

Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report (IIPER)

No. 52, 17 February 2012

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CAUCASUS EMIRATE (CE) DAGESTAN VIALIAYAT (DV) AMIR 'SALIKH' IBRAGIMKHALIL DAUDOV KILLED

On 16 February, the killing of the amir of the Caucasus Emirate's (CE) Dagestani network, the Dagestan Viliayat (DV), 'Salikh' Ibragimkhalil Daudov was confirmed by the DV's command on its official website VDagestan.com (<http://vdagestan.com/2012/02/ot-administracii>). The next day VDagestan was not online. The CE's main website, *Kavkaz tsentr*, also reported Daudov's demise.¹ His body was reportedly found near a river near the village of Gurbuki after he had escaped a battle with security forces on February 11th in which his son and three other mujahedin were killed.²

Daudov was appointed as DV amir in May of last year, so he survived in the post for some nine months – a typical length of survival in such a post. Recently, IIPER reported on the killing of the amir of the CE's Ingushetiya network, the Galgaiche Viliayat, whose tenure may have been slightly longer. Daudov had previously been the amir of the DV's important Central Sector and the Central Sector's key Gubden Sector or Jamaat in 2010, having succeeded the infamous 'Seifullah Gubdenskii' Magomedali Vagabov in both posts after becoming one of naibs of Vagabov's successor as DV amir 'Khasan' Israpil Velidzhanov in late 2010.

¹ "Komandovanie Dagestanskogo Fronta podtverdilo Shakhadu Amira Salikha," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 16 February 2012, 00:23, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2012/02/16/88879.shtml.

² "Boeviki Dagestana podtverdili gibel' amira Daudov, siloviki soobshchayut o novom lidere podpol'ya," *Kavkaz uzal*, 16 February 2012, 14:47, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/201279/.

Most likely to succeed Daudov in the position of DV amir is his first naib and Central Sector amir Abu Mukhammad, especially given Abu Mukhammad's status as Daudov's first naib. Other candidates include: CE qadi Ali Abu Mukhammad al-Dagistani, DV qadi and amir of the DV's Mountain Sector Sheikh Muhammad Abu Usman Al-Gimravii, and Central sector amir. However, officials in the apparatus of the North Caucasus Federal District claim that Daudov's successor has already been decided, basing the claim on captured intelligence, according to *Kavkaz uzal*. The new amir is supposedly an ethnic Turk named Abdusalam. Abdusalam is said to have undergone training in camps in Turkey allegedly being used to prepare mercenary fighters for the Arab revolutions in Libya and Syria. This sounds like bureaucratic propaganda. The same source claims that Abdusalam has been amir of the "united group" or sector that included the Sergokalinsk, Kaspiisk, and Izberbash Jamaats, the last being unusually active in 2011 for the first time.³ IIPER's records based on the DV's own reports confirm that Abdusalam was amir of a united Sector or Jamaat that included the Karabudakhkent and the Shuabkalin (Sergokalinsk) Jamaats. Abdusalam attended the shura of the DV's Central Sector in June 2010 and was identified in a DV report as the amir of the Shuabkalin (Sergokalinsk) Jamaat.⁴

Within hours of the announcement of Daudov's demise, local authorities and security forces announced that a major battle with tens of mujahedin had ensued along the Dagestan-Chechen border in which 7 to as many as 20 mujahedin and 11-13 members of the police and security forces were killed and 17-20 of police and security were wounded, depending on the report. According to some reports some three groups of mujahedin were led by the 47 year-old Chechen 'Abuldar' Magarbi (Makharbi) Timiraliyev and two Dagestanis – 28 year-old Ruslan Temirkaev and 26 year-old Arslan Mamedov.⁵ This is an usually large battle in general, no less for the winter period, when the mujahedin tend to hole up waiting of the harsh winter weather to subside.

THE REVITALIZATION OF THE CAUCASUS EMIRATE'S OVKBK

After setbacks in early 2011, the Caucasus Emirate's (CE) United Vilaiyat of Kabardino, Balkariya, and Karachai or OVKBK has regrouped and may be extending its network into Karachaevo-Cherkessiya as a stepping stone for operations targeting the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games.

In 2010 and especially in April 2011, Russia and local security forces succeeded in decimating the leadership cadre of the OVKBK – the CE's network for Russia's republics of Kabardino-Balkariya (KBR) and the Karachaevo-Cherkessiya (KChR). On 29 April 2010 the OVKBK suffered the loss of its founder 'Seifullah' Anzor Astemirov, who was also the CE's qadi.⁶ Little more than a year later, on 29 April 2011 it lost nearly its entire leadership, including OVKBK amir 'Abdullah' Askar Dzhappuev and several, perhaps all of his naibs, all of whom also served as sector amirs, including Northeastern Sector amir 'Abdul Jabbar' Kazbek Leonidovich Tashuev, Abdul Jabbar's naib Abdul Gafur (Aslanbek Khamurzov), Southwestern Sector amir Zakariya (Ratmir Shameyev), Northwestern Sector amir Musa, and others (see IIPER No. 39).

The loss of not just amir Dzhappuev but also key naibs such as Tashuev and Shameyev was a major blow to the OVKBK's summer offensive plans. Tashuev (born 14 August 1978) had been amir of the Baksan Sector of the Northeastern Sector/Front since 2005, a key OVKBK sector. He also displayed prudent leadership in carrying out important intelligence operations and as far back as autumn 2005 by refusing to participate in the major incursion into the KBR's capitol Nalchik with some 200 fighters because it would be a high casualty

³ "Boeviki Dagestana podtverdili gibel' amira Daudov, siloviki soobshchayut o novom lidere podpol'ya," *Kavkaz uzal*, 16 February 2012, 14:47, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/201279/.

⁴ "Znamenie Allakha Vo Vremya Boya v Vilaiyate Dagestan, Golos Amira Khattaba (Shakhid Inshallakh) Prizval Kafirov k Sdache," *Jamaat Shariat*, 7 June 2010, 17:43, <http://jamaatshariat.com/ru/new/15--/861-2010-06-07-16-44-40.html>.

⁵ "Neskol'ko desyatkov predpolagaemykh boevikov blokirovany na granitse Chechni i Dagestana," *Kavkaz uzal*, 16 February 2012, 20:00, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/201305/.

⁶ See my profile of Astemirov in IIPER, Nos. 19, 20, 23, and 25. On his killing by security forces see IIPER, No. 13.

operation and too costly in terms of the KBR mujahedin's limited manpower.⁷ Southwestern Front/Sector and Nalchik Sector amir 'Zakariya' Ratmir Shameyev had been a rising star, producing numerous propaganda videos and undertaking a good share of OVKBK operations in 2010, sporting his signature black head dress and eye patch.

Now the OVKBK has resuscitated itself and appears poised to give the KBR and perhaps the KChR more difficulties. Six months after the decimation of its leadership, as detailed in IIPER No. 47, the OVKBK's top ranks have been renewed, and the leadership has convened several organizational shuras. The amirs of the OVKBK sectors appeared at a shura in October under the leadership of its new amir 'Ubaid' Alim Zankishev. As noted in IIPER No. 47, the new OVKBK amir thus far has not exhibited much charisma or personality and seems similar to CE amir Umarov in dress, beard, and manner. The accompanying video, showing several minutes of statements by the amirs, includes at least 5 or 6 amirs, suggesting the OVKBK now includes at least 5 or 6 sectors, depending on whether Zankishev is also a sector amir.⁸ Emphasizing at the shura that their previous losses will not stop their efforts to "raise the word of Allah," OVKBK amir Zankishev introduced the new amirs he appointed: Southeastern Sector amir Khamzat, Southwestern Sector amir Abu Khasan, Northwestern Sector amir Khamza, Northeastern Sector amir Abdulmanik, and Central Sector amir Umar (Omar). Zankishev did not indicate whether any of these sector amirs are his naibs.⁹ The updated leadership and structure of the OVKBK is presented in the table below.

