and timing of crises.

Progressions from Crisis to War
Pakistan and India have fought four wars, three of which were started by Pakistan. In each of these three cases, Pakistan tried to make it appear as if civilians, rather than soldiers, had taken up arms. The fourth war was started by India to support a real popular uprising in East Pakistan, enabling India to do to Pakistan what Pakistan had wanted to do to India, i.e. to cut its neighbour down to size by supporting a popular uprising. In addition to the wars, there have been four war scares, with the last being an important indicator.

The three wars willfully engineered by Pakistan started in 1947, 1965, and 1971 respectively. The first war was fought in 1947–49, immediately after India and Pakistan were created in August 1947 after long negotiations to secure a peaceful and viable process of decolonisation. Already in August, Pakistan had infiltrated Kashmir, and on October 22, 1947, about 20,000 men entered Kashmir. This force consisted of Pathans and other tribal invaders supported by the Pakistani army and politicians. The result of the war was that Pakistan gained control over about one-third of Kashmir, while India retained the rest. The 1965 war also centred on Kashmir. According to Gagsly, Pakistan reckoned that India was weak after it had been defeated by China in 1962, and after its leader, Jawaharlah Nehru, had died in 1964. The Kashmiris, Pakistan hoped, were ready to rise. Pakistan made a limited probe in the desert in the summer of April, following it up with an infiltration in the spring of May. Although the Indian forces in the spring were stronger than the Pakistani forces, the latter managed to hold on despite India's superior forces. India crossed the line of control in mid-August, when regular Pakistani forces in uniform initiated 'Operation Grand Slam'. On September 6th India opened a front in the north of Kashmir. The ensuing war lasted 17 days. The war was also a little, but exposed Pakistan's miscalculation: the Pakistani forces were not well received by people in Indian Kashmir, and India did not crush them.

The third war came about as a result of a calculation – or miscalculation – and more decisive factors. It started with an election in December 1970, which gave an East Pakistani majority in the Pakistani parliament. The elite in West Pakistan refused to entertain both the idea of being governed by Bengalis, and the idea of East Pakistan secession. In March 1971 the army was sent to East Pakistan on 'Operation Searchlight', subduing the Bengalis to the largest number of killings on the sub-continent since 1947. India decided to intervene in the civil war. The Indian army started shelling Pakistani forces in late November 1971 in order to support the irregular forces fighting for secession. On December 3rd Pakistan unsuccess fully attacked Indian airfields. India then launched a 'brass attack' lasting until December 16th, when Dhaka fell to Indian and secessionist forces. The fourth war, the Kargil war, was conducted in a sparsely populated high altitude area. It started because regular Pakistani troops—apparently largely with out uniform and identification papers—crossed into India in the spring of 1999 as the snow melted. Pakistan claimed that the infiltrators were freedom fighters, and not Pakistani soldiers. Bill Clinton, however, called their bluff in a meeting with Nawaz Sharif in Washington on July 4th. The war lasted from the end of May to around July 20th when Pakistan withdrew.

War Scares
The first major war scare occurred in 1987 when an Indian military exercise called 'Brass Tacks' (and parallel exercises on the Pakistani side of the border) threatened to escalate into war. A major war scare in 1990 was also averted when India and Pakistan decided to start peace talks. The third war scare was a consequence of India's losses in 1998, which were followed by similar tests by both Pakistan and India. The fourth war scare is the recent one. The military build-up was initiated by India because it rightly gauged that the attacks on the US on September 11th 2001 had opened a window of opportunity to link its own war against Pakistani terror with the US-led war on terror. They also know that they cannot rely on the channels of communication they themselves have manually established. Hence other countries can act as messengers, facilitators, and negotiators. The case is not a balancing act because India and Pakistan both put a high premium on their national sovereignty.

As the level of tension rises, the leadership of each of the two countries comes into sharper focus, while other players, such as the Kashmiris, fade out. Though there is a real risk that there could be a fundamentalist revolution in Pakistan, so far the escalating tensions have united both countries along nationalist lines. The fact is that – as long as the catastrophe has not occurred – leaders unite across party lines, armies remain dis- ciplined even under extreme pressure, and the general population submits to the national will. Peace movements are too weak to change the picture. This all makes it easier for the political elite to control the situation. The leaders may have more clout to govern during war scares like the recent one, than they have under normal circumstances when both India and Pakistan tend to stagger from crisis to crisis.

