UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE PRESS
Carlisle Barracks, PA
STRENGTH and WISDOM

ASSESSING THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION: CAPABILITIES AND VULNERABILITIES

Richard Weitz

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE
SSI
STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

The United States Army War College

The United States Army War College educates and develops leaders for service at the strategic level while advancing knowledge in the global application of Landpower.

The purpose of the United States Army War College is to produce graduates who are skilled critical thinkers and complex problem solvers. Concurrently, it is our duty to the U.S. Army to also act as a "think factory" for commanders and civilian leaders at the strategic level worldwide and routinely engage in discourse and debate concerning the role of ground forces in achieving national security objectives.

The Strategic Studies Institute publishes national security and strategic research and analysis to influence policy debate and bridge the gap between military and academia.

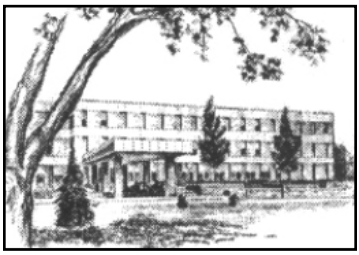
The Center for Strategic Leadership contributes to the education of world class senior leaders, develops expert knowledge, and provides solutions to strategic Army issues affecting the national security community.

The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute provides subject matter expertise, technical review, and writing expertise to agencies that develop stability operations concepts and doctrines.

The School of Strategic Landpower develops strategic leaders by providing a strong foundation of wisdom grounded in mastery of the profession of arms, and by serving as a crucible for educating future leaders in the analysis, evaluation, and refinement of professional expertise in war, strategy, operations, national security, resource management, and responsible command.

The U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center acquires, conserves, and exhibits historical materials for use to support the U.S. Army, educate an international audience, and honor Soldiers—past and present.

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE



The Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) is part of the U.S. Army War College and is the strategic-level study agent for issues related to national security and military strategy with emphasis on geostrategic analysis.

The mission of SSI is to use independent analysis to conduct strategic studies that develop policy recommendations on:

- Strategy, planning, and policy for joint and combined employment of military forces;
- Regional strategic appraisals;
- The nature of land warfare;
- Matters affecting the Army's future;
- The concepts, philosophy, and theory of strategy; and,
- Other issues of importance to the leadership of the Army.

Studies produced by civilian and military analysts concern topics having strategic implications for the Army, the Department of Defense, and the larger national security community.

In addition to its studies, SSI publishes special reports on topics of special or immediate interest. These include edited proceedings of conferences and topically oriented roundtables, expanded trip reports, and quick-reaction responses to senior Army leaders.

The Institute provides a valuable analytical capability within the Army to address strategic and other issues in support of Army participation in national security policy formulation.

Strategic Studies Institute
and
U.S. Army War College Press

ASSESSING THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION: CAPABILITIES AND VULNERABILITIES

Dr. Richard Weitz

October 2018

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. Authors of Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Press publications enjoy full academic freedom, provided they do not disclose classified information, jeopardize operations security, or misrepresent official U.S. policy. Such academic freedom empowers them to offer new and sometimes controversial perspectives in the interest of furthering debate on key issues. This report is cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

*****

This publication is subject to Title 17, United States Code, Sections 101 and 105. It is in the public domain and may not be copyrighted.

*****

Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, 47 Ashburn Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013-5238.

*****

This manuscript was funded by the U.S. Army War College External Research Associates Program. Information on this program is available on our website, *http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/*, at the Opportunities tab.

*****

All Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Press publications may be downloaded free of charge from the SSI website. Hard copies of certain reports may also be obtained free of charge while supplies last by placing an order on the SSI website. Check the website for availability. SSI publications may be quoted or reprinted in part or in full with permission and appropriate credit given to the U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. Contact SSI by visiting our website at the following address: *http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/*.

*****

The Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press publishes a quarterly email newsletter to update the national security community on the research of our analysts, recent and forthcoming publications, and upcoming conferences sponsored by the Institute. Each newsletter also provides a strategic commentary by one of our research analysts. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, please subscribe on the SSI website at the following address: *http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/newsletter/*.

ISBN 1-58487-793-6

FOREWORD

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) has been one of the Russian Federation's more visible forays down the path of regional hegemony. Under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin, Moscow has been promoting a series of increasingly ambitious Russian-led multilateral institutions. The CSTO has helped restore Moscow's military power in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Although originally designed for mutual defense, CSTO members employ the organization to counter transnational threats such as cyber vulnerabilities, narcotics trafficking, transnational crime, and terrorism. Member countries further collaborate on arms sales and manufacturing, military facilities and training, regional security consultations, and conducting joint military exercises. In addition, the development of some permanent bodies in recent years demonstrates increased integration among CSTO members. Moscow uses the CSTO to pursue a variety of goals such as power projection, legitimation of its policies, and constraints on member states. Although Russia dominates the CSTO, the organization is weak. Its member governments continue to disagree on important issues and have failed to act in Ukraine or Syria. The weakness of the CSTO has hindered Russia's ability to pursue its goals through the organization and provides an opening for skilled U.S. leadership.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
Strategic Studies Institute and
U.S. Army War College Press

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RICHARD WEITZ is a senior fellow and director of the Center for Political-Military Analysis at the Hudson Institute, Washington, DC. His current research includes regional security developments relating to Europe, Eurasia, and East Asia as well as U.S. foreign and defense policies. Dr. Weitz has authored or edited several books and monographs, including *Promoting U.S.-Indian Defense Cooperation* (2017); *Parsing Chinese-Russian Military Exercises* (2015); *Reforming U.S. Export Controls Reforms* (2015); and *Turkey's New Regional Security Role: Implications for the United States* (2014). Dr. Weitz has also published articles in many academic journals, newspapers, and magazines, and has delivered numerous presentations at conferences, panels, and other events. Dr. Weitz holds a B.A. with Highest Honors in government from Harvard College, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa; an M.Sc. in international relations from the London School of Economics; an M.Phil. in politics from Oxford University; and a Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University.

SUMMARY

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) consists of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. The CSTO's membership has been stable, with the exception that Uzbekistan, which joined the organization in 2006, withdrew in 2012. The CSTO operates on the basis of the Collective Security Treaty (CST), a mutual defense pact signed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on May 15, 1992. The CSTO's initial declared purpose was to counter external aggression against members and to harmonize their foreign policy stances. The organization has since addressed sub-conventional challenges such as cyber threats, transnational terrorism, ethnic unrest, narcotics trafficking, humanitarian emergencies, and peacekeeping. Many CSTO members do not face immediate conventional military threats from other nation-states, but do confront transnational challenges. They further benefit from collaborating on joint weapons acquisition, training opportunities, and military exercises.

The CSTO's joint command structure was originally designed to mobilize multinational coalitions during wartime. The organization has since developed standing decision-making and advisory bodies as well as additional types of military forces. These include rapid reaction forces, comprised of members' elite units, as well as special purpose forces for peacekeeping, drug interdiction, and other low-intensity missions. The organization's Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF) is the main structure for addressing these new missions. Its components are in a higher state of readiness than other CSTO units; they engage in regular exercises, especially in Central Asia, where the main transnational threats are concentrated. These

drills rehearse the canonical scenario of resisting North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) aggression as well as the new sub-conventional missions. The CSTO has also gained some international recognition, signing agreements with the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and other multinational organizations. During meetings, CSTO leaders typically issue joint statements on various international security issues to amplify the impact of their individual views by speaking with a collective voice. These joint declarations usually support Moscow's stance but can also back other members' positions.

Russia is the CSTO's dominant member, with the largest economy, population, defense budget, and armed forces. Moscow uses the CSTO to support its foreign basing network in the former Soviet republic. The organization helps justify Russian military presence in other former Soviet republics, which enhances Moscow's influence and provides a defensive buffer from Russian state borders. The other CSTO members also receive discounts, subsidies, and other incentives to buy Russian arms, which promote military interoperability. Additionally, the Russian Government provides subsidized military education and training opportunities to other CSTO members. This Russian domination has weakened the CSTO's institutional legitimacy in the West. NATO members see the CSTO as an instrument to sustain Russian defense primacy in Eurasia. According to the CSTO Charter, members cannot host foreign bases without the approval of all other members, effectively giving Moscow a veto on NATO military facilities in the CSTO region. The organization also helps limit Beijing's military role in what Moscow sees as its zone of security influence even as the CSTO develops ties with the SCO.

Notwithstanding Moscow's institutional primacy, CSTO member states regularly deviate from Russian positions on some security issues, such as Moscow's creation of separatist states in Abkhazia and South Ossetia following the August 2008 Georgian war and Moscow's military operations in Ukraine. In addition, members have generally declined to back Armenia in its territorial dispute with non-member Azerbaijan. Even when CSTO governments have called on the organization to suppress domestic instability in a member country, such as when mass violence broke out between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, the CSTO failed to take collective action. Despite the persistent threats Afghanistan presents to the organization, the CSTO has considerably restricted its role regarding that conflict. For example, the organization helps interdict the influx of Afghan-origin heroin into Central Asia and Russia, but has not supported NATO's stabilization missions inside Afghanistan. Collaboration with other regional security bodies has also been modest. Despite some interaction, the CSTO and SCO exist as potentially competitive organizations. The CSTO's internal divisions, shirking of regional challenges, and lack of collective combat experience cast doubt on the organization's capability and resolve to engage in actual operations. If relations between NATO and Russia ever improve, opportunities may arise for cooperation on common security concerns, such as securing the Afghanistan-Tajikistan border, but for now, Washington and its allies should focus on monitoring the organization's activities and challenging its claims to legitimacy and exclusivity.

ASSESSING THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION: CAPABILITIES AND VULNERABILITIES

In recent years, Russia has strengthened its military position in Central Asia and the South Caucasus through a combination of bilateral and multilateral initiatives, including by signing economic and security agreements with the former Soviet republics and promoting the development of Moscow-led multinational organizations such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This monograph reviews the CSTO's history, structure, missions, capabilities, activities, members, opportunities, and challenges, including the wars in Afghanistan and Syria, as well as some suggestions for future U.S. policies toward the institution. The CSTO has become the most important multilateral defense structure in the former Soviet Union. In the coming years, however, the CSTO faces significant internal and external challenges that could impede the realization of some of Moscow's most important security goals in Eurasia. Conversely, the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies have opportunities to sustain a regional defense role.

ORIGINS

On December 8, 1991, the new political leaders of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine signed an agreement that officially recognized the Soviet Union's dissolution and established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Two weeks later, on December 21, representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and

Uzbekistan joined the three original governments in signing the Alma-Ata Protocol, which expanded the number and legal authorities of the CIS. While Georgia entered the CIS 2 years later, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan did not ratify the CIS Charter and became only associate members; the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania never joined.

The former Soviet republics derived benefits from the Soviet Union's demise, namely greater national sovereignty and economic freedoms. However, they suffered major economic, political, diplomatic, and military costs. These states had to transition from a socialist state-run command economy, based on an integrated Soviet defense industrial complex, to a freer but more complex mixed market economic system. They also abruptly replaced their stifling but stable communist political systems with more turbulent multiparty (at least on paper) political structures. Although the former Soviet republics welcomed their newfound independence, they found themselves excluded from the core Euro-Atlantic institutions of the European Union (EU), which admitted only the three Baltic republics. The CIS lacked the strong structures and authorities found in these Western institutions or in the defunct Soviet Union. Perhaps the best analogy for the CIS (and possible role model) is the British Commonwealth, which likewise seeks to sustain links between newly independent states and their former mother country. Their mutual disagreements prevented them from forming an equivalently strong bloc of their own.

On May 15, 1992, at a meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, most CIS members signed the Collective Security Treaty (CST), which obliged the signatories to assist each other against external aggression. Of the CIS members, only Moldova and Turkmenistan did not

join the CST. Although Russia saw the CST as an instrument to promote Moscow's power and influence in the former Soviet Union, the other signatories welcomed Russian pledges to respect their national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and control of the military assets that they inherited from the Soviet era.[1] These governments also sought to sustain access to Russia's arms and military technologies since they still relied heavily on Soviet-era weaponry. These defense industries had all suffered from the abrupt collapse of the Soviet military-industrial complex, which has been based on integrated supply chains, research and development, production, and maintenance elements.[2] The Protocol of Prolongation, valid initially for 5 years after it came into force, was extended for automatic renewal every 5 years in April 1999. Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan declined the new arrangement and tried to deepen their ties with Western institutions. Ukraine ended its association with the CIS in May 2018.

In 2002, some CST members signed a charter creating a new regional military structure: the Collective Security Treaty Organization (*Organizacija Dogovora o Kollektivnoj Bezopasnosti*, abbreviated as ODKB in Russian). While maintaining the existing formal security pledges by member states under the CST, the new organization aimed to foster deeper and more concrete cooperation. Members sought to transform the mutual security commitments under the CST into a more institutionalized form of cooperation involving standing structures, periodic exercises, and other attributes of a strong regional security institution, such as NATO. Even so, for several years, the CSTO existed mostly as a paper structure, providing a multinational shell for potential cooperation among members' national defense forces. However, over the past

decade, the CSTO has strengthened its authority and capabilities as well as fostered increased joint weapons manufacturing; integrated air defenses; multinational military training; and collective peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and counternarcotics activities among its members.[3]

Moscow has strived to bolster the CSTO's international legitimacy. The initial focus was on securing NATO's recognition of the CSTO as an equal and equivalent partner. Until Russian-NATO relations collapsed following Moscow's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, Russian and CSTO officials repeatedly proposed joint actions with NATO to fight terrorism, counter narcotics trafficking, and support Afghanistan's security.[4] NATO has consistently rejected these initiatives, seeing the CSTO as a Russian-led organization that supports Moscow's drive to strengthen its influence in the former Soviet Union.[5] Though shunned by the West, the CSTO has gained some international recognition elsewhere. In 2004, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a resolution granting the CSTO formal observer status. The organization established contacts with the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council. In March 2010, the CSTO signed an agreement with the UN Secretariat that allowed for the organization to support UN-mandated peacekeeping missions.[6] In 2012, the CSTO and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations signed a memorandum on cooperation to prevent and resolve conflicts.[7] The CSTO's contacts with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) include meetings between senior officials of both organizations and reciprocal invitations to major events.[8] The CSTO has also built connections with the Anti-Terrorism Center and other security organs of the

CIS, an organization that includes former Soviet republics that are not CSTO members (notably Uzbekistan). Finally, Moscow has promoted ties between the CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a more comprehensive regional organization that promotes economic and security cooperation among its full members (which includes all CSTO members plus China, Uzbekistan, and more recently India and Pakistan). In 2007, the CSTO and SCO Secretariats signed a memorandum of understanding that defines their relationship and expresses the readiness of both organizations to cooperate on crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, and other regional security issues on an "equal and constructive" basis.[9]

STRUCTURE

Since its formal inauguration in October 2003, when all its member states ratified the organization's founding documents, the CSTO has developed a more defined legal basis, including a charter that defines the main legal bodies and officers as follows:

- The Collective Security Council, comprised of the heads of the member states, determines the CSTO's fundamental goals and makes decisions to achieve them. It can also create working groups and other temporary bodies; the chair rotates each year before the annual presidential summit.
- The Permanent Council coordinates the CSTO activities between Collective Security Council sessions.
- The Foreign Ministers Council promotes international cooperation among members.

- The Defense Ministers Council coordinates members' defense policies.
- The Military Industrial Commission promotes cooperation among members' defense industries.
- The Committee of Security Council Secretaries harmonizes members' internal security and law enforcement policies.
- The Secretary General is the CSTO's chief administrative officer and represents the organization to other bodies.
- The Secretariat provides administrative, technical, and other support for CSTO activities.
- The Military Committee, supported by the CSTO Joint Staff, prepares and implements military-related plans and activities.
- The CSTO Parliamentary Assembly Council promotes cooperation among members' legislative bodies and helps harmonize national legislation.

The CSTO also has lower-level interagency bodies, such as the Coordinating Council of Heads of Competent Bodies for Countering Drug Trafficking. The presidential summits and other major meetings adopt joint statements, resolutions, and protocols that summarize the collective concerns of the CSTO governments as well as their future goals. During meetings, the CSTO leaders typically issue joint statements on various international security issues, such as missile defense, Iran, and Syria. In doing so, they aim to amplify the impact of their individual views by speaking with a collective voice. The member governments also regularly present collectively agreed upon documents to multinational originations such as the UN; they proposed more than a dozen such documents in 2017.[10]

These joint declarations usually support Moscow's position but can also back other members' policies. For example, at Armenia's initiative, in April 2014, the CSTO issued a collective statement condemning the occupation of the Syrian town of Kessab, populated by ethnic Armenians, by an al-Qaeda linked extremist group.[11]

MISSIONS

The CSTO's original military purpose was to counter external aggression against its members and align their foreign policy stances around common positions. In recent years, the CSTO governments have tasked the organization with pursuing a wider range of objectives and have provided further resources and authorities to achieve them. For example, the CSTO has devoted greater attention to countering modern transnational threats, such as terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, organized crime, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, and cyber menaces. In the words of Belarus's Foreign Ministry:

> [T]he CSTO has transformed from a 'classic' military-political bloc, focused on protecting allies from foreign aggression, into a multifunctional regional organization that can provide a comprehensive security of Member States.[12]

The Central Asian members are especially vulnerable to these threats given their proximity to the volatile regions of South Asia and the Middle East. For instance, they are situated along the paths that traffickers use to convey narcotics to Russia and Europe along the "northern route" from Afghanistan, the world's largest producer of opium. Regional terrorist groups

traffic drugs and people to buy weapons and bribe border guards. Terrorist infiltration is a constant concern for the CSTO member states because Tajikistan shares an approximately 1,300 kilometer (km)-long border with Afghanistan. Through Operation NELEGAL, the CSTO member states collaborate against illegal migration, beyond monitoring the movement of potential terrorists.[13] The member governments are reviewing a draft multi-year action plan on countering illicit migration.[14] For years, many CSTO leaders blamed NATO for failing to suppress the Afghan drug trade and insurgency. More recently, they have expressed anxiety about NATO's possible premature withdrawal from the Afghan war, which they fear could create a security vacuum that could destabilize much of Eurasia.

In addition to the Afghan Taliban, the CSTO member governments have identified several other threatening Islamist groups active in the former Soviet republics: the Islamic Resistance Party of Tajikistan, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and more recently al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Islamic State, and by the Arabic language acronym, Daesh). During the 1990s, the IMU emerged as the main terrorist movement in Central Asia. The IMU formally came into being in 1998, but its precursor organizations had been active in Central Asia since the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991. In their August 1999 communiqué, IMU leaders proclaimed their objective of overthrowing the secular regime of Uzbek President Islam Karimov and establishing a Taliban-style Islamic republic. The organization detonated bombs

in Uzbekistan, attempted to assassinate Karimov, and invaded southern Kyrgyzstan, where IMU fighters seized foreigners as hostages and ransomed them for money. IMU guerrillas sought but failed to establish a base of operations in the Fergana Valley in order to gather recruits and wage a protracted insurgency against the Uzbek Government. The IMU developed extensive connections with al-Qaeda as well as with the Taliban when they ruled Afghanistan. Following the large-scale U.S. military intervention there in October 2001, the IMU lost its bases in Afghanistan and had to relocate to Pakistan and other territories. Kyrgyz authorities feared that IMU operatives had established sleeper cells within their territory, especially in the Fergana Valley, by blending in with the local population. In April 2003, Uzbekistani authorities discovered a possible IMU bomb plot when construction workers found a probable improvised explosive device in the basement of a Tashkent hotel. Some of the IMU's operatives may have been involved in the bombings that occurred in Uzbekistan from March to April 2004 and in Tajikistan in 2006.[15]

Another terrorist group of great concern to the CSTO members is al-Qaeda and its affiliates. This group has historically not focused on Central Asia because its leader, Osama bin Laden, was preoccupied with other regions. Additionally, because of the presence of other jihadist organizations in the region, al-Qaeda saw little need for taking on the burden of starting an insurgency there. Nevertheless, the group has been involved in providing some training, leadership, and logistical support to Central Asian militants that have joined its ranks in Afghanistan and Pakistan.[16] Al-Qaeda and the more narrowly focused Central Asian terrorist groups obtain multiple mutual or

reciprocal benefits from their partnerships. For instance, the IMU received the right to operate in Afghanistan; in exchange, it helped the Taliban and al-Qaeda fight their respective opponents.[17] Although al-Qaeda is predominantly an Arab organization, by collaborating with foreign Muslim terrorist networks, the group can extend its reach to non-Arab Muslim countries within the framework of a global jihad. The CSTO governments have more recently focused on the ISIS threat. As early as 2015, then Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov claimed, "[T]hey are starting to push toward the southern borders of our allies, first of all those in the CSTO."[18] At the September 2015 CSTO summit, Russian President Vladimir Putin called for forming an international coalition against ISIS, arguing, "the global community must unite in the face of these threats."[19]

Yet, the Russian military intervention in Syria has promoted radicalization and encouraged retaliatory strikes against Moscow and its allies. The Syrian civil war has helped extremists recruit, train, and empower scores of Muslim militants, including some from Russia and Central Asia. Averting or reversing radicalization remains the responsibility of its member governments, some of whom have been criticized for excessively curbing religious liberty. The CSTO analysts fear that these fighters, along with homegrown radicals, will wage jihad in Central Asian countries, which have secular governments despite their large Muslim populations.[20] In 2015, Sergei Smirnov, the First Deputy Director of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) remarked that 2,400 Russian citizens are now fighting for ISIS, along with about 3,000 Central Asians."[21] Almazbek Atambayev, the then-President of Kyrgyzstan, added:

> [I]t is of particular concern that there have been numerous cases of recruitment of our citizens to participate in armed conflict . . . and of them subsequently returning to continue their terrorist activities and recruitment in the countries of this region.[22]

Furthermore, Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev acknowledged, "that citizens of the CSTO member states join radical groups and participate in illegal activities in the Middle East and Afghanistan . . . [which] requires effective measures from our side."[23] In June 2018, the CSTO foreign ministers warned that ISIS was "creating a bridgehead in northern Afghanistan, that is, in direct proximity to the CSTO zone of responsibility."[24]

Information security has become a growing CSTO security priority. The member governments, which exercise various forms of domestic media censorship, have expressed concern about how terrorists, Western governments, and their domestic opponents can exploit the Internet to recruit followers and organize subversive activities. Following Moscow's lead, the CSTO governments have sought to use the organization to strengthen their control over information. For example, through Operation PROXY, launched in October 2012, members' intelligence organizations have collaborated to strengthen their security against terrorist extremists, criminals, political provocateurs, and other potential cyber threats. These governments have also, through the CSTO and other means, blocked their citizens from accessing thousands of websites suspected of publicizing extremist views.[25] In December 2014, the Collective Security Council adopted a resolution on coordinating the CSTO responses to cyber incidents and a protocol on resisting "criminal activities in the information sphere."[26] The Russian Government has

proposed UN resolutions calling for collective actions against "information terrorism," which would include any information that could "distort the perception of the political system, social order, domestic and foreign policy, important political and social processes in the state [or] spiritual, moral, and cultural values of its citizens."[27] In 2017, Jenish Razakov, Kyrgyzstan's Deputy Prime Minister for national security and law enforcement, called on the CSTO to spearhead a collective approach to cybersecurity and information assurance for the region.[28] The CSTO sponsors the Center for Modern Technology at Moscow University, which trains information security specialists.