OVKBK LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL TABLE (revised from IIPER, No. 47):

TOP LEADERSHIP

Amir – 'Ubaid' Alim Zankishev, appointed 9 September 2011. Predecessors – 'Abdullah' Asker Dzhappuev, cited 16 May 2010, killed April 2011; Arsen Tatarov, killed 31 March 2010; Anzor Astemirov (aka Seyfullah), killed 24 March 2010.

Naib(s) – unknown. Predecessors – 'Zakariya' Ratmir Shameyev (killed 29 April 2011); 'Abdul Jabbar' Kazbek Leonidovich Tashu(ev) (killed 29 April 2011); Timur Tatchaev (killed May 2010); Abu Dudzhan Adam Dzhappuev (appointed March 2009, killed 21 June 2009); Abdu-R-Rakhman Marat Guliev (appointed March 2009, killed 20 May 2009); Imam Musa Mukozhev (appointed March 2009, killed 11 May 2009); Abu Djalil (killed 21 June 2009); Abu Usman Zeitun Sultanov (appointed March 2009, killed 22 April 2009).

LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

Eastern Sector (last cited in 2009): **Amir** – unknown. Predecessors: Abu Usman Zeitun Sultanov (killed 22 April 2009).

Central Sector (Nalchik, Khasan): Amir – Umar (first cited October 2011, last cited 16 November 2011). Predecessors: Abu Usman Zeitun Sultanov (killed April 22, 2009).

Unknown jamaat: Amir – Khattab (cited 16 November 2011).

Southeast Sector (Lesken, Irvan, and Tersk Raions and part of Cherek Raion): **Amir** – Khamza (first cited October 2011, last cited 22 November 2011).

Southwest Sector: Amir – Abu Khasan (cited October 2011). Predecessors: 'Zakariya' Ratmir Shameyev (killed 29 April 2011).

Nalchik Sector: Amir – unknown. Predecessors - 'Zakariya' Ratmir Shameyev (killed 29 April 2011)

⁷ "Baksanskii dzhamaat," *Kavkaz uzel*, 27 July 2011, 00:00, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189804/.

⁸ "Shura amirov sektorov Vilaiyata KBK," *Islamdin.biz*, 20 October, 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/10/blog-post_30.html.

⁹ "Shura amirov sektorov Vilaiyata KBK," *Islamdin.biz*, 20 October, 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/10/blog-post_30.html.

Northwest Sector: Amir – Khamzat (first cited October 2011, last cited 11 November 2011). Predecessors: Musa (first cited September 2010, killed 2011).

Northeast Sector (Baksan): Amir – Abdul Malik (first cited October 2011, last cited 14 November 2011). Predecessors: ‘Abdul Jabbar’ Kazbek Leonidovich Tashu(ev) (2005 - 29 April 2011 when killed).

Naib – unknown. Predecessors: Abdul Gafur (first cited July 2010, killed 29 April 2011).

- **Baksan Sector: Amir** – Zalim Tutov. Predecessor - ‘Abdul Jabbar’ Kazbek Leonidovich Tashu(ev) (2005 – 29 April 2011 when killed).
 - Naib – unknown. Predecessor - Aslanbek Khamurzov (killed 29 April 2011).
 - **Baksan Jamaat: Sultan Shevhuzhev** (killed May 28 2009).

Yarmuk Jamaat: Amir (last cited in 2009) – Unknown. Predecessors: Adam Dzappuev (killed 21 June 2009); Predecessors - Anzor Astemirov ‘Seyfullah’; Muslim Atayev (killed April 2005); Ruslan Bekanov (killed June 2005);

Chegem Jamaat (last cited 2009): **Amir** - unknown.

Other Amirs:

Kanamat Zankishev (brother of Alim, killed May 2010).

KARACHAEVO-CHEKKESSIYA SECTOR

Amir – Biaslan Gochiyaev (killed 7 December 2011)

The leadership of the OVKBK’s historically notorious Baksan Sector has been replenished with an experienced amir, Zalim Tutov. The 27-year Tutov was already wanted by the authorities for at least four previous attacks on law enforcement personnel when he took over the Baksan mujahedin.¹⁰

The OVKBK also established a new website ‘*Dzhamaat Takbir*’ (Jamaat Takbir) at www.djamaattakbir.com. In effect it is a mirror site that duplicates much of the material posted on the OVKBK’s main site *Islamdin*, which in turn had mirror sites under the same title: *Islamdin.com* and *Islamdin.biz*. However, since *Dzhamaat Takbir*’s appearance, *Islamdin.com* has disappeared and only *Islamdin.biz* remains. In early December, the KBR’s prosecutor called for the *Dzhamaat Takbir* website to be declared extremist and be shut down, but the site remains online and is updated daily with much the same content as appears on *Islamdin.biz*.¹¹

More recently, the new sector amirs introduced themselves on the OVKBK and other CE websites and issued threats as they prepared for attacks. A six-minute video declaration by Central Sector (TsS) amir Umar appeared on November 16th on the OVKBK website ‘*Islamdin*’, in which the young unbearded Umar, seated along with three other mujahedin, calls on Muslims to join the jihad for the “great words” Allah offers and warns the “infidel” (*kafir*) that they cannot escape Allah’s wrath. Umar introduces the mujahed seated to his

¹⁰ “MVD: baksansjuyu gruppirovku boevikov v Kabardino-Balkarii vozglavil Zalim Tutov,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 26 July 2011, 22:50, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189763/.

¹¹ “Prokuratura Kabardino-Balkarii prosit sud priznat’ sait ‘Dzhamaat Takbir’ ekstrimistskim,” *Kavkaz uzel*, 7 December 2011, 15:06, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197173/.

right, whom he identifies as amir Khattab of one of the TsS's "groups" (gruppy). Khattab gives a brief, unremarkable statement before Umar ends the video with an Arabic language closing.¹²

Northeast Sector (SVS) amir Abdul Malik's first video statement appeared on *Islamdin* two days earlier. Abdul Malik is seen seated alone holding his Kalashnikov vertically in the seven and a half minute video. He urges all Muslims to fight the jihad with their blood and property and submit to an amir and laments that those who do not have lost their proper faith. Abdul Malik also notes that infidels are raping Muslim women and it should not matter where this happens for Muslims to join the jihad.¹³

One week after Abdul Malik's first video, *Islamdin* posted the first from OVKBK Southeast Sector (YuVS) amir Khamza. In the thirteen and a half minute video, Khamza, seated next to another well-armed and well-equipped mujahed in the forest, notes that jihad is ongoing across the territory of the Caucasus Emirate and the YuVS is responsible for jihadi activity in Lesken, Irvan, and Tersk Raions (Districts) and part of Cherekskii Raion in the KBR emphasizes. In a long exegesis on Allah and jihad, he refers to several ayats in the Koran to impress upon Muslims their supposed obligation to engage in jihad against the infidel. Each Muslim on the CE's territory is obliged to submit to the authority of the CE's amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov, the Prophet Mohammed, and Allah.¹⁴ The amir of the OVKBK's Southwest Sector, Abu Khasan, also has been actively posting videos on *Islamdin*. In December he posted two.¹⁵

Theo-ideologically, remain the vilaiyat most influenced by the teachings of the global jihadi revolutionary alliance's leading philosopher – Sheikh Abu Muhammad Asem al-Maqdisi. The OVKBK's websites continuously post fatwahs and to cover his status in and out of prisons.¹⁶

Politically, like the CE's other most active vilaiyat, the Dagestan Vilaiyat (DV), the OVKBK is increasingly relying on qadis and Shariah law to establish dual sovereignty on 'its' territories. However, in July this effort suffered a setback when its leading executor of shariah court decisions, amir 'Suleiman' Aslan (Arsen) Balkarov was gunned down by KBR police.¹⁷

The OVKBK mujahedin could number well over 100 mujahedin and perhaps as many as 200 actively fighting mujahedin. As of mid-summer 2011 the Baksan Jamaat included at least 11 mujahedin, according to the KBR MVD's wanted list, this after the authorities claimed to have liquidated 10 of the jamaat's mujahedin since the beginning of the year. ("MVD: baksanskuyu gruppirovku boevikov v Kabardino-Balkarii vozglavil Zalim Tutov," *Kavkaz uzel*, 26 July 2011, 22:50, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189763/.) A caveat here would be that in recent years and in 2011 the Baksan Jamaat was arguably the OVKBK's most powerful jamaat, making a figure of 100-150 mujahedin more likely.¹⁸

The KBR's Hot December

¹² "Obrashchenie amira Tsentral'nogo sektora Umara," *Islamdin.biz*, 16 November 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/11/blog-post_16.html.

