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**Ethnic Conflict and its Connection to Terrorism in the Republics of
Ingushetia and North Ossetia**

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**Ethnic Conflict and its Connection to Terrorism in the Republics of
Ingushetia and North Ossetia**

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Ethnic Conflict and its Connection to Terrorism in the Republics of Ingushetia and North Ossetia

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Violence in Russia's North Caucasus region has not been limited to Chechnya since the early 2000's. The generally accepted theory on violence in other North Caucasus republics is that it has spilled over from Chechnya and is associated with religious extremism and poverty. There may be other reasons, however, for outbreaks of violence in other North Caucasus republics such as Ingushetia and North Ossetia. The North Ossetians and Ingush have had a tense relationship since the late Tsarist period. Disputes over a region known as the Prigorodny region has fueled ethnic hatreds and resulted in an armed conflict between the two republics in 1992. The relationship remains tense to this day. The conflict may be playing a role in the outbreak of violence in the two republics. Studies have shown that terrorism, while an extreme tactic, is in many cases associated with moderate political demands shared by the terrorists' community. Additionally, terrorism appears to be often connected with lack of economic opportunity and the need for solidarity rather than simple poverty. The driving forces behind conventional terrorism suggest that Russian policymakers may be misguided in

their attempts to combat terrorism in Ingushetia and North Ossetia. Terrorist violence in the region may be an Ingush continuation of ethnic battles fought in 1992, but utilizing extreme guerrilla methods. Exploring the violence in the two republics in the context of an ongoing ethnic conflict may enable policymakers to better tailor anti-terrorism policies in the region.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the last decade, terrorist violence in the North Caucasus republics of Ingushetia and North Ossetia has increased dramatically. Both republics have seen an increase in bombing attacks, among other violent attacks, with a large portion of them occurring in Ingushetia. The source of terrorist activity in both republics appears to be Ingush and possibly Chechen militants operating in the area. Many of the attacks in North Ossetia appear to be committed by Ingush militants. For example, the North Ossetian public tends to view the 2004 Beslan hostage crisis as being the work of an Ingush terrorist organization.¹

Ingushetia, which remained peaceful during the first Chechen war for independence, appears to have become part of Russia's conflict with the North Caucasus region, which flared up once again in 1999.² Russian policymakers appear to view the violence coming from Ingushetia in the same context as the violence that flared up in neighboring Chechnya. The general focus of Russian policymakers appears to be fighting Islamic extremism with military force and vague economic stimulus plans.³⁴ Assuming that they are fighting the same enemy and ideology that they were fighting in

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- 1 Valery Dzutsev, "Final Settlement of North Ossetian-Ingush Conflict is tied to Peace in Ingushetia," *North Caucasus Analysis* 21, no. 10 (2009): 1, accessed July 15, 2012, [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35063](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35063)
 - 2 John O'Loughlin, Edward C. Holland, Frank D. W. Witmer, "The Changing Geography of Violence in Russia's North Caucasus, 1999-2011: Regional Trends and Local Dynamics in Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 52, no. 5 (2011): 606.
 - 3 John B. Dunlop and Rajan Menon, "Chaos in the North Caucasus and Russia's future," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 48, no. 2 (2006): 101.
 - 4 Liz Fuller, "Russian President Calls For 'Emergency Measures' In Ingushetia," Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, last modified January 21, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russian_President_Calls_For_Emergency_Measures_In_Ingushetia/1372965.html

Chechnya may be a mistake for Russian policymakers. There may be other reasons for the intense outbreak of violence in and around the two republics.

Terrorist violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia may have an ethnic conflict component as well. The two republics have experienced tensions over the Prigorodny region since the early 20th century. The region, which was claimed by the Ingush after their successful support of the Bolshevik army during the Russian Civil War, was later given to North Ossetia after the Ingush population was deported in 1944. The region remained a source of tension between the two populations after the Ingush were allowed to return. Tensions continued to build until they erupted into an armed conflict in 1992. The armed conflict ended quickly, but little was actually resolved. Tensions over the region continue to this day.⁵ There are indications that this conflict may be playing a role in the terrorist violence that is affecting both Ingushetia and North Ossetia.

Analysis the current situation in Ingushetia and North Ossetia as well as analysis of alternate explanations for terrorist violence, such as ethnic tensions, will ideally help provide more contexts on the outbreak of violence experienced in the two republics over the last decade. By looking at violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia in the context of an already existing conflict, the Russian government will be able to better tailor policies to combat the terrorist threat in the region.

5 John O'Loughlin, Gearoid O Tuathail, and Vladimir Kolossov, "The Localized Geopolitics of Displacement and Return in Eastern Prigorodnyy Rayon, North Ossetia," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 49, no. 6 (2008): 636-637.

Chapter 2: Background on the Ingushetia-North Ossetia Conflict

Ingushetia is a republic located in the North Caucasus region of southern Russia, located between North Ossetia and Chechnya. The Ingush are indigenous to the Caucasus mountain region and are closely related to their Chechen neighbors. They are historically Sunni Muslims like the Chechens. In fact, the Ingush and Chechen peoples were considered to be the same by the Russian government until the Caucasian War of Sheikh Shamil against the Russian empire in the mid-19th century. Russian colonizers initially made the distinction between Chechens and Ingush based on the choice of the majority of Ingush fighters to abstain from the conflict.⁶

The Ingush people are more distinct from their North Ossetian neighbors, who are ethnic Iranian Alans and Sarmatians who migrated to the North Caucasus region in the fourth century. Standing in contrast to the majority Muslim populations of Ingushetia and Chechnya, North Ossetians primarily practice Eastern Orthodox Christianity. There are, however, a minority of about twenty percent of North Ossetians who identify as Sunni Muslims. North Ossetia has historically had a much stronger relationship with Russia, largely in part to a shared religion as well as North Ossetia's willingness to play a subservient role in their relationship with Russia and acts as its pawn in the North Caucasus region.⁷

Prior to the late 19th century, relations between Ingushetia and North Ossetia were

6 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region (New York: Human Rights Watch/ Helsinki, 1996) 6-7.

7 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 7-8.

relatively peaceful. Each of the populations had their own settlements and coexisted with little difficulty. The source of their eventual conflict begins with the expansionist efforts of the Russian empire in the 18th century. The Tsarist Empire sent multiethnic frontiersmen, who would come to be known as Terek River Cossacks, into the North Caucasus region in the 18th century to act as an arm of the state. They built forts and settlements on land seized from local populations. The Cossacks built their villages and towns on lands that were once considered to be Ingush or Ossetian. The Cossack settlements would continue to disrupt local populations as the Tsarist military pushed further into the Caucasus mountain region in the 19th century.⁸

With the invasion of the Tsarist military, the Ossetian population differentiated itself from their Ingush neighbors by converting to Russian Orthodox Christianity. Some Ossetian leaders joined the Russian Empire, which was commemorated in the newly established city of Vladikavkaz (“Power over the Caucasus”). The cooperation between Ossetians and the Russian Empire set the Ossetian population apart from the rest of Caucasian populations. The expansionist efforts of the Cossacks, however, continued to affect Ingush communities. Vladikavkaz grew after the defeat of rebel leader Imam Shamil in 1859. After his surrender, Cossack and Ossetian raids continued to expand the city. As the raids reached further out, Ingush communities located south and east of the city were forcibly relocated to Nazran valley. The tensions created by the Cossack/Ossetian alliance would continue to intensify during the Russian Revolution and subsequent civil war as a result of an alliance between the Bolshevik army and the

⁸ O’Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 637-8.

oppressed Ingush and Chechen populations.⁹

During the Russian civil war, The Bolshevik army formed an alliance with Chechen, Ingush, and left-wing Ossetian fighters against the Ossetian and Cossack fighters who were fighting in support of the White army, which remained loyal to the Tsarist system. In March of 1920, Vladikavkaz fell to the Bolshevik army. While forming the alliance with Ingush and Chechen fighters during the war, the Bolsheviks supposedly made promises of land concessions to Ingush fighters in exchange for their efforts in fighting the Cossacks and Ossetians. In particular, the Bolsheviks supposedly promised the Prigorodny region to the Ingush fighters in exchange for their service. The fighters loyal to the Bolshevik army broke the Cossack power base along the Terek, at which point Ingush fighters reclaimed the Prigorodny region and once again settled in its towns.¹⁰

In exchange for the support of the Ingush fighters, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party passed a decree of “Decossackification” in the Prigorodny region. The decree, passed in March of 1919, forcibly resettled the Cossacks who had inhabited the Prigorodny region before and during the civil war. In 1920, the party created the Autonomous Mountain Soviet Socialist Republic, which was referred to as the “Mountaineers Republic”. The republic, with its capital located in Vladikavkaz was composed of a variety of ethnic groups, including Kabards, Chechens, Ingush, Ossetians, Karachai, Cherkess, and Balkers. The republic soon began to break apart however, with smaller territorial units being created instead. By 1924, the republic primarily consisted

⁹ Localized geopolitics of displacement, 638-9

¹⁰ O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 639.

of Ingush and Ossetians, at which point the government simply decided to divide the two groups into autonomous oblasts. The Ingush and Ossetians were each given their own territories, with the Prigorodny region being located in the Ingush oblast. The right bank of Vladikavkaz served as the capital of the Ingush oblast, while the left bank served as the capital of the Ossetian oblast. Over a decade later, in 1936, the Ingush territory was temporarily merged with neighboring Chechen territory, creating the Checheno-Ingush ASSR. The Prigorodny region was still located within this territory.¹¹

The beginning of the conflict over the Prigorodny region, which would serve as the source of later conflicts between Ingush and North Ossetian populations began in the 1930's. During the early 1930's, the support of the Soviet government began to shift from the Ingush towards the Ossetians. This shift in support reflected an effort by the Soviets to contain the rebellious Vainakh peoples of the Ingush population. This shift in support was demonstrated in a series of governmental decrees. In 1933, the Soviet government declared that the city of Vladikavkaz would serve solely as the capital of North Ossetia, depriving the Ingush of their capital. Additionally, the creation of the Checheno-Ingush ASSR, while not further affecting the territorial boundaries of Ingushetia, served as a method of decreasing the cultural and political capital of the Ingush population.¹²

The most dramatic action taken against the Ingush people occurred in early 1944. Under Stalin's orders, the Chechen and Ingush populations of the North Caucasus region were forcibly deported to Central Asia beginning on February 23, 1944. It is estimated that 83,000 Ingush were deported, 32,100 from the Prigorodny region. The Caucasian

11 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodny Region, 9.

12 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 639-643.

peoples were deported under extreme conditions, and some estimates suggest that almost half of those being deported died during their journey.¹³ The deportations were ostensibly punishment for supposed cooperation between the Caucasian peoples and the invading German armies. It is widely believed that the forced deportations were an effort by the Stalinist regime to further control the rebellious populations of the North Caucasus, especially after an attempted uprising in Chechnya in 1940.¹⁴

The Checheno-Ingush ASSR was dissolved, and the territory was distributed among neighboring regions, including the Prigorodny region. During the following twelve years, the Stalinist state attempted to fill the vacant regions with Ossetians and Russians. The state created an organized movement of peasant workers to inhabit the regions. By the late 1940's, these migrants had established themselves in the formerly Ingush territory, living in former Ingush homes and working on collective farms and in factories. By the time the deported populations were allowed to return, the Prigorodny region had a majority Ossetian population.¹⁵

After Stalin's death and Khrushchev's secret speech, in which he acknowledged the crimes committed by the Stalinist regime, Khrushchev's regime attempted to remedy the deportations of the Ingush and Chechen peoples. A decree, entitled "On the Lifting of Special Restrictions on Settlement of Chechens, the Ingush, and Karachays, Evicted during the Great Patriotic War" allowed the deported groups to return to their former homelands. In January of 1957, the Supreme Soviet restored the Checheno-Ingush

13 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 642-643.