The actual degree of danger presented by Islamist terrorist groups to the CSTO members is unknown. While all these countries have seen radicalization and Islamist-linked violence, but their governments have an incentive to exaggerate this threat to justify domestic security measures that they might like to take for other reasons. In addition, Moscow can use terrorist threats to justify Russian military actions and secure cooperation from other CSTO members.[29] Other CSTO members initially opposed Russia's aspiration to expand the organization's combat capabilities and missions. The leaders of these newly independent states were reluctant to compromise their post-Soviet autonomy. However, the Russia-Georgia War of 2008, the mass violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, the "social revolutions" in the Arab states during the last few years, and NATO's inability to suppress the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan had sufficiently alarmed the CSTO members to outweigh concerns about augmenting the organization's missions and capabilities. In a way, the war in Syria may have drawn potential militants out of Eurasia.[30]

CAPABILITIES

The CSTO has several types of collective military forces made up of units from the armed forces of the member states, including large combined regional forces available upon national mobilization, standing rapid reaction forces, and smaller special purpose forces for peacekeeping, drug interdiction, and other low-intensity missions. The CSTO was originally designed to mobilize multinational coalitions in wartime under a joint command. On paper, three such multinational frameworks exist, though they do not regularly conduct exercises: an East European group with Russia and Belarus, a Caucasian group involving Russia and Armenia, and a Southern group that includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. In addition to these three original regional collective-defense groups, the CSTO has developed rapid reaction forces consisting mostly of elite military units to engage in counterterrorism and peacekeeping missions and potentially prevent social revolutions in member countries. In theory, the CSTO members fall under the protection of Moscow's nuclear umbrella, though the precise extent of any Russian extended deterrent guarantee remains unclear.[31]

In 2009, the CSTO officially created a *Kollektivniye Sily Operativnogo Reagirovaniya* (Collective Rapid Reaction Force [CRRF], KSOR in Russian).[32] The CRRF is designed to conduct low-intensity operations, which include peacekeeping, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, emergency response, and countering narcotics trafficking and other transnational criminal activity.[33] Unlike the CSTO's three large multinational groups, the CRRF engages in regular exercises, especially in Central Asia, where the main transnational threats are

concentrated. It includes special purpose forces as well as conventional combat troops.[34] Originally, the CRRF planned to have approximately 16,000 troops, with the Russian military comprising approximately half of that total.[35] However, the CSTO later increased the size of the CRRF to more than 25,000 troops. The force is split into a large battle group of 22,000 and a 3,500-member Central Asian Regional Rapid Collective Deployment Force (KSBR TsAR), which maintains a higher state of combat readiness and is intended for use only in Central Asia.[36] If deployed, the CRRF and the KSBR TsAR would fall under multinational command. Yet, neither the CRRF nor the KSBR TsAR has been deployed in an actual operation.

Each CSTO member contributes to the CRRF, but Russia and Kazakhstan make much larger troop commitments than the other members. Russia has assigned the 98th Guards Airborne Division, the 31st Guards Air Assault Brigade, and the 15th Guards Independent Motor-Rifle Brigade to the CRRF. In addition to these combat units, Russia has pledged several paramilitary and special police units from non-Ministry of Defense (MOD) agencies, including detachments of the FSB Border Department, to the CRRF to address terrorism and narcotics trafficking. The new Russian National Guard, created in 2016, could further assist with these non-combat missions. It has several hundred thousand personnel as well as light armored vehicles, mortars, and small arms and light weaponry.[37] The CRRF also includes Armenia's 23d Independent Special Operations Brigade, Belarus's 103d Independent Guards Mobile Brigade, Kazakhstan's 1st Independent Marines Brigade, Kyrgyzstan's 2d Guard Independent Motorized Rifle Brigade, and Tajikistan's 7th Independent Airborne Assault Brigade, as well as

some other specialized units, such as "Grom" (Thunder), the special purpose detachment for fighting narcotics trafficking.[38]

The CSTO has additionally discussed creating a collective crisis reaction center, which would coordinate closely with Russia's MOD.[39] The organization still operates a database of regional terrorist members and groups.[40] Moreover, Russia maintains large military bases in other CSTO member countries, for which it pays little or no rent. The Russian 201st Motorized Rifle Division has been in Tajikistan since 1989 and, according to existing agreements, will be maintained until at least 2042. Planes based at the Russian airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, can patrol all of Central Asia as well as Afghanistan without refueling. Russia also has a major military base in Armenia.

As an incentive for CSTO membership and as a means of keeping its allies dependent on its military, the Russian Government provides the CSTO personnel with subsidized education and training opportunities at Russian military institutions. Moscow also allows the CSTO allies to purchase Russian weapons at the same cost as its own armed forces. These transfers occur directly between Russia and its allies instead of through the CSTO. The organization facilitates cooperation among members' defense industries, which were tightly connected during the USSR as part of the integrated Soviet military-industrial complex.[41] In 2016, the CSTO members agreed to create a common service center support network for their military equipment.[42] In 2017, Russia announced plans to arm some CRRF elements almost free of charge, but the implementation date for this arrangement has been postponed from 2015 to 2016 to at least the 2018 to 2019 period.[43] Of the five Central Asian states, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

depend the most on Russia for security due to deficiencies in equipment and training, while Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have stronger national defense forces, and Turkmenistan has limited its defense ties with Russia. While the balance of forces between Armenia and Azerbaijan is unclear, Armenia needs Moscow's assistance to counter a possible Turkish military intervention on Azerbaijan's behalf. Belarus could not defend itself in an improbable war with NATO without strong Russian military support.

Proposals to create a joint CSTO collective air force and a collective air and missile defense system have made only partial progress.[44] However, the Joint CIS Air Defense System, established in 2005, covers most of the CSTO region. For example, the Russian Air Force patrols Tajikistan's airspace as part of the CIS system.[45] Furthermore, Russia has been expanding bilateral air defense cooperation directly with some CSTO members such as Belarus and Kazakhstan that, unlike Kyrgyzstan or Tajikistan, have modern air forces and air defense systems.[46] These arrangements are not under the CSTO command but do provide protection for the organization's zone of responsibility, especially given Russia's strong national air defenses.[47] Even a modest regional air defense network could help protect the CSTO members against terrorist drone attacks of the kinds seen in Syria.[48] Russia has undertaken talks with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to establish similar bilateral air defense networks, though neither Tajikistan nor Kyrgyzstan has combat fighter aviation or modern Russian surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems.[49] However, proposing a unified air defense system allows Moscow to offer collective military support without deploying more troops to the region.[50] In any case, whatever the arrangement, these countries will remain dependent on the Russian Air Force and its SAM systems.

EXERCISES

Each year, the CSTO Secretariat and Joint Staff adopt and execute an annual Command and Forces Collective Combat Training Plan. The CSTO has been increasing the frequency of its major exercises in recent years, especially since the Ukraine conflict began in 2014. These drills have numbered about half-a-dozen annually in recent years and aim to improve the organization's capabilities for collective defense, counternarcotics, counterinsurgency, reconnaissance, and rapid response. The "Vzainmodeystviye" (translated in English as "interaction," sometimes "cooperation" or "collaboration") drills are the annual large-scale multinational exercises for testing the CRRF's conventional capabilities. The "Rubezh" ("Frontier") series tests the rapid deployment of collective forces against hypothetical terrorist organizations based in Afghanistan or Central Asia. The "Nerushimoe bratstvo" ("Unbreakable Brotherhood," also translated as "Enduring Brotherhood" or "Indestructible Brotherhood") drills which began in 2012, focus on rehearsing various peacekeeping skills. The periodic "Kobalt" (also "Cobalt") exercises train the members' interior troops, counternarcotics units, emergency response, and other internal security forces. The similar "Grom" drills rehearse joint counternarcotics operations by members' national drug and law enforcement bodies. The "Poisk" ("Search") drills rehearse reconnaissance of terrorists and other infiltrators using the CSTO air, ground, and special forces.[51]

The CSTO held three major joint exercises in 2014. In early July, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan conducted conventional military drills in "Rubezh-2014" to improve joint command of rapid

response multinational forces. From July 29 to August 1, 2014, all the CSTO members contributed some 700 personnel supported by BTR-70 armored personnel carriers (APC), BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles (IFV), and Mi-17 transport helicopters, in the three-phased "Unbreakable Brotherhood-2014" peacekeeping drills at Kyrgyzstan's Ala-Too firing range.[52] The following month, Armenia, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan engaged in "Interaction-2014" at the military range at Spassk in Kazakhstan's Karaganda region. Between August 18 and August 22, 2014, approximately 3,000 service members (including 500 Russian airborne troops), 200 military systems, and some 30 jets and helicopters simulated various defense missions, including cybersecurity, psychological warfare, and air transport of CRRF elements protected by the Russian-Kazakhstani joint air defense network.[53] The exercise scenario posited two hypothetical countries, with:

> an imaginary state Karania making part of the CSTO, and an imaginary state Irtyshia that borders on Karania and suffers from a deep domestic policy crisis triggered by a separatist movement on the back of exacerbated interethnic clashes.[54]

Karania then appeals to the CSTO for military assistance.

The "Interaction-2015" drills occurred from August 23 to August 28 and were staged at the Russian airborne forces' training range in Pskov, about 40 km from Estonia's border. All 6 member states participated in some capacity, providing some 2,000 troops (regular soldiers but also emergency, interior, and drug control personnel); 200 pieces of military hardware; and 40 fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, including Su-27

fighters, Su-24 tactical bombers, Il-76 transport aircraft, and Mil MI-24, MI-26, and Kamov KA-52 helicopters. Russia's Western Military District (MD) commanded the exercises and deployed two paratroop battalions (about 1,000 troops). Tajikistan sent one assault platoon, Kyrgyzstan deployed one platoon, while Kazakhstan sent a nuclear, chemical, and biological defense unit. Only Belarusian and Kazakhstani forces brought their own equipment; Russia had to provide the Armenian, Kyrgyz, and Tajikistani contingents with weaponry. The exercise tested the CRRF's command-and-control arrangements for planning and executing collective intervention against local terrorists subverting a member government (e.g., similar to that of Belarus), as well as for interdicting narcotics trafficking, conducting airborne operations, responding to emergencies, and upholding members' territorial integrity.[55] Some analysts speculated that Interaction-2015 represented a response to the recent NATO drills in Estonia; however, the CSTO Deputy Secretary General Valeriy Semerikov said he:

> would not like our exercise to be seen as a counter to the exercise NATO is now holding in the West. Our exercise is a planned one and was given the go-ahead last year by the ministers of defense and the Security Council secretaries.[56]

Russia conducted the "Center-2015" (or "Tsentr-2015") national strategic exercise from September 14-20, 2015. The Russian MOD described the drills as a command and staff exercise that focused on training the Russian armed forces as well as joint combat training activities of the CSTO. The exercise included approximately 95,000 personnel and more than 7,000 pieces of hardware as well as 170 aircraft and 20 ships.

It took place at several locations in Russia's Central MD, Russia's largest, as well as off Kazakhstan's Caspian Sea coast. The exercise covered a multitude of security and defense-related drills, including a counterterrorist operation in the CSTO's Central Asian region. Military attachés from dozens of countries, along with President Putin, watched the last stage of the exercise in Orenburg.[57]

"Unbreakable Brotherhood-2015," which occurred in late September through early October 2015, trained the CSTO peacekeeping forces in Armenia. The exercise included armed forces, police units, and representatives from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. It also included representatives from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the CSTO Joint Headquarters, and the CSTO Secretariat. Unbreakable Brotherhood-2015 consisted of three stages that lasted 5 days and involved 600 troops, 50 pieces of army hardware, helicopters, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Particular attention was paid to improving the coordination of peacekeeping troops, liquidating terrorists, dealing with the mass media, rendering first aid in cooperation with the International Red Cross, and responding to a chemical emergency.[58]

From April 18-22, 2016, the CSTO conducted its first large-scale military reconnaissance exercise, "Poisk 2016" ("Search-2016"), at the Lohour and Maghob training grounds in Tajikistan, where a simulated militant attack occurred. Although all the CSTO members contributed some of the 1,500 service personnel, the drills focused on rehearsing the application of advanced Russian military technology and tactics for collecting, analyzing, and distributing tactical-operational battlefield intelligence against

armed adversaries; strategic-operational mobility for rapid response; advanced networked information technology; and other combat support capabilities. For example, helicopter crews dropped paratroopers close to enemy formations to cut off their lines of communication, while the participants also used electronic reconnaissance equipment to target "enemy" communications points.[59] At the end of the year, "Clear Sky 2016," an international command and staff exercise conducted by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia, aimed to enhance interoperability between the CSTO military staffs.[60]

All the CSTO members participated in the multiphased fall "Combat Brotherhood 2017," which occurred throughout the southern region of the CSTO and, for the first time, was based on a single integrating political-military concept and scenario. Under Colonel General Alexander Dvornikov, Commander of the Russian Southern MD, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan contributed both regular and specialized units for the CRRF drills, which totaled 12,000 troops, 1,500 major pieces of hardware, some 90 aircraft, and other combat equipment. The Russian contingents included: regular forces; National Guard units; and Ministry of Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies, and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM) emergency response troops. The first phase, "Search-2017," which took place from October 3-7, 2017, drilled members' reconnaissance forces. In the second phase, "Interaction-2017," which took place from October 9-13, 2017, Russian and Armenian regular units exercised at Armenia's Bagramyan and the Alagyaz training grounds. The third stage, the "Unbreakable Brotherhood-2017" peacekeeping drills,

took place from October 16-20, 2017, at two ranges in Kazakhstan. The CSTO Collective Peacekeeping Forces rehearsed conducting negotiations, escorting humanitarian deliveries, operating checkpoints, psychological and information operations, and eliminating terrorists.[61] In the final phase of Combat Brotherhood 2017, which occurred from November 10-20, 2017, more than 5,000 troops, 300 major ground platforms, and some 60 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft of the CRRF rehearsed counterterrorist missions in the mountainous areas of Tajikistan. The multiple forces, locations, and phases of the Combat Brotherhood 2017 exercise simulated the various missions that might occur under unified command and control when defending the southern CSTO region from state and especially non-state actors.[62]

In June 2018, the CSTO members held "Kobalt-2018" in Kazakhstan. The drill included more than 700 special forces units, 70 pieces of combat and specialized equipment, six aviation systems, and artillery weapons. The special forces used UAVs to provide intelligence for the CRRF, including troops from Russia's Internal Affairs Ministry and National Guard, Kazakhstan's National Guard, and internal security units from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Belarus. The 3 days of drills simulated a range of scenarios, including detection and elimination of an illegal armed group of terrorists.[63] In the fall of 2018, Kyrgyzstan will host "Interaction-2018." Participating in this drill will be an estimated 3,000 personnel, 600 pieces of military hardware, and some 40 aircraft.[64] The drill will rehearse peacemaking, rapid response, interoperability, reconnaissance, and air force missions.[65] It will reportedly feature a new operational format allowing for more synchronized exercise management across the CSTO members. In October, the CSTO peacekeeping exercise

"Indestructible Brotherhood-2018" will occur in Russia.[66] Starting that month, the month-long Combat Brotherhood 2018 drills will practice redeploying the CSTO contingents by air.[67] Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu explained that these exercises are part of an integrated series of CSTO drills "conducted in October this year in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan sequentially under a single plan."[68]

Depending on their location, the large annual Russian national military drills, which rotate among Russia's four major geographic commands, can include a CSTO multinational component. Russia's Western ("Zapad") MD strategic military exercise encompasses Belarus, while the quadrennial drill in Russia's Central MD ("Center" or "Tsentr") covers Armenia and the Central Asian CSTO members. The Zapad 2017 exercise featured an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 Russian troops, including premier units such as Russia's 1st Guards Tank Army, 11th Army Corps, 3 airborne divisions and the Baltic Fleet, as well as hundreds of pieces of military equipment, such as S-400 air defense interceptors and SS-26 Iskander missile units.[69] The Tsentr exercises in 2008, 2011, and 2015, occurred primarily in Russia but did have some drills in Central Asia.

MEMBERS AND THEIR MOTIVES

During the past 2 decades, the CSTO's membership—currently consisting of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Russia—has been very stable. On two occasions, Uzbekistan was a formal CSTO member for a few years, but was not very active during either period. Apart from that exception, all the countries that signed the CSTO Charter in 2002 have remained in the alliance, while no new states have

become permanent members. Article 19 of the Charter holds that membership is open to any state that shares its purposes and principles and is prepared to undertake the Charter's obligations. Article 19 also allows any member state to withdraw from the organization, as Uzbekistan did most recently in 2012. Belarus President Alexandr Lukashenko has said that future EEU members must also join the CSTO, but this is not an official policy.[70] Unlike in the case of the EEU, Moscow has not pressed hard for further CSTO membership enlargement.

The official justification for the creation of the CSTO, as stated in Article 3 of the Charter, was to promote "international and regional security and stability, and to ensure the collective defense of the independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of the member States." Specifically, the CSTO is designed to preserve "security on [a] collective basis." Article 2 states:

> In case [of] a threat to security, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of one or several Member States, or a threat to international peace and security, Member States will immediately put into action the mechanism of joined consultations with the aim to coordinate their positions and take measures to eliminate the threat that has emerged.[71]

This tenet is reinforced in Article 4, which affirms the responsibilities of member states:

> In case an act of aggression is committed against any of the Member States, all the other Member States will provide it with necessary assistance, including military [assistance], as well as provide support with the means at their disposal in exercise of the right to collective defense in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter.[72]

While Armenia and Belarus provide the CSTO with security requirements and armed forces in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, respectively, the organization's primary regional focus has been Central Asia. There, the CSTO has bolstered Moscow's influence by helping justify Russia's bases in the region, offering incentives for Central Asian militaries to cooperate with Moscow, and providing legal justification for potential Russian military interventions. The other Central Asian member governments, excluded from NATO or any other powerful defense alliance, perceived security benefits in participating in the CSTO. The general goals of combating terrorism, countering drug trafficking, and pledging assistance to each other in the case of aggression are widely appealing. However, each government also pursues unique objectives through membership. For example, the Belarus regime worries about many threats, including Russia, NATO, state, and non-state actors, while Armenians see the CSTO primarily as a means to secure Russian support against rival nation-state Azerbaijan. Meanwhile, the Central Asian governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan worry most about terrorist threats. All the non-Russian CSTO members perceive the organization as an instrument to obtain some Russian weaponry and other Russian defense industrial assistance, albeit with some compromises regarding their sovereignty.[73]

Russian Federation

Russia is clearly the dominant CSTO member and has been the driving force behind the organization's development. The size of Russia's population, economy, defense budget, and armed forces dwarf those

of the other members. The Russian armed forces' ability to conduct large-scale operations and project military power beyond its borders surpasses that of any other CSTO member. Its recent Zapad 2017 strategic exercise featured tens of thousands of troops and hundreds of pieces of military equipment. Russia is also the only CSTO member with foreign military bases, having major facilities in Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. In April 2018, Shoigu announced that Russia would reinforce its Kant Air Base, along with its military facility in Tajikistan in part to address the threat of ISIS militants in Afghanistan.[74] Russian defense firms are also the primary arms suppliers of the CSTO armed forces. Furthermore, Moscow uses its influence in other international organizations, such as the UN and the SCO, to promote the CSTO.[75]

The balance of influence within the CSTO clearly reflects these power imbalances. The CSTO Secretariat is based in Moscow, and most of the organization's employees are Russian citizens. For most of its history, the organization's Secretary General was former Russian General Nikolai Bordyuzha.[76] Moscow also uses military exercises to promote its interests within the CSTO. During the Zapad 2017 drills, Russia pressured Belarus to maintain cooperation with Moscow.[77] Russia also employed Combat Brotherhood 2017 to improve relations with Kazakhstan, after tensions rose between the two states over Astana's refusal to deploy troops to Syria in support of the Assad regime.[78] Even the practice of allowing other CSTO members to purchase Russian weapons at subsidized prices benefits Moscow's interests. For example, the sales can strengthen Russia's forward defenses by providing advanced weaponry to allies that could not otherwise afford them.[79] Russia's modernization of the Tajik military helps to

keep Afghan militants from reaching Russian borders.[80] Subsidizing sales of Russian S-300 and S-400 SAM systems to Belarus strengthens Russia's western forward defenses.[81] Belarus could not have afforded the purchase without the discounts.[82] These weapons transfers can also preempt Western and Chinese sales to CSTO members and thereby sustain Moscow's predominant military influence in these countries. For instance, by selling fighter jets to Kazakhstan, Moscow can limit opportunities for Western defense engagement with that country.[83]

Moscow seeks to pursue a variety of goals through the CSTO. Its priorities involve augmenting Russian military power projection capabilities, legitimizing Moscow's foreign activities, constraining other members' policies, and limiting Western military activities in the former Soviet space.[84] The CSTO augments Russia's international influence by allowing Moscow to claim it is acting as the head of an alliance of states or in defense of their interests. The other CSTO governments have supported Russia on important issues, such as Moscow's military intervention in Syria and its criticism of NATO. The organization also helps legitimize Russia's military presence in other member countries. For example, Moscow justifies its military facilities in Armenia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan as contributing to the CSTO multinational missions.[85] (The CSTO as an institution does not have military bases; they all belong to the member governments.) The CSTO Charter requires Russian authorization before a member can host a non-member's troops, circumscribing the Western military presence in these countries.

Though Russia is by far the most powerful member, the CSTO is a weak organization, which has encouraged Moscow to apply other bilateral and multilateral

security tools. The other member governments also showed reluctance to back Moscow's most controversial actions, including the Russia-Georgia War of 2008, the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, and Moscow's increased tensions with Turkey.[86] Most recently, after Turkey shot down a Russian Sukhoi Su-24, Moscow only received rhetorical support from the CSTO member states, which aimed to balance their obligations to the alliance with their respective relationships with Turkey.[87] As an alternative tool, Moscow will exploit unresolved ("frozen") territorial conflicts among the former Soviet republics. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine have such conflicts, which provide Russia with the opportunity to exert influence over warring factions and play a key role in peace negotiations.[88] For example, the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict gives Russia, which sells weapons to both states, substantial leverage.