¹³ "Obrashchenie amira Severo-vostochnogo sektora Abdul' Malika," *Islamdin.biz*, 14 November 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/11/blog-post_14.html.

¹⁴ "Obrashchenie amira Yugo-Vostochnogo sektora Khamzy," *Islamdin.biz*, 22 November 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/11/blog-post_22.html.

¹⁵ The earlier of the two Abu Khasan videos does not have a separate page or URL but remained on the video side column of *Islamdin*'s front page as of February 5th, 2012. Titled "Obrashchenie amira Abu Khasan, the video shows the amir seated between two other mujahedin. The later video can be found at "Kratkoe obrashchenie amira Abu Khasan," *Islamdin.biz*, 23 December 2011, http://www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/blog-post_23.html

¹⁶ One recent Maqdisi fatwah posted on the OVKBK website can be found at "Sheikh Abu Mukhammad al-Makdisi" 'O tom, kto ne molitsya v mechetyakh po prichine spionazha i slezhki'," *Islamdin.biz*, 27 December 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/blog-post_27.html.

¹⁷ "Ubityi v Nalchike Balkarov privodil v isponenie prigovory shariatskogo suda," *Kavkaz uzel*, 27 July 2011, 11:10, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189782/.

¹⁸ "Baksanskii dzhamaat," *Kavkaz uzel*, 27 July 2011, 00:00, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189804/.

The amirs' nearly simultaneous issuance of video statements suggested a well-coordinated propaganda plan and that the KBR, where the OVKBK has been most active, would be in for a new wave of attacks carried out by the mujahedin. Reminiscent of the decision to end the larger counter-terrorist operation (KTO) in Chechnya in April 2009 just as the CE was reviving the Riyadus Salikhii Martrysts Brigade of suicide bombers and began an up tempo wave of suicide and other operations, the authorities lifted the more local KTO that had been in force in the KBR's Cherek and Chegem Raions since February 2011 after several attacks in the area. The authorities claimed the situation had been "stabilized."¹⁹

On December 5th, the OVKBK's official website *Islamdin* issued a warning of sorts when it posted a video that included films of operations and photographs of some twenty law enforcement officers the OVKBK mujahedin claim to have killed over the last year or so. There are also short clips of the "liquidation" of an informer, a "wizard," one Yusup Taukenov, two workmen, among others.²⁰

Although matters gained steam slowly, by December the OVKBK's operational tempo picked up, forcing the authorities into declaring several temporary special counter-terrorist operations. In early December a cache of weapons was uncovered, and in three separate incidents three residents of Nalchik and likely mujahedin were captured with an improvised explosive device (IED), explosive materials, other weapons, and ammunition.²¹ The greenness of the new amirs seems to have been matched by novice rank-and-file mujahedin, resulting in a certain operational ineffectiveness. On December 10th, a counter-terrorist operation was declared briefly around the village of Zhakhoteko in Baksan Raion after law enforcement organs received information that mujahedin were in the area.²²

¹⁹ "V Cherekskom raione Kabardino-Balkarii snyat rezhim KTO," *Kavkaz uzal*, 6 December 2011, 23:40, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197132/.

²⁰ A partial list of the names of those killed and in the photographs includes: Chief of the Criminal Investigation MVD for the KBR Col. Zuber Shukaev, authorized operative of the MVD Criminal Investigation Administration Maj. Zaur Mazanov, Station Chief of the Baksan Inter-Municipal Department of the MVD Maj. Zaur Chipov, Senior Operative of the Physical Protection Section of Department 'M' of the Special Forces Unit 'Terek' of the Mian Administration of the MVD of the North Caucasus Federal District and a Junior Lieutenant (no name with the photograph), Chief Mufti and Chairman of the Main Spiritual Administration of the KBR Anas Pshikhachev, Senior Station Chief of the First Police Department of the Department of the UUM for the city of Nalchik Sr. Lt. Martin Gegirov, Station Officer in Chegem Raion Jr Lt. Murat Mambetov, Senior Station Operative of the Chegem Raion MVD Maj. Chaniuar Sokurov, Senior Operative of the Physical Protection Section of Department 'M' of the Special Forces Unit 'Terek' of the Mian Administration of the MVD of the North Caucasus Federal District Lt. Zaurbek Gukepshev, Station Inspector of the Baksan Municipal MVD Department Maj. Asker Malukhov, Propaganda Inspector of the Traffic Patrol Service (DPS) of the Chegem Raion MVD Lt. Alim Nazranov, DPS Inspector of the Chegem Raion MVD Lt. Zaur Tambiev, village administration head in Khasan Ramazan Frieu, DPS Inspector of the Chegem Raion MVD Lt. Artur Batov, DPS Inspector of the Chegem Raion MVD Sr. Lt. Azret Unezhev, DPS Inspector of the Chegem Raion MVD Cpt. Akhed Sogov, Criminal Investigations Operative in Nalchik city's MVD Cpt. Azamat Nyrov, Chegem Raion Administration Head Mikhail Mambetov, **Stavropol** Special Forces Lt. Sergei Arapov, Stavropol Special Forces Sr. Sgt. Aleksandr Chernenko, **Stavropol** Special Forces Lt. Maksim Lugovskoi, Station Inspector of the 2nd Department of the UUM of the Nalchik city MVD Timur Dolov, Deputy Commander of Special Forces and MVD OMON troops Col. Zamir Dikinov, Deputy Chief of the KBR MVD's Center for the Struggle with Extremism Col. Khazan Bogatyrev, Deputy Chief of the KBR MVD's Criminal Investigation Department Col. Albert Sizhazhev, Senior Operative of the Special Forces Unit of the Main Administration of the MVD for the North Caucasus Federal District Sr. Lt. Muradin Bezhdugov, Baksan Raion MVD Operative Sr. Lt. Husein Nakhushev, among others. "Operatsii mudzhakhidov v Vilaiyate KBK. Chast' 2," *Islamdin.biz*, 5 December 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/2_05.html.

²¹ "U zhitelei Kabardino-Balkarii iz"yaty oruzhie, vzryvchatka i boepripasy," *Kavkaz uzal*, 7 December 2011, 15:00, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197172/ and "U zhitelei Kabardino-Balkarii iz"yaty bomba i boepripasy," *Kavkaz uzal*, 9 December 2011, 12:50, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197311/.

²² "V Baksanskom raione Kabardino-Balkarii otmenen rezhim KTO," *Kavkaz uzal*, 10 December 2011, 15:01, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197379/.