14 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 10.

15 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 643-44.

ASSR. Although a meaningful gesture, the republic was restored with different borders from those that existed prior to its dissolution. The border issue was significant because it involved the distribution of the Prigorodny Rayon. Eastern parts of the rayon, which were considered Ingush territory prior to the deportations, remained part of North Ossetia. The government did not want to deal with the prospect of resettling the Ossetian migrants who had settled the area after the Ingush populations were deported. In fact, 22,000 more South Ossetians arrived in the area between 1956 and 1959.¹⁶ The government also did not plan accordingly for the number of families that would be returning. Policy and propaganda efforts were used in order to attempt to slow the rate of repatriation among deported peoples. According to the original plans put forth by the party, 17,000 families were expected to return in 1957, but 34,645 families actually returned by September of that year.¹⁷

Returning Ingush and Chechens, who were arriving in unexpectedly large numbers, were met with discrimination and even violence in the formerly Ingush territory. Those attempting to settle in what was then considered North Ossetian territory encountered obstacles to gaining the necessary permits that enabled them to obtain a home or job. The local government in the region attempted to limit the sale of homes and the number of available permits in an effort to discourage Ingush from returning.

According to an Ingush official who experienced the tension that surrounded his family's

16 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 644.

17 Vladimir A. Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings in the USSR: Protest and Rebellion in the Post-Stalin Years*, trans. Elaine McClarnand MacKinnon (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 88.

return, the discrimination was fairly common.¹⁸

From 1957 on the Ingush people led a constant struggle to return to their homes and their land. Our return was decided upon, but the leadership of North Ossetia did everything to block this. The home where I and my parents were born was not returned. And if an Ossetian tried to sell and Ingush back his home, his Ossetian neighbors would threaten him with vigilantism. And they blocked us with residency permits and with discrimination at work.¹⁹

In addition to discrimination in housing, Ingush from the Prigorodny region also claimed discrimination in the job and education sectors as well. Ingush workers found it difficult to rise in factories, and young Ingush found themselves being rejected from educational institutions even if they had the necessary qualifications. On account of their position in society, the returning Ingush found themselves having to rely on corruption and bribes in order to gain positions or access to institutions. Many Ossetians acknowledge that bribes were necessary for the returning Ingush, but also claim that the positions they bought allowed them to live as well or better than the Ossetians in the region.²⁰ Most Ingush inhabitants of the Prigorodny region appear to disagree with the Ossetian position:

18 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 12.

19 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 13.

20 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 13-14.

At enterprises the practice arose whereby an Ingush had to pay a bribe to occupy a middle-level position. And the Ossetians would speak about this, not hiding anything... If an Ingush did buy a position he would be allowed to work for some time unhindered, but then he would be called to the boss who would tell him, 'If you don't resign you will have big problems...' This trend was especially strong from 1987 to 1992. They did this to give the impression that they weren't against all Ingush. They would say your position had become redundant. A month later they would reopen this position and hire an Ossetian.²¹

In addition to widespread discrimination in the region, physical violence also became a concern for returning Ingush and Chechens. Violent clashes first erupted in 1956, not long after the deported populations began returning to their former homeland. The first instance of violence between returning groups and those that had migrated to the region in their absence occurred in December 1956. An Ingush man, having returned from exile, declared that he had owned his home before being deported. He demanded that he and his family be allowed to live in it once again, and an argument ensued with the current Ossetian inhabitant. Others became involved, and eventually a fight occurred in which one Ingush and three Ossetians were killed.²²

The relationship between settlers and returning Ingush and Chechens was extremely tense, and it appeared that more violence was likely. A complaint from the village of Bukovka, Novoselsk district in April 1957, filed in the name of a generalized

21 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 14.

22 Kozlov, 88.

Russian people, helps describe the tension and local efforts to politicize the conflict.

The Chechens and Ingush are telling Russians that their exile from the Caucasus was illegal. Stalin and Beria were the ones guilty of this, and therefore they demand that the Russians give back their homes and everything else that had earlier belonged to them. They claim that during the deportation they left everything here. Now they are forcing the Russians to flee. With a ribald sneer, they gibe about how their people will soon be sitting in power and you [Russians] will be digging bathrooms for us... The land is ours [they say], the Russians do not belong here, the Russians are interfering with our lives. We can manage our own republic, and now we will uphold our old law of the Caucasus. Both young and old have begun to pray to God. They have chosen a mullah, and under the leadership of the mullah they are working wonders that are sickening to hear about. Russian women and children fear their glance, because each day brings new incident...²³

Tensions further escalated in 1958, when Russian settlers conducted a three day pogrom against returning Ingush and Chechens. Tensions continued throughout the rest of the Soviet period, particularly in the 1970's and early 1980's.²⁴ In 1970, 1972-1973, and 1980, Ingush conducted demonstrations in support of what they believed was their

²³ Kozlov, 91.

²⁴ The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 14.

rightful entitlement to the Prigorodny region.²⁵ In 1973, demonstrations were held for four days in Grozny, the capital of the republic. The demonstrations could only be dispersed after the crowds were addressed by a member of the Politburo, but they remained civil. Not all of the demonstration, however, remained non-violent. There were violent clashes in the Prigorodny region between Ingush and Ossetians in 1981. The majority of the clashes took place in the capital, Vladikavkaz. Each side claims that the other instigated the conflict, with the Ingush claiming they had support from Moscow and the Ossetians claiming that the Ingush participants had killed an Ossetian taxi driver. The clashes were more intense than those in the 1970's, with crowds attacking government and police buildings in Vladikavkaz. Moscow authorities attempted to restore order by instituting a curfew and replacing the North Ossetian first party secretary with a Russian official who was perceived to be less biased against the Ingush population in the region.²⁶

Tensions continued throughout the perestroika period. Nationalist sentiments began to become more widespread in the North Ossetian ASSR as well as in the Checheno-Ingush ASSR. More people in the Ingush region began to debate the issue of the Prigorodny region. Some new political groups, such as Niishko, even built their platforms around the demand for the return of the Prigorodny region. Others demanded that the Ingush once again have their own territorial unit, as they did prior to Ingushetia being merged with Chechnya in 1934. Ingush demands were again fueled by a 1990 Soviet investigation that concluded that there was some merit to Ingush claims to the

²⁵ O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolossov, 646.

²⁶ The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 15.

Prigorodny region.²⁷

Tensions further increased in 1991, the year of the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Further emboldened by the Soviet investigation that lent legitimacy to their claims, the number of rallies for the return of an Ingush territorial unit as well as the return of the Prigorodny region increased. Boris Yeltsin even spoke at a rally in Nazran, the Ingush capital, in favor of the restoration of an Ingush republic. The Ingush sent a representative to the North Ossetian ASSR Supreme Soviet to explain their demands. The rally called for

“the restoration of Vladikavkaz, the North Ossetian capital, as the Ingush capital; the rescinding of the ban of issuing residency permits for the Prigorodnyi region; an end to the settlement of South Ossetian refugees in the Prigorodnyi region; and the establishment of a commission to pay damages to Ingush who were deported in 1944.”²⁸

The demands were rejected by the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet. They responded with their own rally, which condemned the extreme Ingush demands and rejected the possibility of any territorial changes.²⁹

Demonstrations on both sides once again became violent in 1991. There were clashes between Ingush and North Ossetian police in the Prigorodny region on April 19.

27 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 15-16.

28 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 15.

29 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 16-17.

A state of emergency was quickly declared, but dispatched Russian troops could not put an end to the rallies or violence. Violent skirmishes continued throughout the month. A “First Congress” of peoples from the Chechen-Ingush Republic restated their demands for the return of the Prigorodny region in June 1991, and Boris Yeltsin provided support for the return of the region in September 1991, though that was likely an effort to split the Ingush from their increasingly restive Chechen neighbors. Thousands of Ingush once again rallied in to demand the return of the disputed region in November, after the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet had asked central authorities to intervene.³⁰

The torrent of rallies and demands eventually had an impact on the Soviet government, especially due to the fact that the government was increasingly concerned about the possibility of a conflict in Chechnya. On November 14, 1989, the USSR Supreme Soviet issued a declaration that acknowledged that the Stalinist deportations of the people of the North Caucasus in 1994 were criminal actions. In April, 1991, the Law on the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples was passed. Article 3 of the law supported the restoration of territory that existed before the deportations and compensation for the victims:

Статья 3. Реабилитация репрессированных народов означает признание и осуществление их права на восстановление территориальной целостности, существовавшей до антиконституционной политики насильственного перекраивания границ, на восстановление национально - государственных

³⁰ The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 17.

образований, сложившихся до их упразднения, а также на возмещение ущерба, причиненного государством...

Реабилитация предусматривает возвращение народов, не имевших своих национально - государственных образований, согласно их волеизъявлению, в места традиционного проживания на территории РСФСР.

В процессе реабилитации репрессированных народов не должны ущемляться права и законные интересы граждан, проживающих в настоящее время на территориях репрессированных народов.³¹

Article 6 also addressed the restoration of former borders, stating:

Статья 6. Территориальная реабилитация репрессированных народов

31 “Российская Советская Федеративная Социалистическая Республика: Закон: О реабилитации репрессированных народов” ПЦПИ. Accessed June 2, 2012.
<http://www.pcpi.ru/manage/page/?tid=764400007&nd=9003294&prevDoc=9003294&spack=110listid%3D010000000100%26listpos%3D68%26lsz%3D70%26nd%3D9001023%26nh%3D1%26>.

“Article 3. The rehabilitation of repressed peoples means recognition and exercise of their right to restore the territorial integrity of the pre-constitutional policy of forced redrawing of borders, the restoration of the national - state entities formed prior to their abolition, as well as compensation for damage caused by the state...

Rehabilitation involves the return of people who did not have their own nation - state entities, in accordance with their consent, in the traditional places of residence in the territory of the RSFSR.

In the process of rehabilitation of repressed peoples should not be infringed upon the rights and lawful interests of citizens, now living in the territories of the repressed peoples. “

предусматривает осуществление на основе их волеизъявления правовых и организационных мероприятий по восстановлению национально - территориальных границ, существовавших до их антиконституционного насильственного изменения.

Для осуществления территориальной реабилитации в необходимых случаях может устанавливаться переходный период. Решение об установлении переходного периода и восстановлении национально - территориальных границ принимается Верховным Советом РСФСР.³²

The law, while initially received favorably by Ingush officials, was somewhat lacking. While it stated that territories taken from deported groups should be returned, it did not go into detail about how such a feat would be accomplished. The government would run into the same problems encountered during the period of de-Stalinization. Returning a region to a previously deported group and having to resettle those who have since inhabited the region is a fairly sizable undertaking. Returning territory to a

32“Российская Советская Федеративная Социалистическая Республика: Закон: О реабилитации репрессированных народов” ПЦПИ. Accessed June 2, 2012. <http://www.pcpi.ru/manage/page/?tid=764400007&nd=9003294&prevDoc=9003294&spack=110listid%3D010000000100%26listpos%3D68%26lsz%3D70%26nd%3D9001023%26nh%3D1%26>.

“Article 6. Territorial Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples provides for their expression on the basis of legal and organizational measures to restore the national - territorial borders that existed prior to their violent anti-constitutional change.