Republic of Armenia

Landlocked between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, and Turkey, Armenia is the only CSTO member located wholly in the South Caucasus region of Eurasia. Its conflict with Azerbaijan remains its immediate national security policy priority, with bilateral tensions centering on the Nagorno-Karabakh region. From 1988 to 1994, some 30,000 Azeris and Armenians died fighting to control the enclave. Since then, an oft-violated ceasefire has prevailed, though fighting flared anew during a 4-day conflict in April 2016. As the only CSTO member facing a plausible military attack from another country, Armenia has accordingly been very supportive of the organization. Armenia is a founding member of the organization and has backed

all its major initiatives. For instance, in 2009, Armenia assigned a unit to the newly created CRRF. Since then, Armenia has been an active participant in almost all major CRRF exercises and has hosted several of them. Armenia held the rotating chair of the CSTO from 2007 to 2008 and from 2015 to 2016. During its latter chairmanship, Armenia focused on harmonizing members' foreign policies, improving management of the CSTO, conducting more exercises, developing the organization's legal foundation, enhancing its logistical infrastructure, collaborating with other international institutions such as the UN and the SCO, promoting defense industrial cooperation, combating international terrorism, and finalizing "The CSTO Collective Security Strategy for the Period till 2025."[89] Armenian General Yuri Khatchaturov became the CSTO Secretary General in May 2017. Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan considered it a "huge privilege" that the CSTO members could buy weapons from each other at discounted prices as well as use each other's professional military education institutions.[90]

Yerevan has long relied on Moscow's patronage and protection against regional adversaries. Such ties continued after Armenia became newly independent from the Soviet Union. Armenia relies on bilateral as well as multilateral support from Moscow for its conventional defenses perhaps more than any other CSTO member. From Moscow's perspective, having Armenia as an ally helps Russia maintain a forward military presence in the South Caucasus. Thousands of Russian troops have since remained in Armenia, while the two countries have negotiated dozens of bilateral defense agreements covering military bases, joint defense structures, and other security collaboration. Armenian-Russian economic ties reinforce this defense

connection. Russia accounts for about a quarter of Armenia's foreign trade and approximately one-third of Armenia's incoming foreign investment.[91] Russian corporations and oligarchs have a strong presence in Armenia's energy, mining, transportation, financial, media, and telecommunications sectors. ArmRosGazProm, Russian railways, telecom operators MTS and Beeline, as well as leading Russian financial institutions have been the key investors in Armenia. Russia partly finances Armenian border security and helps patrol the Armenian-Turkish border.[92] In June 2016, Russia and Armenia established a joint air defense system, which allows Armenia to benefit from Russia's superior capabilities.[93] In July 2017, they created joint Russian-Armenian military units. During peacetime, Armenia's general staff has command of the units; during wartime, depending on the threat conditions and by mutual agreement, they could be subordinated to Russia's Southern MD.[94] The Armenian Defense Ministry has even expressed a willingness to consider sending professional (non-conscripted) soldiers to Syria to aid local demining efforts.[95]

In 2010, Yerevan and Moscow agreed to extend Russia's military presence in Armenia until 2044. Russia maintains two major military bases in Armenia: the 102d Military Base of the Group of Russian Forces in Transcaucasia located in Gyumri; and the 3624th Air Base located at Erebuni Airport south of Yerevan. The base in Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city situated near the Turkish border, houses some 5,000 Russian troops consisting of three mechanized infantry units, and one artillery unit. Their pieces of heavy weaponry include T-72 tanks, BMP-2 and BTR 70/80 armored vehicles, BM-21 and BM-30 multiple rocket launchers, as well as a battalion of S-300V and BukM1

air defense systems. At Erebuni, Russia has deployed MiG-29 fighter jets and Mi-24 and Mi-8 helicopters.[96] Furthermore, Russia has been Armenia's main arms supplier since independence. As part of the basing extension agreement, Russia supplied Armenia with almost US$800 million in new weaponry, including Navodchick-2 and Takhion UAVs, and Mi-24 helicopter gunships. In July 2015, Moscow approved a US$200-million loan for Armenia to purchase Russian military equipment, at below-market Russian domestic prices, including Smerch multiple-launch rocket systems, TOS-1A heavy flamethrowers, anti-tank weapons, and shoulder-fired SAMs.[97] In 2016, Russia permitted Armenia to become the first foreign country to purchase the 9K720 Iskander-M surface-to-surface tactical ballistic missile system, which can have a maximum range of 500 km.[98]

Despite these Armenian-Russian military arrangements, a major source of Armenian-Russian tension is that Moscow has provided even more arms to non-CSTO member Azerbaijan, which has a considerably larger defense budget and relies on Russia for more than four-fifths of its arms imports.[99] President Sargsyan called the sales the most problematic issue in Armenian-Russian relations.[100] However, Armenia's national security policymakers and their Russian counterparts understand that Yerevan's dependence on Moscow compels Armenia to accept the situation, while Azerbaijan's hydrocarbon resources make these sales too lucrative for Russia's military-industrial complex to resist. Some Russians argue that supplying arms to both sides is not only financially advantageous, but also gives Moscow greater leverage to avert a full-scale war. Defense Minister Vagharshak Arutyunyan likewise believes that Russia's alliance with Armenia

does help Yerevan deter threats from Azerbaijan and Turkey.[101] Indeed, the possibility of Russian military intervention on Armenia's behalf, whether through the CSTO or more likely bilaterally, is the greatest deterrent to Azerbaijan launching a major offensive to recover its occupied territories. The forces in Russia's Southern MD could rapidly reinforce the Russian forces based in Armenia. Moreover, by giving Armenia unique access to several Iskander missiles, Moscow may help sustain a relative balance of power in the region, despite Azerbaijan's enormous arms purchases from Russia and military assistance from Turkey.[102]

Armenians are also frustrated with other CSTO members who side with Azerbaijan regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. They have insisted that their allies are obligated to come to Armenia's defense against attacks by non-members. At a CSTO Council meeting in September 2016, then Armenian President Sargsyan said, "Every time the armed forces of Azerbaijan use various small arms, mortars and artillery systems against the Republic of Armenia, they also shoot at Astana, Dushanbe, Bishkek, Moscow and Minsk," referencing the CSTO clause that military aggression against one treaty party constitutes an attack on all members.[103] Since Azeris refuse to recognize the occupation of their territory by foreign forces, they have threatened to resort to arms to recover the region, which positions Azerbaijan as the tactical initiator of renewed conflict. Reacting to the renewed fighting in 2016, Bordyuzha condemned what he called the "provocative actions on the territory of a CSTO member state," which he referred to as the "Nagorno Karabakh Republic," a name only used by the separatists, who have declared themselves an independent state.[104]

Yet, the other CSTO members have assumed no unified joint position regarding the territorial dispute or the recent fighting. Some hold that the disputed enclave is part of Azerbaijan's internationally recognized boundaries and therefore outside the CSTO's zone of responsibility.[105] When Armenia joined the EEU, it had to accept a provision stating that its membership only concerned Armenia's UN-recognized borders.[106] Kazakhstan ambassador to Armenia Timur Urazaev suggested that the CSTO's role in the conflict should take the form of diplomatic negotiations rather than military intervention.[107] To the Armenians' discontent, Belarusian and Kazakhstani objections and boycotts of the CSTO meetings delayed the appointment of Khachaturov as the CSTO Secretary General, who should have assumed his position more than 1 year earlier, according to the scheduled rotation.[108] When Belarusian authorities extradited Armenian activist Alexander Lapshin to Azerbaijan for traveling to Nagorno-Karabakh, some Armenian politicians called for Belarus's expulsion from the CSTO.[109] During the organization's November 2016 parliamentary assembly, Armenian legislators blocked Pakistan's assuming observer status in the organization due to Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's territorial claims.[110] Even Russia seemed more interested in preserving a balance of power between Azerbaijan and Armenia than it was in pursuing Yerevan's territorial concerns or resolving the conflict.[111] Whatever their displeasure, Armenians have resigned themselves to accepting this situation for now in the hope of gaining greater support in the future.

Armenia has pursued circumscribed ties with Euro-Atlantic institutions. In recent years, Armenia has developed more extensive ties with NATO than

any other CSTO member. Like other former Soviet republics, it has participated in both NATO's Individual Partnership Action Plan and the Partnership for Peace program.[112] Armenia has also sent delegations to recent NATO summits as observers.[113] Armenia has notably contributed troops to NATO peacekeeping missions, including Iraq and Kosovo, in addition to the UN peace mission in Lebanon.[114] Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan stated:

> Over the past years Armenia has been guided by 'both/and' rather than 'either/or' principle, and has succeeded in both military and economic domains. Armenia interacts with NATO under the Cooperation for Peace Program and has an Individual Partnership Plan (IPAP) with NATO. Our peacekeepers are carrying out missions in NATO-led operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, and are present in Lebanon within the framework of a UN-led peacekeeping mission. Armenia has grown from consumer of peace into a contributor of it, and it's a huge achievement. . . . We have managed to equally develop effective cooperation with both our strategic partner Russia and other countries, rather than take sides in the existing controversies.[115]

Armenia has also developed additional bilateral security ties with several NATO members, such as Greece and the United States. China also gives Armenia a small amount of military aid.[116]

Former Presidential spokesman Vladimir Akopyan, who was appointed Deputy Head of the National Security Service in May 2018, stated that Armenia has no intentions of joining NATO.[117] In any case, Armenia does not meet the criteria for NATO membership, which requires a high degree of military inoperability as well as extensive security sector reform. Even so, Armenia's engagement with NATO offers the country an opportunity to present its views on regional security

issues as well as help keep the alliance from aligning more closely with Azerbaijan, which has also partnered with NATO on important security issues. In addition, NATO helps Armenia with defense training, security reform, emergency planning, and environmental protection.[118] Armenia's national security community has expressed confidence that Yerevan can sustain relationships with both NATO and the CSTO without controversies.[119] In a February 2017 press conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, President Serzh Sargsyan declared that Armenia's CSTO membership and cooperation with NATO were fully compatible: "No doubt, the CSTO and NATO pursue different goals, but I reiterate that our practice shows it's possible that a country finds ways for cooperation in different formats to ensure its national security."[120] NATO spokesperson James Appathurai likewise said that, regardless of Armenia's membership in the EEU or the CSTO, "Armenia is and has been a reliable partner of NATO."[121]

Later that year, however, Armenia abruptly canceled its participation in the upcoming NATO Agile Spirit 2017 military exercise scheduled to occur in Georgia. Although Armenia's participation in that September 2017 drill was to be mostly symbolic—only several military health professionals were planning to attend—Russians had expressed some concern about Armenia drifting closer to the West and has regularly objected to NATO military drills in Georgia.[122] Moscow had also objected to Armenia's planned entrance in 2013 into an association agreement with the EU, which Yerevan abruptly abandoned when Moscow delivered US$1 billion worth of military equipment to Azerbaijan, implicitly threatening greater support for Baku in any future confrontation.[123] Russian policymakers

considered the EU agreement a potential threat to the Moscow-led EEU initiative. Russian objections to Ukraine's entering into such an agreement in 2014 precipitated the collapse of the pro-Moscow government in Kyiv. In deference to Moscow's demands for a sphere of influence, President Sargsyan said, "when you are part of one system of military security it is impossible and ineffective to isolate yourself from a corresponding economic space."[124] The Armenian Government is clearly aware of the geopolitical sphere it finds itself in, with Foreign Minister Nalbandian observing, "we are not free to choose our neighborhood, but every and each state has an obligation to follow certain sets of universal principles and norms."[125] Armenia did sign a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the EU in March 2017 in order to facilitate stronger international ties.[126] However, its membership in the EEU will invariably limit the impact of this decision.[127]

Despite the May 2018 change in the Armenian Government as a result of the so-called Velvet Revolution, new Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan affirmed that Armenia will remain in the CSTO and EEU even as it seeks to build new ties with Europe.[128] Pashinyan's Yelk Alliance is pro-Western and had opposed Armenia's entry into the EEU and subordination to Moscow.[129] However, Pashinyan has focused on domestic reform and sought to temper expectations of any major change in Armenia's foreign policy, including in his meeting with Putin in Moscow a week after he took office.[130] Furthermore, the government will continue developing the north-south economic corridor from Russia to Iran to circumvent the closure of Armenia's borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey.[131]

Republic of Belarus

Belarus and Russia have close and multifaceted ties. Belarus was a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. In 1997, Belarus joined the Union State of Russia and Belarus, which loosely harmonizes the two countries' foreign and economic policies. Belarus depends heavily on Russia for energy, economic, and military assistance. Moscow provides subsidized gas and uses Belarusian territory for energy transit and other commerce. In 2017, two-way trade amounted to US$32.4 billion, while Russian investment in Belarus is almost US$4 billion.[132] Another geographic link is the Kaliningrad Oblast, which Moscow has fortified into an air and naval bastion against NATO activities near northwest Russia. In the event of a CSTO conflict with NATO, the Russian armed forces would likely try to seize the 100 km-wide piece of Polish and Lithuanian territory separating Kaliningrad and Belarus.[133]

Russia has stationed up to several thousand troops in Belarus for years and enjoys access to important military facilities on Belarusian territory. Belarus currently hosts more than 1,000 Russian troops on its own territory. Through the Joint CIS Air Defense System, Russia is leasing two airbases in Belarus through 2020.[134] Since 2014, in response to increased NATO activity near the Belarus-Russia border, Moscow has deployed more warplanes to Belarus.[135] The two governments also share the Hantsevichy Radar Station, which contains a Russian-operated Volga early warning radar that can track missile launches across Europe. The Russian Navy's 43d Communications Center, based in Vileyka, transmits orders to nuclear submarines using a very low frequency transmitter.[136] Russia leases a ground-based radar station in Baranovichi, where in the past

it has also deployed Su-27 fighters.[137] Russian officials have shown interest in acquiring another military base in Lida, but the Belarusian Government has resisted, viewing a large internal Russian troop presence as a potential future threat to the regime's security.

Belarus is an important CSTO member and contributor. It is the only member wholly in East Central Europe, positioning the country on the probable frontline of any major Russia-NATO conflict. By law, Belarus treats armed aggression against any CSTO member as an attack on Belarus.[138] The country has committed its premier special forces units, the 103d Guards Special Operations Force and an Interior Ministry special forces unit to the CRRF. Furthermore, Belarus routinely takes part in Russian and CSTO military exercises. Recent examples of prominent joint drills include Rubezh-2008, Interaction-2009, Interaction-2012, Vzaimodeistviye-2013, Interaction-2014, Search-2016, and Combat Brotherhood 2017. Even when the drills occur on a bilateral basis, they enhance the two countries' military capacity for potential CSTO operations. Russia rotates its most significant annual strategic exercise among its four major operational commands. When Moscow holds its strategic exercise in Russia's Western (Zapad) MD, the Belarusian armed forces will participate in the drills, along with Russian military units based in Belorussia and in Central Russia. The exercise scenario is often a simulated joint Belarusian-Russian defense against NATO, sometimes with the overt use of Russian nuclear weapons.[139]

Zapad 2017 generated significant anxiety among NATO analysts since it was Russia's first strategic exercise in its Western MD since the 2014 annexation of Crimea. Given Moscow's recent use of military drills as a precursor to foreign military interventions,

and Ukraine's lengthy shared border with Belarus, some Western analysts feared that Moscow would use Zapad 2017 to develop options for a future conventional invasion of Ukraine or for infiltrating unconventional forces into the country, where they could generate unrest, engage in sabotage, or otherwise prepare for a Crimean-style hybrid subversion operation.[140] While the Belarusian and Russian Governments said that only 12,700 soldiers took part in Zapad 2017, some Western analysts speculated that the number of Russian troops was significantly higher.[141] The declared figure of 12,700 soldiers conveniently fell just below the 13,000 level that, according to the Vienna Document signed by Russia and other European countries, would oblige Russia and Belarus to invite foreign observers. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko defended the hosting of the exercises from Western criticism, insisting that, "no one is going to neglect the security of their government—not Belarus, not Russia, not the CSTO."[142] Nonetheless, the number of Russian soldiers that were stationed in Belarus as part of Zapad 2017 was markedly lower than in Zapad 2009.[143] The Belarusian authorities encouraged foreign observers to monitor the drills on Belarusian territory. Lukashenko insisted that, "We are not hiding and should not hide anything. If NATO representatives want to be present at our drills, you are welcome."[144] The two countries also have another quadrennial bilateral exercise, "Union Shield," based in Russia's Western MD. The last Union Shield ran from September 10-16, 2015, on the Kirylkovskiy and Strugy Krasniye training grounds in Russia's Pskov and Leningrad Oblasts. Union Shield-2015 involved 8,000 soldiers (1,000 from Belarus), 400 military vehicles (including T-72-B3 tanks, BMP-2 IFVs, and 2S3 Akatsiya self-propelled artillery), as well as 80

aircraft including fighters, bombers, and rotary-wing aircraft.[145]

Besides protection from potential external threats, CSTO membership provides Belarus with important benefits, including subsidized access to advanced Russian weapons systems and opportunities for participation in joint training and high-profile exercises. Almost all Belarusian weaponry is of Soviet and Russian origin. In 2017, perhaps as a reward for hosting the Zapad 2017 exercise, Russia reversed its earlier reluctance and finally agreed to provide Belarus with advanced Su-30SM fighter aircraft, which will replace Belarus's Soviet-era MiG-29s, and Nona-M1 heavy mortars at favorable prices.[146] Belarus partly pursues military modernization to reduce its dependence on Russia for security, but for now, defense industrial cooperation reinforces bonds between Belarus and Russia as well as with the CSTO.

At least in their public rhetoric, the Belarusian and Russian national security establishments identify some shared perceived security threats. Belarusian authorities fear possible infiltration and radical influence from foreign nationals coming from the Middle East.[147] They have deported dozens of people from North Caucasus and the Middle East who have illegally crossed the border. However, Belarus has a small Muslim population and is not a major terrorist transit zone, safe haven, or target. The growing NATO activities near Belarus represent a more plausible threat for the country's military leaders. In public speeches, such as at the annual Moscow Security Conference, the Belarusian Defense Minister has echoed Russian views about the threat of NATO's military buildup in East Central Europe, the growing ties between the alliance and non-NATO European countries, and the destabilizing potential

of the Ukraine conflict.[148] Not only does Belarus lie in the middle of a potential war zone, but also worsening East-West tensions have constrained Minsk's geopolitical maneuvering. The extensive Western sanctions on Russia and Moscow's countermeasures have hurt the Belarusian economy. Due to the influence of Russian media and other factors, many Belarusians say they view NATO as a threat.[149]

At a June 2017 meeting of the CSTO Security Secretaries in Minsk, Lukashenko delivered a comprehensive presentation on threats to Belarusian security as well as his government's goals regarding the CSTO. From his perspective, Minsk's security was challenged by great power rivalries, the expansion of NATO infrastructure near Belarus, terrorist groups in Central Asia and Europe, and the disputes in Nagorno-Karabakh, eastern Ukraine, and Transnistria. Given this challenging security climate, Lukashenko envisaged five tasks for the CSTO: 1) coordinating members' foreign policies, 2) cooperating with other international organizations, 3) countering international terrorism and narcotics trafficking, 4) stabilizing migration flows, and 5) strengthening the CSTO's defense, political-military, peacekeeping, and other capabilities. He insisted that, while cooperating with other actors, the CSTO members should be capable of resolving these problems together through their own exertions.[150]

Despite its reliance on Russia, Minsk has insisted on national autonomy from Moscow on vital issues and has bargained hard for Russian aid and other concessions. President Lukashenko, who has governed the country since independence, has expressed unease at Moscow's possible interference in Belarus's domestic affairs as well as Russia's military intervention in Georgia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet republics. The

Belarusian Government has deflected Russian interest in acquiring another military base in Belarus, refused to follow Moscow's recognition of the pro-Russian separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, initially supported Ukraine's attempts to build ties with the EU, rebuffed Moscow's request to send official Belarusian observers to the March 2014 referendum in Crimea, and affirmed that Belarus would defend its sovereignty from all foreign threats.[151] Belarus has sought to dilute its dependence on Russia by importing energy from Azerbaijan, attracting non-Russian investment and trade, and developing security ties beyond the CSTO, including with some NATO members and China.[152] Lukashenko has leveraged some concessions from Russia by highlighting Minsk's autonomy within the CSTO as well. For example, by skipping a December 2016 summit in St. Petersburg, he induced Russian Press Secretary Dmitri Peskov publicly to call Belarus a "close ally and partner" of Russia.[153] Russia relaxed some restrictions on arm sales to Belarus after Lukashenko made a high-profile visit to Brussels. However, since Western governments continue to shun and sanction the Lukashenko government due to its authoritarian nature, and since defense ties with China remain tightly circumscribed due to Beijing's deference toward Moscow's security primacy, Minsk has no alternative except to remain Moscow's "reluctant follower" regarding the CSTO and other issues.[154] Most recently, Belarus has come to accept Moscow's annexation of Crimea as a fait accompli and supported the Russian military intervention in Syria.[155]

The Belarusian Government has been more interested than most of the CSTO members in using the organization as a means to counter potential domestic threats. Following a wave of social revolutions

that deposed some other former Soviet governments, Lukashenko argued that the CRRF's mandate should expand to cover all internal threats to member states.[156] After the CSTO failed to intervene in the 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan despite an appeal from the Kyrgyz President to do so, Lukashenko chastised the other members, stating "What sort of organization is this, if there is bloodshed in one of our member states and an anti-constitutional coup d'état takes place, and this body keeps silent?"[157] Although Moscow decided against using the CSTO in these earlier cases, Russian officials might be more willing to employ the organization and other available assets to preserve a friendly government in Belarus, given the country's importance to Russia's defense. A multilateral intervention under the organization's auspices would arouse less foreign condemnation than Russian unilateral action. From Moscow's perspective, Belarus is a more important, but less pliable, ally than most other CSTO members.