The inexperience of the OVKBK's renewed cadres continued to show when on December 12th two were killed themselves after accidentally detonated a bomb they were preparing.²³ On the same day an MVD investigator was shot dead in the village of Islamee, Baksan Raion by an unknown assailant – a possible jihadi success.²⁴ However, on the night of 13-14 December a special operation led to the killing of four mujahedin, two of whom, Takhir Dzhappuev and Yurii Tutov, may have been relatives of present Baksan Sector amir Zalim Tutov and the OVKBK's late amir Askar Dzhappuev.²⁵

Five days later, on December 19th, the OVKBK scored its first significant success under the new command, when mujahedin killed the alleged leader of the unofficial death squad known as the 'Black Hawks' (*Chernyie yastreby*), which first emerged in February 2011. According to the *Kavkaz uzel* website affiliated with the human rights organization Memorial, citing a source in Russia's Investigative Committee (SK), slain MVD Colonel and Extremism Center associate Vadim Sultanov was the leader of the alleged group supposedly dedicated to extrajudicial killing of OVKBK mujahedin.²⁶ The OVKBK's website posted a de facto claim of responsibility for killing Sultanov and claimed that Sultanov was involved in the killing of three civilians on December 15th.²⁷ On the same day that Sultanov was killed, a transporter of alcoholic goods was gunned down as well. Three mujahedin were also killed near the village of Bylyi in Elbrus Raion.²⁸ On New Year's Eve the OVKBK claimed responsibility for the killing of the commander of the KBR MVD's SOBR or rapid reaction force, Colonel Murat Shkhagumov, who was killed in Baksan.²⁹

Thus, 2011 ended with a modest surge in OVKBK operational capacity. Nevertheless, the OVKBK will be unlikely to avoid a drop in the number of operations carried out and casualties inflicted on siloviki and other state officials in 2011 as compared to 2010. In 2010, according to IIPER's estimate, the OVKBK carried out 113 attacks in the KBR, but it appears that it will fall short of 100 attacks in 2011. IIPER will present its final estimates for attacks, violent incidents, and casualties for 2011 in the next issue, but as of the end of September, the KBR had seen just 65 attacks and violent incidents approximately in 2011. A small portion of this shortfall may be compensated for by the higher number of attacks in the KChR and evidence of a more active OVKBK presence there.

The KChR Sector: Moving Towards Sochi?

The OVKBK covers not just the KBR but also the Republic of Karachaevo-Cherkessiya (KChR). However, in contrast with their KBR operational network, the CE and OVKBK have been unable to establish a permanent network in the KChR. Until last year, there had been little jihadi presence in the KChR since the demise of Jamaat No. 3 in the mid-2000s. There has been little more than a handful of jihadi incidents in the KChR in recent years. By contrast, there were nearly 110 in the KBR in 2010 and more than 20 in each of the previous two years, 2008 and 2009.

²³ "SK: boeviki v Kabardino-Balkarii pogibli iz-za neostorozhnogo obrashcheniya s bomboi," *Kavkaz uzel*, 14 December 2011, 11:08, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197604/.

²⁴ "MVD Kabardino-Balkarii vedet poisk ubiits sledovatelya politsii," *Kavkaz uzel*, 13 December 2011, 10:55, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197538/.

²⁵ "Ustanovleny lichnosti ubitykh v khode spetsoperatsii v Kabardino-Balkarii," *Kavkaz uzel*, 14 December 2011, 13:07, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197613/.

²⁶ "Ubityi v poselke Khasan'ya ofitser byl liderom 'Chernykh yastrebov,' zayavlyayet istochnik," *Kavkaz uzel*, 21 December 2011, 02:09, <http://kabardino-balkaria.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/198011/>.

²⁷ "Unichtozhenyi podpolkovnik Sultanov okazalsya glavarem bandy 'Chernykh yastreby,'" *Islamdin.biz*, 20 December 2011, http://www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/blog-post_20.html.

²⁸ "V Kabardino-Balkarii ubit voditel' spirtovoza," *Kavkaz uzel*, 20 December 2011, 23:51, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/196132/.

²⁹ "V gorode Baksan likvidirovan ocherednoi polkovnik, Vilaiyat KBK," *Islamdin.biz*, 31 December 2011, http://www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/blog-post_560.html.

However, 2011 saw an increase in OVKBK activity on the KChR. In addition to some 51 attacks in the KBR, there were 2 in the KChR during the first half of 2011. Another rare jihadi-related violent incident occurred in the KChR in October when an alleged mujahed opened fire on police, killing one and wounding two in Uchkeken.³⁰ On November 24th security forces surrounded Kanamat Saryiev, who was then killed in a shoutout. The *Islamdin.com* website of the CE's United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya, and Karachai (OVKBK) seemed to claim Saryiev as one of the OVKBK mujahedin's own, referring to him as "our brother." The report also noted that a second mujahed, Ruslan Bairamkulov, was wounded and captured in the incident.³¹

In December 2011, Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAK) announced that security forces had killed four alleged mujahedin in the KChR village of Kumysh during a special operation on December 7th. If true, this would be largest group of mujahedin uncovered in that republic in many years. The incident occurred when police sought to stop a car in Cherkassk which they then chased to Kumysh where those inside the car fired on the siloviki. The siloviki returned fire which set off a powerful explosion, killing and leaving only fragments of all those inside. The authorities claimed that one of those killed, 27-year old Biaslan Gochiyaev, was appointed leader of the mujahedin in the KChR a little more than a year ago. However, this information has never appeared on any CE site, including the OVKBK's *Islamdin.com*. The other alleged mujahedin included 25-year old Temurlan Totorkulov, 27-year old Valentin Dlugoborskii, and 33-year old Marina Urusova. The latter two alleged mujahedin may have been ethnic Russians. The NAK claimed that the group was preparing a series of terrorist operations and had been training. It also reported that automatic firearms, explosives, and IEDs were found and that Urusova was to be used as a suicide bomber.³² Neither the OVKBK nor any mujahedin have ever carried out a suicide bombing in the KChR or the KBR. The CE mujahedin reporting on the incident seemed to indicate some doubt or at least did not confirm that those killed were mujahedin, but his is sometimes the case even though later the same website will confirm the martyrdom of the previously doubted mujahedin.³³ Days later another alleged mujahedin was detained in the KChR and was said to be part of a jamaat of seven that had undertaken the attack on police in Uchkeken on October 29th.³⁴

This brought the number of violent jihadi-related incidents and casualties in the KChR for 2011 to an unprecedented possible high of 6 violent incidents (4 jihadi attacks and 2 security forces' special operations), 5 state agents killed and 6 wounded, and 11 mujahedin killed and 5 captured. In 2011 there were 4 attacks in the KChR, but some of those could have been undertaken by the DV. The increase in activity in the KChR suggests that perhaps the OVKBK is making a move to establish a permanent foothold in that republic as a stepping stone in the western direction towards Sochi, where the 2014 Winter Olympic Games are to be held.

TRIUMPH OF THE CAUCASUS EMIRATE: The Caucasus Emirate as a Special Ethno-Fundamentalist Model

By ISLAM TEKUSHEV

³⁰ "V Karachaevo-Cherkessii zaderzhan predpolagaemyi boevik," *Kavkaz uzal*, 10 December 2012, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197352/.

³¹ "Perestrelka v gorode Cherkesske. Vilaiyat IKB IK," *Islamdin.com*, 25 November 2011, www.islamdin.biz/2011/11/blog-post_4701.html.

³² "V Karachaevskovo-Cherkessi ubity chetvero predpolagaemykh boevikov," *Kavkaz uzal*, 8 December 2011, 15:50, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197255/.

³³ "V Karachaevskom sektore ubity chetvero musul'man. Vilaiyat KBK IK," *Islamdin.biz*, 8 December 2011, 21:09, www.islamdin.biz/2011/12/blog-post_08.html#more.

³⁴ "V Karachaevo-Cherkessii zaderzhan predpolagaemyi boevik," *Kavkaz uzal*, 10 December 2012, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/197352/.

For the last ten years, we have been observing a process in the North Caucasus in which a special Islamic fundamentalist structure has been formed under the influence of both the historical background and current conditions. The given empirical paper proposes the hypothesis that the Caucasus Emirate (CE), the jihadi terrorist network active in the North Caucasus and an allied part of the global jihadi and larger Salafi revolutionary movement, is a unique Islamic fundamentalist model. Its specificity contains the secret of its vital capacity, while its features are a possible key to its self-destruction.

In many respects, the CE, as part of an international Islamic fundamentalist movement, has similar forms to its allied clones in the Middle East and Central Asia such as the jihadist Al Qa`ida (AQ) and taliban networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan or the Salafist, quasi-jihadist Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami (HTI) in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and elsewhere. The basis of these organizations' ideology has the same matrix – the Islamic fundamentalist doctrine - Salafism. However, in every part of the world there is an Islamic fundamentalist model adapted to the cultural and geopolitical characteristics of the region just like the Northern Caucasian underground. It has its own specific distinctions in kind, which are determined by local historical, political, social, economic, social, and ethnic circumstances in spite of the formal commonality.