In order to implement the territorial rehabilitation, where necessary, can be set a transition period. The decision on the establishment of the transitional period and the restoration of the national - territorial boundaries is taken by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.”

deported population becomes even more complicated after those who settled the region had been allowed to remain there for decades. Infringing upon the rights of the current population became a very real concern. Therefore, Ingush who were optimistic about the law being passed, soon realized that the Prigorodny region would not be returned to them as quickly and definitively as they had hoped. The law did however, add more legitimacy to the Ingush cause, which would only exacerbate tensions in the region.³³

Several factors contributed to a further increase in ethnic tensions that would eventually escalate into an armed conflict in 1992. In 1989 and from 1991 to 1992, violence in Georgia drove large numbers of Georgian Ossetians out of their country and into North Ossetia. The large influx of refugees, between 60,000 and 100,000, placed a large amount of stress on the republic, with many of the refugees settling in Vladikavkaz and Prigorodny. The influx of Georgian Ossetians further increased the proportion of Ossetians in the Prigorodny region, and also instilled a certain amount of resentment in them due to their competing with many others for increasingly limited resources and jobs.³⁴

Support for the reestablishment of an autonomous Ingush republic also contributed to the growing conflict. In 1991, Djokar Dudayev declared Chechen independence, which would result in two armed conflicts with Russian forces over the next two decades. While the Ingush did not want to declare independence from Russia, Dudayev's actions emboldened them to continue demanding for the reestablishment of an autonomous Ingushetia. Boris Yeltsin supported the cause and campaigned in the region

33 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolossov, 647.

34 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolossov, 648.

with strong support for an autonomous Ingushetia and the return of territory that had been lost in 1944. On November 30, 1991 the Ingush population in Checheno-Ingushetia conducted a referendum on whether to establish Ingush republic, with its capital located in Vladikavkaz and containing the territory lost in 1944. The referendum passed with 92.4 percent of voters in favor. Public support for the referendum caused Ingush leaders to draft a letter to the Russian President, the Supreme Soviet Chairman, and the People's Deputies of the Russian Federation on March 17, 1992, demanding the return of the land lost in 1944.³⁵ The Russian Supreme Soviet would recognize their demands and allow for the establishment of the Republic of Ingushetia within the Russian Federation on June 4, 1992. The establishment of the region did not solve territorial disputes however. The Supreme Soviet did not clearly define the borders of Ingushetia, thus allowing arguments about territory to continue.³⁶

The conflict grew in 1992 as ethnically-motivated crimes in the Prigorodny region increased. It is estimated that in the nine months preceding the armed conflict, there were “thirty one premeditated murders, thirteen serious assaults, 120 bandit attacks, and 135 robberies, of which sixteen murders, one hundred bandit attacks, and sixty-nine robberies went unsolved.”³⁷ The haphazard attempts at investigation created a situation in which victims could not be satisfied, assuming that justice had been served.

Prior to the actual outbreak of conflict, both the North Ossetians and Ingush had been receiving arms from various sources. The North Ossetians received weapons from a

35 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 648.

36 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 22.

37 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 31.

conflict in South Ossetia that was also fueling in the dramatic influx of Georgian Ossetians in North Ossetia. The Ingush also received weapons, mostly from neighboring Chechnya. North Ossetia's military strength grew as the local government began to incorporate regional paramilitary groups in to the North Ossetian Security forces, which also allowed for an increase in the amount of military hardware in the region.³⁸

The conflict exploded on October 20, 1992, when a young Ingush girl was struck and killed by an Ossetian armored personnel carrier. Ethnic tensions flared, and soon all Ingush localities in North Ossetia were put under the rule of armed Ingush groups. These groups went so far as to erect barricades around Ingush settlements in the Prigorodny region. After that point, larger scale fighting began to break out along ethnic lines in villages and towns in Prigorodny. Shortly after, Ingush forces attacked an Ossetian militia. The conflict spread from there, and a response came from North Ossetian and Russian authorities. Moscow's official view on the conflict was that Ingush forces had invaded North Ossetia, and the central government subsequently supplied small arms and tanks to North Ossetian forces. Russian and South Ossetian forces deported Ingush from North Ossetia. Those actions likely saved lives, but the deportations were done violently and elicited a negative response. By the end of 1992, approximately forty percent of the population of North Ossetia had changed. The combination of the influx of Ossetians from Georgia and Ingush deportations during the conflict resulted in a North Ossetia that was considerably more homogenous.³⁹

Additionally, it appears to be widely accepted that the Russian forces dispatched

38 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 29-30.

39 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 650-653.

to the region to stop the conflict did so by fighting on the side of the North Ossetians. In contrast to the more organized forces on the North Ossetian side, Ingush forces were mostly limited to irregular militias, often referred to as gangs and commandos in the media.⁴⁰

Open hostilities lasted from October 31 – November 5, 1992, during which both Ingush and North Ossetian forces were guilty of violations of the rules of war. During that short period of conflict, 583 were killed, 939 were wounded, 261 were reported missing, and 1093 persons were taken hostage. Ingush represented a majority of the victims in all of those categories.⁴¹ The conflict itself did not end with any kind of definitive peace accord or any guarantees to return displaced Ingush. The Russian government took over the administration associated with the conflict and attempted to create conditions under which displaced Ingush would be allowed to return to their homes. The governance structure in charge of these arrangements changed over the years but has appeared to produce few results. From November 1992 to the present, the governance structure has been called the “Transitional Administration in the Territories of the Republic of North Ossetia and in the Ingush Republic”, the “Temporary State Committee of the Russian Federation to Eliminate the Consequences of Ossetian-Ingush Conflict of October-November 1992”, the “Representative of the Russian Federation in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania and the Republic of Ingushetia”, and the “Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Settlement of the Ossetian-Ingush Conflict”. In November 2004, responsibilities were transferred to the

40 O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolossov, 649.

41 The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region, 36-37.

Russian Federal Migration Service. Any kind of real progress has been slow, partially due to disagreements on the number of persons displaced by the conflict.⁴²

⁴² O'Loughlin, Tuathail, Kolosov, 653.

Chapter 3: The Situation in Modern Ingushetia and North Ossetia

Tensions remained after open, armed hostilities in the 1992 Ingush-North Ossetian conflict came to an end. While tensions remained, acts of violence appeared to decline in both republics. Conflict in the North Caucasus after the 1992 conflict was heavily contained within the borders of Chechnya. The 1994-1996 war in Chechnya that ended with de-facto independence for Chechnya was a separatist war, fought by Chechen rebels determined to achieve independence. The conflict did not seem to heavily involve other groups in the North Caucasus region. The second Chechen war however, which began with a series of apartment building bombings in Moscow and officially ended in 2009, seems to have had a much more wide-reaching effect on the Caucasus region. The Chechen rebel leader during the second war initially released statements that used the term 'martyr', which suggested that the new conflict had a religious element that was not present in the first war.⁴³

This new conflict is being fought over a much larger territory, with violence spilling into neighboring republics in the Caucasus and into Moscow. The general consensus among Russian officials as well as many Western officials, is that the violence is mostly driven by Islamic extremism, with many of the attacks being conducted by 'jammats', Islamic rebel groups fighting against the Russian government.⁴⁴

Ingushetia

43 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 597.

44 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 597.

Ingushetia in particular has experienced a large surge in violence since the resurgence of hostilities in the North Caucasus region in 1999. There are several factors contributing to the increased levels of violence. Ingushetia quickly destabilized by an influx of Chechen refugees during the early part of the second war. Intrusions by Moscow and a general mistrust of the central government due to the outcome of the 1992 conflict also made Ingushetia a more susceptible location for further outbreaks of violence.⁴⁵

Moscow's intrusion into Ingushetia's local government is best represented by the dismissal of popular Ingush president Ruslan Aushev in 2002. Aushev was a former Soviet general who managed to counter threats of Islamic insurgency to the area in the 1990's by appealing to rebels with policies and economic incentives. Examples include legalizing polygamy and finding employment for young men in the region who were in danger of becoming radicalized. Angered by Aushev's public criticism of the Kremlin's handling of the second Chechen war, Moscow manipulated the 2002 Ingush presidential election to ensure that the popular Aushev was defeated by Murat Zyazikov, who was considerably more supportive of the Kremlin's policies in the region.⁴⁶

Zyazikov's time in office was plagued with violence. There was a negative public response to his placement in office, as well as a subsequent harsh crack-down on rebellious and dissident elements in the region. His term even witnessed attempts on several officials in the region. Zyazikov himself was targeted by a car bomb in 2004.⁴⁷

45 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 606.

46 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 606.

47 "У машины Зязикова взорвана бомба мощностью 100 кг тротила," *Газета.Ru*, last modified April 6 2004, <http://www.gazeta.ru/2004/04/06/last116994.shtml>.

His family has been targeted as well. His cousin was killed in a shooting, and his uncle was held in captivity for a period before being freed by a rescue operation.⁴⁸⁴⁹

Additionally, Prime Minister Ibragim Malsagov was injured and hospitalized in a bomb attack in August 2005.⁵⁰

Zyazikov eventually resigned in 2008. The Kremlin reported that Zyazikov was not being dismissed, but rather was being transferred to another position.⁵¹ It is widely believed however, that Zyazikov was being replaced due to his inability to control increasing levels of violence and unrest in the region, particularly after the murder of Magomed Yevloyev, a human rights activist.

Отметим, что в последние месяцы в Ингушетии участились случаи нападений на сотрудников правоохранительных органов. Также было совершено несколько покушений на родственников Мурата Зязикова, в том числе занимавших высокие посты в руководстве Ингушетии.

Зязиков, занимавший пост главы Ингушетии с апреля 2002 года, подвергся резкой критике со стороны политических оппонентов и правозащитников после убийства Магомеда Евлоева, одного из ведущих оппозиционеров и владельца сайта "Ингушетия.Ру". Евлоев был застрелен после задержания

48 Эдуард Ломовцев, "Зязикова убили :В Назрани расстрелян двоюродный брат президента Ингушетии," *Время Новостей*, last modified November 9 2008, <http://vremya.ru/2008/167/46/212465.html>.

49 "В Ингушетии найден похищенный полгода назад дядя президента Зязикова," *newsru.com*, last modified October 12 2007, <http://www.newsru.com/russia/11oct2007/zyazikov.html>.

50 Екатерина Рогожникова, "Двойной удар боевиков на улице Победы," *Лента.ru*, last modified August 26, 2005, <http://lenta.ru/articles/2005/08/26/ingush/>.

51 "Зязиков больше не президент," *Интерфакс*, last modified October 30 2008, <http://interfax.ru/politics/txt.asp?id=42760>.

сотрудниками правоохранительных органов. Руководство республики.⁵²

Yevloyev's death appears to represent an unwanted incursion into the lives of Ingush by Moscow, which is already regarded poorly on account of the lack of continuing federal support for the return of the Prigorodnyi region. Yevloyev, who was an activist and founder of the critical *ingushetiya.ru* website, was a figure who publicly stood in opposition to Zyazikov's brutal rule in the region. Upon landing in Ingushetia on August 31, 2008, Yevloyev was detained by a group of armed police and ushered into a nearby car. His body was dumped in front of a local hospital less than twenty minutes later, with a gunshot wound to his temple. He died shortly after. Officials later claimed that he was shot while trying to grab an officer's weapon. Deaths like Yevloyev's appear to be common enough that it was described as being “an entirely predictable tragedy, just the latest example of Russia's murderous grip on the republic.”⁵³

Zyazikov's period of rule also witnessed one of the first large-scale attacks conducted by rebels in Ingushetia. In June 2004, militants led by Shamil Basayev attacked Nazran, Ingushetia's largest city. The attack represented the change in the

52 "Медведев отправил в отставку президента Ингушетии," *Лента.ru*, last modified October 30 2008, <http://lenta.ru/news/2008/10/30/ingush/>.