Republic of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan's recent military doctrines stress the CSTO's value in promoting Central Asian security and affirm that Kazakhstan will further enhance cooperation with the organization.[158] The Kazakhstani Ministry of Foreign Affairs defines the CSTO's objectives as the "strengthening of peace, international and regional security and stability, and protection of independence on a collective basis, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of the Member States."[159] The government has signed dozens of CSTO-related agreements.[160] Kazakhstan's approach toward the CSTO reflects the government's aim to bolster Kazakhstan's international prestige and impact. The Foreign Ministry regularly

characterizes many of the CSTO decisions and actions as Kazakhstani initiatives in order to highlight the country's importance and influence.[161]

Kazakhstan does not currently face a conventional military threat from another nation-state, but transnational security challenges such as narcotics trafficking, ethnic unrest, Islamic extremism, and natural and man-made disasters present perennial risks. The Kazakhstan Government considers international terrorism to be "the acutest problem within the CSTO's responsibility zone and in the world as a whole."[162] Thousands of Kazakhstani citizens and other Central Asian nationals have fought in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria and may return to wage jihad in Eurasia.[163] Kazakhstan experienced two terror attacks in 2016 attributed to Islamist militants.[164] President Nazarbayev has acknowledged "citizens of the CSTO member states join radical groups and participate in illegal activities in the Middle East and Afghanistan . . . [which] requires effective measures from our side."[165] During its 2017-to-2018 chair of the CSTO, which coincided with its membership on the UN Security Council, Kazakhstan sought to promote counterterrorism cooperation between the two organizations in support of Nazarbayev's initiative for a Code of Conduct to end terrorism throughout the world by 2045.[166]

Astana has joined Moscow in pushing to expand the CSTO's missions and capabilities. For example, Kazakhstan backed legal and organizational changes to enable the CSTO to counter some internal threats to the members' governments. Nazarbayev, however, has stressed that the use of force inside a member country by the CSTO would require the host government's consent.[167] In 2012, the CSTO adopted Kazakhstan's proposed anti-drug strategy, and Nazarbayev signed

legislation permitting CSTO units to be deployed temporarily on Kazakhstan's territory, such as for military exercises.[168] That same year, then Kazakhstani Deputy Defense Minister General-Colonel Saken Zhassuzakov took charge of the CSTO Joint Headquarters.[169] In addition, Astana accepted the decision that all member governments must consent to the establishment of non-member foreign military bases on their territories.[170] At the July 2017 CSTO foreign ministers meeting in Minsk, Kazakhstani Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov briefed the CSTO members on Kazakhstan's efforts to curb transnational cyber and information technology crimes, including Kazakhstan's Cyber Shield initiative. Abdrakhamanov urged greater cooperation amongst the CSTO members to combat cybercrimes in Central Asia, particularly within the CSTO Coordination and Consultation Center. He also informed the other members about Kazakhstan's additional anti-terror efforts and the Astana-based negotiations to end the Syrian war.[171]

Kazakhstan is the second largest contributor of military forces to the CSTO after Russia and has assigned some of its best forces to the organization. The country has supported the development of integrated military capabilities within the CSTO. For instance, Kazakhstan helped form the CRRF in 2009 for CSTO-wide missions other than major wars, including peacekeeping, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, managing natural and manmade emergencies, as well as fighting narcotics trafficking and other organized crime.[172] Kazakhstan has assigned its 37th Independent Airborne Assault Brigade (based at Taldykorgan), a reconnaissance battalion from the 1st Independent Marines Brigade, an aviation group, and other elite units to the CRRF.[173] During the May 2018 session of the CSTO

Council of Defense Ministers in Astana, Nazarbayev backed increasing the size of the CSTO Joint Staff to enhance its effectiveness.[174]

Kazakhstani national security managers recognize that the political and security environments of their neighbors directly impact their own country's security. At a July 2014 CIS Defense Ministers Council session, Nazarbayev emphasized Kazakhstan's interest in deepening military cooperation with its neighbors to offset unsettling regional challenges such as turbulent economies, separatist movements, and fallout from NATO's drawdown in Afghanistan. He noted that the CSTO members "had established allied relations, mutual protection, and total external anti-aircraft defense" and insisted that they "maintain these relations and confidence in each other" and cultivate their "joint experience . . . human contacts, common educational field, including in the military sphere, equipment with single type of weapons, as well as common space protection of external borders."[175] Kazakhstan has highlighted its ability to render aid to other CSTO member states, such as Tajikistan, which is seen as especially vulnerable to Taliban infiltration due to its lengthy border with Afghanistan.[176]

Kazakhstan is one of the most active participants in the CSTO joint exercises.[177] The country's armed forces have not conducted actual military operations since the Soviet period, so participating in joint training and exercises with the more combat-experienced Russian military helps compensate for this gap.[178] From October 8-17, 2012, Kazakhstan hosted the first "Unbreakable Brotherhood" exercise involving the CSTO's new peacekeeping forces. Nearly 1,000 troops participated in the drills that took place at the Iliskiy, Shoshkala, and Bereg training ranges, with Kazakhstan providing

more than half of the soldiers. Representatives of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the International Organization for Migration, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the CIS Executive Committee, and foreign defense attachés attended the drills as observers.[179] Most recently, some 700 special forces from the CSTO countries joined the "Kobalt-2018" anti-terrorist drills in the Alma-Ata region of Kazakhstan to rehearse eliminating illegal armed formations.[180]

The Kazakhstani armed forces benefit from their ties with Russia. Through the CSTO, Kazakhstan can enroll its officers in Russian military academies, purchase Russian-made defense equipment at the same prices as the Russian military, and integrate its defense structures with those of Russia.[181] Recent large-scale Kazakhstani-Russian arms transfers have supported development of the CIS Joint Air Defense System (JADS), which concurrently increase the air defense capabilities in the CSTO region.[182] Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that Russia delivered five battalions of S-300PS surface-to-air defense systems to Kazakhstan "free of charge with an aim to strengthen the unified regional air missile defense system."[183] Other Russian arms transfers to Kazakhstan have included Su-30SM aircraft, Mi-171Sh military transport helicopters, Mi-35 combat helicopters, a Project 10750E minesweeper, and a Project 250-class patrol boat.[184]

Through military-technical cooperation with Russia, Kazakhstan has significantly improved its defense industry.[185] Interestingly, one reason Kazakhstan strives to develop domestic arms production is to reduce its dependency on Russia and other foreign partners. In 2015, Kazakhstan procured more armaments indigenously than from Russian suppliers.[186]

Astana has strived to highlight Kazakhstan's growing arms industry, as well as entice buyers of these weapons, by hosting an annual KADEX arms show. Yet, Kazakhstan still relies on Russia to maintain its more advanced aircraft systems, for upgrading some military systems, and to improve national defense industrial capacity through joint ventures with Russian companies. For example, a notable 2016 KADEX arms deal was the Russian-Kazakhstani joint production of the Ka-226T light helicopter.[187] Such joint production simultaneously advances Astana's goal of building its domestic defense industry while also advancing Moscow's objective of remaining Kazakhstan's main military partner.

A more contentious issue has been Russia's continued ownership of Kazakhstani territory for defense purposes. Since the Soviet era, Russia has been leasing land in Kazakhstan to house seven major military bases and weapons test sites (Kapustin Yar firing range, Sary-Shagan and Emba missile-testing sites, 929th, Test Flight Center in Taysoygan, the Baikonur Cosmodrome, Balkhash Radar Station, and a regiment of Russian transport planes based at the Kostanay Airport).[188] Many of these leases are up for renewal in 2020, and both parties have been negotiating new rental agreements.[189] Kazakhstan has strived to regain control of some of these facilities for reasons of national sovereignty, environmental concerns, and to use some of the land for agriculture or energy production. Russia has accepted the joint use of Balkhash and Baikonur facilities and returned most of the Taysoygan testing facility.[190] Kazakhstani officials have also resisted contributing troops to the Russian military campaign in Syria.[191]

Despite its close military ties with Russia, Kazakhstan has pursued a multivector foreign policy since its independence that has included sustaining some defense ties with China, Europe, and the United States. For example, Kazakhstan regularly hosts annual Steppe Eagle International peacekeeping exercises. In 2017, Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom (UK), Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan sent contingents to these drills. Kazakhstan's Minister of Defense used the opportunity to affirm a commitment to strengthening is peacekeeping capabilities.[192] Still, Russia will remain Kazakhstan's closest defense partner for the foreseeable future. At the opening of KADEX-2018 in Astana, Nazarbayev stated,

> [O]ur country pursues peaceful policy aimed at strengthening good-neighborly relations with near and far-abroad countries. However, today's situation in the world forces all to strengthen the country's defense capability. We try to do the same within the CSTO.[193]

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's relationship with the CSTO reflects the country's precarious security situation, weak military, and close ties with Russia. Kyrgyzstan is one of the weaker CSTO members in terms of both military capacity and internal stability. Lacking the natural or population resources that other CSTO members possess, the Kyrgyz Government has struggled to sustain modern military forces. Political and ethnic strife, especially between the Kyrgyz majority and the Uzbek minority, have generated instability. Moreover, Islamist extremist groups have exploited Kyrgyzstan's divisions as well as the country's corruption issues to

recruit members from among the Sunni Muslim population. Hundreds of Kyrgyz nationals have joined various militant groups, particularly in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.[194] The Fergana Valley, a territory that straddles Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, has also seen a growth in Muslim militancy. The Kyrgyz authorities have charged several thousand individuals with terrorism and extremism and placed an additional several thousand people under government surveillance.[195]

From 2001 to 2014, the United States had a military base in Kyrgyzstan. However, Russian pressure and other developments led the U.S military to withdraw from the facility. As a result, Kyrgyzstan's military overwhelmingly depends on Russian equipment, training, and protection. The Kyrgyz Government adamantly pursues military cooperation with Russia within the CSTO framework. In August 2017, Kyrgyzstan Deputy Prime Minister for National Security and Law Enforcement Jenish Razakov and Deputy Chairman of the CSTO Military Economic Cooperation Oleg Bochkaryov inspected Kyrgyz military plants and discussed establishing joint ventures and production in the military sector.[196] In January 2018, the Kyrgyz Government ratified a military-technological agreement with Russia to reduce transaction costs and enhance Kyrgyz-Russian coordination on management, training, and technical collective defense systems.[197] Economic ties reinforce Russian-Kyrgyz security connections. Russia is Kyrgyzstan's leading trade partner, a major source of foreign investment, a sizeable holder of Kyrgyzstan's national debt, and a leader of the EEU.

The Kyrgyz Government has publicly backed the Russian military campaign in Syria and supported the pro-Moscow regime of Syrian President Bashar

al-Assad. Nonetheless, Kyrgyz officials deflected Russian probes that suggested Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan send soldiers to Syria to monitor the deescalation agreement that Moscow signed with Iran and Turkey. The high civilian casualties from Russian air strikes and the Assad government's atrocities have engendered discontent among some Kyrgyz.[198] In addition, the Kyrgyz Government has limited funds to support foreign peace missions. The government also fears that intervening in Syria could expose them to more Western sanctions. The sanctions on Russia have already indirectly hurt Kyrgyzstan due to the close economic connections between the two countries. Nonetheless, Kyrgyz officials have stated that they might allow professional soldiers (i.e., mercenaries) to serve in Syria to earn money and gain experience.[199]

Kyrgyzstan will chair the CSTO in 2019. Due to its limited capabilities, the Kyrgyz armed forces cannot render direct military assistance to other countries. However, Kyrgyzstan contributes to collective security through hosting a major Russian airbase at Kant, in northern Kyrgyzstan, 40 km from the capital city of Bishkek. The airbase's original purpose was to protect Kyrgyzstan from threats emanating from Afghanistan and has now become a component of the CRRF. From Kant, Russian warplanes can patrol all of Central Asia as well as Afghanistan without refueling. Russia maintains a squadron of Su-25 Frogfoot ground-attack aircraft, several Mi-8 helicopters, and some 500 personnel at Kant.[200] In 2009, Kyrgyzstan and Russia extended the Kant lease with indefinite 25-year renewals.[201] The Russian military also has access to some smaller facilities, such as a military communications center in Mailuu-Suu and a naval station in Karakul.[202]

Kyrgyz and Russian representatives have periodically considered the idea of constructing another Russian military base in southern Kyrgyzstan. When he was Uzbekistan's President, Karimov strongly objected to having a Russian base so close to his country.[203] Kyrgyz leaders also wanted to limit the foreign military presence in their country and take charge of their own security. However, the idea recently underwent a revival due to the deteriorating security situation in Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan's south, the advent of a new Uzbekistani Government, and persistent weaknesses in the Kyrgyz armed forces.[204] In 2017, Atambayev explicitly supported establishing a second Russian base in southern Kyrgyzstan.[205] The following May, Sooronbay Jeenbekov, who became President in October 2017, joined other officials in backing construction of a new Russian military facility in southern Kyrgyzstan to address the threats of terrorism, extremism, and narcotrafficking emanating from Afghanistan.[206] While affirming that Kyrgyzstan would follow a multidirectional foreign policy and seek better relations with the EU, Jeenbekov insisted, "Russia is and will be our main strategic partner and ally, and we will build further upon our partnership."[207] Kyrgyzstan's improved relations with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have likely encouraged security concerns to focus on threats to the south, but the Kyrgyz Government will probably defer to Moscow's wishes regarding a second military base and other major security decisions.[208]

Factors that might lead Russia to establish such a base include combating spillover from Afghanistan, building influence in Bishkek, positioning Moscow as a security leader for the broader Central Asian region, and improving competition with Washington, and even Beijing, in the region (including the Afghanistan

conflict).[209] However, Russian decision-makers have other priorities and a strained defense budget. In addition, keeping forces in the Fergana Valley region, where a second base would be located, is risky given the risks of ethnic violence between Kyrgyz, Tajiks, and Uzbeks, as well as the possibility of foreign intervention across the Valley's arbitrary and disputed borders.[210]

Republic of Tajikistan

The CSTO's contribution to Tajikistan's security is critical. Due to its geopolitical situation as the sole CSTO member bordering Afghanistan and its limited national defense resources, Tajikistan stands as the member most likely to benefit from the organization. Conversely, the CSTO's fate may be decided in Tajikistan—if the organization cannot protect Tajikistan from terrorists, or if the country is overwhelmed by drug trafficking and regime instability, then the CSTO's attractiveness to potential security partners will decline relative to alternatives like the SCO.

The security situation in northern Afghanistan has deteriorated in recent years, prompting cries of alarm by the CSTO members and more promises of substantial support to Tajikistan. Of the three Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan—Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan—only Tajikistan is a member of the CSTO. Tajikistan's border remains the most vulnerable of these three countries. Its border is ridged with mountains that serve as natural fortresses for militants. Uzbekistan's frontier with Afghanistan is short and well-fortified, while Turkmenistan has nearly 100 miles of desert extending from its border before its major population centers can be reached (though important gas fields are within reach). In

addition to the Taliban's nearby presence in northern Afghanistan and the constant activities of drug traffickers, ISIS militants present a new threat to Tajikistan's security. The country has limited security resources, porous borders, a weak state apparatus, and pervasive corruption.[211] The weak economy also propels many Tajiks to work in dismal conditions in Russia and the other CSTO states. Their remittances make up about half of Tajikistan's gross domestic product (GDP). The country's harsh economic and political environment may explain why Tajikistan is the leading source of ISIS suicide bombers.[212]

Tajikistani and the CSTO leaders regularly pledge mutual security support. In September 2016, President Emomali Rahmon and the CSTO Secretary General Bordyuzha, expressing concern about terrorists infiltrating the Tajikistani-Afghan border, reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen Tajikistan's border forces.[213] Although the capacity of Tajikistan's armed forces to engage in foreign missions is limited, Tajikistan regularly participates in the CSTO summits, military exercises, and other activities. The CSTO has also conducted many counternarcotics operations in Tajikistan, such as its annual Operation Channel (aka "Kanal"), which has run since 2003.[214] This operation involves thousands of drug officers, security agents, border guards, and customs officers from all the CSTO members, with observers from other governments and international organizations. The participating governments regularly announce large seizures of narcotics, drug precursor chemicals, and small arms and light weapons, which are abundant, given the widespread examples of armed smuggling and regional strife.[215] A more recent development has been the smaller-scale "Grom" (Thunder) drills involving the CSTO anti-drug

agencies, police forces, and security services attached to the CRRF. Nonetheless, the seizures of narcotics, particularly heroin, in Tajikistan have declined markedly over the years.[216] According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) *World Factbook*, some experts estimate the value of narcotics transiting Tajikistan is equivalent to half of the country's GDP.[217] Tajikistan's Drug Control Agency has limited resources and must confront corrupt local elites who benefit from allowing narcotics to transit Tajikistan to reach the more lucrative markets in Russia and Europe.

In addition to hosting numerous counterterrorism and counternarcotics exercises, Tajikistan's main contribution to the CSTO's security is hosting, though on a bilateral basis, Russian forces and military facilities. Tajikistan has agreed to let the 201st Motorized Rifle Division (MRD) remain until at least 2042. In May 2015, Russia sent around 500 troops and helicopters from the 98th Division of the Russian Army to reinforce the Tajikistani-Afghan border.[218] In 2017, however, Moscow reversed plans to send more forces to Tajikistan and instead reduced the MRD to a brigade-sized unit, with several thousand troops, possibly due to the need to reduce defense spending and concentrate resources on Ukraine and Syria.[219] The Russian military denied that the cut signified any reduction in Moscow's commitment to regional security and claimed the move would improve the force's mobility.[220] Russia has provided the unit with additional BTR-82A APCs, T-72B1 tanks, and BM-27 Uragan self-propelled multiple rocket launcher systems.[221] Russia's 670th air group at Ayni Air Base consists of Su-25 fighters as well as combat and military transport helicopters, which is a considerably less powerful force than Russia keeps at the Kant Air Base in Kyrgyzstan. Russia can use Ayni for national and

CSTO missions, in accordance with its bilateral agreements with Tajikistan, but it remains under jurisdiction of the Tajik Defense Ministry.[222] Under the multilateral CIS air defense system, the Russian Air Force patrols Tajikistan's airspace.[223]

Moscow is Tajikistan's leading security partner, within both the CSTO framework and via bilateral channels. Tajikistan hosts the Russian 201st MRD, which is one of Moscow's largest foreign military deployments and one of the most powerful elements of the CRRF. The 201st MRD consists of both contract soldiers and conscripts, and includes the 191st regiment in Qurghonteppa, the 149th in Kulob, and the 92d regiment in Dushanbe, as well as tanks, armored vehicles, artillery pieces, and combat and transport helicopters. These forces regularly exercise with Tajikistani and CSTO units. The division has been in Tajikistan since 1989, before the CSTO existed. During Tajikistan's civil war in the early 1990s, the 201st MRD, having already been deployed in the country after leaving Afghanistan, formed the core of a pro-government CIS peacekeeping force, along with small contingents from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. During the war, the CIS peacekeeping force assumed control over Tajikistan's porous border with Afghanistan, a safe haven and source of arms for the United Tajik Opposition. The peacekeeping force withdrew in 1999, but the 201st MRD remained. Russian troops continued to guard the nearly 13,000 km Tajikistani-Afghan border until 2005. In 2004, Moscow signed a 10-year lease with Tajikistan that granted Russia exclusive, rent-free basing for the 201st MRD, access to the small Ayni Air Base outside of Dushnabe, and the use of the optoelectronic control center at the Okno Nurek airspace surveillance facility, located in Tajikistan's eastern mountains. The facility

detects objects in orbit up to 40,000 km in altitude. In return for these benefits, Moscow wrote off Tajikistan's US$250-million debt and pledged to modernize its armed forces.[224]

Tajikistan's military depends heavily on Russian weapons and equipment.[225] Tajikistan inherited almost all of its military equipment from the Soviet Union and, despite pledges of assistance from Russia, the Tajik armed forces remain outdated and severely lacking in firepower. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Russia has sold around US$90 million worth of major Soviet weapons systems to Tajikistan since 1991, including secondhand, refurbished, and modernized BTR-70M APCs, Mi-8MT transport helicopters, Mi-24P combat helicopters, and L-39C Albatros trainer aircraft.[226] Russia has also promised to help develop Tajikistan's defense industry.[227] Moscow has been courting both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to deepen security ties, but their joining the CSTO could also prove beneficial to Tajikistan. Russian officials have periodically announced surges in economic and military assistance to Tajikistan.[228] However, actual deliveries have fallen substantially short.[229] Russian and Tajikistani officials have regularly considered the option of having Russian forces restore control over the Tajikistani-Afghan border, but Moscow says Dushanbe has yet to make a formal request for such a restoration.[230]

Russian propaganda has had some success in claiming that Washington colludes with terrorists and militants. According to a Gallup poll, more Central Asians view NATO as a threat than as a protector. The Tajikistani population is the most anti-NATO state in the region, with 34 percent of Tajiks surveyed believed NATO to be a threat, while only 8 percent of

the respondents viewed NATO as a protector.[231] Meanwhile, though the government hopes to benefit from Chinese trade and investment, the Tajikistani population is wary of China's long-term aspirations to dominate the country. Tajikistan could become an arena of limited Russian, Chinese, and U.S. cooperation since all three countries provide Tajikistan with security assistance. The United States and China have made contributions to enhancing Tajikistan's border security with Afghanistan and have supplied some non-lethal hardware to the country's security and anti-drug agencies.[232] China is concerned that terrorists, particularly Uyghur militants, could employ the region as a base of operations against Beijing's control of Xinjiang. Beijing spent approximately US$15 million to construct apartments for military officers in Dushanbe in 2016.[233] Moreover, China has funded the construction of 11 border posts on the Tajik-Afghan border in addition to a border guard training center.[234] Due to the CSTO and other Russian connections, however, neither Beijing nor Washington are in a position to contest Moscow's security primacy in Tajikistan. To illustrate, in March 2017, while the U.S. Central Command oversaw a counterterrorism exercise involving 150 U.S. soldiers and 100 Tajikistani soldiers, some 2,000 Russian troops were engaged in a drill with approximately 50,000 Tajikistani troops.[235]

Ties with Other Countries

Other countries can formally affiliate with the CSTO by becoming an observer of the organization or, less formally, by participating on an ad hoc basis in the CSTO exercises and other activities. On April 11, 2013, the CSTO Council for the Parliamentary Assembly

designated both Afghanistan and Serbia as formal observers of the organization.[236] The Afghan Government seeks CSTO assistance to strengthen its national security forces. Several CSTO states also neighbor Afghanistan and engage in joint border and other bilateral security collaboration with Afghanistan. The Serbian Government has been a long-standing security partner of Russia, engaging in joint exercises with Russia and sometimes Belarus, and has declared an interest in working with the CSTO on counterterrorism.[237] There has also been discussion about Iran possibly becoming a CSTO observer or member.[238] Turkmenistan is not a member of either the CSTO or SCO but could become a credible candidate for membership in both organizations if the Turkmenistani Government ever abandons its neutrality policy. Turkmenistan is located between Russia and China; has historical ties with the CSTO members as a former Soviet republic; shares security concerns with the CSTO states regarding, for instance, Islamist terrorism; and could benefit from Russian and CSTO military assistance, training, and other joint projects.

Russia has been open to cooperating with non-CSTO security partners, especially those belonging to the CIS. For example, from May 30 to June 1, 2017, Russia led a Dushanbe anti-terror exercise, the first large-scale drill held under the auspices of the CIS Anti-Terrorism Center (founded in 2000), not the CSTO. The drill involved Russia's 201st MRD, with additional military personnel, armored vehicles, artillery, and aviation (including Sukhoi Su-24 bombers redeployed for the exercise). Maneuvers apparently focused on combating terrorist groups, countering illegal armed units in mountainous areas, and peacekeeping with air support. Military engineers; medical

specialists; and radiation, chemical, and biological defense specialists, among others, participated in the exercise.[239] These drills stood out for the deployment of advanced Russian weaponry in Central Asia, including for the first time the Iskandar-M.[240] Organizing the exercises through the CIS as opposed to the CSTO also makes it easier for non-members, such as Uzbekistan, to participate.[241]

Since gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has stayed aloof from Moscow-led regional initiatives, especially those that could enhance Russian influence in Central Asia or constrain Uzbekistan's foreign policies. Uzbekistan's Foreign Policy Concept is defined by four "no's": 1) no foreign bases in Uzbekistan, 2) no Uzbekistan membership in military blocs, 3) no Uzbekistan participation in international peacekeeping, and 4) no foreign mediation in Central Asian conflicts.[242] Uzbekistan has insisted on its right to engage with NATO, the EU, and other Western-led institutions, though cooperation has remained limited due to geography, Western human rights concerns, and other issues. Although Uzbekistan joined the CSTO in 2006 following its short-lived break with NATO over mass violence in Andijon, Tashkent still resisted Russian efforts to strengthen the organization's capacities and missions. For example, wary of giving Russia additional means to intervene in regional conflicts, Uzbekistan opposed proposals to deploy the CSTO "peacekeeping" units in conflicts between or within member states, including during the 2010 wave of ethnic violence in neighboring Kyrgyzstan against its Uzbek minority. In past years, Uzbek authorities have also criticized Russia's increased military presence in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.[243] Another Uzbek concern

was to limit direct ties between the CSTO and Afghanistan that might weaken Tashkent's influence on its Afghan neighbor.[244]

After Russia and other CSTO members ignored Tashkent's objections in 2010 and 2011 and rapidly expanded the CSTO's authorities and activities, as well as created the CRRF, Uzbekistan formally left the organization in 2012. The withdrawal notice that Tashkent transmitted to the CSTO cited Uzbekistan's discontent with the organization's plans to expand its capabilities and missions, Tashkent's interests in pursuing an independent policy regarding Afghanistan, and the CSTO's failures to address Uzbekistan's previously stated concerns regarding these matters.[245] The CSTO officials signaled an openness to considering Uzbekistan's return at some future date, but meanwhile the other members enjoyed a freer hand to evolve the CSTO without requiring Tashkent's approval. Relations between Uzbekistan and other CSTO members, including Russia, have improved during the last 2 years under the new presidency of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who replaced President Karimov in late 2016. Although defense industrial cooperation has expanded and Russian and Uzbek forces have resumed joint exercises, Uzbekistani officials insist that they do not plan to join the CSTO.