Length and timing of crises
Historically, war on the Subcontinent occurs in the hot summer months before the break of the monsoon. Is this still the pattern? In 1947 Pakistan initiated the war in August, but delayed a full-scale attack until October. The 1956 war started in April, but escalated in August, and September was the month of war. The 1970–71 war culminated in December. The Kargil war was a summer war beyond the range of the monsoon. The recent crisis could have exploded any time between December and June.

During the monsoon conventional war is difficult. Tasks get stuck in the mud, and war may drag on. Therefore, so far, we have been of remarkably short duration. To ensure that a major war will be short, it should start before the middle of September. We are, however, at the height of the current crisis, the defense establishment and the press in India are starting to look ahead to September as the likely month of war.

In October, Pakistan should consider conducting elections to the national assembly. Elections are also due in the latter part of Jammu and Kashmir. As the 1970–71 war shows, elections have the potential to push a nation into war. Possibly the elections, if coupled with election violence and terror attacks, are the next dangerous corners to be turned.

The record
In addition to many years of low-intensity warfare and terror, four open Indo-Pak wars have occurred. This has happened:
- even though both countries are mainly out of power;
- even though they share culture;
- even though democracy is rarely completely absent in either country;
- even though much effort has gone into fixing borders;
- despite steps at mutual confidence building.

As regards the will and competence to de-escalate a crisis, mutual talks and agreements, the record shows persistent weaknesses. The two parties could not talk, but they could read each other's intentions, and they could talk through third parties. They also showed their ability to build up and maintain an enormous strike capacity for a prolonged period of time without losing control over the armed forces. To wit, soldiers inside the tanks had to endure inhume temperatures during the summer months.

Continued on p. 30
Recent guests

Hanna Kaisi, University of Tampere, had a Contact Scholarship on 3–14 June. She is working on a PhD thesis on the ‘Impact of Political and Economic Decentralization on Forest Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia’.


Sissel Marit Jensen, University of Bergen, held a Contract Scholarship on 27 May–7 June. She is working on an MA thesis on ‘Out of sight, out of mind: A study of municipality solid waste management in Bhaktapur, Nepal’.

Prof. David G. Marr held a Guest Fellowship on 21 May–28 June. David G. Marr is a professor in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University. He is the author of *Vietnamese Anti-colonialism (1805–1925)*, *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial (1920–1945)*, and *Vietnam 1945: The Quest for Power*. During his stay he also lectured in Lund and Göteborg. Prof. Marr’s stay and lecture tour in Scandinavia is generously sponsored by the Swedish School of Advanced Asia Pacific Studies (SSAAPS).

NIAS author Andrew Hardy, newly appointed to EFEKO (Ecole Francais d’Etudes Orientales) in Hanoi, paid us a lightning visit in June to discuss the editing of his book, *Red Hills, Migrants and the State in the Highlands of Vietnam*, out later this year.

Nikolaï Vendelbo Blichfeldt, University of Aarhus, had a Contract Scholarship on 19–28 June. He is working on an MA project on ‘China and the Environment’.

Ms. Farijana Adeney-Riakotta, Ph.D. student at the University of Amsterdam, visited NIAS on 7–17 August to work with Timo Kivistö in her project. She was accompanied by her husband Prof. Bernard Adeney-Riakotta, Dova Wacana University, Yogakarta, Indonesia.

Dr. Wendy Smith, Director of the Centre of Malaysian Studies, Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, Victoria, Australia, visited NIAS on 22–23 August and gave a lunch talk on Islamic Identity and Work in Malaysia.

Katarina Vilberg, University of Helsinki, held a Contract Scholarship on 12–23 August. Katarina Vilberg is working on her MA-thesis on the Matu cult in modern Taiwanese society.

Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, gave a lunch talk on ‘ICT, Development, Democracy’ on 12 June.

Dr. Hauwoke Hambu, from the Department of Applied Sociology, Kasetsart University, visited NIAS on 21–31 May.