It should be noted that in recent months in Ingushetia, the cases of attacks on police officers. Also, there were several attacks on relatives of Murat Zyazikov, including occupying high positions in the leadership of Ingushetia.

Zyazikov, who served as head of Ingushetia in April 2002, was sharply criticized by political opponents and human rights activists after the murder of Magomed Yevloyev, one of the leading opposition figures and the owner of the site "*Ingushetiya.ru*." Yevloyev was shot to death after being detained by law enforcement officials. The republic's leadership insists that the opposition leader was killed by accident.

53 Tom Parfitt, "Moscow's secret war in Ingushetia," *The Spectator* 9394, no. 308 (2008): 18.

region, to a situation in which ethnic Ingush were willing to take up arms against the Russian government.⁵⁴ Throughout his period in office, Zyazikov would insist that Islamic separatists were the source of all attacks in Ingushetia. His claim would often be echoed in Moscow.⁵⁵

Following the Nazran attack, violence in Ingushetia increased at a rapid pace. While no high-profile attacks like the Beslan school attack occurred in Ingushetia, violence appears to occur fairly regularly after Zyazikov was put in power in 2002. A dataset used to measure violence in the region recorded 70 violent events in Ingushetia in 2002, 90 in 2003, and then increased wildly to 157 in 2004. The number of violent attacks continued to rise throughout Zyazikov's term as president, with 357 violent events being recorded in 2008, his final year in office. Violence subsided somewhat following 2008, with 309 events and 192 events recorded in 2009 and 2010 respectively.⁵⁶

After Zyazikov's resignation, he was replaced by Yunus-bek Bamatgireyevich Yevkurov . The general public reacted negatively to Yevloyev's appointment on account of their desire to see Aushev, the last popularly elected leader reinstated. Nonetheless, Yevkurov was received more favorably than Zyazikov. His considerably more populist approach to governing no doubt helped the number of violent events in the region continue to drop to 34 recorded conflicts in the first half of 2011.⁵⁷ There do not appear to be any readily available numbers for the whole year of 2011 or 2012 as of yet.

There still appears to be a sizable opposition to the rule of Yevkurov, however.

54 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 605-606.

55 Parfitt, 19.

56 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, 606.

57 O'Loughlin, Holland, Witmer, , 606.

While his populist rule is considerably more popular than Zyazikov's, there appears to be a general mistrust of Moscow and its actions in the region, including the appointment of leaders such as Zyazikov and Yevkurov. The number of attacks in the region appears to have declined, but the remaining attacks appear to target officials in the region. In June 2009, the Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Court of Ingushetia and Yevkurov himself were both attacked. The Deputy Chairman was attacked by gunmen, while militants attacked and hospitalized Yevkurov with a car bomb on June 22, 2009.^{58,59} Not long after those attacks on Ingush officials, there was a major attack in August, in which a car bomb detonated at a police station killed 20 and injured 60.⁶⁰

While religious extremists are often reported to be the cause of such attacks, it should also be noted that Yevkurov has managed to alienate Ingush activists who are passionate about having the Prigorodny region returned.

Yevkurov made a point of meeting with opposition representatives soon after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev named him republic head. But he alienated them within months by pushing through the republican parliament a law on municipalities that did not designate the disputed Prigorodny district of neighboring North Ossetia as part of Ingushetia.⁶¹

58 “Режим КТО, введенный в Назрановском районе 22 июня, отменен,” *РиаНовости*, last modified August 24 2009, http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20090824/182176376.html.

59 Владимир Шишлин, “Бандитский беспредел,” *Интерфакс*, last modified June 10, 2009, <http://www.interfax.ru/politics/txt.asp?id=84394&sw=%C8%ED%E3%F3%F8%E5&bd=25&bm=5&by=2009&ed=25&em=6&ey=2009&secid=0&mp=0&p=5>.

60 Люся Мовсесян, “Дестабилизировать нестабильное,” *Лента.ru*, last modified August 17 2009, <http://lenta.ru/articles/2009/08/17/nazran/>.

61 “Ingushetian Leader Faces His Critics,” Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, last modified February 28

There have also been claims from militants that challenge Yevkurov's legitimacy in ruling Ingushetia based on his ethnicity.

Militants are not just worried about major government offensives; they also reject Yevkurov's claim of being Ingush, since he was born in North Ossetia – a neighboring province that is Russian Orthodox Christian and distrusted by the Ingush – and is half North Ossetian.⁶²

North Ossetia

North Ossetia does not experience violence with the same frequency as Ingushetia and several other Caucasus republics. Widespread assassinations along the lines of those previously described as having taken place in Ingushetia do not appear to be the dominant form of violence in the republic. That being said, North Ossetia has not escape the violence that has plagued the North Caucasus region since the early 2000's. The republic has experienced eight separate terrorist attacks since 1999.⁶³ While the violence is not as regular as in other regions of the Caucasus, the violent events in North Ossetia appear to be well-organized and often times have a large number of casualties. The eight attacks in the North Ossetian republic, which includes the tragic hostage-taking in Beslan, have

2012, http://www.rferl.org/content/ingushetian_leader_faces_his_critics/24498976.html.

62 "Russia: Attempted Assassination in Ingushetia," *Stratfor*, last modified June 22 2009, <http://www.stratfor.com/sample/analysis/russia-attempted-assassination-ingushetia>.

63 "Хронология самых масштабных терактов в России. Справка," Корреспондент.нет, last modified January 25, 2011, <http://korrespondent.net/russia/1178319-hronologiya-samyh-masshtabnyh-teraktov-v-rossii-spravka>.

killed 516 people and wounded 980.⁶⁴

While all of the attacks in the region were tragic, the most recent attacks in the North Ossetian region best explain the current narrative associated with violence in the republic. On November 6, 2008, a female suicide bomber detonated an explosive device in a market area of Vladikavkaz. The attack killed 12 people, and was seen as the first terror attack aimed at civilians in Vladikavkaz. An obscure Islamist group, Riyadus Salihiyna, claimed responsibility for the attack ten days after the bombing, although the group was widely believed to have disbanded in 2004 or 2006.

A similar attack occurred in Vladikavkaz on September 9, 2010. The blast killed 16 and injured over 100. Much like the 2008 attack, the target was a market.⁶⁵ Attacks in North Ossetia appear to primarily target the civilian population. While there are occasionally attacks on military checkpoints, attacks in North Ossetia appear to occur in public areas such as markets or schools.⁶⁶

64 Khasan V. Dzutsev, "The Republic of North Ossetia-Alania After the Terrorist Act of 9 September 2010 in Vladikavkaz," *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 49, no.4 (2011): 41.

65 Daisy Sindelar, "Blast At Vladikavkaz Market Kills 17," Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, last modified September 9 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Blast_At_Market_In_Russian_Caucasus_City_Casualties_Reported/2152777.html

66 Robert Johnston, "Terrorist attacks in Russia," Johnston Archive, last modified January 26 2011, <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/terrorism/terr-russia.html>.

Chapter 4: Current Official Explanations for Violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia

Islam

A main concern for those hoping to see an end to widespread violent acts in Ingushetia and neighboring North Ossetia is the Russian government's focus on Islam as being the main cause of instability in the area. The general consensus among policymakers in the region appears to be that violence emanating from the second conflict in Chechnya was primarily connected with Islamic extremism and therefore that violence in neighboring regions must be spillover violence with the same causes. While Islamic extremism may not be the cause of all violence in the regions in question, it is important to note that there have been issues associated with young people adopting extremist Wahhabi and Salafi ideologies, particularly during the troublesome 1990's.⁶⁷ The concern however, is that the Russian government is choosing to create counter-terrorism policies solely based on the threat of Islamic extremism, which in-turn helps turn their focus into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders have begun to make statements about the need to fight terrorism with economic development and jobs⁶⁸, but there appears to be little in the way of substantial improvements in the area. While it is occasionally mentioned in the media, policymakers do not appear to be eager to address the problem of terrorism in the area in the context of the unresolved ethnic conflict in the area.

⁶⁷ Brendan Fogarty, "Chechnya Redux," *Harvard International Review* 31, no.4 (2010): 8.

⁶⁸ Fuller, 1.

The main problem with Russia's counter-terrorism policies in the North Caucasus region appears to be their primary focus on Islam. The problem is compounded by the tendency of Russian leaders and members of security forces to widely associate Islam with radicalism. This tendency is in-part due to the fact that the Russian government appears to view the entire North Caucasus region in terms of what occurs in Chechnya. Since the 2005 death of Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov, subsequent leaders, such as Shamil Basayev had stated their intention to create an independent Islamic caliphate uniting the North Caucasus.⁶⁹ Russian leaders appear to believe that the creation of an independent, Islamic state must be the goal of terrorists in other regions as well. Few rebel leaders in Ingushetia appear to be fighting for any kind of independent, pan-Islamic state though. According to Eliza Musaeva, an expert on the North Caucasus region:

...the connection between different rebel groups is low...It's important to understand that it's a region for separatists, rebels, local mullahs, who themselves announced that they are not anymore fighting for the independence of Chechnya, so there is not any more need to understand the idea of separatism.⁷⁰

Regardless of evidence to the contrary, Russian policymakers appear content to “reduce the violence in the Muslim south to terrorism and 'Wahhabism'(a catch-all term applied to any admixture of Islam and politics), seeing tougher law enforcement and

⁶⁹ Dunlop and Menon, 100.

⁷⁰ “Ingushetia, The New Hot Spot In Russia's North Caucasus,” *Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, Washington: 2011, 6.

military operations as the solution.”⁷¹ It is possible that the focus on Islamic militants in the region is a way for the Russian government to claim that it is not fighting a purely domestic enemy, and that outside elements are playing a part in destabilizing what would otherwise be a controlled area. Claims have been made that

Since September of '04-- that is when the Beslan tragedy occurred-- Ingushetia has, although unofficially, been an area where the Federal Government has been conducting what they referred to as counterterrorism operations. And specifically, the authorities have singled out Ingushetia as part of the country where, among others, they are particularly fighting international terrorists, quote-unquote.⁷²

The focus on a generalized Islamic enemy is apparent in the statements of Russian officials as well as in many media reports of attacks in Ingushetia and North Ossetia. In a 2010 article discussing the increased levels of violence in Ingushetia, Al-Jazeera noted that:

Recently, the Russian republic of Ingushetia has become the most dangerous place in the Russian federation. Endemic corruption combined with a battle between Islamic extremists and unaccountable Moscow-backed security forces has plunged the area into violence...While the Ingush stayed out of the Chechens' recent wars for independence from Russia, this did not prevent the violence from finally

71 Dunlop and Menon, 101.

72 “Ingushetia, The New Hot Spot In Russia's North Caucasus”, 2.

spilling over....Yet violence by the security forces is only one side of Ingushetia's mayhem. In the last seven years, Islamic militants have killed over 200 policemen, soldiers and government officials.⁷³

The article, like many other media accounts of violence in the region, suggests that all of the violence in Ingushetia is a result of spillover Islamic extremist violence from neighboring Chechnya. There is also mention of poverty in the republic being a possible driving factor. General mistrust of the Russian central government and its security forces based on previous conflicts are not mentioned.