The main peculiarity of the Northern Caucasian underground is its network or link structure and a system of self-sufficiency based on the socio-cultural and political underground incorporated into the Northern Caucasian communities. It is these features that comprise the secret of the vital capacity of the Northern Caucasian jihadi network.

Quite a lot is written that the contemporary Northern Caucasian Islamic underground is a network structure comprising dozens of cells, jamaats, formally or loosely subordinated to the unified center of the Caucasus Emirate but in fact acting independently within separate sectors. However, very little is written about links in the underground's structure, the principle of cyclicity of these links, and the system for the collection and distribution of funds.³⁵ However, it is these aspects of the CE that allow us to speak about the formation of a unique fundamentalist model in the North Caucasus with its own structural pattern and principles of coordination.

Links as the basis of the renewed structure of the Northern Caucasian underground

The CE's structure is largely determined by the Salafi ideology. In turn, the CE's hierarchical structure replicates that of similar Islamic networks in the Middle East, such as that of AQ.

All Islamic fundamentalist organizations are similar in that all have network structures. At the lowest level, they consist of structural units called jamaats (groups or communities) according to the Salafi ideology. Each network structure has a multilevel management system. Each network level is headed by an Amir. At the jamaat level, power is concentrated in the hands of a jamaat Amir. The jamaats are united by the common goal: the creation of an emirate in that part of the world where they are established towards the ultimate creation of a global Caliphate. In other words, there is a certain joint goal matrix for all these structures.

However, all these networks are fundamentally different in content and principles of interaction with those social institutions of the socio-political environment in which they operate. We stress that vital capacity of the idea depends on the level of infiltration of an Islamic fundamentalist structure into public institutions of this or that social-political system. This is why these structures are more viable in Muslim republics and countries with a predominantly Muslim population. And virtually all of them are invulnerable when the fundamentalist model is adapted to the local social and ethno-political conditions.

³⁵ Exceptions are Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia's Islamic Threat* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007) and the *Islam, Islamism, and Politics in Eurasia Report* (IIPER), which provide analysis on these subjects.

The jamaats, which are loosely coupled with the Caucasus Emirate, are united by primary structures within the network sectors, which are called sectors; sectors are consolidated into vilaiyats (provinces or governates), which form the highest rung on the ladder below the CE's top leadership level or central command. Large sectors may comprise 4 - 6 jamaats. On average, jamaats consist of 8-12 people. Thus on average, large sectors tend to average between 30 to 80 mujahedin.

As a rule, sectors geographically replicate the geography of state administrative formations. For instance, the southwestern sector of the United Vilaiyat of Kabardiya, Balkariya, and Karachai (OVKBK), which encompasses Russia's North Caucasus Republics of Kabardino-Balkariya (KBR) and Karachevo-Cherkessiya (KChR), replicates the administrative borders of Chegem district. The northeastern sector controls the territory of the Baksan district of the KBR; the north-western sector controls the KBR's Elbrus district.³⁶

In some cases, one sector operates on the territory of two or three districts: the underground employs this practice either when membership of jamaats, which comprise certain sectors, is small or when the administrative formation they are responsible for is very large. Such is, for instance, the Central Sector, which comprises several areas of Nalchik, the KBR's capitol, as well as settlements adjacent to it. Mostly, jamaats are considered by the mujahedin to consist of the residents of the district on the territory of which a certain sector operates. This, and not ideology, explains the dominance of the ethnic factor in the membership of certain jamaats and sectors.³⁷ In most cases, most ethnic groups in the North Caucasus are settled compactly, especially in rural areas. For instance, Kabardins dominate in the town of Baksan, located in Baksan district of Kabardino-Balkaria, and adjacent villages (the OVKBK's northeastern sector). In the village of Elbrus or Zhanhoteko of Elbrus district, 80 percent of the population is Balkars (the northwestern sector).

Thus, even if the OVKBK's Kabardino-Balkarian underground formally does not look mono-ethnic as a whole, the local jamaats are ethnically tinted. The ethnic form of jamaats is in part a consequence of changes in the socio-political conditions during the last decade. The CE project would be doomed to rapid failure if these features were ignored, and the leadership attempted to impose a multiethnic structure on jamaats, sectors, or vilaiyats.

Here we come to a very important point. We are witnessing the fundamentalist ideology's coexistence with the social and political systems in the North Caucasus. With a certain level of confidence, one can speak about the evolution of the Northern Caucasian underground and the formation of a unique 'Islamic ethno-fundamentalist model' in the North Caucasus. Previously, the jamaats did not enjoy common coordination and common financial system, and they had been just armed groups driven by different underlying motives, including revenge ethnic sentiments of aggrieved ethnic groups like in the case of Yarmuk Jamaat in Elbrus district of Kabardino-Balkaria or by religious ambitions of a part of the Kabardin Muslim youth not recognized by the official Muslim clergy. Now, however, there is an extensive network structure with its own institutions, including the judiciary (qadi), the fiscal system as well as the executive power represented by Amirs of different levels. Day by day the efficiency of this parallel power is more and more visible in the North Caucasus. The conditional success of the Caucasus Emirate became possible only after the adaptation of the Salafi ideology to the current social and political conditions in the North Caucasus.

The CE's evolution has proceeded concurrently with the process of integration of the reactionary Salafism into the Northern Caucasian communities. Tribal ties, which always have been of great importance in

³⁶ The official site of the OVKBK. www.islamdin.com <http://www.islamdin.tv/>, Bulletin of 'Memorial' Human Rights Center, the situation in the conflict zone in the Northern Caucasus: assessment of human rights activists, www.memo.ru/2011/07/11/1107111.pdf.

³⁷ The same point is made in Gordon M. Hahn, *Getting the Caucasus Emirate Right*, Center for Strategic and International Studies Russia and Eurasia Program Report, September 2011, http://csis.org/files/publication/110930_Hahn_GettingCaucasusEmirateRt_Web.pdf.

the Northern Caucasian communities for self-organization of Northern Caucasian communities, have served as the locomotive power in the process of the evolution. This is a direct consequence of the fact that from the initial stages of the CE network's formation, the ethnic factor played a key role in the cementing and viability of the jamaats by facilitating the use of tribal connections to recruit new members and to organize military operations.

Territorial attachment has helped jamaats to effectively counter the federal and local law enforcement structures. It helps them forestall special operations, control local businesses on which they impose tribute (zakyyat) and recruit new members using kin or tribal ties. Moreover, territorial attachment enables members of the underground to create additional links beyond the North Caucasus. This is the rear, the most important element in the structure of the Northern Caucasus jihadi network: the systemic structure of the underground.

Tiers and the cyclicity principle in the Northern Caucasian underground

The Northern Caucasian underground consists of three major network links. All these links are involved in the confrontation process, used in jihad, but they perform different roles in the network. All links are in constant cyclical motion, providing a regenerative process for the network.

The first tier consists of people, who directly participate in military operations. In the jamaat network, they are called mujahedin, the warriors of Allah; in some media and academia the term 'jihadists' is used. As a rule, these people are known and wanted by the security structures, and they are being hunted. They usually make open appeals by means of video messages calling Muslims to jihad. This is the most militant link in the underground. They are potential suicide bombers, for whom this world is only a bridge over which they must go to reach Allah. The first tier is replenished by the second; rarely, do people from the third tier (discussed below) get into the first, since a person must prove his or her worth and show diligence to enter on 'the path of Allah.'

However, there have been exceptions to this rule. A striking example is Alexander Tikhomirov (who converted to Islam and took the Muslim name of Sayid Buriyatskii). Being a well-versed preacher of the Salafi fundamentalist ideology, he was able to bypass the second tier (without providing support to the underground in the rear) and directly enter the first. However, Buriyatskii's case is a rare one, explained by his being a theologian and famous preacher; he was in great demand by the CE leadership for implementation of its project.