Meanwhile, some Russian policies to woo Uzbekistan may cause problems for Moscow's management of the CSTO. For example, a November 2016 bilateral military-technical cooperation agreement allows Uzbekistan to purchase Russian military equipment at prices close to the Russian domestic prices, a benefit that Moscow normally offers only CSTO members. Additionally, Uzbekistan representatives can deal directly with Russian weapons manufacturers,

bypassing state regulators.[246] If Uzbekistan receives the benefits of CSTO membership without the commitments, then the organization's attractiveness will decline.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The more cooperative policy adopted by the new Uzbekistan Government toward its neighbors has created opportunities for closer cooperation, infrastructural integration, and political reconciliation among the CSTO members. Besides engaging in increased reciprocal presidential visits and summits, the Mirziyoyev administration has adopted a much more conciliatory approach toward regional water management, energy sharing, cross-border travel, and border demarcation. The disputes between other Central Asian states, such as between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, have also recently decreased. The reduction in tensions among the CSTO members could make it easier for the organization to develop new capabilities and a more coherent strategy. Meanwhile, if the United States and NATO continue to reduce their military presence in Central Asia, alternative security institutions such as the CSTO may fill the void given the paucity of viable alternative security institutions. Notwithstanding these favorable conditions, sustaining the CSTO primacy and the organization's growing capabilities, missions, and authorities, the CSTO faces major challenges that constrain its future impact.

Russian Domination

The CSTO resembles a bicycle wheel—its main connections lie between the hub (Moscow) and the other members, which have few direct ties with each

other. Russia's preeminent position within the CSTO yields both advantages and disadvantages for the organization. From the perspective of the other members, having the backing of Eurasia's strongest military power against external threats can be reassuring. Yet, Russia has often exploited other CSTO members' need for Russian security and economic assistance to coerce them into following Moscow's military lead. For example, Russia granted debt relief and improved conditions for Tajik migrants in return for Tajikistan's hosting Russian military forces.[247] Moscow's recent military assertiveness in Georgia, Ukraine, and now Syria has augmented unease in the other CSTO members about Russian pressure while, conversely, heightening their fears of arousing Moscow's wrath.

Opportunities for CSTO membership expansion remain limited, at least as long as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan sustain their neutral policies, and other potential membership aspirants see little to gain by alienating NATO and empowering Russia by joining the organization. Although many members joined the organization to benefit from Russia's military protection and security assistance, Moscow's dominance of the CSTO partly explains the absence of Georgia and Azerbaijan from the organization. Both these countries left the CSTO in 1999 due to general concerns about Moscow's policies and particular grievances over Russia's role in exacerbating conflicts involving these countries' territorial integrity: the separatist conflicts involving the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the Armenia occupation of the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, as well as large areas of Azerbaijani national territory. Furthermore, smaller states have a greater dependence on the CSTO than larger powers like Russia. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan,

for example, depend on the CSTO (i.e., Russia) for modern military equipment, defense training opportunities, and national protection. Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan lack the transport and other capabilities to render meaningful security assistance to other countries beyond their hosting Russian forces and endorsing their actions.[248] Recent CSTO exercises have highlighted the disparities between sophisticated Russian military technologies and the lagging capabilities of other CSTO members.[249] Moscow, however, relies on the organization primarily for international legitimacy and to influence the other members' national security policies, which constrains their freedom of action. Not only does Moscow pressure other CSTO members such as Armenia to limit ties with NATO, but also in the West, the CSTO is seen as a Moscow-dominated institution that pursues predominately Russian interests.

Moscow has attempted to counter the perception of Russian dominance of the CSTO to raise the organization's international profile, particularly in the West. Russian and the CSTO officials have repeatedly offered to cooperate with NATO to manage regional security issues.[250] At an international security conference in 2006, then Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov stated that the CSTO and NATO should combine their efforts to fight terrorism and rebuild Afghanistan.[251] In 2009, Moscow sought to exchange the CSTO cooperation in building supply routes to Afghanistan through Russia and Central Asia in return for NATO cooperation with the CSTO on anti-narcotic trafficking and other issues.[252] Seeing the CSTO as a Moscow-dominated institution and mechanism to reinforce Russian hegemony in Central Asia, NATO has collectively declined to engage with the CSTO on an organization-to-organization basis, choosing instead

to work with the CSTO members individually.[253] The common Western perception of the CSTO is that it is a Moscow-controlled organization to counter NATO and strengthen Moscow's influence in the former Soviet Union.[254] Russia's efforts to constrain NATO activities in Central Asia have contributed to this view. For example, Russia encouraged Kyrgyzstan to end the U.S. military base at Manas and blocked the U.S. Central Asian Counternarcotics Initiative to build a network of U.S.-supported anti-drug centers and task forces in Central Asia.[255] Since March 2014, Moscow's annexation of Crimea and support for militant separatists in eastern Ukraine has further alienated NATO from Russia and the CSTO. Bordyuzha announced that the CSTO had suspended efforts to establish contacts with NATO because of the Ukraine crisis, Western sanctions, and NATO's alleged attempts to blackmail Russia and its CSTO allies. Instead, the CSTO announced on April 24, 2014, that it would pursue deeper relations with the SCO.[256] In May 2018, the CSTO Secretariat, the CIS Counter-Terrorism Center, and the SCO Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure signed a memorandum on sharing terrorist information and conducting mutual consultations regarding terrorist threats.[257]

Internal Divisions

Disputes among the CSTO members have continually weakened the organization's cohesion. As noted, Armenia has been unable to secure backing from its CSTO allies in its dispute with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. The organization has also not taken a position in the dispute among some CSTO members and non-members over how to delineate the

Caspian Sea.[258] Border conflicts also prevail in the Fergana Valley, an ethnically diverse and densely populated agricultural region divided between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan's Parliament has questioned the CSTO's viability and usefulness due to its failure to address that country's border dispute with Tajikistan.[259] The issue of border conflicts among member states falls outside the CSTO's mandate. The organization can mediate among members only with their explicit consent.[260] Russian policymakers may reason that these internal conflicts allow Moscow to exploit regional tensions to advance its interests, since many of the parties want Russian support against their rivals.

Despite Russia's preeminent position in the CSTO, other members have regularly deviated from Moscow's stance on important security issues. For example, most CSTO governments failed to endorse Russia's military occupation of Georgia's territory in 2012; only Belarus followed Moscow in recognizing Georgia's separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent nation-states. Moscow's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, and its proxy war in eastern Ukraine, have augmented other CSTO member states' anxieties that Russia might have designs on their own territories. In principle, the CSTO could send "peacekeepers" to Ukraine under UN auspices. However, Russian and CSTO leaders have assured other members that it would not press them to deploy combat troops to Ukraine.[261] According to Bordyuzha, "this will happen only after the use of peacekeepers is recognized as reasonable."[262] Although private military and security companies are illegal in the Russian Federation, Moscow seems to have been encouraging other CSTO member states to legalize these groups. The

advantages of using mercenaries in Syria or Ukraine include plausible deniability of Russian involvement in these conflicts as well as obscuring casualty rates.[263] Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov downplayed these divisions, asserting that fellow CSTO members do vote with Russia at international meetings "on questions of fundamental importance." Lavrov specifically cited "voting against resolutions on the alleged human rights problems in Crimea . . . [and] allegations involving the so-called Skripal case," when Western governments accused Russians of using a chemical weapon against an anti-Putin Russian intelligence officer.[264]

One way the CSTO has attempted to temper the perception of excessive Russian dominance within the alliance has been to institutionalize the principle of mandatory rotation of the nationalities of senior offices, including the Secretary General.[265] According to this principle of alphabetical rotation now embedded in the CSTO Charter, Bordyuzha's replacement was to have been an Armenian. However, members found it hard to implement this principle in practice. The voting on Bordyuzha's successor had to be postponed until a consensus had arisen on the preferred candidate, and all the CSTO heads attended the same meeting to allow for that person's unanimous endorsement.[266]

Some CSTO governments have closer ties with non-members than with their fellow allies. This complication has been most evident in how the CSTO governments have declined to side with their nominal ally, Armenia, against non-member Azerbaijan. Due to its hydrocarbon wealth, Muslim population, Turkish heritage, and Armenian occupation of its internationally recognized territory, Azerbaijan has better economic and diplomatic ties with several other CSTO members than Armenia. For example, Kazakhstan's

absence from the October 2016 CSTO summit, which delayed the selection of Armenia's Yuri Khachaturov as the new CSTO Secretary General to replace Bordyuzha, was seen as signaling concerns about the CSTO's aligning against Baku.[267]

Shirking Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a major, proximate, and acknowledged threat to the members' security. Yet, while the CSTO members want the security benefits of a stable Afghanistan, they have been unwilling to expend substantial resources toward that end. Despite members' deep concern about the situation in the country, the CSTO has declined a direct combat role in Afghanistan and let NATO take the lead international role in rendering on-site military support to the Afghan Government against the Taliban insurgency. Russian leaders have simultaneously criticized NATO for failing to suppress the guerrillas and Afghan narcotics exports, as well as for prematurely reducing the alliance's efforts in that country.[268] Other CSTO leaders likely harbor similar anxieties. The CSTO has established a working group on Afghanistan and has initiated several programs to strengthen the Afghan Government's law enforcement and counternarcotics agencies. In April 2013, Afghanistan received observer status in the CSTO Parliamentary Assembly.[269] The CSTO has also discussed Afghan issues with the SCO.

However, the CSTO has focused on containing Afghan threats rather than solving them. The priority has been limiting the flow of Afghan narcotics, militants, and small arms and light weapons into Central Asia. For example, the CSTO intelligence, law enforcement, and defense personnel have conducted annual

Channel campaigns to interdict shipments of narcotics flowing northward from Afghanistan. Non-CSTO members, including some Western countries, have supported these operations as full participants or as observers. The CSTO has also created a counternarcotics center and a database of transnational drug dealers accessible to Central Asian drug enforcement agencies.[270] Notwithstanding these efforts, the CSTO and its partners have proved unable to intercept more than a small percentage of the Afghan-origin narcotics flooding their domestic markets.

For now, Russia's weak economy, military operations in Ukraine and Syria, bad memories of the Soviet-Afghan war, internal divisions within the CSTO over Afghanistan, and the recently extended U.S.-NATO military presence in Afghanistan make it likely that the CSTO will continue concentrating on securing the border between Afghanistan and Central Asia. In the future, the CSTO could pursue several courses of action regarding Afghanistan—including stepping up military-technical assistance, returning Russian troops to the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border, expanding its dialogue with Taliban leaders regarding the mutual threat of ISIS, or even intervening directly in Afghanistan with Russian or the Russian-led CSTO forces if the security situation severely deteriorates. Moscow has shown a willingness in recent years to deploy forces in foreign countries to uphold Russia's perceived national interests, as in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria. Russian forces have gained experience from the wars in Ukraine and Syria that might facilitate such military intervention in Afghanistan. A complete U.S. and NATO military withdrawal from Afghanistan could make CSTO intervention more likely unless the Afghan National Security Forces proved able to

defend themselves along with Western forces. The CSTO leaders would also be hesitant to conduct military operations in proximity to NATO forces, given the complexities of deconflicting such forces as seen in Syria. A prior reduction in the Russian military operations in Ukraine and Syria would also free up Russian resources for a possible CSTO intervention in Afghanistan. The KSBR TsAR forces would likely deploy first due to their enhanced readiness, training, and proximate location, but additional forces would probably need to follow to secure and sustain a major intervention. However, Russian and CSTO leaders would have to overcome doubts about the risks of undertaking yet another failed foreign military intervention in Afghanistan, following on the Soviet and more recent NATO campaigns.

Shunning Syria

The CSTO has shown neither the political will nor the operable military capability to advance its interests beyond the CSTO region. As early as September 2013, Putin insisted at a CSTO presidential summit that:

> The CSTO cannot ignore as serious an issue as the Syrian conflict. The armed groups operating in Syria did not come out of nowhere and will not disappear into nowhere. The issue of terrorism 'spilling over' from one country into another is very real and can affect the interests of any of our countries.[271]

In the summer of 2017, some Russian Government officials probed whether the CSTO partners would send military observers to enforce the deescalation zones that Russia, Iran, and Turkey established in May in Syria. On June 22, 2017, Chair of Defense Committee of the State Duma Vladimir Shamanov said that Russia was

negotiating with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, whom he noted were both predominately Muslim countries, to send peacekeeping forces to Syria. Kazakhstan's elite forces at least have rehearsed contributing to UN authorized peacekeeping missions. Russia does not need a CSTO military contribution to support its military campaign in Syria since the pro-Moscow government, Iranian, and Lebanese Hezbollah forces provide experienced combat troops. However, a Kyrgyz or Kazakhstani troop presence could bolster the perceived international legitimacy of any Syrian peace agreement.

In any case, Abdrakhmanov quickly specified that Kazakhstan would only send peacekeeping forces under a UN Security Council mandate. Secretary of Kyrgyzstan's Security Council Temir Dzhumakadyrov said that the proposal was raised in the CSTO Permanent Council only as a theoretical option. Kyrgyz Prime Minister Sakar Isakov declared that Bishkek would review any formal Russian request for support in Syria but that such a request, or any official bilateral discussions, had not taken place. He added that, in any case, Kyrgyzstan would only send military contractors or professional soldiers rather than enlisted personnel. In addition to UN authorization of the peacekeeping mission, Kyrgyz officials noted that any deployment would require a unanimous CSTO decision and parliamentary approval. In June 2018, at the opening session of the CIS Defense Ministers Council, Foreign Minister Abdrakhmanov again denied that Kazakhstan was in formal talks "with anyone on deploying its service members to Syria," reaffirming that Kazakhstan would only consider participating in foreign peace missions that enjoyed a UN Security Council mandate. The Kazakhstani and Kyrgyz Governments were

likely concerned about popular opposition to sending their nationals to a controversial war zone to fight for an unpopular dictator against predominately Sunni insurgents. Kyrgyz officials likely worried about the financial costs of such a contribution, while Kazakhstani decisions probably also feared damage to Astana's prestigious role as an impartial facilitator of the Syrian peace process.[272]

Potentially Competing Organizations

Ties between the CSTO and the SCO have been increasing in recent years, but still lag substantially behind, for instance, the collaboration between NATO and the EU. Cooperation between the CSTO and the SCO has remained limited primarily to sharing intelligence regarding regional terrorism and narcotrafficking. When they met on the sidelines of the June 2018 SCO summit in Qingdao, China, senior representatives of the CSTO, CIS, and SCO acknowledged "the need for the further consolidation of efforts and improving international counterterrorism cooperation" based on "the UN's central and coordinating role based on the strict observance of its Charter and the norms of international law," while opposing "the principle of unacceptability of 'double standards'," a criticism of the alleged NATO approach to international counterterrorism cooperation.[273] SCO members deny that they have collective defense aspirations and describe its military activities as designed to counter regional terrorist threats. The SCO also has a much wider agenda than the CSTO. SCO activities include promoting regional economic and energy initiatives as well as humanitarian projects. In theory, the two organizations could merge, with the CSTO serving as

the SCO's defense component, but China has resisted the idea. Russian policymakers also presumably like having the option of conducting military operations in Central Asia without requiring Beijing's approval, which would be necessary for any SCO action.

However, the SCO is also a potential competitor to the CSTO. The SCO includes all of the CSTO's Central Asian members plus Russia, China, India, and Pakistan. Both organizations play security roles in Central Asia. Since their common creation in the first years of the last decade, they both have regularly engaged in training and hold exercises with Central Asian security forces. From Moscow's perspective, the SCO plays a strategic role of sustaining Chinese support for the pro-Russian regimes in Central Asia and is valuable in terms of showing a united front in opposing the Western presence in the region. Yet, the SCO could provide the Central Asian states with an opportunity to act in a multinational manner independent of Moscow by playing China off against Russia. Moreover, the SCO could allow Beijing the possibility of increasing Chinese power at the expense of Russia. In contrast to the Moscow-dominated CSTO, China and Russia share the leadership role in the SCO. The CSTO clearly stands out as a military alliance, while the SCO describes its security activities as focused on counterterrorism. For example, the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) located in Tashkent focuses on information sharing, coordination, and analysis. The SCO's numerous anti-terrorism exercises culminate in the large multinational "peace mission" drills held every year or two.[274] Additionally, the SCO has economic, diplomatic, and cultural functions that, while not well developed, provide a different mandate than the CSTO, which has let the Moscow-led Customs Union and newer EEU

assume the lead role in these non-military areas. Putin repeatedly has denied that the SCO would develop into a full-grown defense organization such as NATO or that it would conduct military operations. For him, the SCO's security role is to "give moral and political support to its members and facilitate exchange of information."[275] For instance, only the CSTO has military bases in Central Asian countries. Beijing so far has declined to acquire any foreign combat bases (the one in Djibouti is described as a logistics base) and insists that it will not join a foreign military alliance. China generally avoids challenging Russia by not selling weapons to Central Asian countries. In this light, Beijing limits its security assistance to uniforms, barracks, communication equipment, and vehicles suitable for law enforcement and internal security agencies.[276]

One similarity between both organizations is that there is no commitment to Western democratic values. Instead, the two organizations prioritize internal stability, territorial sovereignty, and non-interference in the internal affairs of the member countries' right to pursue whatever internal political and economic policies favored by their national governments. Although the CSTO is officially neutral regarding the political system of its members, membership tends to allow undemocratic leaders to receive protection and other assistance from Moscow in exchange for political and military support. Autocratic governments are pleased to have a value-neutral ally that does not meddle in their domestic affairs or censure human rights violations. In the words of Bordyuzha, "Of course we can play at democracy as much as we want, but personally, I say let well enough alone."[277] Another important similarity between the CSTO and SCO is their common failure thus far to prove that they can act in crisis situations.

For instance, the CSTO and SCO were equally inactive during the 2010 ethnic clashes in South Kyrgyzstan, as well as the war in Afghanistan. Although the CSTO and SCO both have concerns regarding Afghanistan, neither has contributed substantially to resolving the conflict or helping the Afghan Government suppress the Taliban insurgency. They both have focused on sharing intelligence about drug trafficking and Afghan terrorists with fellow member governments and sometimes with each other.

The strengthening of Sino-Russian security ties in recent years may facilitate further CSTO-SCO cooperation. Thus far, Beijing has been content to leave Moscow and the CSTO to police Central Asia. Economic and energy considerations, rather than security, have been the driver of China's increased collaboration with Central Asia. However, as Chinese presence and interests in the region grow, Beijing may seek a greater security role for the SCO, particularly if NATO withdraws from Afghanistan and the CSTO appears unable to defend Central Asia from that regional conflict. Even with the new EEU and its other regional institutions and assets, Russia will find it hard to manage China's growing economic presence and security stake in Eurasia, which could lead Beijing to adopt a more assertive stance toward the region in coming years.

At some point, Russia might want to integrate the CSTO into the EEU, just as the EU has tried to develop an integrated foreign and security structure as well as partner with NATO. The EEU was formally established in May 2014 by Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan and began operating in 2015. Armenia and Kyrgyzstan have since joined the EEU due to their close economic ties with Russia. Though the EEU is primarily political and economic in nature, Putin has at times said

the EEU should have a common parliament, passport, and currency, reminiscent of the EU. Whether the EEU will have a military dimension depends on the relationship it develops with the CSTO. All current and intended members of the EEU belong to the CSTO, but some future members may not. Even if all members belonged to both organizations, the two bodies may remain distinct, as the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) and SCO were regarding the CSTO despite their overlapping membership. Yet, the EU, though primarily a political-economic entity, often has been driven to pursue a military dimension even when another body (NATO, in the case of the EU) exists to fulfill that function.

Uncertain Will and Capabilities

Article 5 of the CSTO Charter provides for "non-interference in matters falling within the national jurisdiction of the member States."[278] However, a few CSTO leaders have wanted the option to call for CSTO emergency assistance in the event their regime is threatened by political coups, popular unrest, or social revolutions.[279] In 2006, Bordyuzha claimed that, "the treaty aims to prevent bloodshed and application of force for solving problems both inside the country and on the borders with other states."[280] Lukashenko advocated that members change the CSTO Charter to permit the organization's explicit use to suppress internal uprisings and coups.[281] Russian leaders have regularly warned the other CSTO governments of the risks of the Western-backed democracy promotion and forced "color revolutions."[282] However, the CSTO has never undertaken such an internal intervention. For instance, the organization notoriously stood aloof when deadly

riots broke out between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. The organized mass violence in the Osh and Jalalabad areas of the Ferghana Valley led to the killing of hundreds of ethnic Uzbeks, while tens of thousands of others fled toward the border of Uzbekistan, raising the risk of Uzbekistani military intervention in a foreign civil war. Yet, even after the Kyrgyz Government requested CSTO assistance to end the conflict, especially the deployment of military police units, the organization failed to intervene. The CSTO leaders justified their detachment by stating that, since the Kyrgyz situation was an internal conflict rather than an external attack on a CSTO member, the organization lacked the legal basis to send peacekeepers to suppress the violence.[283] Although Russian leaders initially seemed open to considering a more vigorous response, then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev stated, "[O]nly in the case of a foreign intrusion and an attempt to externally seize power can we state that there is an attack against the CSTO. . . . All the problems of Kyrgyzstan have internal roots."[284] Similarly, Bordyuzha declared that the violence in Kyrgyzstan was "purely a domestic affair," and therefore, the CSTO would not dispatch peacekeepers.[285] Other CSTO leaders, fearful of establishing a precedent of the CSTO becoming involved in member nations' internal affairs, agreed with Medvedev, such as then President Karimov.[286] Neither the SCO nor the OSCE intervened in Kyrgyzstan despite its being a member of both regional bodies. Medvedev later said that the events in Kyrgyzstan proved the CSTO needed to respond more rapidly in the future to similar crises.[287] Nonetheless, such intervention would require the unanimous consent of the members and remains a controversial issue due to concerns about

legitimizing intervention in members' internal affairs. At present, under most scenarios, one or more CSTO governments would most likely block the use of the CSTO military forces to intervene in an internal political dispute within a member government unless it was clear that some external force was behind the unrest. Some analysts believe Moscow has tolerated these ambiguities regarding the CSTO mandate in order to employ the organization when it is advantageous to Russian interests and to avoid acting when it is not.[288] The CSTO members subsequently amended the organization's authorities to give it a broader legal mandate and augmented its capabilities (including by strengthening its rapid reaction forces) to enable the CSTO to intervene militarily in a member country.[289] All the CSTO members agree on the organization's responsibility to defend members from external threats. Even so, the organization's capacity and will to engage in military operations is unknown since it has never engaged in an actual combat operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

Notwithstanding its weaknesses, the CSTO will remain a major player in the Eurasian security landscape for the foreseeable future. Until now, the United States has never developed a comprehensive strategy toward the CSTO. One approach would be for Washington to work through NATO to promote multinational ties between the two alliances. In principle, NATO and the CSTO could pool their limited resources to render assistance to Central Asian militaries, manage regional conflicts, strengthen border security, support peacekeeping operations, counter narcotics trafficking, limit WMD proliferation, fight terrorism,

and help the Afghan National Security Forces. Direct dialogue between the two organizations could also lead to mutual confidence-building, crisis management, and deescalation agreements. Engagement with the CSTO can help NATO constrain Russian actions since some CSTO members would welcome expanded ties with NATO to dilute Russia's regional influence. Another policy option would be to focus U.S. efforts on influencing the CSTO by primarily engaging with Russia, since Moscow dominates the organization. The United States and Russia share some security interests in Eurasia, such as avoiding a military clash and countering regional terrorism. Washington and Moscow might also find such a Eurasian partnership useful for managing Beijing's rise.