The focus on Islam is also apparent in reports of the attacks in North Ossetia mentioned in the previous chapter. The reports tend to ignore the ethnic tensions existing between North Ossetia and neighboring Ingushetia and instead focus on a widespread war fought by religious extremists. Russian authorities were quick to embrace the role of Islamic militants because it fit into their version of events, which blamed International Islamic terrorist groups for attacks in the North Caucasus.⁷⁴ In reference to the 2008 market bombing in Vladikavkaz:

Коснувшись взрыва маршрутного такси во Владикавказе 6 ноября, глава

73 Dom Rotheroe and Antony Butts, "Ingushetia: A second Chechnya?," *Al Jazeera*, last modified December 8 2010,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2009/10/20091028615251646.html>

74 Valery Dzutsev, "Power failure," *Transitions Online*, (2008): 4, accessed October 11, 2011, <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/ehost/detail?vid=5&hid=126&sid=742f4e24-d89f-46c8-87ec-d41b87f0cefe%40sessionmgr110&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=35875919>

ФСБ заявил, что к нему причастно бандподполье, связанное с международными террористическими организациями. "Совершенный 6 ноября во Владикавказе теракт, в результате которого погибли 12 человек и 43 получили травмы различной степени тяжести, направлен на дестабилизацию обстановки, - цитирует "Интерфакс" слова Бортникова. - Ведется розыск конкретных лиц, являющихся организаторами данного преступления.⁷⁵

Prime Minister Putin also publicly focused on the threat of Islamic Extremism in the North Caucasus as an explanation for the bombing.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin also condemned the attack, saying the bombing was "aimed at sowing enmity between our citizens" and that he expected Russian Muslims to make a "decisive contribution" to combating extremism..."I know what Muslims think of these extremists. We feel their support, especially in the North Caucasus region, and we see it," Putin said. "We are grateful for this support and we hope that together we can overcome these difficulties."⁷⁶

75 "ФСБ нашла на Кавказе угрозу для России," *дни.ру*, last modified November 27 2008, <http://www.dni.ru/polit/2008/11/27/154231.html>

Referring to the explosion in Vladikavkaz, taxi on November 6, head of the FSB announced that it has involved thugs linked to international terrorist organizations. "A perfect November 6 bombing in Vladikavkaz, which killed 12 people and 43 received injuries of varying severity, is aimed at destabilizing the situation, - quotes the "Interfax", the words Bortnikov. - Being wanted specific individuals who are the organizers of this crime."

76 Daisy Sindelar, "Blast At Vladikavkaz Market Kills 17," Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, last modified September 9 2009,

The Kremlin and many media outlets focused on the threat associated with Islamic extremists in the attack. Many residents of Vladikavkaz saw the attack differently though, focusing on inter-ethnic tensions instead.

In Vladikavkaz there is a widespread belief that the marketplace bombing was an act of revenge, not jihad. Riyadus Salihiyna's statement made reference to the alleged killing of a young Ingush by Ossetian police officers in October. While the group spoke of hardships faced by Muslim Ingush in the predominantly Orthodox North Ossetia, it said little about holy war... Moscow's official position on the Ossetian-Ingush conflict is that it is over. But the aftermath of the November bombing, and events before and since, suggest that nationalism and political infighting rather than Islamism are at the heart of the spiral of violence in the region.⁷⁷

A similar narrative surrounds September 9, 2010 bomb attack on a Vladikavkaz market. Russian authorities and many media outlets once again focused on the idea that the attack was carried out by an Islamic extremist group.⁷⁸ From the Wall-Street Journal:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Blast_At_Market_In_Russian_Caucasus_City_Casualties_Reported/2152777.html

⁷⁷ Dzutsev, 4.

⁷⁸ Luke Harding, "Islamist militants blamed after suicide bomb kills 16 in Christian Caucasus city," *The Guardian*, last modified September 9, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/sep/09/russian-market-deadly-car-bomb>

A suicide-bomb blast near a crowded market Thursday killed 16 people and brought new strife to a mostly Orthodox Christian republic in southern Russia, raising fresh questions about the government's methods of fighting the region's Islamist insurgency...No group claimed responsibility for Thursday's attack. But it appeared to demonstrate the resilience and reach of the insurgency, which seeks to establish a fundamentalist state in southern Russia. Vladikavkaz is the capital of North Ossetia, a republic that has been less plagued by violence than its mainly Muslim North Caucasus neighbors, Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan.⁷⁹

Poverty

To be fair to Russian policymakers, leaders have recently begun mentioning the role of economics in possibly radicalizing young Muslims in the North Caucasus. They are operating on the logic that young men are likely to become radicalized if they are subject to poverty and unemployment. Poverty has become a particular concern for authorities in Ingushetia because of the widespread anger felt towards the local government, especially during Zyazikov's time in office, about corruption. Corruption is rampant in Ingushetia, and large amounts of federal aid money are siphoned off by corrupt officials, which continue to leave many Ingush poor.⁸⁰

Ingushetia is certainly suffering from widespread poverty. Of the six republics in the North Caucasus, Ingushetia is the poorest, with an average per-capita monthly income

⁷⁹ Richard Boudreaux, "Bombing in North Caucasus Kills 16, in Blow to Kremlin," *The Wall Street Journal*, last modified September 10 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704644404575481092815678432.html>.

⁸⁰ Fogarty, 8.

of \$85. The average is just over half of the per-capita monthly income of residents in Dagestan, which is considered to be the second poorest republic in the region.⁸¹ Additionally, the region is dealing with high unemployment and several other economic issues. Economic growth is extremely slow in the region. In fact, industrial production fell sharply, by 27 percent, in 2008. Investment in the region has also fallen, and unemployment remains dangerously high. Recent estimates of Ingushetia's unemployment have placed it around 57 percent.⁸² Ingushetia's extreme poverty has created a situation in which the republic functions almost entirely on subsidies from the Russian central government. Despite claims of growth under Zyazikov, Ingushetia appears to be a republic in a state of economic stagnation or decline. Comparing Nazran, the current capital of Ingushetia, with neighboring North Ossetia's capital city, Vladikavkaz, provides a stark contrast.

The reality is that Ingushetia, a patch of scorched steppe that rears into stunning mountains to the south, is poverty-stricken and terrorized. A few miles across the border in Vladikavkaz, the capital of the neighboring Russian region of North Ossetia, shoppers glide through department stores and stop for a break at the Vogue Cafe. Nazran, by contrast, is a big dust-glazed village of broken pavements and potholed roads where sheep graze on the verges and a sprawling bazaar is one of the few sources of peaceful work.⁸³

81 Olga I. Vendina, Vitaly S. Belozarov and Andrew Gustafson, "The Wars in Chechnya and Their Effects on Neighboring Regions," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 48, no.2 (2007): 184.

82 Fuller, 1.

83 Parfitt, 19.

Some Russian leaders appear to understand the current economic situation in Ingushetia and hope that it can be remedied. President Medvedev is reported to have met with Ingush president Yunus-Bek Yevkurov in October 2008 and pledged 29 billion rubles in economic aid to the region. In January 2009, he stated that “emergency measures” needed to be taken in the region, but did not delve into specifics. He suggested that money would be spent to improve socioeconomic conditions in addition to aiding the security forces operating in the region. The vague terms in which the economic aid was described suggest that there was little in the way of a long-term plan for the republic's economy. In fact, some have claimed that “Medvedev's offer of massive investment in Ingushetia's ramshackle economy is almost certainly a sop to induce the republic's leaders to drop any territorial demands on either North Ossetia or Chechnya.”⁸⁴

Medvedev reiterated his concerns about Ingushetia's economy later that year, when he stated:

The conditions for developing the racketeering and religious extremism came after the collapse of the Soviet Union...And its roots are in the living conditions, in unemployment, poverty...in clans that do not care about people and are only busy making money, fighting among each other and spreading corruption within

84 Fuller, 1.

our law enforcement authorities...Uprooting these problems is our task.⁸⁵

President Putin has also stated that poor economic conditions in the region have contributed to security concerns. In March 2010, Putin, Prime Minister at the time, pledged 43 billion rubles for economic development in Ingushetia, to be distributed through 2016. The money, aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment in the republic, is also intended to secure Ingushetia's loyalty to Moscow. There were once again no specifics about how the money would be spent.⁸⁶

The current focus on Islam and poverty as the driving factors behind the violence that plagues Ingushetia and North Ossetia certainly has some merit. There are groups of Islamic extremists in the area who are fighting for some kind of pan-Islamic region in the North Caucasus. There are probably cases of young people being pushed over the edge by unemployment as well. Viewing violence in the North Caucasus region as being one problem that spread across the region however, will make it difficult to truly address the problem. Russian leaders need to look at each region individually and understand how to address the issues of violence on a more local, cultural level. Simply throwing money at the problem does not appear to be an effective method for creating a long-term solution. Simply pledging money to improve socioeconomic conditions and not build any kind of lasting institutions is unlikely to help.

⁸⁵ "Unemployment and poverty beget terrorism in North Caucasus – Medvedev," RT, last modified August 23 2010, <http://rt.com/politics/unemployment-poverty-beget-terrorism/>.

⁸⁶ Dmitry Solovyov, "Russia to spend \$1.4 bln to develop Ingushetia-Putin," Reuters, last modified March 1 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/03/01/idUSLDE6201OD>.

Chapter 5: Issues With the Current Response

Violent response to Islam

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Russian government has taken a heavy handed approach to dealing with the issue of religious extremism in the North Caucasus region. Russia's security services are more present in Ingushetia than North Ossetia, because neighboring North Ossetia is a predominantly Orthodox republic, which does not interest the Russian Government.

The main issue with the Russian government's response to Islamic extremism in Ingushetia and several other republics in the North Caucasus is the level of brutality from Russian forces that has become common. Abuses in Ingushetia began in June 2003, with seven operations being conducted, five of which were carried out in settlements of Ingush displaced by the 1992 conflict with North Ossetia.⁸⁷

The operations followed the pattern of sweep operations or targeted raids seen in Chechnya: large groups of armed personnel, often arriving on armored personnel carriers and other military vehicles without license plates, surrounded a settlement or an entire village and conducted either sweep or random checks at peoples' dwellings. The armed personnel, who were in most cases masked, did not identify themselves or provide the residents with any explanation for the operations.

During the operations, many civilians were subjected to beatings and other forms of ill-treatment; and some houses were looted. As a result of the seven operations,

⁸⁷ "Spreading Despair: Russian Abuses in Ingushetia," *Human Rights Watch* 15, no.8 (2003): 9.

the armed personnel detained at least eighteen people; ten of those were released several days or weeks after, without ever getting any explanation of the grounds for their detention.⁸⁸

The abuses have continued through present day. An Amnesty International report, released in June, 2012, indicates that human rights violations are still extremely common in Ingushetia.

Перечень грубых нарушений прав человека в Ингушетии также является типичным для Северного Кавказа в целом, и не меняется уже длительное время. Это насильственные исчезновения, предполагаемые внесудебные казни, незаконные задержания, пытки и иное жестокое обращение и, вдобавок ко всему, почти полная невозможность добиться правовой защиты и восстановления своих прав. Недостижимость правосудия усугубляет огромные страдания жертв этих нарушений и людей, потерявших своих близких.⁸⁹

It appears that these abuses are fairly common, and that justice for victims is rare.

⁸⁸ “Spreading Despair: Russian Abuses in Ingushetia”, 9.

⁸⁹ Цечоев Абабукар, “Спецоперации и нарушения прав человека в Ингушетии. Из доклада Amnesty International,” ОНК.РФ, last modified June 21 2012, <http://онк.рф/profile/36/blog/218.html>.