The second tier consists mostly of relatives and co-villagers of the mujahedin of the first tier. Here is where the territorial principle mentioned above operates and a more detail description of which is provided below. This category of jamaat network members provides the first tier with information, intelligence, food supplies, and safe houses. In short, they provide logistical support. The law enforcement structures call the logistical personnel. Members of this given tier are of different ages because it is comprised of wives, sisters and brothers of members of the first tier. Given the large number of clans (teips?) in Northern Caucasian society, one can assume that the second tier reaches the limits of the clans' contours and is therefore much larger than the the first one. Members of this unit are rarely used in preparation of special operations, but this occasionally happens, depending on contingencies. Members of the second tier can move to the first for four main reasons: (a) when they are sought by law enforcement organs want them and when their lives are in danger; (b) when replenishment of the mujahedin ranks is needed because of operational attrition; (c) as reward for achievements on the path of jihad usually during a combat mission; and d) when they come under threat as a result of the institution of blood revenge/feuding. In other words, displacement takes place after the killing of a close relative, who was a member of the jihadi network, or after security forces have abducted him or have put him on the wanted list for jihadi, criminal, or even no special activity. It is worth noting that the institution of blood feud exists only in Chechnya, Ingushetia, and some parts of Dagestan. It is not a social institution in the KBR, KChR, or North Ossetia.

The third tier is the most numerous and most important for replenishing the ranks of the underground network. It consists of supporters and sympathizers, mostly young people who for whatever reasons sympathize with the Islamic underground but are not related to it directly. The foundation of this tier is young Muslims, who observe Islamic traditions and regularly go to the mosque. The process of infiltration of these people into the third tier takes place through the mosques as well as via online forums, which today are the primary platform for Islamic propaganda. This tier is hazy, and it is practically impossible to determine the extent of its function in the overall process of the jamaat network's development. However, this tier is the main and most constant source for new recruits. Therefore, it is at this level where people often become victims of abductions and extrajudicial executions by the security organs.³⁸

Often after a young man, who is not linked to the underground, is kidnapped, tortured and humiliated; he begins to seek protection from the underground, which a certain part of the population considers an alternative government in the North Caucasus. Thus, the numerous humiliations exercised by law enforcers of Kabardino-Balkaria against faithful Muslims helped push many young Muslims to join the Chechen resistance in 2005. But it not only legal arbitrariness that feeds the Caucasian Islamic underground. Political and socio-economic factors play a leading role in formation of the Islamic underground as well.

The Caucasus Emirate's Control System: Two Principles

The control system in the Northern Caucasian underground has its own distinctive peculiarities. Despite the fact that the ideology of Salafism, which formed the basis of the CE's political project, rules out the ethnic factor in considering the appointment of the amirs of the vilayats, CE amir Dokku 'Abu Usman' Umarov, the formal leader of the network, adheres to the principle of ethnic parity. In other words, an Ingush or an Ossetian cannot be appointed the amir of the CE's Nokhchicho Vilaiyat (NV), the CE's network in Chechnya, and an Ingush or Chechen cannot become the amir of the OVKBK. Although CE theo-ideologists formally insist on the insignificance of the ethnic idea within the Caucasus Emirate, in reality they follow the soviet administrative principles ethnic parity and native elites in its system of the hierarchical control. In the same way, the primary units, jamaats, are combined into autochthonous cells, which have distinct ethnic coloring. This conclusion can be drawn based on observations on changes of heads of virtually all vilaiyats.

The Ethno-National (ethnic) Parity Principle

The ethnic parity principle lies in taking into account ethnicity of candidates in appointing amirs/valis of vilaiyats and the amirs of the vilaiyats' sectors. There is a peculiar irony in the fact that this practice is dictated by historical preconditions of the administrative-territorial structure that originated in the early USSR. Consequently, the management of the Caucasus Emirate would be impossible without acquiescing to the North Caucasus's ethnic structure in making leadership appointments. Neglect of this factor could lead to splits in the network. In fact, this took place in August 2010, when a large portion of the NV's amirs defected from Umarov and the CE for over a year.³⁹ Umarov then accused CE deputy military amir Mukhannad, an Arab

³⁸ A structured interview conducted by Islam Tekushev with an employee from the prosecutor's office of Kabardino-Balkaria (the name of the interviewee is not mentioned following his request), who is in charge of criminal proceedings against persons detained on suspicion of affiliations with Islamic extremists. Also see "Memorial: young Muslims are secretly abducted in Dagestan," *Kavkaz uzul*, 2 August 2007, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/120148/.

³⁹ See the analysis of Gordon M. Hahn on the possible role of interethnic conflict as one of the causes leading to the CE split in August 2010. Gordon M. Hahn, "Trends in Jihadism in Russian and Eurasia in 2010," *Islam, Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report*, No. 32, 13 January 2010, https://csis.org/files/publication/110113_Hahn_IIPER_32.pdf. The split (fitna) was overcome at the end of July 2011.

militant, who according to some sources represented AQ in the Caucasus, of sewing of dissent and division among the mujahedin. Mukhannad joined the council of the breakaway NV Chechen insurgents headed by field commander Hussein Gakaev until he was killed last April. The split was patched up in August 2011 with the return of gakaev and the NV amirs to the CE fold under Umarov's command. Adherence to the ethnic parity principle while appointing amirs of different levels is confirmed by representatives of the underground in their comments posted on various forums as well as by dynamics of changes of heads of vilayats. This is also visible while analyzing the ethnic composition of the dominant majority of jamaats.

A unique situation exists in the OVKBK. Here while changing the amir, the ethnic conflict between the two titular groups, Kabardins and Balkars, has been taken into account. In order to avoid dissension (*fitna*) within this key vilayat, the position of amir is alternated between representatives of the two ethnic groups, the Kabardins and the Balkars, in turn. Thus, the first amir of OVKBK was 'Seifullah' Anzor Astemirov, an ethnic Kabardin. After his death, 'Abdullah' Asker Dzhappuev, an ethnic Balkar became the amir. After Dzhappuev was killed, the OVKBK again is headed by a Kabardin, Alim Zankishev. One can assume with some confidence that a Balkar will be the next OVKBK amir.⁴⁰

One of the main questions for us is whether this management model emerged from below or is imposed from above by the CE leadership. Judging by the references to the hadiths, which are posted on www.islamdin.com, the official OVKBK website, the jamaats themselves should offer or choose their amirs. On websites close to the underground, I even have found a theological rationale for initiative from the bottom: Ibn Hajar said: "And it contains permissibility to elect an Amir during a war without appointment, in other words, without an order from the Imam. Al-Tahawi said: "This is the basis, which means that it is obligatory for Muslims to nominate a person if the Imam is absent so that he replaces until he returns."⁴¹ In other words, under certain circumstances, the jamaat or community by means of debates decides who will be its head.

The principle of parity in the system of appointments in the CE was dictated by objective reasons. Though as a whole the CE declares the supranationality as a fundamental principle, the underground cannot exist in isolation from the existing system in the region of separate zones of influence between ethnic groups, especially under the conditions of partisan warfare, where the viability and security of the network is reinforced by the logistical, second tier and therefore dependent on kin and tribal connections. Under conditions in the North Caucasus, the logistical rear is closely tied to the teip system in Chechnya and Ingushetia and kin and tribal connections in Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria. It is an understanding of this feature that has led the leadership of Chechnya and Kabardino-Balkaria to apply the practice of collective responsibility of tribes and taips for connections with the underground.

In order to veil the decisive importance of the territorial-ethnic factor in the CE's management system, ideologists of the given project invented sectors. Thus, local Islamists demonstrate incompetence of the names of districts, which are ethnically divided. However, in practice the system depends precisely on the established ethnic systems.

The Principle of Autochthony

Jamaats forms the basis of the Northern Caucasian underground. The Northern Caucasian jamaats are created based on the territorial principle. Historically in the North Caucasus, the boundaries of settlements go along the boundaries of settlements of certain ethnic groups. This determines the ethnic coloring of local

⁴⁰ Analysis and comparison of video statements of the sector amirs of the OVKBK with the data of the Interior Ministry of Kabardino-Balkaria. July 2011, www.islamdin.com <http://mvd-kbr.ru/?Page=rozisk6>.