However, for the next few years, significant obstacles render overt U.S.-CSTO collaboration, whether through NATO or directly, impractical. Ukraine, missile defense, democracy promotion, and other issues deeply alienate the United States and its NATO allies from the CSTO. Furthermore, engaging with the CSTO risks empowering its institutional legitimacy, which Moscow employs to further its regional military dominance in Eurasia under a multinational guise. On balance, continuing the current U.S. strategy of essentially ignoring the CSTO is probably the best one, pending a major change in Russian policy toward the post-Soviet space or a transformation of the Russia-China Eurasian partnership into a more traditional great power rivalry. Continuing the existing approach of bypassing the CSTO may be welcome even by some of the organization's members, who might favor U.S. actions to dilute Russia's military primacy in the former Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the United States and its allies need to improve their public relations outreach in the former Soviet bloc. A survey of residents of the former Soviet republics (except for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) found that the majority of Central Asian respondents perceive NATO as more of a threat than a protector, probably due to Russia's anti-NATO propaganda.[290] In addition to countering public misperceptions, Washington could target local grievances against Russia's heavy-handed presence and policies. For instance, U.S. messaging could exploit fears in the CSTO states about being dragged into Russia's wars in Ukraine and Syria. U.S. senior officials and officers should also frequently engage with Eurasia's non-CSTO security elites. These efforts should encompass the U.S. combatant commands as well as U.S. civilian agencies. For example, the U.S. Department of State should receive the resources it needs to intensify its bilateral and multilateral dialogues with the CSTO members, such as sustaining the recently launched C5+1 format involving all five Central Asian countries' foreign ministers and the U.S. Secretary of State. The United States should additionally provide military, diplomatic, and economic incentives for Eurasian governments to limit their CSTO connections, or at least eschew anti-NATO policies. They should further demand that the CSTO members make their defense exercises and other activities more transparent in order to promote confidence-building and regional stability, such as by limiting fears of surprise attack. In all these endeavors in Eurasia, the United States should cooperate with NATO members and other partners to amplify the impact of these policies.

ENDNOTES

1. Katharina Hoffmann, "The Collective Security Treaty Organization: A multilateral response to new security challenges?" in Stephen Aris and Andreas Wenger, eds., *Regional Organisations and Security: Conceptions and Practices*, Oxon, United Kingdom (UK): Routledge, 2013, pp. 162-164.

2. William E. Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998, p. 301.

3. A quasi-official history from the current CSTO General Secretary can be found in Yuriy Hachaturov, "ODKB-15 let vmeste vo imya besopasnovo mira y stabil'novo razvitiya" ("CSTO-15 Years Together in the Name of a Secure World and Stable Development"), TASS, May 25, 2017, available from *http://tass.ru/opinions/4276931*.

4. See for example, "Ivanov For NATO-CSTO Interaction in Fighting Terrorism," *RIA Novosti*, February 5, 2006, available from *https://sputniknews.com/russia/2006020543344211/*.

5. Joshua Kucera, "U.S. Blocking NATO-CSTO Cooperation," Eurasianet, February 12, 2011, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/62882*.

6. "Mirotvoricheskiye ucheniya ODKB 'Nerushimoe Bratstvo-2014'" ("CSTO peacekeeping exercise 'Unbreakable Brotherhood-2014'"), TASS, July 29, 2014, available from *http://tass.ru/info/1346904*.

7. Siranush Ghazanchyan, "UN, CSTO Agrees to Expand Cooperation in Peacekeeping Operations," Public Radio of Armenia, September 29, 2012, available from *http://www.armradio.am/en/2012/09/29/3971/*.

8. "Written Contribution by the Collective Security Treaty Organization Secretariat for the Twenty-First Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council," OSCE website, December 4, 2014, available from *https://www.osce.org/cio/129441?download=true*.

9. "Interview: CSTO head eyes closer partnership with SCO," *Xinhua*, June 8, 2018, available from *http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/08/c_137239043.htm*.

10. "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Answers to Media Questions following CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, Almaty," Moscow, Russia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 11, 2018, available from *http://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/video/-/asset_publisher/i6t41cq3VWP6/content/id/3255184.*

11. "CSTO Leaders Call for End to Kessab Crisis," Asbarez, April 4, 2014, available from *http://www.asbarez.com/121531/csto-leaders-call-for-end-to-kessab-crisis/;* see also CSTO website, available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=3296.*

12. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, 2017, available from *http://mfa.gov.by/en/organizations/membership/list/cddd96a3f70190b1.html.*

13. "CSTO to Improve Measures to Prevent Illegal Migration," Belarusian Telegraph Agency (hereafter BelTA), November 30, 2017, available from *http://eng.belta.by/society/view/csto-to-improve-measures-to-prevent-illegal-migration-107271-2017/.*

14. "Sovet ODKB rassmotrel proekt Plana po razvitiyu kollektivnoj sistemy protivodejstviya nezakonnoj migratsii" ("CSTO Council considers a draft plan on the development of a system of countering illegal migration"), CSTO Website, June 21, 2018, available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=12944&SECTION_ID=91.*

15. Thomas M. Sanderson, Daniel Kimmage, and David A Gordon, "From the Ferghana Valley to South Waziristan: The Evolving Threat of Central Asian Jihadists," CSIS Transnational Threats Project, Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2010, available from *https://www.csis.org/files/publication/100324_Sanderson_FerghanaValley_WEB_0.pdf*; and "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) Narrative," College Park, MD: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, University of Maryland, March

2015, available from *http://www.start.umd.edu/baad/narratives/islamic-movement-uzbekistan-imu*.

16. Michael Scheuer, "Central Asia in al-Qaeda's Vision of the Anti-American Jihad, 1979-2006," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, pp. 6-7, available from *https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/32064/CEF_4.2_full.pdf*.

17. Jeffrey Dressler and David Witter, "Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Changing Face of Uzbek Militancy (Small Wars Journal)," excerpt republished with Institute for the Study of War, n.d., available from *http://www.understandingwar.org/otherwork/al-qaeda-taliban-and-changing-face-uzbek-militancy-small-wars-journal*.

18. Avaz Yuldoshev, "Tajik Defense Minister, CSTO Secretary-General Discuss Cooperation Issues," *Asia Plus*, March 12, 2015, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20150312/tajik-defense-minister-csto-secretary-general-discuss-cooperation-issues*.

19. "Summit Focuses on Central Asia's Islamic State Anxieties," Eurasianet, September 15, 2015, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/75091*.

20. Theodore Karasik, "Kazakhstan: At the Crossroads of Security," *US News and World Report*, December 5, 2016, available from *http://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2016-12-05/kazakhstan-a-security-pivot-between-russia-and-china*.

21. Thomas Luce, "Russia Taps SCO and CSTO to Counter Islamic State," *Silk Road Reporters,* September 24, 2015, available from *http://www.silkroadreporters.com/2015/09/24/russia-taps-sco-and-csto-to-counter-islamic-state/*.

22. "Summit Focuses on Central Asia's Islamic State Anxieties."

23. Malika Orazgaliyeva, "CSTO Member State Presidents Discuss Regional Security in Dushanbe," *The Astana Times,* September 17, 2015, available from *http://astanatimes.com/2015/09/csto-member-state-presidents-discuss-regional-security-in-dushanbe/*.

24. "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Answers to Media Questions following CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, Almaty."

25. "Patrushev prizval strany ODKB sosredotichit'sya na bor'bye s deystviyami IG v internet" ("Patrushev Calls on CSTO Countries to Concentrate on Fighting IS Actions in the Internet"), TASS, May 24, 2018, available from *http://tass.ru/politika/5227440*.

26. "CSTO Member Nations Agree to Set Up Collective Air Force," *Asia-Plus*, December 24, 2014, available from *http://news.tj/en/news/csto-member-nations-agree-set-collective-air-force*.

27. Khatuna Mshvidobadze, "Russia's Military Alliance Tackles Cyber Crime," Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, November 26, 2012, available from *https://pipscyberissues.wordpress.com/2012/11/26/russias-military-alliance-tackles-cyber-crime/*.

28. "Kirgiziya predlagaet ODKB proizvodit' oruzhiye na eyo territorii" ("Kyrgyzstan Proposes that the CSTO Manufacture Arms on Its Territory"), *Regnum*, June 8, 2017, available from *https://regnum.ru/news/2286084.html.*

29. Michael Lelyveld, "China Eyes Russia's Central Asian Role as it Considers Energy Interests," Radio Free Asia, November 9, 2015, available from *http://www.rfa.org/english/commentaries/energy_watch/china-centralasia-11092015103136.html*.

30. "Syria Calling: Radicalisation in Central Asia," Briefing No. 72, Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group, January 20, 2015, available from *https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/central-asia/syria-calling-radicalisation-central-asia*.

31. "Russia: The Nuclear Umbrella and the CSTO," Stratfor, February 25, 2010, available from *https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia-nuclear-umbrella-and-csto*; and Oleg Yegorov, "Has Russia been able to build its own NATO in Eurasia?" *Russia Beyond The Headlines*, May 18, 2017, available from *https://www.rbth.com/defence/2017/05/18/has-russia-been-able-to-build-its-own-nato-in-eurasia_765449*.

32. Dadan Upadhyay, "NATO versus CSTO: The Clash between Competing Military Alliances," *Global Research*, January

11, 2012, available from *https://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-versus-csto-the-clash-between-competing-military-alliances/28612*.

33. Roger McDermott, "The Kazakhstan-Russia Axis: Shaping CSTO Transformation," Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, January 6, 2011, pp. 8-10.

34. John A. Mowchan, "The Militarization of the Collective Security Treaty Organization," Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Center for Strategic Leadership, July 2009, available from *http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/5078~v~The_Militarization_of_the_Collective_Security_Treaty_Organization.pdf*.

35. Ibid.

36. "Bolyee 25 tis. voennikh vkhodyat v Kollektivniye sily operativnovo reyagirovaniya ODKB" ("More than 25,000 Troops Comprise the Collective Rapid Reaction Force of the CSTO"), TASS, May 25, 2017, available from *http://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/4280141*.

37. "Chapter Five: Russia and Eurasia," *The Military Balance*, February 2017, p. 186.

38. "Tactical-Special Exercises 'Grom-2017' were Held in Moscow Region," Moscow, Russia: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, September 14, 2017, available from *https://en.mvd.ru/news/item/11131469/*.

39. Thomas Luce, "Russia Taps SCO and CSTO to Counter Islamic State," *Silk Road Reporters*, September 24, 2015, available from *http://www.silkroadreporters.com/2015/09/24/russia-taps-sco-and-csto-to-counter-islamic-state*.

40. Michael Mihalka, "Counterinsurgency, Counterterrorism, State-building and Security Cooperation in Central Asia," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, pp. 146-147, available from *https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/32064/CEF_4.2_full.pdf*.

41. Natalya Kovalenko, "CSTO integrates military industry," *Voice of Russia*, September 28, 2012, available from *http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_09_28/CSTO-integrates-military-industry/*.

42. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Astana, Kazakhstan: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, January 29, 2017, available from *http://mfa.gov.kz/en/content-view/odkb*.

43. Siranush Ghazanchyan, "Russia to supply Belarus, Armenia, and Kazakhstan with advanced copters, air defense systems in 2017," Public Radio of Armenia, May 22, 2017, available from *http://www.armradio.am/en/2017/05/22/russia-to-supply-belarus-armenia-and-kazakhstan-with-advanced-copters-air-defense-systems-in-2017/*.

44. Joshua Kucera, "CSTO Planning Joint Air Forces," Eurasianet, April 17, 2013, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66838*; and Andrei Parotnikau, "Kremlin's Aggression In Ukraine Frightens Lukashenka," *Belarus Digest*, April 16 2014, available from *https://belarusdigest.com/story/kremlins-aggression-ukraine-frightens-lukashenka-belarus-security-digest-17515*.

45. "Russia Will Supply Tajikistan only with New Armament, Says Tajik Military Official," *Asia-Plus*, December 2, 2016, available from *http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20161202/233924*.

46. Joshua Kucera, "CSTO Getting Serious about Joint Air Defense System," Eurasianet, November 20, 2014, available from *https://www.eurasianet.org/node/71041*.

47. "Bordyuzha: Obyedineniye sistyem PVO pozvolit prikrit' vso prostranstvo ODKB" ("Bordyuzha: Unification of BMD System Will Provide Coverage of the Entire CSTO Airspace"), *Vzglyad*, June 8, 2016, available from *http://www.vz.ru/news/2016/6/8/815025.html*.

48. Victoria Grigorenko, "Boyeviky-ekstrimisty mogut napast' na Kyrgyzstan s vozdukha" ("Extremist Fighters Can Attack Kyrgyzstan from the Air"), *Vechernii Bishkek,* April 25, 2018, available from *https://www.vb.kg/doc/370489_boeviki_ekstremisty_mogyt_napast_na_kyrgyzstan_s_vozdyha.html*.

49. Guy Plopsky, "Russia's Big Plans for Air Defense in Eurasia," *The Diplomat*, April 7, 2017, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/russias-big-plans-for-air-defense-in-eurasia/*.

50. Alexsandr Golts, "For Protection from 'Terrorists,' Moscow Offers Central Asians Air Defense," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 13, Iss. 107, June 15, 2016, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/for-protection-from-terrorists-moscow-offers-central-asians-air-defense/*.

51. "Tajikistan Hosts Military Exercise, the First of Its Kind, for CSTO Reconnaissance Units," *Asia-Plus*, April 18, 2016, available from *http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-hosts-military-exercise-first-its-kind-csto-reconnaissance-units-0*.

52. "CSTO Exercises Tested Cooperation System of Member-States' Armies," TASS, November 17, 2014, available from *http://tass.com/world/760118*; and "Nerushimoe Bratstvo—2014" ("Unbreakable Brotherhood—2014"), *Krasnaya Zvezda*, July 25, 2014, available from *http://archive.redstar.ru/index.php/nekrolog/item/17510-nerushimoe-bratstvo-2014*.

53. Anton Serov, "Intensive Phase of Military Exercises 'Interaction 2014' Completed in Karaganda Region," *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, August 23, 2014, available from *http://www.kazpravda.kz/en/news/view/24887*; Catherine Putz, "Russia Engages in Military Drills on Europe's Doorstep," *The Diplomat*, August 25, 2015, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/russia-engages-in-military-drills-on-europes-doorstep/*; and "CSTO Psychological and Cyber War Games as 3,000 Troops Drill," TASS, August 12, 2014, available from *http://en.itar-tass.com/world/744623*.

54. "CSTO Army Exercise Interaction 2014 Kicks Off in Kazakhstan," *Kazinform*, August 19, 2014, available from *https://www.inform.kz/encsto-army-exercise-interaction-2014-kicks-off-in-kazakhstan_a2688760*.

55. "CSTO Countries 'Interaction-2015' Drills to Involve 2,000 Troops," *Sputnik*, August 19, 2015, available from *http://sputniknews.com/military/20150819/1025908403.html*; and "More than 2,000 Troops to Take Part in CSTO Drills near Pskov," TASS, August 19, 2015, available from *http://tass.com/russia/815157*; and "V Pskovskoi oblasti nacholos' ucheniye KSOR ODKB Vzaimodeistviye-2015" ("CSTO CRRF Exercise 'Interaction-2015' Begins in the Pskov oblast"), CSTO website, August 23, 2015, available from *http://odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=4979&SECTION_ID=91*.

56. Roger McDermott, "Russia Hosts CSTO Exercises in Western Military District." *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 12, Iss. 156, September 1, 2015.

57. "Strategic command-and-staff exercise Center-2015," Moscow, Russia: Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, September 14, 2015, available from *http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/mission/practice/all/center2015.htm*; and Pavel Lisitsyn, "95,000 Russian Troops Join Massive CSTO Military Exercise," *Sputnik*, September 14, 2015, available from *http://www.sputniknews.com/russia/20150914/1026966249.html#ixzz3nos0LgzV*.

58. "Ucheniya Mirotvorcheskikh sil ODKB 'Nerushimoe Bratsvo-2015' zavershilis' v Armenii" ("CSTO 'Unbreakable Brotherhood-2015' peacekeeping exercise concluded in Armenia"), CSTO website, October 4, 2015, available from *http://odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5527&SECTION_ID=91*; "V Armenii zavershilos' ucheniye Mirotvorcheskikh sil ODKB 'Nerushimoe Bratsvo—2015'" ("CSTO 'Unbreakable Brotherhood-2015' Peacekeeping Exercise Ended in Armenia"), TASS, October 4, 2015, available from *http://www.tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/2317183*; "CSTO 'Indestructible Brotherhood 2015' Military Exercises Kick Off in Armenia," News.am, September 30, 2015, available from *https://news.am/eng/news/288382.html*; and "CSTO Peacekeeping Exercise Begins in Armenia," BelTA, September 30, 2015, available from *http://www.eng.belta.by/politics/view/csto-peacekeeping-exercise-begins-in-armenia-85812-2015/*.

59. "Tajikistan Hosts Military Exercise, the First of Its Kind, for CSTO Reconnaissance Units"; Roger McDermott, "Poisk-2016: CSTO Stages Intelligence and Reconnaissance Exercise," *The Central Asian-Caucasus Analyst*, May 31, 2016, available from *https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13366-poisk-2016-csto-stages-intelligence-and-reconnaissance-exercise.html*; and Joshua Kucera, "Russia And Allies Practice Fighting ISIS In Tajikistan," Eurasianet, April 25, 2016, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/78461*.

60. Dylan Malyasov, "Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia to Hold Joint 'Clear Sky 2016' Military Exercise," Defence Blog, November 3, 2016, available from *http://defence-blog.com/news/*

kazakhstan-kyrgyzstan-and-russia-to-hold-joint-clear-sky-2016-military-exercise.html.

61. "CSTO Drills Indestructible Brotherhood-2017 Begin in Kazakhstan," *AKIpress,* October 16, 2017, available from *https://akipress.com/news:597886*.

62. "About 12,000 Servicemen to Take Part in CSTO Combat Brotherhood 2017 Drills," Interfax, September 26, 2017, available from *http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?id=780164*; "Final Stage of CSTO Army Exercise Combat Brotherhood 2017 Begins in Tajikistan," BelTA, November 14, 2017, available from *http://eng.belta.by/society/view/final-stage-of-csto-army-exercise-combat-brotherhood-2017-begins-in-tajikistan-106720-2017/*; and "Combat Brotherhood 2017 CSTO Strategic Exercise," Moscow, Russia: Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, October 3, 2017, available from *http://eng.mil.ru/en/mission/practice/more.htm?id=12144354@egNews*.

63. Gaukhar Erubaeva, "Russia-Led CSTO's Military Wraps Up Drills in Kazakhstan," *Caspian News*, May 25, 2018, available from *https://caspiannews.com/news-detail/russia-led-cstos-military-wraps-up-drills-in-kazakhstan-2018-5-22-2/*.

64. Maria Orlova, "Osyenyu 2018 goda v Kyrgyzstanye proidut ucheniya operativnikh sil ODKB" ("CSTO Force Training Exercises to Take Place in Kyrgyzstan in Fall 2018"), 24.kg, March 6, 2018, available from *https://24.kg/obschestvo/77857_osenyu_2018_goda_vkyirgyizstane_proydut_ucheniya_operativnyih_sil_odkb/*.

65. "Kyrgyzstan to Host CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces Exercise in 2018," *Kazinform*, June 13, 2017, available from *http://lenta.inform.kz/en/kyrgyzstan-to-host-csto-collective-rapid-response-forces-exercise-in-2018_a3035771*.

66. "Kyrgyzstan primyet uchastiye v ucheniyakh ODKB 'Nerushimoe Bratsvo-2018" ("Kyrgyzstan Will Participate in CSTO 'Unbreakable Brotherhood-2018' Exercise"), 24.kg, May 23, 2018, available from *https://24.kg/obschestvo/85411_kyirgyizstan_primet_uchastie_vucheniyah_odkb_nerushimoe_bratstvo-2018/*.

67. "Post-Soviet Security Bloc to Hold Joint Air Force Drills," TASS, March 6, 2018, available from *http://tass.com/defense/992939*.

68. "Russia Improves Its Military Bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan," *Trend*, April 26, 2018, available from *https://en.trend.az/casia/kyrgyzstan/2894130.html*; and "Russia's defense chief slams West for its inability to unite to fight terror," TASS, June 7, 2017, available from *http://tass.com/defense/950228*.

69. Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Russia's Military Drills Near NATO Border Raise Fears of Aggression," *The New York Times*, July 31, 2017, available from *https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/31/world/europe/russia-military-exercise-zapad-west.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=first-column-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news*; Nicholas J. Myers, "Everything We Learned From Russia's Massive Zapad Military Exercise," The Buzz, blog of *The National Interest*, September 23, 2017, available from *http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/everything-we-learned-russias-massive-zapad-military-22436*; and Dave Johnson, "ZAPAD 2017 and Euro-Atlantic security," *NATO Review*, December 1, 2017, available from *https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2017/also-in-2017/zapad-2017-and-euro-atlantic-security-military-exercise-strategic-russia/EN/index.htm*.

70. "All Eurasian Union Members Will Join CSTO—Lukashenko," RT, October 27, 2011, available from *http://rt.com/politics/eurasian-union-members-lukashenko-859*.

71. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," CSTO website, available from *http://www.odkb.gov.ru/start/index_aengl.htm*.

72. Ibid.

73. Dmitry Gorenburg, "External Support for Central Asian Military and Security Forces," Working Paper, Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, January 2014, available from *https://www.sipri.org/publications/2014/working-paper/external-support-central-asian-military-and-security-forces*.

74. "Russia Improves Its Military Bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan."

75. Elena Kropatcheva, "Russia and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation: Multilateral Policy or Unilateral Ambitions?," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 68, Iss. 9, November 25, 2016, pp. 1526-1552, available from *https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2016.1238878*.

76. General Bordyuzha previously served in the Soviet KGB, the Kremlin's Presidential administration, as Russia's National Security Advisor, and as the Russian Ambassador to Denmark.

77. Maxim Starchak, "The CSTO in 2017 and How Russia Exploits Its Allies," Intersection Project, May 24, 2017, available from *http://intersectionproject.eu/article/security/csto-2017-and-how-russia-exploits-its-allies*; and Dmitry Gorenburg, "Everything You Need to Know: Russia's Massive Zapad Military Exercise," *The National Interest*, August 7, 2017, available from *http://nationalinterest.org/featureeverything-you-need-know-russias-massive-zapad-military-21814*.

78. Samuel Ramani, "CSTO Rift Grows Between Moscow and Astana," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 6, 2017, available from *https://www.rferl.org/a/qishloq-ovozi-csto-kazakhstan-russia-nazarbaev/28661553.html*; and Adam Taylor, "Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan Deny Reports They Are in Talks with Russia to Send Troops to Syria," *The Washington Post*, June 23, 2017, available from *https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/06/23/kazakhstan-and-kyrgyzstan-deny-reports-they-are-in-talks-with-russia-to-send-troops-to-syria/?utm_term=.93e2065a95a4*.

79. Starchak.

80. "Chapter Three: North America," *The Military Balance*, February 2017, p. 48.

81. Starchak.

82. Guy Plopsky, "Russia's Big Plans for Air Defense in Eurasia," *The Diplomat*, April 7, 2017, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2017/04/russias-big-plans-for-air-defense-in-eurasia/*.

83. Ibid.

84. "Re-Examining the Collective Security Treaty Organization," *Stratfor*, August 6, 2012, available from *http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/re-examining-collective-security-treaty-organization*; and Mowchan.

85. Bruce Pannier, "Central Asia: Russia Comes on Strong (Part 2)," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, November 17, 2004, available from *http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/11/ffdd150c-4daa-4577-9d8a-893ff8613e82.html*.

86. Evan Gottesman, "The Limits of Collective Security in Eurasia," *The Diplomat*, December 24, 2015, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2015/12/the-limits-of-collective-security-in-eurasia/*.

87. Kropatcheva.

88. Alexander Cooley, "Whose Rules, Whose Sphere? Russian Governance and Influence in Post-Soviet States," Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 30, 2017, available from *http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/06/30/whose-rules-whose-sphere-russian-governance-and-influence-in-post-soviet-states-pub-71403*.

89. "Armenia in CSTO," Mission of Armenia to the CSTO, 2016, available from *http://csto.mfa.am/en/shortoverview/*.

90. Siranush Ghaznchyan, "No Controversy between Armenia's Membership in CSTO and Cooperation with NATO," Public Radio of Armenia, March 29, 2017, available from *http://www.armradio.am/en/2017/03/29/no-controversy-between-armenias-membership-in-csto-and-cooperation-with-nato/*. See also "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Yerevan, Armenia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, n.d., available from *https://www.mfa.am/en/international-organisations/1*; and "Outcome of the meeting of the Collective Security Council in Dushanbe on September 15, 2015," CSTO website, available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5401&SECTION_ID=*.

91. "Meeting with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan," Kremlin website, May 14, 2018, available from *http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/57459*.

92. Eugene Chausovsky, "Armenia's Isolation Laid Bare," *Stratfor*, April 10, 2016, available from *https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/armenias-isolation-laid-bare*; and "Russian, Armenian Border Guards Hold Joint Drills Near Iran's Border," *Sputnik*, July 10, 2017, available from *https://sputniknews.com/military/201707101055407837-russia-armenia-joint-border-drills/*.

93. "Armenia Ratifies Agreement on Joint Air-Defense System with Russia," Reuters, June 30, 2016, available from *http://www.reuters.com/article/us-armenia-russia-defence-idUSKCN0ZG2AS*; and Nikolai Litovkin, "Russia and Armenia to Create Joint Defense Force in Caucasus," *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, November 16, 2016, available from *https://www.rbth.com/defence/2016/11/16/russia-and-armenia-to-create-joint-defense-force-in-caucasus_648317*.

94. "Putin Ratifies Deal On Russian-Armenian Joint Military Units," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, July 27, 2017, available from *https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-armenia-joint-military-units/28643630.html*; and "Russia, Armenia Create Joint Group of Forces to Ensure Security in the Caucus," *Sputnik*, November 9, 2016, available from *https://sputniknews.com/politics/201611091047235845-russia-armenia-joint-group-forces/*; Arshaluis Mghdesyan, "Armenia's CSTO Disappointment," Washington, DC: Institute for War and Peace Reporting, November 7, 2016, available from *https://iwpr.net/global-voices/armenias-csto-disappointment*; Emil Sanamyan, "'Joint' Armenian-Russian Force: What it is & What it isn't," Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California, Dana and David Dornsife College, Institute of Armenian Studies, January 12, 2016, available from *http://armenian.usc.edu/focus-on-karabakh/analysis/new-agreement-defines-joint-armenian-russian-military-grouping/*; and Alexander Zemlianichecko, "Russia and Armenia to Create Joint Military Forces," *The Moscow Times*, November 14, 2016, available from *https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russia-and-armenia-to-create-joint-military-forces-56121*.

95. "Armenia Not Planning to Deploy Servicemen to Syria for Now—Defense Minister," Interfax, June 28, 2017, available from *http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?id=762887*; and "Armenia Clarifies Stance on Troop Deployment to Syria," *Asbarez*, September 12, 2017, available from *http://asbarez.com/166337/armenia-clarifies-stance-on-troop-deployment-to-syria/*.

96. Litovkin, "Russia and Armenia to Create Joint Defense Force."

97. "Armenian Military Seeks More Weapons," *Asbarez*, January 27, 2017, available from *http://asbarez.com/159555/armenian-military-seeks-more-weapons/*.

98. "Why Russia Restricts Sale of Iskander Missile Systems to its Closest Partners," *Sputnik*, September 3, 2017, available from *https://sputniknews.com/military/201709031057046466-iskander-exports-prospects-analysis/*; Nikolai Litovkin, "Armenian President: We had to buy Iskander-M Missiles from Russia," *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, November 18, 2016, available from *https://www.rbth.com/defence/2016/11/18/armenian-president-we-had-to-buy-iskander-m-missiles-from-russia_648961*.

99. Joshua Kucera, "Report: Azerbaijan Gets 85 Percent of Its Weapons from Russia," Eurasianet, March 18, 2015, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72581*. IISS assesses their range at 300 km ("Chapter Five: Russia and Eurasia," p. 199).

100. Yulia Zhuchkova, "Armenia's Hands Are Tied Regarding Russian Arms Sales to Azerbaijan," Washington, DC: Jamestown Foundation, July 26, 2017, available from *https://jamestown.org/armenias-hands-are-tied-regarding-russian-arms-sales-to-azerbaijan/*.

101. Mghdesyan, "Armenia's CSTO Disappointment."

102. "Why Russia Restricts Sale of Iskander Missile Systems to Its Closest Partners," *Sputnik*, September 3, 2017, available from *http://sputniknews.com/military/201709031057046466-skander-exports-prospects-analysis/*.

103. "Criticizing the Allies: Yerevan again Slams CSTO Members for Lack of Support in Karabakh Issue," *ArmeniaNow*, December 22, 2015, available from *https://www.armenianow.com/karabakh/68903/armenia_president_serzh_sargsyan_csto*.

104. "Comment by Bordyuzha CSTO Secretary General in Connection with an Armed Incident in the Armenian-Azerbaijani Border," CSTO website, December 29, 2016, available from *http://odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=8664&SECTION_ID=91*.

105. "Nagorno-Karabakh Profile," BBC, April 6, 2016, available from *http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325*.

106. Casey Michel, "Frustrations between Kazakhstan and Armenia Persist," *The Diplomat*, April 28, 2016, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2016/04/frustrations-between-kazakhstan-and-armenia-persist/*.

107. Ramani, "CSTO Rift Grows between Moscow and Astana."

108. Hayk Khalatyan, "CSTO's problematic present and obscure future," *EADaily*, April 15, 2017, available from *https://eadaily.com/en/news/2017/04/15/cstos-problematic-present-and-obscure-future*.

109. Joshua Kucera, "Armenia Proposes Kicking Belarus Out of CSTO," Eurasianet, February 10, 2017, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/82351*.

110. Joshua Kucera, "Armenia Nixes Pakistan's Ties with CSTO," Eurasianet, November 29, 2016, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/81476*.

111. Samuel Ramani, "Why the Russia-Azerbaijan Alliance is Weaker than it Looks," *Huffington Post*, August 23, 2017, available from *http://www.huffingtonpost.com/samuel-ramani/why-the-russiaazerbaijan-_b_11608854.html*.

112. "Armenian Presidential Spokesman Comments on Relations with NATO," TASS, September 7, 2017, available from *http://tass.com/defense/964491*.

113. Lyubov Stepushova (Lulko), "Russia tells Armenia Where to Sit," Pravda.ru, September 7, 2017, available from *http://pravdareport.com/world/ussr/07-09-2017/138617-armenia-0/#*.

114. Richard Giragosian, "Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Armenia" Providing for Peacekeeping Project, New York: International Peace Institute, November 2015, available from *http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2015/12/14/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-armenia/*.

115. Ghaznchyan.

116. "Armenian Defense Chief Visits China" *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, September 7, 2017, available from *https://mirrorspectator.com/2017/09/07/armenian-defense-chief-visits-china/*.

117. "Armenian Presidential Spokesman Comments on Relations with NATO."

118. "Relations with Armenia," NATO website, November 30, 2016, available from *http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48893.htm#*.

119. Ghaznchyan.

120. "Armenia's Accession to CSTO and Cooperation with NATO Fully Combinable—President Sargsyan," *ArmenPress*, February 27, 2017, available from *https://armenpress.am/eng/news/880516/armenia%E2%80%99s-accession-to-csto-and-cooperation-with-nato-fully-combinable-%E2%80%93-president-sargsyan.html*.

121. James Apputhurai, "It Causes Us No Complication that Armenia is in CSTO, or in EAEU," *Aravot*, June 13, 2017, available from *http://www.aravot-en.am/2017/06/13/195622/*.

122. Joshua Kucera, "At Last Minute, Armenia Drops Out of NATO Exercises in Georgia," Eurasianet, September 4, 2017, available from *https://eurasianet.org/s/at-last-minute-armenia-drops-out-of-nato-exercises-in-georgia*.

123. Anahit Shirinyan, "Armenia's Foreign Policy Four Years after the U-Turn," *Hetq*, September 3, 2017, available from *http://hetq.am/eng/news/81704/armenias-foreign-policy-four-years-after-the-u-turn.html*.

124. Farhad Mammadov and Azad Garibov, "Why Armenia's Allies are Letting it Down," *The National Interest*, June 5, 2016, available from *http://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-armenias-allies-are-letting-it-down-16455*.

125. Edward Nalbandian, "Edward Nalbandian delivered lecture at the Italian Society for International Organization (SIOI)," Yerevan, Armenia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, June 7, 2017, available from *https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2017/06/07/min-sioi/7282*.

126. "Armenia, EU Initial Comprehensive, Enhanced Partnership Agreement," *Asbarez*, March 21, 2017, available from *http://asbarez.com/161452/armenia-eu-initial-comprehensive-enhanced-partnership-agreement/*.

127. Natalia Konarzewska, "Armenia Seeks to Enhance Cooperation with the West," *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, June 22, 2017, available from *https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13451-armenia-seeks-to-enhance-cooperation-with-the-west.html*.

128. "Russia to remain Armenia's strategic ally, Pashinyan says," TASS, May 1, 2018, available from *http://tass.com/world/1002601*.

129. Gabriella Gricius, "Will Armenia's New Prime Minister Change Russia-Armenia Relations?" *Global Security Review*, May 18, 2018, available from *https://globalsecurityreview.com/velvet-revolution-armenia-indicates-stronger-russian-armenian-relationship/*.

130. "Pashinyan and Putin Hold First Meeting, Pledge to Build Closer Ties," Eurasianet, May 14, 2018, available from *https://eurasianet.org/s/pashinyan-and-putin-hold-first-meeting-pledge-to-build-closer-ties*; and Emil A. Souleimanov and Anton Barbashin, "Moscow's Role in Armenia's Revolution," *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, May 31, 2018, available from *https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13522-moscows-role-in-armenias-revolution.html*.

131. "Nikol Pashinyan Makes Georgia First Destination of His First Foreign Trip," *Civilnet*, June 1, 2018, available from *https://www.civilnet.am/news/2018/06/01/Nikol-Pashinyan-Makes-Georgia-First-Destination-of-His-First-Foreign-Trip/338312*.

132. For a summary of recent activities, see "Press statements following Union State Supreme State Council meeting," Kremlin website, June 19, 2018, available from *http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/57813*.

133. Jim Maceda, "Why the Suwalki Gap Keeps Top U.S. General in Europe Up at Night," NBC News, December 7, 2015, available from *https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/why-suwalki-gap-keeps-top-u-s-general-europe-night-n469471*.

134. "Russian Military Bases Abroad: How Many and Where?" *Sputnik*, December 19, 2015, available from *https://sputniknews.com/military/201512191032030941-russian-bases-abroad/*.

135. Andrei Makhovsky, "Belarus Says Russia to Send Warplanes in Response to NATO Drills," Reuters, March 12, 2014, available from *http://www.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-belarus-idUKBREA2B1GN20140312*.

136. Ben Piven, "Russia Expands Military Footprint Abroad with New Syria Base," *Aljazeera America*, September 18, 2015, available from *http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/18/russia-foreign-military-bases.html*.

137. "Chapter Five: Russia and Eurasia," p. 203.

138. "Belarus to Consider Aggression against Any CSTO Member as Military Threat—Belarus DefMin," TASS, December 19, 2014, available from *http://tass.com/world/768187*.

139. "Russia's Biggest War Game in Europe since the Cold War Alarms NATO," *The Economist*, August 10, 2017, available from *https://www.economist.com/europe/2017/08/10/russias-biggest-war-game-in-europe-since-the-cold-war-alarms-nato;* and Tomasz K. Kowalik and Dominik P. Jankowski, "The Dangerous Tool of Russian Military Exercises," Washington, DC: Center for European Policy Analysis, May 9, 2017, available from *https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2017/06/07/dangerous-tool-russian-military-exercises/*.

140. Keir Giles, "Russia Hit Multiple Targets with Zapad-2017," Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 25, 2018, available from *http://carnegieendowment.org/2018/01/25/russia-hit-multiple-targets-with-zapad-2017-pub-75278*.

141. "Russia's Biggest War Game in Europe."

142. "Prezidyent nazval shest' vazhneishikh zadach ODKB na sovremyennom etape" ("The President Has Named the Six Most Important Current Tasks for the CSTO"), *Belarus' segodnya*, July 15, 2017, available from *https://www.sb.by/articles/prezident-nazval-shest-vazhneyshikh-zadach-odkb-na-sovremennom-etape.html*.

143. Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Russia's Military Drills near NATO Border Raise Fears of Aggression," *The New York Times*, July 31, 2017, available from *https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/31/world/europe/russia-military-exercise-zapad-west.html*.

144. "Lukashenko calls for 'transparency,' consents to NATO observing Belarus-Russia drills," TASS, March 20, 2017, available from *http://tass.com/world/936455*.

145. Juliusz Sabak, "Russian-Belarusian 'Union Shield' Exercise Begins, 8 Thousand Troops Involved," Defence24, September 11, 2015, available from *https://www.defence24.com/russian-belarusian-union-shield-exercise-begins-8-thousand-troops-involved*.

146. Siarhei Bohdan, "Belarus's New Russian Arms: What Minsk Has Given in Exchange," *Belarus Digest*, March 3, 2017, available from *http://belarusdigest.com/story/belaruss-new-russian-arms-what-minsk-has-given-exchange-29276*.

147. Ryhor Astapenia, "Is Radical Islam a Threat for Belarus?" *Belarus Digest*, February 3, 2015, available from *https://belarusdigest.com/story/radical-islam-threat-belarus-21165*.

148. Belarusian Defense Minister General A. Ravkov, "European Security: Belarusian Perspective," Moscow Security Conference, April 4, 2018, available from *https://russiamil.wordpress.com/2018/04/12/mcis-2018-belarusian-defense-minister-slides/*.

149. Michael Smith, "Most NATO Members in Eastern Europe See it as Protection," Gallup Poll, February 10, 2017, available from *http://www.gallup.com/poll/203819/nato-members-eastern-europe-protection.aspx*.

150. "Prezidyent nazval shest' vazhneishikh zadach ODKB."

151. Paul Coyer, "Belarus's Quandary: No Longer Putin's Dependable Ally?" *Forbes*, January 24, 2015, available from *http://www.forbes.com/sites/paulcoyer/2015/01/24/belaruss-quandary-no-longer-putins-dependable-ally/#2a2d92b12217*.

152. "Oil from Azerbaijan, Defence Cooperation with Latvia," *Belarus Digest*, December 9, 2016, available from *http://belarusdigest.*

com/story/oil-azerbaijan-defence-cooperation-latvia-belarus-state-press-digest-28226.

153. Yaroslav Shimov, "Y nye drug, y nye vrag, a – tak" ("Neither Friend Nor Foe, Just So"), Radio Liberty, December 27, 2016, available from *https://www.svoboda.org/a/28200042.html*.

154. S. Frederick Starr and Svante E. Cornell, eds., *Putin's Grand Strategy: The Eurasian Union and Its Discontents*, Washington, DC: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, 2014, p. 12, available from *https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/1409GrandStrategy.pdf*.

155. Starchak.

156. Vitaliy Portnikov, "Garmaty nad mistom" ("Guns Over the City"), Radio Liberty, September 2, 2011, available from *https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/24315981.html*.

157. Joshua Kucera, "Unintended Consequences in Belarus," Eurasianet, April 26, 2010, available from *https://www.eurasianet.org/unintended-consequences-in-belarus*.

158. See for example the most recent iteration of "Voennaya Doktrina Respubliki Kazakhstan" ("Military Doctrine of the Republic of Kazakhstan"), Astana, Kazakhstan: Ministry of Defense of Kazakhstan, 2017, available from *https://www.mod.gov.kz/rus/dokumenty/voennaya_doktrina/*.

159. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

160. Zhanna Shayakhmetova, "Central Asian Parliaments Seek Regional Peacebuilding, Joint Anti-Terrorist Efforts," *Astana Times*, May 26, 2017, available from *http://astanatimes.com/2017/05/central-asian-parliaments-seek-regional-peacebuilding-joint-anti-terrorist-efforts/*.

161. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

162. "President Meets CSTO Security Council's Secretaries, Defense Ministers," *Kazinform*, May 23, 2018, available from *https://www.inform.kz/en/*

president-meets-csto-security-council-s-secretaries-defense-ministers_a3262269.

163. Reid Standish, "Putin to Central Asia: Let Daddy Save You from the Islamic State," *Foreign Policy*, June 11, 2015, available from *http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/11/russia-is-exploiting-fears-of-the-islamic-state-to-grow-its-military-influence-central-asia-isis*.

164. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2016: South and Central Asia," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, July 2017, available from *https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2016/272233.htm*.

165. Orazgaliyeva, "CSTO Member State Presidents Discuss Regional Security."

166. Almasbek Zhumadilov, "Foreign Minister Briefs CSTO Ministers on Kazakhstan's Priority as CSTO Chair," *Astana Times*, June 13, 2018, available from *https://astanatimes.com/2018/06/foreign-minister-briefs-csto-ministers-on-kazakhstans-priority-as-csto-chair/*.

167. McDermott, "The Kazakhstan-Russia Axis."

168. E. Kosolapova, "Kazakhstan Ratifies CSTO Agreements," *Trend*, March 15, 2012, available from *https://en.trend.az/regions/casia/kazakhstan/2003932.html*.

169. "Representative of Kazakhstan Defense Ministry now heads CSTO Joint Headquarters," *Tengri News*, May 22, 2012, available from *https://en.tengrinews.kz/politics_sub/Representative-of-Kazakhstan-Defense-Ministry-now-heads-CSTO-9923/*.

170. "CSTO Member State's Foreign Ministers Review Coordinated Policies," *Gazeta.kz*, June 1, 2011, available from *https://www.engarticles.gazeta.kz/print.asp?aid=342166*.

171. Malika Orazgaliyeva, "CSTO foreign ministers adopt measures to curb IT crime during Minsk meeting," *The Astana Times,* July 18, 2017, available from *https://astanatimes.com/2017/07/csto-foreign-ministers-adopt-measures-to-curb-it-crime-during-minsk-meeting/*.

172. Daniyar Mukhtarov, "Kazakh President Calls for Maintaining Confidence in Each Other at CIS Defense Ministers,"

Trend, July 5, 2014, available from *https://en.trend.az/regions/casia/kazakhstan/2291409.html*; "Ob itogakh sessii Soveta kollektivnoi bezopasnosti gosudarstv-chlenov ODKB" ("On the Results of the CSTO Collective Security Council Session"), CSTO website, December 20, 2011, available from *https://www.mamf.ru/news/news/newsbb.htm*; and "Nazarbayev nazval pyat' prioritetov predsedatyel'stva Kazakhstana v ODKB" ("Nazarbayev names five priorities for Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the CSTO"), December 20, 2012, available from *https://www.today.kz/ru/news/kazakhstan/2011-12-20/56353*; and "Udar po Iranu grozit katastrofoj" ("Strike on Iran Threatens Catastrophe"), *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, February 21, 2012, available from *https://www.rg.ru/2012/02/21/versiya-poln.html*.

173. Georgy Dubovtsev, "Security in All Central Asia Depends Mainly on Kazakhstan Russia Cooperation," Astana, Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, 2017, available from *http://kisi.kz/en/categories/experts/posts/security-in-all-central-asia-depends-mainly-on-kazakhstan-r*.

174. "President Meets CSTO Security Council's Secretaries, Defense Ministers."

175. Mukhtarov.

176. "Summit Focuses on Central Asia's Islamic State Anxieties."

177. Georgy Dubovtsev, "Security in All Central Asia Depends Mainly on Kazakhstan Russia Cooperation," Astana, Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, 2017, available from *http://kisi.kz/en/categories/experts/posts/security-in-all-central-asia-depends-mainly-on-kazakhstan-r*.