The list of grave human rights violations in Ingushetia, as is typical of the North Caucasus as a whole and does not change for a long time. This is enforced disappearances, alleged extrajudicial killings, illegal detentions, torture and other ill-treatment and, on top of that, an almost complete inability to obtain legal protection and restoration of their rights. Inaccessibility of justice adds tremendous suffering of the victims of these violations and the people who lost their loved ones.

While complaints are often made about abuses by Russian forces, few cases make it to trial. Some claim that the abuses have gone so far as illegal executions in the republic, but that the security services operate under a cloak of secrecy that enables them to engage in these human rights violations.⁹⁰

Victims have given accounts of the abuses they were exposed to, but little appears to be done. The following is an account of the torture a man underwent after being detained in a raid of the Ingush village of Surkhakhi. He claimed that his captors told him they were taking him to the FSB headquarters in Nazran and that his captors spoke mostly Ossetian to one another.

Я не уверен, было это здание ФСБ или УБОПа. Мне так и не сказали.

Завели меня в комнату на четвертом этаже и стали пытаться.

Привязали провода к пальцам на ногах и током пытали. Время от времени водой обольют и опять током бьют. Вопросов никаких не задавали. Сказали только, что знают наверняка, что я брата двоюродного [Руслана Аушева] у нас на чердаке прятал, знал, что он боевик, помогал ему. Еще твердили, что я знаю про какой-то склад оружия. Говорили, что будут продолжать [пытки], пока я не сознаюсь. Голову опять пакетом замотали, бросили в машину, отвезли куда-то в пустынное место. Кинули в яму, стали меня

⁹⁰ “Порочный круг несправедливости. Операции силовых структур и нарушения прав человека в Ингушетии,” *Кавказ Online*, last modified June 23 2012, <http://kavkasia.net/Russia/2012/1340439736.php>.

заживо закапывать. Пока землю лопатами кидали – издевались, вроде как молитвы читали, говорили, что многих вот так закопали с концами. Потом вытащили меня из земли, одели два бронжилета и стали в упор стрелять. Я отключился.⁹¹

Russian authorities insist that they are not committing abuses in Ingushetia. They claim that Russian forces are simply conducting routine raids on areas they believe are being used by terrorist groups. According to an official with the Ministry of Internal Affairs,

Nothing extraordinary is going on here. Ordinary measures. Of course, some people are interested in presenting all this in a different light, but all these are lawful measures, lawful detentions... Only lawfulness and harshness, nothing else... We never touch the innocent, and people always know who conducted the operation and why. But they just try to present it in such a light, to lump their problems on someone else so that someone else would solve them. They often

91 “Они как будто упали с неба!: Контртерроризм, нарушения прав человека и безнаказанность в Ингушети” *Хьюман Райтс Вотч* (2008): 66.

I’m not sure if that building belongs to FSB or to the Department Against Organized Crime. They [servicemen] never told me. They took me to a room on the fourth floor and started torturing me. They tied wires to my toes and tortured me with electric currents. Every once in a while, they poured water all over me and then continued to give me electric shocks. They never asked me any questions. They simply said that they knew for a fact I was hiding my cousin [Ruslan Aushev] in the attic of our house, I knew he was an insurgent, and helped him. They also insisted that I knew about some storage of weapons. They said they would continue [the torture] until I confessed. They put a bag on my head again, threw me in a car and took me to a deserted place. They dropped me in a pit in the earth and started to bury me alive. While shoveling earth into the pit they recited mock prayers and told me that they “disappeared” many others just like this. Then, they took me out of the ground, put two bulletproof vests on me and started to shoot past me from close range. I passed out.

play foul like that.⁹²

The current approach to dealing with religious extremists in Ingushetia will not provide any real, long-term solutions. Disappearances, torture, and other brutal techniques utilized by Russian security forces against seemingly anyone suspected of terrorist activity will only become a self-fulfilling prophecy.⁹³ The Ingush are traditionally a relatively peaceful people who embrace a more mystical version of Islam that is rejected by hard-line Muslims. By ignoring other possible causes of violence in the region and treating young Muslim men as possible terrorists, the counter-terrorism policies of the Russian government, carried out by Russia's brutal security forces, may create more terrorists than they thwart.

A mosque in the North Caucasus is less likely to be filled with militants seething with hatred than with young men dressed in knock-off Dolce and Gabbana clothing looking for a measure of spiritual relief from their unhappy personal lives and bleak job prospects. Yet when some of these men travel to Turkey for work or to Egypt for education and then return home, they are frequently targeted by ruthless local police and heavy-handed Federal Security Service bureaucrats who assume that they have imbibed Wahhabism while abroad. More than a few such men have joined Islamist groups as a consequence.⁹⁴

⁹² Spreading despair, 21

⁹³ Parfitt, 19.

⁹⁴ Charles King and Rajan Menon, "Prisoners of the Caucasus: Russia's Invisible Civil War," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no.4 (2010): 32.

Focus on poverty and unemployment

The focus on poverty and unemployment makes a certain amount of sense to the average person. One would believe that people are angered by the fact that they are poor and unemployed and would become increasingly desperate as they continued to experience poverty and unemployment. Some experts believe that those suffering from poverty and unemployment may be angry enough to commit acts of terrorism or be desperate enough to be manipulated into committing acts of terrorism. Some studies show however, that there is little statistically significant connection between poverty and terrorism.

Economists and leaders have often established a simple connection between crime and economic status. The idea is that as one's income drops, that person becomes more likely to embrace criminal activity in order to increase their income. That logic, while reasonable, is overly simplistic. Individuals tend to act in a way that increases their utility. In doing so, a rational person would not simply decide to commit crimes because their income fell. They would account for other aspects of criminal activities, such as risk, probability and severity of punishment, and stigma associated with criminal activities. The risks associated with crime have to be weighed against the person's current wage and they must then determine what would produce the highest level of utility.⁹⁵

There are some connections between crime and poverty though. As people

⁹⁵ Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Education, Poverty, and Terrorism: Is There a Casual Connection?," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no.4 (2003): 121.

become poorer, they do become more desperate in some cases. Those choosing to engage in criminal activities as a result of low wages however, tend to take part in property crimes.⁹⁶ The fact that those suffering from decreasing incomes are more likely to turn to property crime makes a certain amount of sense. By focusing on property, the causes of crime and subsequent rewards are more in-line. If a man or woman is desperate because of their level of income, it makes more sense for that person to steal what they want or to steal someone's property and then sell it. There is less of a logical connection to violent crime.

Violent crimes themselves are often considered unrelated to economic opportunity by researchers.⁹⁷ Studies have shown that joblessness rates are often negatively correlated with total mortality rates. An increase of one percentage point in the state unemployment rate has been known to correlate with a reduction of 0.5 percent in the predicated death rate. When adjusted for age, a one percentage point increase in the state unemployment rate produces a 2 percent decrease in the predicted death rate for people aged 20-44. It should also be noted that a one percentage point increase in the state unemployment produces a 1.9 percent decrease in the predicated rates of mortality from homicide. Personal incomes are also considered to have a small impact on the mortality rate of a state.⁹⁸

While the studies discussed above focus more on traditional crime than terrorism, it is fair to say that terrorism, in the deadly form that is being experienced in Ingushetia

⁹⁶ Krueger and Maleckova, 121.

⁹⁷ Krueger and Maleckova, 121.

⁹⁸ Christopher J. Ruhm, "Are Recessions Good For Your Health?," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 15, no.2 (2000): 627-633.

and North Ossetia, is much more related to violent crime than property crime. Concerning terrorism specifically, it has been shown that terrorism may attract individuals with high levels of education, which is often a sign of a more comfortable economic background. Well educated people are more likely to join terrorist organizations if they believe they will be placed in leadership positions or if they strongly identify with the cause of the group. Terrorist organizations may also provide a larger wage to those with higher levels of education relative to the legal sector. Once again however, high levels of education would suggest that they already come from a comfortable economic background.⁹⁹ The data collected from various terrorist organizations indicates that income has little to do with the likelihood of participating in terror attacks.

Indeed, the available evidence compared with the relevant population, members of Hezbollah's militant wing or Palestinian suicide bombers are at least as likely to come from economically advantaged families and have a relatively high level of education as to come from the ranks of the economically disadvantaged and uneducated. Similarly, members of the Israeli Jewish Underground who terrorized Palestinian civilians in the late 1970's and early 1980's were overwhelmingly well-educated and in highly regarded occupations.¹⁰⁰

The previously mentioned data suggests that while some terrorists may be

⁹⁹ Krueger and Maleckova, 122.

¹⁰⁰ Krueger and Maleckova, 141.

engaging in terrorist activity for financial purposes, the vast majority of terrorist, especially suicide bombers, are not motivated by economic gain. Most individuals participating in terrorist attacks are likely motivated by support of a movement. Therefore, focusing on poverty and unemployment are unlikely to reduce violent attacks in a region.¹⁰¹

Other studies indicate that economic factors are not good indicators of the likelihood of terrorist activity once data is adjusted for political freedom. Essentially, research as shown that the level of political freedom is more important than socioeconomic status when combating terrorism. “Countries with intermediate levels of political freedom are shown to be more prone to terrorism than countries with high levels of political freedom or countries with highly authoritarian regimes.”¹⁰²

101 Krueger and Maleckova, 123.

102 Alberto Abadie, “Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism,” *The Economics of National Security* 96, no.2: (2006): 51.

Chapter 6: Alternate Explanations For Terrorist Violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the current approaches to combating terrorist activity in Russia are not working. A main problem with the Russian government's methods is the belief that terrorism is a result of desperation that is brought on by poverty. Viewing terrorism as being the outcome of desperation suggests that policymakers believe terrorism to be a last-resort tactic, to be utilized only when other methods of exerting political influence have been exhausted. Terrorism, however, is often a first resort for terrorist groups.

Terrorist groups seem to possess “an innate compulsion” to engage in terrorism and an “unswerving belief” in its desirability over nonviolence, contradicting the strategic model's assumption that groups employ terrorism only as a last resort upon evaluating their political options.¹⁰³

The notion of terrorism as a first resort stands in contrast to the current belief among Russian policymakers that terrorism is usually something that young people resort to when all other options have been exhausted, at which point they are taken in and effectively brainwashed by an organization. As stated earlier, terrorist groups are often composed of educated individuals who are not struggling economically. These people are unlikely to be the desperate individuals they are perceived to be by policymakers.

103 Max Abrahms, “What Terrorists Really Want,” *International Security* 32, no.4 (2008): 85.

Terrorist groups in Ingushetia are likely operating because they see terrorism as an effective method of achieving their goals. First-resort terror attacks can essentially be seen as a guerrilla warfare tactic. Any spillover from Chechnya likely has more to do with tactics than belief structures. Terror attacks on both Ingush and North Ossetian soil can be seen as the attempts of an impoverished republic that is fighting against larger and better-equipped forces. Ingush fighters did not fare well during the 1992 conflict with North Ossetia. They were fighting against better-equipped North Ossetian militias that were fighting along-side Russian forces. Guerrilla tactics, including terrorism, would likely be viewed as more effective by Ingush militants who are still bitter about the outcome of the 1992 conflict, and still want what they consider to be their land returned.