Dr. Nicola Piper, Australian National University, and Dr. Anders Ullin, Södertörns Högskola, held NIAS Guest Fellowships on 29 July–9 August and 29 July–2 August respectively. They are collaborating on a book manuscript.
Continued from p. 8, 
(Yasufrai)

Also fueling insecurity is the continued dominance of the warlords, all having personal and political agendas at odds with that of the Karzai government; the botched U.S. bombing raids including one on a wedding party in central Uruzgan province killing 48 civilians and injuring 118; the record, unmanageable repatriations of about 1.3 million Afghan refugees from Pakistan, Iran and other neighboring countries; and the slow pace of reconstruction. Hope is giving way to despair and there is talk again of warlords stocking up on arms flowing into Afghanistan from outside in preparation for future battles. Afghanistan is again at the crossroads and there are no easy answers to the plethora of problems confronting the Afghan people. Besides other urgent steps, one initiative that would determine the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan is creating a balance between the U.S. military objectives and the needs and aspirations of the war-weary Afghans.

NIAS Information Gateway to ASEM in Asia
http://www.nias.dk/asemgateway

NIAS Information Gateway to ASEM in Asia has been launched on the occasion of the 4th Asia-Europe Meeting in Copenhagen 23-24 September 2002. It is intended to complement the official ASEM4 website (http://www.asem4.dk) by providing relevant background information concerning the ASEM process, the ASEMs' partners and the relations between the Asian and European partners. There are links to further readings for the interested through the Asia-EU bibliography 1990-2002 and a selection of relevant Asian news sources, which will include highlighting of the latest news in Asian media concerning ASEM4 and Asia-Europe relations. For those who wish to have more information of a specific Asian-related issue, we also provide the opportunity to ask us for assistance in finding references to further information through the 'Ask about Asia' service.

This is a dynamic website and we warmly welcome your participation and suggestions of interesting information links or other improvements.

The website will be continuously updated until 15 October and will be available until 31 December 2002.

Continued from p. 15, 
(Swannström)

Chinese suppression of terrorists trained by bin Laden and Taliban is justified to secure internal stability and acceptable by international law, but the fighting has influenced the every-day life of the relatively secularized Muslim population in Xinjiang. The strongly repressive methods that have developed over the region and internationally create more, rather than less, Islamic fundamentalism within Xinjiang. If China is to stabilize the region, increased pressure is the wrong solution as it will feed the militants, while increased trade and higher living standards could decrease the number of militants. The problem will not be solved by increased trade. However, a purchasing power that is much higher than the Central Asian republics com-bined with cultural freedoms would probably entice the overwhelming part of Xinjiang to accept to stay within China. It should not be forgotten that Xinjiang is relatively secularized and the Xinjjang version of Islam is very tolerant, as long as Taliban-style organisations do not get a hold on the people.

NIASSept no. 3, 2002

Continued from p. 27, (Toft Madsen)

The six months that the recent war scare lasted was not unique. It appears that a party's quarters before they fight. The good news is that three of the four wars were short and conventional. They did not in the first instance aim at civilians. The bad news is that a coming war may force Pakistan to receive the nuclear arms within 72 hours of losing out in a conventional war. The risk of such a scenario materializing will increase in the months of September and October.

A longer version of this article will be published in Danish in 'Militær Tidsskrift' around October 1st, 2002

Notes

NIASSept no. 3, 2002

Continued from p. 13, 
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perhaps through NATO and the new NATO-Russia Council, if not other mechanisms, and a large-scale political and economic presence as well.

Not only does the failure of the SCO teach us critical lessons about the difficulties inherent in trying to bring about regional cooperation in Central Asia; it reminds us that nature abhors political and military vacuums as well as physical ones, and that if we do not learn from the mistakes of the recent past, somebody else will fill that vacuum. But that state's leadership may not be as benign as America's.
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Good Government
Nordic and East Asian Perspectives
Geir Helgesen and Uichol Kim

What is ‘good government’? Is it transparent, responsive, small and unobtrusive, or on the contrary, big and active? And is ‘good government’ the same everywhere, or do regional differences of opinion have to be acknowledged? This short study aims to answer some of these questions by presenting the opinions of 7,127 respondents from China, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Korea and Sweden.

Surprising results were revealed: within the global political context, the political cultures of East Asia and the Nordic countries have common traits regarding people’s expectations of their governments. Unexpectedly, popular control of government is not alien to East Asian political opinion; even more surprisingly is, however, the fact that the moral, paternalistic leadership style so widely accepted in East Asia attracts a positive response in the Nordic countries as well.

This volume offers a first glimpse of a comprehensive comparative study conducted by the Eurasia Political Culture Research Network (EPCRaN) in 1999–2000. This is a pioneer study that aims to spearhead comparative social science research springing from the growing mutual interest between Asia and Europe.

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