⁴¹ "Sheikh Abdul-Kadir ibn Abdul-Aziz: Refutation to doubts in regards to the Amir institution", *The Caucasus Centre*, 13 April 2011, www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2011/04/13/80707_print.html.

jamaats. Thus, before the elimination by security forces of aloo of the OVKBK's sector amirs in April 2011, the ethnic composition of jamaats was as follows: Baksan jamaat populated mostly by Kabardins (northeastern sector) was headed by amir 'Abdul Jabbar' Kazbek Tashuev, a Kabardin; Chegem district (southwestern sector) also inhabited mainly by Kabardins was headed by amir 'Zakariya' Ratmir Shameyev, a Kabardin; and the Elbrus jamaat (northwestern sector) populated by Balkars was headed by amir 'Musa' Khadziev Buzzhigit, a Balkar.

Random changes of amirs typically have taken place only in exceptional circumstances: in jamaats located in large cities where the population is poly-ethnic); when the ethnic composition is very diverse; and when the sector is not well delimited by territorial boundaries. The Central Sector is a good example. It subsumes several jamaats in Nalchik and the surrounding villages of Kenzhe and Khasanya. Both the strength and weakness of the CE network's organizational principles lie in this feature. The advantage derives from the autochthony principle's provision of capacity to local jamaats. I would like to stress that the jamaats were created in the deep underground and in most cases jamaats recruited people through relatives and friends. For instance, the KBR's famous first jamaat, the Yarmuk Jamaat, was established by ethnic Balkar residents in the KBR. Muslim Atayev, Adam Dzhappuev and Asker Dzhappuev, the leaders of Yarmuk Jamaat were ethnic Balkars born in Elbrus and Chegem districts and recruited their relatives and fellow villagers which again in the North Caucasus means that they are representatives of the same ethnic group.

However, the monoethnicity of the jamaats also brings a weakness; it results in the insularity of the network's nodes. In addition, the motives and interests of a jamaat dominated by one ethnic group can often differ from those of a jamaat with a different dominant ethnic group. Thus, the system plants the seed and provides nutrients for the growth of ethnocentrism. When representatives of the Kabardino-Balkarian underground killed ethnic Kabardin Aslan Tsipinov in 2011, a famous Circassian activist, the Circassians of the KBR were upset and openly accused the OVKBK's amir of murder. Amir Dzhappuev, an ethnic Balkar, rejected their recriminations against him.

Contrary to the OVKBK, the Ingush vilaiyat (galgaiche Vilaiyat or GV) and jamaats of Dagestan (Dagestan Vilaiyat or DV) and Chechnya (NV) were established following the autochthonous principle.

The CE's Life Support System: *Zakayat* Collection and Fund Distribution

The Northern Caucasian fundamentalist underground is a stable and financially independent system, supported by a multilevel budget. In this regard, four budget levels or tiers can be mentioned: (1) the budget of the Caucasus Emirate; (2) the budgets of Vilayats; (3) the budgets of the Sectors; and (4) the budgets of the Jamaats.

The budget of the Caucasus Emirate is formed from the budgets of vilayats, and budgets of vilayats are formed from the budgets of the sectors, and sector budgets are formed from the budgets of jamaats. There is a cash office at each level. Budgets are replenished with *zakayat*, an Islamic poll tax used enforced by the mujahedin for the jihad through levies on businessmen and officials in the Northern Caucasian republics. The essence of the tax system is simple. It is based on extortion, which the CE's leaders justify on theological grounds.

Collection and distribution of funds are as follows. In the first stage, funds are collected at the level of the village jamaats. In the second stage, funds are passed to the sector level. In the third, they are collected at the level of the vilayats. In the fourth, funds are accumulated on the level of CE's central command. However, it appears that a certain portion of the collected funds remain at all four levels.

Amirs are in charge of the funds at the vilaiyat, sector and jamaat levels. This decentralization provides effectiveness, since in the underground and terrorist environment financial independence of units enables the rapid planning and carrying out of terrorist and insurgent attacks.

The system of zakyat collection involves all three links described in the first part of this paper. Funds are collected in the following way. The third and second tiers collect and process information about objects to be taxed. However, people in the first tier directly collect zakyats. It is they who, following decisions of the Sharia judge of a certain vilaiyat, execute those who refuse to pay their zakyat to the mujahedin.⁴² Thus, in the town of Tyrnyauz, Kabardino-Balkariya, Islamic radicals killed Mukhtar Baizullaev, the director of ‘Ushba’ training sports center, for refusing to pay zakyat in the amount of 500,000 rubles.⁴³ Information about the duty of every Muslim to pay zakyat is distributed by means of video messages via the Internet as well as via collectors, who sends video messages from the vilaiyat’s amirs about the obligation to pay the tax to the mujahedin. If a businessman refuses to pay the tax, he is warned, if he refuses to pay again, he is killed. A businessman is granted guarantees of immunity if he pays taxes in a timely manner, and he is provided all possible assistance to protect his business.⁴⁴

The jihad tax or zakyat as Salafists call it, was not invented by Northern Caucasian fundamentalists or CE mujahedin. The practice of imposing businessmen with the jihad tax has been used for a long time in the Middle East. It was also practiced in the Central Asia during the civil war in Tajikistan. It appeared in the North Caucasus during the first Chechen campaign, but there was no collection system. There were cases of sporadic extortions executed by separate groups.

It is difficult to say when this practice was reshaped into the system of collection and distribution of funds operating for the sake of the whole network. However, the first time this practice was mentioned as a system came in 2010, when first threats against businessmen who refused to pay zakyats were posted on the website of Kabardino-Balkaria militants.⁴⁵ The CE’s first unified tax system was created for the OVKBK by its first amir and the CE’s first Shariah court judge or *qadi* ‘Seifullah’ Anzor Astemirov. His scheme was then extrapolated and imposed on all territories, where the underground operates. It appears that the theological justification for this practice was provided by Astemirov as well. It was Astemirov who developed and implemented the whole system of taxation in Kabardino-Balkaria and had all the links working the way mentioned above. Efficient interaction of these units provided the underground with large inflows of finances, which strengthened the underground and expanded its membership.

Conclusion

The analysis of the structure and organizational principles of the CE network and the significant, if not dominant role of ethnic factor in the system of relationships between the network’s subunits lead us to the conclusion that a unique fundamentalist model has developed in the given region of the Russian Federation. The distinctive features of this model, formed within the framework of the Caucasus Emirate project, are incorporation of the Salafi fundamentalist ideology into the Northern Caucasian ethno-political structure and social institutions.

⁴² A structured interview conducted by Islam Tekushev with an employee from the prosecutor’s office of Kabardino-Balkaria (the name of the interviewee is not mentioned following his request), who is in charge of criminal proceedings against persons detained on suspicion of affiliations with Islamic extremists.

⁴³ Training sports center director killed for nonpaying zakyat (tax), 10 October 2011, www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/193834

⁴⁴ A structured interview conducted by Islam Tekushev with an employee from the prosecutor’s office of Kabardino-Balkaria (the name of the interviewee is not mentioned following his request).

⁴⁵ Islam Tekushev, “Internal resources of jihad”, the Religion and Policy Institute, 1 February 2010, <http://i-r-p.ru/page/stream-event/index-25483.html>.

The dominance of the ethnic factor in the life support system of the Caucasus Emirate is not accidental. At present, protest sentiment in the Northern Caucasus, which at the beginning of the nineties resulted in open ethnic conflicts (Prigorodnyi district of the North Ossetia, the first and second Chechen campaigns) and latent ethnic confrontations (in Kabardino-Balkariya and Karachaevo-Cherkessiya) found themselves reflected in, and fused with the Islamic fundamentalism of the region as a result of ongoing internal disagreements. But by the beginning of the 2000s, ethnocentric ideas were replaced by radical Islamism.

The paradox of the situation lies in the fact that nationalism in Northern Caucasus has not dissolved over time; it has only changed its outer appearance. In fact, underlying motives of people, who sympathize with the Islamic fundamentalism, remain the same within the same vector determinants: land issues, ethnic claims, social and religious discrimination, lack of basic freedoms. All these remain, only the slogan has changed. A portion of the region's population considers Islamist and jihaidist groups like the CE to be the only force capable of protecting them from official arbitrariness and political oppression. They believe that only the Islamic fundamentalist theo-ideology can redress the lack of justice in the Russian North Caucasus. Consequently, sympathy of the population for fundamentalism, on the one hand, as well as hatred towards people of other faiths, on the other hand, is growing.