The use of terrorism as a first resort, essentially using it as a guerrilla tactic, also helps explain the choices of targets in both Ingushetia and North Ossetia. In the republic of Ingushetia, the targets of militant attacks tend to be federal buildings, Russian forces, or police. For example, there have been several recent attacks on Russian forces and local police in Ingushetia. On July 21, 2012, militants opened fire on soldiers near the village of Dattykh, killing two and wounding three. There have also been grenade attacks on police and the police station in Nazran.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, in June, 2012, during the 20th anniversary celebration of Ingush independence from the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the only militant violence reported appeared to be against police and military forces. There was a grenade attack on a police car, and militants

104 Лидия Градова, “В Ингушетии обстреляли колонну внутренних войск,” *Утро.ru*, last updated July 21, 2007, <http://www.utro.ru/articles/2012/07/21/1060350.shtml>.

opened fire on a helicopter carrying Russian forces.¹⁰⁵

Federal targets make sense when examining militant attacks in Ingushetia in the context of asymmetric warfare. The Ingush people are wary of the Russian government after the 1944 deportation and the actions of Russian forces during the 1992 conflict. They do not trust the security forces currently present in Ingushetia or the Russian government's restrictions on their autonomy, particularly their ability to democratically choose a leader. The fact that Russian forces use brutal tactics against Ingush civilians in the name of combating terrorism only adds to the resentment felt by Ingush militants. The choices of targets in Ingushetia suggest that the struggle is more political than ideological.

The choices of targets in North Ossetia are telling as well. The majority of the targets in North Ossetia are areas where civilians tend to congregate. There have been several attacks on markets in Vladikavkaz, as well as an attack on a hospital and the tragic attack on the school in Beslan. The only attack on a non-civilian target in North Ossetia was a suicide bombing attack on a military checkpoint in the Prigorodny region in August, 2010.¹⁰⁶

The attacks are often attributed to Ingush and Chechen militants. There have been claims of an Islamic terrorist group in North Ossetia, called “The Ossetian Jamaat”, that took credit for the 2008 attempt on Vladikavkaz Mayor Vitaly Karaev, but those claims are disputed.

105 Георгий Александров, “«То строят, то стреляют». Репортаж спецкора «АиФ» из Ингушетии”, *Аргументы и Факты*, last modified July 4 2012, <http://www.aif.ru/politics/article/53231>.

106 Robert Johnston, “Terrorist attacks in Russia,” Johnston Archive, last modified January 26 2011, <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/terrorism/terr-russia.html>.

Согласно РИА Новости, правоохранные органы Северной Осетии не восприняли заявление джамаата всерьез. "Это не первая провокация, в Северной Осетии никакого "джамаата" экстремистского и реакционного толка не существует", - заявил источник агентства в правоохранительных органах.¹⁰⁷

Many experts do not believe that the group exists. Even if it did exist, it would be tied to a small number of attacks in the republic. The majority of the attacks appear to come from external groups. Most attacks are claimed by outside groups and assumed by North Ossetians to come from outside groups, particularly Ingush. The September, 2010 bombing of a market in Vladikavkaz is a good example. The attack was committed by an Ingush militant, and North Ossetian residents did not appear to be surprised. A large group of North Ossetian residents responded by attacking the nearby Ingush village of Kartsa.¹⁰⁸

В Северной Осетии стали известны подробности попытки погрома, который

107 "Ответственность за убийство мэра Владикавказа взял на себя "осетинский джамаат",
Кавказский Узел, last modified November 27, 2008, <http://georgia.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/144660>.

According to RIA Novosti, law enforcement authorities in North Ossetia did not take the statement seriously Jamaat. "This is not the first provocation, in North Ossetia there is no" Jamaat "an extremist and reactionary wing does not exist", - said a source in law enforcement agencies.

108 "Осетины попытались разгромить ингушский поселок - террорист, устроивший бойню во Владикавказе, оказался их соплеменником," *upmonitor*, last modified September 14 2010, <http://www.upmonitor.ru/news/russia/845547a/>.

пытались учинить осетины в поселке Карца, где проживают преимущественно ингуши. В ходе переговоров власти пресекли попытки нападения на поселение. Но ингуши подготовились к худшему: они выставили оцепление по периметру поселка, а женщин и детей из домов, расположенных на окраинах, перевели в центр поселения, сообщает газета "Коммерсант".¹⁰⁹

The attack and response suggest the attacks are committed with more of a political and ethnic motive than an ideological motive. The attacks and their targets can be viewed as ethnic guerrilla warfare. Ingush militants attack the military and police in Ingushetia because civilians are Ingush. They may be targeting civilians in North Ossetia due to high levels of ethnic tensions that remain from the 1992 war and the fact that North Ossetian civilians live in the Prigorodny region, which the Ingush claim belongs to them.

Also, standing in contrast to the Russian focus on religious extremism and successionist movements, studies suggest that terrorist groups often have fairly moderate political views, even though they use extreme methods.¹¹⁰

109 "Осетины попытались разгромить ингушский поселок - террорист, устроивший бойню во Владикавказе, оказался их соплеменником," *upmonitor*, last modified September 14 2010, <http://www.upmonitor.ru/news/russia/845547a/>.

In North Ossetia details of the pogrom attempts became known, which Ossetians were trying to inflict on the village of Kartsa, inhabited mostly by Ingush. During the negotiations, the authorities have tried to stop the attack on the settlement. But the Ingush were prepared for the worst: they put up a cordon around the perimeter of the village, the women and children from homes located in the suburbs, moved to the center of the settlement, the newspaper "Kommersant".

110 Abrahms, 86.

...the terrorists' political aims, if not their methods, are often more mainstream than observers realize; they generally reflect quite common, straightforward nationalist self-determination claims of their community... goals that are typically much like those of other nationalists within their community.¹¹¹

The often moderate political aims of terrorist groups also suggest that the Russian government may be looking at their terrorism situation incorrectly. Russian policymakers appear to associate extreme methods with extreme goals. It is possible however, that many of the attacks in the area are due to a general opposition to Russian forces in Ingushetia and the desire to have the Prigorodny region returned. Once again, the people of Ingushetia have historically embraced Sufi Islam traditions, rather than the more radical Salafi or Wahhabi traditions.¹¹² If terrorist organizations often have somewhat moderate goals that are similar to the goals of their community, then Ingush terrorists seem unlikely to be embracing terrorism for the purposes of achieving radical religious goals. As mentioned previously though, there does appear to be popular support for the return of the Prigorodny region to Ingushetia. Ingush have conducted demonstrations since the Soviet era in an attempt to influence policymakers to return the land they feel is theirs. If a large portion of the Ingush population is concerned about the Prigorodny region being returned and the Ingush refugees who were displaced from the region, then it is reasonable to assume that is a political goal of militant groups as well.

111 Robert Anthony Pape, *Dying to Win* (New York: Random House, 2005), 43.

112 King and Menon, 32.

There is also evidence that ethnic tensions in a region can increase the likelihood of terrorist incidents. Some groups, especially ones with intense histories and high levels of pride, may experience excessive identification with the group by some members. Excessive identification with one group can lead to conflicts with other groups, which can take the form of terrorist activity.¹¹³

Ethnicity provides a natural basis for the formation of groups. Members tend to share a common language, religion, customs, and several other uniting factors. Cooperation within the group tends yield “benefits in excess of costs, which are then shared according to some rule.”¹¹⁴ Essentially, a community grows and becomes stronger when its members cooperate. Interaction with outside groups however, is often seen as a zero-sum game. One group often gains at the expense of another group. These interactions create conflict.¹¹⁵ The Ingush-North Ossetian conflict provides an excellent example. The Ingush had settled the Prigorodny region after the Russian civil war at the expense of its neighbors, and the North Ossetians were given the land and continue to insist on their right to it at the expense of the Ingush.

While it appears that high levels of ethnic tension increases the likelihood of terrorist attacks in a country, there are certain factors that appear to reduce the odds in ethnically tense areas. First, the introduction of liberal economic institutions and greater economic freedoms appears to reduce the likelihood of attacks. That being said, GDP per capita in a region does not appear to be a good indicator of economic freedoms. Studies

113 Atin Basuchoudhary and William F. Shughart II, “On Ethnic Conflict And The Origins Of Transnational Terrorism,” *Defence and Peace Economics* 21, no.1 (2010): 65-66.

114 Basuchoudhary and Shughart II, 67.

115 Basuchoudhary and Shughart II, 67.

suggest that the lack of economic opportunity leads to terrorist activity rather than poverty.¹¹⁶

Focusing on economic opportunity and freedom rather than poverty is beneficial because it focuses on trying to provide choices for people in a republic where there are few. In addition to creating jobs, development also produces a wider variety of options for people in the region. Development often brings educational opportunities, commerce, and forms of entertainment, such as athletics. These are important because a main draw of terrorist groups is that they create solidarity.¹¹⁷ If there were other options to create solidarity, fewer young people would engage in terrorist activity. Small terror cells are also usually created from already existing social networks. Most of the people involved already know each other. If that group had something else to focus on, they may also be less likely to become radicalized.¹¹⁸

If economic opportunity rather than poverty contributes to terrorist activity in ethnically tense areas, then the current approach of the Russian government may be misguided. As stated earlier, both Presidents Medvedev and Putin have pledged aid money to the ailing republic of Ingushetia in order to improve conditions. While the money will certainly have a positive effect on many members of the population, perhaps a focus on encouraging investment and development would be more effective.

There have been previous attempts to encourage investment in Ingushetia. From 1994 to 1997, Ingushetia was declared a “favorable economic zone”. Tax breaks and a

116 Basuchoudhary and Shughart II, 76-82.

117 Abrahms, 96.

118 Arie Perliger and Ami Pedahzur, “Social Network Analysis in the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence,” *Political Science and Politics* 44, no.1 (2011): 46.

variety of other benefits were available to companies that registered in Ingushetia, acting as incentive to increase investment in the republic.¹¹⁹

The experiment was seen by some as an attempt to prevent Ingushetia from becoming another Chechnya, which was at war with Russian forces at the time. While the favored economic zone did attract a large number of companies, it is generally regarded as a failure. Companies would often register in the republic to gain the tax benefits, but then move their money out of the republic.¹²⁰ While the federal government viewed the experiment as a way for companies to evade taxes with little benefit to the region, Ingush leaders claimed that the favorable economic zone was a success and allowed for the development of several industrial projects.¹²¹

While the experiment may not have produced all of the effects policymakers had intended, it doesn't appear to have been a complete failure. Declaring the republic a favorable economic zone did appear to solidify Ingushetia's loyalty to Moscow during the first Chechen war. Considering that Ingushetia was at war with North Ossetian and Russian forces in 1992, their loyalty should be considered at least a small victory. Some also claim that the experiment had a more significant economic impact on the region than the Russian government claims.

119“Постановление Правительства РФ О зоне экономического благоприятствования: на территории Ингушской Республики: Постановление Правительства РФ от 19 июня 1994 г. N 740,” Законодательство РФ в области офшорных операций. Accessed July 23, 2012. <http://rus-finans.com/zakonodatelstvo-rf-v-oblasti-ofschornih-operacii/postanovlenie-pravitelstva-rf-o-zone-ekonomicheskogo-blagopr.php>.

120 “Гуцериев, Михаил: Владелец и президент компании "РуссНефть",” *Лента.ru*. Accessed on July 23, 2012. <http://lenta.ru/lib/14163202/full.htm>.

121 Aleksei M. Lavrov, “Budgetary Federalism,” in *Conflict and Consensus in Ethno-Political and Center-Peripheral Relations in Russia*, ed. Jeremy R. Azrael and Emil A. Payin (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998), 30-31.

For a brief period, Ingushetia appeared to be a model of the entrepreneurial approach, which places a high value on individual initiative and prosperity...Any Russian company that registered in the republic was eligible for a range of benefits, including a reduced profits tax rate (13 percent as opposed to the regular 35) and exemptions from property taxes, highway tolls, and other charges (Krasnoslobodtsev, 2005). The benefits had effectively transformed Ingushetia into an “offshore” location, extremely attractive to businesses throughout Russia. A portion of the windfall that the republican government received from a flood of investment was spent as intended (in building a new capital for the republic in Magas), whereas the remainder ended up in the hands of local elites. After this corporate haven was shut down, Ingushetia's economy returned to its foundations in the informal sector – the largest industries continued to be unregistered oil extraction and refining (especially Chechen oil) and the production of contraband gasoline (Krasnoslobodtsev, 2005).¹²²

It appears as though the experiment worked in some ways. The main problems with the economic zone appear to be that companies moved much of their money outside of the republic after registering there and that a large amount of money ended up in the hands of local elites rather than funding local development. Those two problems could likely be remedied or drastically reduced with the introduction of further regulations into the legislation that created the zone. A similar experiment may produce better results

122 Vendina, Belozarov and Gustafson, 192.

under an administration more concerned with corruption.

Currently, the Russian government is attempting something similar, but on a much smaller scale. The government is currently creating a special economic zone in Ingushetia for the tourist sector in order to encourage the construction of resorts in the Dzheyrakhsy and Sunzhensky districts of Ingushetia.¹²³

While the tourist zone appears to be a step in the right direction for Russian policymakers, it seems as though it will not have as strong of an impact as a policy that would attract other kinds of industry and investment. Tourism is a somewhat fickle industry, especially during difficult economic times. Even if Russian tourists had the money to travel, they may be wary of traveling to republics in the North Caucasus due to the area's reputation for violence and instability. Also, the Dzheyrakhsy and Sunzhensky districts contain neither the current capital, Magas, nor the previous capital, Nazran, in both of which much of the violence seems to occur. Therefore, development efforts are probably not focusing on the regions that are of most concern to policymakers trying to minimize terrorist activity.

Data also suggests that the introduction of liberal political institutions is also associated with fewer terrorist attacks in the post-Cold War period. “New rounds of terrorist violence seem to have been unleashed in countries where the heavy hand of Soviet control was not quickly displaced by freer institutions of governance.”¹²⁴ Russia is an excellent example of a country that has not developed freer institutions of

123 “В Ингушетии создается туристская особая экономическая зона,” *РиаНовосту*, last modified January 12, 2012, <http://www.ria.ru/economy/20120112/538015817.html>.

124 Basuchoudhary and Shughart II, 85.

governance. The Putin and Medvedev administrations' focus on loyalty and order has eroded political freedoms in much of the country, including Ingushetia. The election tampering that enabled Zyazikov to take power, the subsequent appointment of Yevkurov, and the presence of Russian forces in the area are unlikely to have mitigated terrorist violence in Ingushetia and neighboring North Ossetia.

Chapter 7: Policy Recommendations

- The Russian government should restart efforts to return Ingush refugees displaced by the 1992 Ingush-North Ossetian conflict to the Prigorodny region. There are currently 14,000 refugees from the Prigorodny region currently living in Ingushetia.¹²⁵ They have not been able to return to their homes for almost 20 years. The Russian government has passed laws in regard to internally displaced persons and has also created several incarnations of a governing body tasked with enabling the return of Ingush refugees. The government needs to follow up on their previous efforts and assist refugees in returning to their homes in the Prigorodny region. Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, the current Ingush President, claims that territorial claims are no longer a concern for the Ingush, but allowing refugees to return home would help return an element of stability to an area currently subject to terrorist violence.

Если 100 домов ингушами были покинуты, 100 домов и должны теперь быть заняты. На это нужна воля - воля руководства страны, что опять же будет сильнейшим ударом по тем деструктивным силам, которые раскачивают ситуацию...¹²⁶

125 "Ингушский правозащитник: народу надо выступить в западных СМИ, чтобы услышали в Кремле," *Новости Северного Кавказа*, last modified July 8 2008, <http://newsweek.ru/?p=340>.

126 "Евкуров выступает за возвращение ингушских беженцев в Пригородный район Северной Осетии," *Кавказский Узел*, last modified February 9 2009, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/149341>.

If 100 homes Ingush were deserted, 100 houses, and should now be taken. It takes the will - the will of the country's leadership, which again would be a major blow to those destructive forces that are rocking the situation...

- Russian forces operating in Ingushetia need to employ less brutal techniques when attempting to combat militants in the region. Human rights violations are rampant in the republic. Civilians are disappeared and tortured regularly, often times having done little to generate suspicion. Many of those who have been abused or are related to those who have been abused have become radicalized and embraced terrorist violence as a means of revenge against abusive forces in the region. Legitimate trials that result in convictions and actual punishments for those guilty of human rights abuses in the area may begin to instill confidence in the federal government.

- The Russian government should consider re-introducing a modified version of the “favorable economic zone” in Ingushetia. The government is currently experimenting with a similar zone, but it is limited to the tourist industry and only in two districts of the republic. The government should continue with that plan but also consider experimenting with providing benefits to other companies and industries that register in Ingushetia. While the first experiment had its share of problems, the idea of fostering growth through business investment rather than direct government aid is more likely to create a wide variety of economic opportunities and freedoms for the people of Ingushetia. The main shortcomings of the previous “favorable economic zone” appear to have been the reluctance of companies to keep their money in the republic after

registering and large portions of the republic's new revenue ending up in the hands of local elites. These issues could be combatted with strict regulations being attached to any legislation that creates such a zone in Ingushetia. Additionally, the Russian government could place strict limits on the number of companies allowed to register in the republic if policymakers are concerned about declines in federal tax revenue.

- The Russian government should facilitate negotiations between representatives from Ingushetia and North Ossetia. Representatives from the two republics should discuss methods to reduce ethnic tensions and possibly consider a land sharing arrangement in the Prigorodny region. The territory issue will be difficult because of the amount of time that has passed since the 1944 deportations and even the 1992 armed conflict. North Ossetian leaders could consider returning part of the territory to Ingushetia as a good faith gesture, demonstrating that they are committed to finding a solution to the problems that have created so much violence.

- The Russian government should consider funding joint confidence building measures in order to improve relations between the two republics. Public works projects that involve both republics may be useful in improving relations on a more local level. The republics should also consider other methods of improving cooperation. Intelligence sharing and joint patrols by local security forces may be a good place to start.

- The Russian government should make attempts to return political freedoms to the Ingush. The Ingush may resent the Russian government less if they are once again allowed to choose their leaders. Violence increased after Zyazikov was essentially appointed as the President of Ingushetia due to election fraud. While the current President has been more positively received than Zyazikov, he was still appointed. If the Ingush managed to regain some of their autonomy and democratically elect their leaders, violence in the region may decrease.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The current situation in Ingushetia and North Ossetia is extremely tense and complex. While the number of terror attacks in both republics has decreased in recent years, the threat of terrorism is still a problem in the region. The Russian government appears to view terrorism in the context of the republic of Chechnya. Policymakers appear to view religious extremism and poverty as being the main causes of terrorism in the North Caucasus region. While those factors are sure to contribute to Russia's overall terrorism problem, they may not be the specific causes of terrorism in every republic that is has experienced a surge in violent activity since the start of the second Chechen war.

Violence in Ingushetia and neighboring North Ossetia may have more to do with their tense Soviet history more than religious fanaticism. Tensions between the two republics date back to Tsarist times. The two republics initially developed territorial disputes during the Russian Civil War. Ingush fighters supported the Bolshevik army in the North Caucasus region, fighting against Tsarist forces that were supported by North Ossetian fighters. The eventual Bolshevik victory resulted in the Ingush laying claim to the Prigorodny region. They held the land until 1944, at which point the Ingush and several other ethnic groups in the North Caucasus were deported and their land divided among remaining ethnic groups. While the Ingush managed to have most of their land returned, North Ossetia continues to hold onto the Prigorodny region until present day. The region, which sparked an armed conflict between Ingushetia and North Ossetia in 1992 in which Ingush fighters fought against North Ossetian fighters who were backed by Russian forces, continues to be a source of tension and conflict between the two

republics. Tensions actually increased after Ingush in the Prigorodny region were expelled during the conflict and many continue to reside as refugees in Ingushetia today. Research demonstrating that high levels of ethnic tension is associated with increased levels of terrorist attacks suggests that the conflict over the Prigorodny region may be a factor contributing to terrorist violence in both Ingushetia and North Ossetia.

The current approach by the Russian government to reducing the terrorist threat in Ingushetia and North Ossetia is primarily focused in Ingushetia, because Ingush militants are generally assumed to be responsible for attacks in both republics. The government appears to be focusing on the influences of religious extremism and poverty on terrorism. The current approach appears to be flawed. Ingushetia has historically embraced peaceful rather than radical brands of Islam. Additionally, the brutal methods employed by Russian security forces in the region appear to be driving Ingush civilians to joining terrorist organizations for purposes of revenge rather than in the name of a radical religious ideology.

Concerning poverty, there is little evidence that poverty is actually a driving force in radicalizing would be terrorists. While there are economic influences related to terrorism, it appears that terrorism is connected more with the lack of economic opportunity and freedom than actual income. For this reason, attempting to combat terrorism with government aid rather than a specific development strategy seems unlikely to be effective.

In addition to economic freedoms, greater political freedoms appear to be related to a decrease in terrorist activity in the post-Cold War period. The Ingush however,

appear to have had their limited political freedoms stripped since the beginning of the second Chechen War. In an effort to limit criticism of the Russian government and ensure loyalty to Moscow, the Putin and Medvedev administrations have stripped the Ingush of their right to democratically elect their president. The brutal methods employed by security forces in the region also serve as methods to limit the political freedoms of the Ingush.

Solidarity is also a driving force behind terrorism. Many terror groups are built from already existing social networks. In a republic like Ingushetia, with few options for young people to entertain themselves or socialize, radicalizing forces could easily serve as a method to strengthen bonds among people who already know one another. If the republic was more developed, social groups could perhaps rally around other activities.

Russian policymakers focused on violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia should consider looking at violence in the region as a continuation of the ethnic conflict that erupted into an armed conflict in 1992. Few issues were resolved after the armed conflict ended. The Ingush were effectively humiliated and continued to resent both the North Ossetians and the Russian government for its intervention on the side of North Ossetia during the conflict. Many Ingush continue to believe that the Prigorodny region is rightfully theirs and should be returned to Ingushetia. Those who have abandoned territorial claims still believe that the Ingush who were expelled from the region in 1992 should be allowed to return to their homes.

The tensions that still exist suggest that much of the violence in the two republics can be viewed as a continuation of armed conflict rather than religiously driven violence.

Terrorist groups are likely to use terrorism as a first resort, so it can easily be viewed as a method of guerrilla warfare rather than the action of religious extremists. The targets in both republics support that claim. In Ingushetia, the targets of terrorist violence are primarily associated with the Russian federal government. By attacking Russian forces and institutions, militants are attacking a foreign presence that is not trusted after its actions during the 1992 conflict. The targets in North Ossetia are generally places where civilians congregate, such as markets. The attacks on groups of civilians suggest a continuation of ethnic warfare begun in 1992.

Essentially, the spread of terrorist violence in Ingushetia and North Ossetia in the 2000's is a more complex issue than perceived to be by those looking through the scope of a generalized war on terrorism. While radicalized forms of Islam have no doubt contributed to terrorist activity around the world, the issue of terrorism is different in each place it occurs, including the North Caucasus. By looking closely at local factors that may be contributing to the spread of violence in the republics, the Russian government can better tailor anti-terrorism policies to be effective in specific regions.

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