The degree of influence of Islam and its role in the daily routine of people in the North Caucasus are illustrated by the data of unique public opinion surveys conducted by the 'Caucasus Times' informational agency in the capitols of the five republics of the North Caucasus, including Cherkessk (KChR), Nalchik (KBR), Grozny (Chechnya), Nazran (Ingushetia), and Makhachkala (Dagestan). The survey also included questions about the degree of religiosity of the Islamic population in various Northern Caucasian republics, about attitudes towards other religions, in particular towards Wahhabism, and about attitudes toward military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. During the surveys conducted throughout 2010, in total 2,000 people were interviewed (400 people in each city).⁴⁶

According to the findings, 39 percent of respondents in the KBR capitol expressed positive and 'rather positive' attitudes toward Wahhabism and 42 percent of respondents in Cherkessk, the capital of Karachaevo-Cherkessia. Also, 62 percent of respondents stressed "the great" role of religion in their lives. At the same time, religion plays the most important role in Chechnya (81 percent) and Ingushetia (68%), while only 42 percent of residents of Kabardino-Balkaria expressed a "large" role of religion in their lives (see Table 1 below). It appears that the activities of various jihadist structures, which more confidently form a parallel system of power in the North Caucasus republics, accompanied by their slogan of "pure Islam" and liberation of the entire North Caucasus from "infidels," are having a more noticeable effect on the minds of the peoples of the Northern Caucasian republics.

Table 1

WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN YOUR LIFE? (%)						

⁴⁶ "Sociological retrospective review of Islam in the North Caucasus", Caucasus Times, 16 February 2011 <http://caucasustimes.com/article.asp?language=2&id=20764>.

	big	rather big	rather small	small	I am an atheist	I don't know
Kabardino-Balkaria	42	35	11	6	3	3
Chechnya	81	13	1	0	3	2
Ingushetia	68	27	1	0	1	3
Dagestan	66	26	3	2	1	2
Karachaevo-Cherkessia	52	27	12	4	2	3
TOTAL	62	26	6	2	2	2

The public opinion survey also shows that a significant proportion of the population is dissatisfied with the rights of Muslims in their republics. On the whole in the North Caucasus, 24 percent of respondents believe that the rights of Muslims are not respected or “probably not respected as well as 36 percent of respondents in Nalchik, the capital of Kabardino-Balkaria and 32 percent of respondents in Cherkessk, the capital of Karachaevo-Cherkessia. It is noteworthy that the number of people dissatisfied with Muslims rights in the Western Caucasian republics seriously exceeds the number of discontented people in the Eastern Caucasian republics. Thus, in Dagestan 17 percent of people believe that the rights of Muslims in their country are not respected or “probably not respected” as well as 17 percent of people in neighboring Chechnya (See Table 2 below).

Table 2

ARE THE RIGHTS OF MOSLEMS OBSERVED IN YOUR REPUBLIC? (%)					
	yes	rather yes	rather not	not observed	I don't know

Kabardino-Balkaria	13	35	31	5	16
Chechnya	54	25	10	9	2
Ingushetia	63	17	8	5	7
Dagestan	50	27	6	11	6
Karachaevo-Cherkessia	20	30	28	4	18
TOTAL	40	27	17	7	9

The findings describe an interesting and somewhat contradictory picture of the role of Islam in the Northern Caucasian region, indicating a significant influence of Islam on the population (see Table 1), and serious differences between populations of certain Northern Caucasian republics regarding the degree of adherence to Islamic values.

The attitude towards the Islamic factor and its role in the history of certain people of the North Caucasus occupy a more significant place in the ongoing gradual transformation of ethnicity of the peoples of the North Caucasus, which takes various forms and development vectors. Meanwhile, the Islamic factor becomes not only a more visible building material for alteration of the existing identities, but also for the formation of a new super-ethnic identity of all the Islamic peoples of the North Caucasus and its opposition to neighboring non-Muslim peoples. It is this toolkit that ideologists of the self-proclaimed Caucasus Emirate try to use in the area of ethno-cultural engineering.

It should be noted that in some cases, Islam has been able to play a key role in shaping the new ethnic identity as it happened, in particular, with the Slavic population of Bosnia that practices Islam. Experts assume that a similar scenario is being implemented now among the Pomaks in Bulgaria, whose Islamic religious affiliation serves as grounds to deny that they belong to the Bulgarian ethnic group as demonstrated by some local intellectuals. The feature of any nationalism, which has been noticed by E. Gellner, is more clearly seen during processes in which myths “invert the reality” and, exploiting the vocabulary of “the restoration of historical justice” and “defense of traditions,” in fact create new “high cultures,” which are “their own inventions.”

Summarizing what has been said, one can say that merging of the fundamentalist idea with the Northern Caucasian socio-economic and ethno-political conditions has made the Caucasus Emirate a rather viable project capable to expanding the geographical scope of its influence in the region. However, the internal closedness of a system based on ‘national apartments’ and the CE’s dependence on internal ethnic and regional factors that are efficient only in the underground environment present the network with limitations and challenges. It is the Russian model of the Caucasus management that provides the Caucasus Emirate with the condition of self-preservation that deprives various communities, including the Salafists, of dialogue with the authorities. Moscow gives a *carte blanche* to the law enforcement structures and regional leaders to sort out relations with the civilian population solely relying on the law enforcement and administrative resources.

At the same time, it is necessary to notice that any closed system, which the Caucasus Emirate is, is doomed to stagnation and subsequent degeneration, degradation and complete disappearance. If the Northern Caucasian underground is deprived of the favorable public-political and social environment, it will be exposed

to self-destruction. However, contrary to the common sense, the current political system in Russia acts as the indirect guarantor of these favorable conditions.

The 2010 parliamentary elections proved once again that the North Caucasus lives in two dimensions and all shiny and impressive economic indexes of the virtual economies of the North Caucasus are far from the truth. The high parliamentary voter turnout, ‘festive mood’ of voters as well as quarterly reports of security officials describing progress in the fight against the Islamic fundamentalist underground in no way affect the dynamics of terrorist acts and attacks against representatives of the authorities. Attacks occurred in Dagestan even during the most critical days of the elections. Precisely because of this, one cannot talk about ‘volte-face’ in the Caucasian policy in connection with the conducted elections. Thus, it is likely that the fundamentalist network formed in the North Caucasus will expand its web of jamaats.

The Russian tandem founded in 2008 is deeply absolute in their decisions. It does not take criticism well. This means that it will retain the present system of relations between the federal and regional elites. In other words, the tendency to increase the gap between the elites and the society will continue. The Caucasian elite are not interested in dialogue with the civil society, since their political longevity does not depend on public sentiments in the republics. The main condition for career success for regional leaders is still their loyalty to the Kremlin and its official policy. As the present elections are showing, the last condition is met by Caucasian leaders quite well.

The very essence of the federal policy in the North Caucasus remains unchanged. It relies on power and money to address the region’s problems. All efforts to gain a strong hold on the minds of people of the North Caucasus at the local level become abortive due to the unwillingness of the Russian leadership to understand the social processes in the Caucasus. As a result, 4 December 2011 became not only an electoral triumph of the ruling party in the North Caucasus, but more evidence of the failure of the Russian policy in this troubled region.

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**CENTRAL ASIA**

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The CSIS Russia and Eurasia Program published a special report in August by Dr. Gordon M. Hahn, “Getting the Caucasus Emirate Right” which IIPER readers may find

of interest. It can be downloaded at
http://csis.org/files/publication/110930_Hahn_GettingCaucasusEmirateRt_Web.pdf.

ABOUT IIPER

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

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IIPER welcomes submissions on any aspect of Islamic, Islamist, or Jihadist politics in Eurasia as well as financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER's mailing list, please contact:

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