178. Roger McDermott, "CSTO Proposes Cooperation with NATO on Afghanistan," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 9, Iss. 71, April 10, 2012; and "Rossiya gotova srazhatsa za amerikanskuyu neft" ("Russia Is Ready to Fight for American Oil"), *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, September 26, 2011, available from *https://www.mk.ru/politics/article/2011/09/25/626716-rossiya-gotova-srazhatsya-za-amerikanskuyu-neft.html*.

179. "Mirotvoricheskiye ucheniya ODKB 'Nerushimoe Bratstvo-2014'"; and Roger McDermott, "CSTO Stages First Peacekeeping Exercise," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 9, Iss. 188, October 16, 2012, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/csto-stages-first-peacekeeping-exercise/*.

180. "V Kazakhstane zavershilas' aktivnaya faza taktiko-spetsial'nikh uchenii ODKB 'Kobalt-2018" ("The Active Phase of the CSTO 'Cobalt-2018' Tactical Drills Has Concluded in Kazakhstan"), TASS, March 22, 2018, available from *http://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/5223376*.

181. Dubovtsev.

182. Mariya Y. Omelicheva and K. S. Lawrence, "Russia's 'Checks and Balances' on Kazakhstan's Quest for Military Independence," *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 188, August 3, 2016, pp. 5-10, available from *http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/RAD188.pdf*.

183. Catherine Putz, "Kazakhstan Takes Delivery of (Free) Russian S-300 Missile Defense Systems," *The Diplomat,* June 9, 2016, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2016/06/kazakhstan-takes-delivery-of-free-russian-s-300-missile-defense-systems/*; and Plopsky, "Russia's Big Plans for Air Defense in Eurasia."

184. Catherine Putz, "Yes, Kazakhstan Has a Navy," *The Diplomat*, April 14, 2015, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2015/04/yes-kazakhstan-has-a-navy/*.

185. Alexander Smith, Mac William Bishop, and Courtney Kube, "Russia Kicks Off Huge Zapad 2017 Military Exercises With Belarus," NBC News, September 14, 2018, available from *https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-plans-huge-zapad-2017-military-exercises-belarus-n788741*.

186. "Blurring the Lines of Kazakhstan-Russia Relations," *Stratfor*, April 15, 2016, available from *https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/blurring-lines-kazakhstan-russia-relations*.

187. "KADEX 2018 Defense Exhibition under the Patronage of Kazakhstan MoD," KADEX 2018 News, March 12, 2018, available

from *https://www.armyrecognition.com/kadex_2018_news_official_show_daily/kadex_2018_defense_exhibition_under_the_patronage_of_kazakhstan_mod.html*.

188. "The Largest in the CIS Russian Military Facilities Are Located in Kazakhstan," *Karavan*, October 9, 2016, available from *https://www.caravan.kz/news/samye-krupnye-v-sng-voennye-obekty-rossii-nakhodyatsya-v-kazakhstane-383985/*; see also "Chapter Two: Comparative defence statistics," *The Military Balance*, February 2017, pp. 20-21.

189. Catherine Putz, "Russia Paying Less to Lease Kazakh Missile Testing Sites," *The Diplomat*, March 8, 2016, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2016/03/russia-paying-less-to-lease-kazakh-missile-testing-sites/*.

190. Joshua Kucera, "Kazakhstan Takes Control of Russian Military Testing Range," Eurasianet, March 3, 2015, available from *https://www.eurasianet.org/node/72361*.

191. "Collective Security Treaty Organization," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

192. "Steppe Eagle 2017 Drills Wrap Up in Kazakhstan," *Kazinform*, August 7, 2017, available from *http://www.inform.kz/en/steppe-eagle-2017-drills-wrap-up-in-kazakhstan_a3052457*.

193. "Defense Industry Development One of Kazakhstan Priorities, President," *Kazinform*, May 23, 2018, available from *https://www.inform.kz/en/defense-industry-development-one-of-kazakhstan-priorities-president_a3261903*.

194. Joanna Paraszczuk, "More than 330 Kyrgyz Said to be Fighting Alongside IS in Syria, Iraq," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 21, 2015, available from *http://www.rferl.org/content/islamic-state-kyrgyzstan-fighters/26969666.html*.

195. Grigorenko, "Boyeviky-ekstrimisty mogut napast' na Kyrgyzstan c vozdukha."

196. L. Todd Wood, "Kyrgyzstan Wants To Cooperate With Russia Militarily," Tsarizm.com, August 20,

2017, available from *https://tsarizm.com/news/2017/08/20/kyrgyzstan-wants-to-cooperate-with-russia-militarily/*.

197. "Kyrgyzstan usilit voyenno-tekhnicheskoe vzaimodeistviye c Rossiei" ("Kyrgyzstan Will Strengthen Military-Technological Cooperation with Russia"), *Eurasia Expert*, January 22, 2018, available from *http://eurasia.expert/kyrgyzstan-usilit-voenno-tekhnicheskoe-vzaimodeystvie-s-rossiey/*.

198. Uran Botobekov, "Russia's Syria Policy Upsets Central Asian Muslims," *The Diplomat*, October 18, 2016, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2016/10/russias-syria-policy-upsets-central-asian-muslims/*.

199. Joshua Kucera, "Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Under Right Conditions, Open to Deployment to Syria," Eurasianet, June 23, 2017, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/84106*; and "Kyrgyzstan rassmotrit predlozheniye ob otpravke kontraktnikov v Siriyu – Isakov" ("Kyrgyzstan Will Review Proposal of Sending Contract Soldiers to Syria: Isakov"), *Sputnik*, October 2, 2017, available from *https://ru.sputnik.kg/politics/20171002/1035505911/kyrgyzstan-ob-otpravke-voennyh-v-siriyu.html*.

200. "Chapter Two: Comparative defence statistics," p. 23.

201. Elena Kosolapova, "Kyrgyzstan Not to Waive Russian Military Base: Expert," *Trend*, December 1, 2016, available from *https://en.trend.az/casia/kyrgyzstan/2692650.html*.

202. "'Collective East': Why Russia is Reinforcing Its Military Bases in Central Asia," *Sputnik*, June 11, 2017, available from *https://sputniknews.com/russia/201706111054527261-russia-bases-sco/*.

203. "Uzbekistan: Tashkent Throws Temper Tantrum over New Russian Base in Kyrgyzstan," Eurasianet, April 1, 2014, available from *http://cesran.org/uzbekistan-tashkent-throws-temper-tantrum-over-new-russian-base-in-kyrgyzstan.html*.

204. "Kirgiziya mozhet protivostoyat' terrorizmu teoreticheskiy, a nye prakticheski" ("Kyrgyzstan Can Combat Terrorism in Theory, But Not in Practice"), *Regnum*, May 16, 2018, available from *https://regnum.ru/news/2416089.html*.

205. Bruce Pannier, "Kyrgyzstan's President Wants Another Russian Military Base," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, June 28, 2017, available from *https://www.rferl.org/a/kyrgyzstan-new-russian-base-atambaev-putin-afghanistan/28583538.html*.

206. Erkina Asanbaeva, "Rossiiskoi' voyennoi baze na iuge Kyrgyzstana byt'?" ("Will There Be a 'Russian' Military Base in Kyrgyzstan's' South?"), vb.kg, May 15, 2018, available from *https://www.vb.kg/doc/370847_rossiyskoy_voennoy_baze_na_uge_kyrgyzstana_byt.html*.

207. "Zheenbekov: Rossiya yavlyaetsa i budyet nashim osnovnim strategicheskim soyuznikom" ("Jeenbekov: Russia is and Will Remain Our Main Strategic Ally"), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, May 14, 2018, available from *https://rus.azattyk.org/a/29225602.html*.

208. Catherine Putz, "What About That Proposed Second Russian Base in Kyrgyzstan?" *The Diplomat*, March 7, 2018, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/what-about-that-proposed-second-russian-base-in-kyrgyzstan/*.

209. Paul Goble, "Moscow Set to Establish Second Military Base in Kyrgyzstan," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 15, Iss. 80, May 24, 2018, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/moscow-set-to-establish-second-military-base-in-kyrgyzstan/*.

210. Albert Hayrapetyan, "Why the Collective Security Treaty Organization Is a Pale Replica of NATO," To Inform is to Influence, September 8, 2016, available from *https://toinformistoinfluence.com/2017/03/18/why-the-collective-security-treaty-organization-is-a-pale-replica-of-nato/*.

211. Catherine Putz, "What's Stands in the Way of Tajikistan's Development? Basically Everything," *The Diplomat*, June 28, 2018, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/whats-stands-in-the-way-of-tajikistans-development-basically-everything/*.

212. Frud Bezan, "Tajikistan's Deadly Export," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, March 12, 2017, available from *https://www.rferl.org/a/tajikistan-deadly-export-islamic-state-suicide-bombers/28365044.html*.

213. "Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon and CSTO Secretary General Nikolai Bordyuzha Discussed Preparations for the SKB Session during a Meeting in Dushanbe on September 29, 2016, and Expressed Concern over the Activity of Extremist Terrorist Organizations in the Region," CSTO website, September 29, 2016, available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=3146&SECTION_ID=91*.

214. "CSTO Drug Squads Seize 10 Tons of Narcotics in Joint Operation," *Sputnik*, April 9, 2007, available from *https://sputniknews.com/russia/2007090476390200/*.

215. "Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)," Small Arms Survey, June 24, 2017, available from *http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/?id=971*.

216. "Tajikistan: 2015 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR)," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2015, available from *https://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2015/vol1/239017.htm*.

217. "Tajikistan," *The CIA World Factbook*, last updated August 7, 2018, available from *https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ti.html*.

218. "ODKB v Tadzhikistane otrepetiruet otrazhenie ugrozy iz Afganistana (CSTO in Tajikistan Rehearsing a Threat from Afghanistan)," Lenta.ru, May 18, 2015, available from *http://lenta.ru/news/2015/05/18/tajik/*.

219. Catherine Putz, "Why Is Russia Cutting Troops in Tajikistan?" *The Diplomat*, February 5, 2016, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2016/02/why-is-russia-cutting-troops-in-tajikistan/*.

220. "Strength of Russian Military Base in Tajikistan Expected to be Reduced," *Asia-Plus*, February 1, 2016, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20160201/strength-russian-military-base-tajikistan-expected-be-reduced*.

221. "Russian Military Base in Tajikistan to be Reinforced with Battalion of 'Uragan' Rocket System," *Asia-Plus*, December 16, 2016, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20161216/234428*; and Franz-Stefan Gady, "Russia

Reinforces Tajikistan Base with 100 New Armored Vehicles," *The Diplomat*, June 16, 2016, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2016/06/russia-reinforces-tajikistan-base-with-100-new-armored-vehicles/*.

222. "Ayni Airfield Not Leased to Russia, Says Tajik Defense Ministry," *Asia-Plus*, October 8, 2015, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20151008/ayni-airfield-not-leased-russia-says-tajik-defense-ministry*.

223. "Russia Will Supply Tajikistan Only with New Armament, Says Tajik Military Official."

224. "Operational Group of Russian Forces in Tajikistan," Global Security, available from *http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/ogrv-tajikistan.htm*; "Okno/Nurek/Sanglok" ("Okno Space Surveillance Station"), Global Security, available from *http://www.globalsecurity.org/space/world/russia/okno.htm*; "Chapter Three: North America," p. 48; and Marcel de Haas, "Relations of Central Asia with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2017, pp. 1-16.

225. Erika Holmquist, "Challenges abound for Tajikistan," Kista, Sweden: Swedish Defense Research Agency, February 2016, available from *https://www.foi.se/download/18.1b4084ea15549d027d14b7a/1466509555098/RUFS%20Briefing%20No.%2034%20.pdf*.

226. "TIV of arms exports" and "Transfers of major weapons," SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, available from *https://www.sipri.org/databases*.

227. "Tajikistan, Russian Sign Protocol on Cooperation in the Sphere of Defense Industry," *Asia-Plus*, April 21, 2017, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20170421/238960*.

228. "Russia Will Supply Tajikistan Only with New Armament, Says Tajik Military Official."

229. Kucera, "Russia and Allies Practice Fighting ISIS in Tajikistan."

230. "Antonov: We Have Not Received Request from Tajikistan for Patrolling Its Border with Afghanistan," *Asia-Plus*, March 25, 2016, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20160325/antonov-we-have-not-received-request-tajikistan-patrolling-its-border-afghanistan*.

231. Smith, "Most NATO Members."

232. "USA Donates Vehicles, Communications Equipment, and Thermal Cameras to Tajik Border Guards," *Asia-Plus*, May 11, 2017, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20170511/239708*.

233. Umed Partov, "Beijing Encroaching on Moscow's Military Dominance in Tajikistan," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 13, Iss. 185, November 17, 2016, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/beijing-encroaching-moscows-military-dominance-tajikistan/*.

234. Edward Lemon, "CIS Anti-Terrorism Center Holds First Military Exercises in Tajikistan," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 14, Iss. 75, June 7, 2017, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/cis-anti-terrorism-center-holds-first-military-exercises-tajikistan/*.

235. Catherine Putz, "In 2017, What does CENTCOM care about in Central Asia," *The Diplomat*, March 11, 2017, available from *http://thediplomat.com/2017/03/in-2017-what-does-centcom-care-about-in-central-asia/*.

236. "Afghan and Serbian parliaments acquire observer status as CSTO PA," *Kazinform*, April 12, 2013, available from *https://www.inform.kz/eng/article/2549816*; and "Serbia Has Been Granted To Become PA CSTO Observer," *In Serbia Today*, April 11, 2013, available from *https://www.inserbia.info/today/2013/04/serbia-has-been-granted-to-become-pa-csto-observer/#*.

237. "'Indestructible Brotherhood': Serbia in CSTO Military Drill," *b92,* April 10, 2017, available from *http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2017&mm=04&dd=10&nav_id=100981*; and Sergey Sukhankin, "Slavic Brotherhood 2017—A Road to Zapad 2017?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 14, Iss. 85, June 26, 2017, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/slavic-brotherhood-2017-road-zapad-2017/*.

238. "Iran, Other States Might Become Observers at CSTO Parliamentary Assembly—Naryshkin," TASS, November 6, 2014, available from *http://tass.com/world/758407*.

239. "Tajikistan to Host CIS Antiterrorism Drill in Late May," *Asia-Plus*, May 16, 2017, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20170516/239861*; and "Four Russian Bombers Redeployed to Tajikistan to Take Part in CIS Anti-Terrorism Exercise," *Asia-Plus*, May 18, 2017, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/security/20170518/239983*.

240. "Russia Sends Iskander Missiles to Tajikistan for Drills," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, May 25, 2017, available from *https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-iskander-missiles-tajikistan-drills/28508455.html*.

241. Joshua Kucera, "Russia Holds Military Exercises in Tajikistan—But Why Not with CSTO?" Eurasianet, May 31, 2017, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/83781*.

242. Farkhad Tolipov, "Uzbekistan without the CSTO," *Central Asia Caucasus Analyst*, February 20, 2013, available from *http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/12652-uzbekistan-without-the-csto.html*.

243. M. K. Bhadrakumar, "Tashkent Deserts CSTO—Again," *Asia Times*, July 3, 2012, available from *http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/NG03Ag01.html*.

244. Arkady Dubnov, "Tashkent Goes, Problems Stay," *Global Affairs*, October 7, 2012, available from *http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/Tashkent-Goes-Problems-Stay-15692*.

245. Bhadrakumar.

246. Fozil Mashrab, "Uzbekistan Turns to Russia in Search of Modern Weapons," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 14, Iss. 19, February 15, 2017, available from *https://www.jamestown.org/program/uzbekistan-turns-russia-search-modern-weapons/*.

247. Joshua Kucera, "Tajikistan Extends Russian Base Agreement for 'Symbolic Sum', More Migrant Workers," Eurasianet,

October 5, 2012, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66007*.

248. Eduard Abrahamyan, "Russia Mulls New Role for its Post-Soviet Military Bloc," Foreign Policy Research Institute, December 12, 2017, available from *https://www.fpri.org/articles/2017/12/russia-mulls-new-role-post-soviet-military-bloc/*.

249. McDermott, "Poisk-2016."

250. See for example Breffni O'Rourke, "NATO: Alliance Praises Efforts of CSTO States, But Cool to Offer of Cooperation," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, December 3, 2003, available from *http://www.rferl.org/features/2003/12/03122003164831.asp.*

251. "Ivanov For NATO-CSTO Interaction in Fighting Terrorism."

252. Tom Balmforth, "Let's Just Be Friends," *Russia Profile*, December 17, 2009, available from *http://russialist.org/archives/2009-231-32.php*.

253. Kucera, "U.S. Blocking NATO-CSTO Cooperation."

254. "Russia's National Security Strategy and Military Doctrine and Their Implications for the EU," Brussels, Belgium: European Parliament, 2017, available from *http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2017/578016/EXPO_IDA%282017%29578016_EN.pdf*.

255. Josh Smith, "As Russia, US Joust over Central Asia Politics, Afghan Drug Trade Thrives," *Stars and Stripes*, January 1, 2014, available from *http://www.stripes.com/news/as-russia-us-joust-over-central-asia-politics-afghan-drug-trade-thrives-1.260155*.

256. Joshua Kucera, "CSTO To Cut Contacts With NATO, Increase Ties With SCO," Eurasianet, April 24, 2014, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68303*; and Lidia Isamova, "CSTO to Suspend Dialogue With NATO Due to Ukrainian Crisis," *RIA Novosti*, April 24, 2014, available from *https://sputniknews.com/world/20140424189344511-CSTO-to-Suspend-Dialogue-With-NATO-Due-to-Ukrainian-Crisis/*.

257. "CSTO, SCO, CIS Team Up to Counteract Terrorism," BelTA, May 28, 2018, available from *http://www.eng.belta.by/society/view/csto-sco-cis-team-up-to-counteract-terrorism-112097-2018/*.

258. Evan Gottesman, "The Limits of Collective Security in Eurasia," *The Diplomat*, December 24, 2015, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/the-limits-of-collective-security-in-eurasia/*.

259. Joshua Kucera, "In Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Conflict, CSTO's Absence Is Conspicuous," Eurasianet, January 15, 2014, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67940*.

260. "Kyrgyz, Tajik Sides Agree to Expedite Border Demarcation," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 31, 2014, available from *https://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyzstan-tajikistan-border-demarcation/25248994.html*; and "CSTO Secretary General Declares Tajik-Kyrgyz Border Situation Improved," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, February 20, 2014, available from *https://www.rferl.org/content/tajik-kyrgz-border-csto-improved/25270986.html*.

261. Joshua Kucera, "Moscow Assures Allies: You Won't Have to Fight in Ukraine," Eurasianet, March 26, 2014, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68192*.

262. "Russia-Led Military Bloc Ready to Send Peacekeepers to Ukrainian Regions," *Russia Today*, March 19, 2015, available from *http://www.rt.com/politics/242277-csto-peacekeepers-ukraine-donbass/*.

263. Sabra Ayres, "Russia's Shadowy World of Military Contractors: Independent Mercenaries, or Working for the Kremlin?" *The Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 2018, available from *http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-russia-mercenaries-20180218-story.html*; and Anna Gussarova, "Russia Pushes CSTO Countries to Legalize Private Military and Security Companies," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 15, Iss. 31, February 28, 2018, available from *https://jamestown.org/program/russia-pushes-csto-countries-to-legalize-private-military-and-security-companies/*.

264. "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Answers to Media Questions following CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, Almaty."

265. Arshaluis Mghdesyan, "Armenia's CSTO Disappointment—Analysis," *Eurasia Review*, November 13, 2016, available from *http://www.eurasiareview.com/13112016-armenias-csto-disappointment-analysis/*.

266. "CSTO Secretary General Confirms Rotation of Officials within Organization," *News am*, October 17, 2016, available from *https://news.am/eng/news/352243.html*.

267. Anahit Shirinyan, "For Armenia, an Alliance That May Be More Trouble than It's Worth," London, UK: Chatham House, January 24, 2017, available from *https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/armenia-alliance-may-be-more-trouble-it-s-worth*.

268. Andrew S. Bowen, "Why Russia Is Worried About the 'Zero Option' in Afghanistan," *The Diplomat*, August 13, 2013, available from *https://thediplomat.com/2013/08/why-russia-is-worried-about-the-zero-option-in-afghanistan/*.

269. "Parlamentskiye delegatsii Respubliki Serbiya i Islamskoi Respubliky Afghanistan poluchili status nablyudatelyei pri Parlamentskoi Assambleye ODKB" ("Parliamentary Delegations from the Republics of Serbia and Afghanistan Have Obtained Observer Status in CSTO Parliamentary Assembly"), CSTO website, April 12, 2013, available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1776*.

270. Nargis Hamroboyeva, "CSTO Counternarcotics Agencies Sets Up Database of Transnational Drug Dealers," *Asia-Plus*, December 2, 2009, available from *https://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan/20091202/csto-counternarcotics-agencies-sets-database-transnational-drug-dealers;* and "Russia Promotes CSTO Role in Afghan Anti-Drug Effort," *Xinhua*, May 14, 2014, available from *https://www.shine.cn/archive/article/article_xinhua.aspx?id=218285*.

271. "Speech at a CSTO Collective Security Council Summit Meeting in Narrow Format," Kremlin website, September 23, 2013, available from *http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/19268*.

272. Uran Botobekov, "Russia Wants CSTO Allies to Deploy in Syria," *Eurasia Daily Monitor,* Vol. 14, Iss. 89, July 10, 2017, available from *https://www.jamestown.org/program/*

russia-wants-csto-allies-deploy-syria/; Kucera, "Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Under Right Conditions, Open to Deployment to Syria"; Ramani, "CSTO Rift Grows between Moscow and Astana"; and "Kyrgyzstan rassmotrit predlozheniye ob otpravke kontraktnikov v Siriyu – Isakov."

273. "SCO, CSTO, CIS Agree to Enhance Counter-Terrorism Cooperation," Interfax-AVN, June 9, 2018, available from *http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?id=838066*.

274. Richard Weitz, *Parsing Chinese-Russian Military Exercises*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2015, available from *http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1266*.

275. Isabelle Facon, "Moscow's Global Foreign and Security Strategy: Does the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Meet Russian Interests?" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 53, 2013, p. 474.

276. K. Jennie Tresa, "China-Central Asia Defence Relations," *Chennai Centre for China Studies*, May 12, 2015, available from *http://www.c3sindia.org/uncategorized/5031.*

277. Joshua Kucera, "Russia Frustrated by Refusal of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan to Cooperate on Security," Eurasianet, March 20, 2015, available from *http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72631.*

278. Dubnov.

279. Stefan Mrvaljevic, "Collective Security Treaty Organization: Russia's answer to NATO?" International Association for Political Science Students, February 4, 2015, available from *www.iapss.org/2015/02/04/collective-security-treaty-organization-russias-answer-to-nato/.*

280. Miriam Elder, "Kyrgyzstan Tests Russia's Regional Commitments," *Global Post*, June 15, 2010, available from *https://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/russia/100614/kyrgyzstan-ethnic-violence.*

281. "Re-Examining the Collective Security Treaty Organization."

282. Hoffmann, "The Collective Security Treaty Organization," p. 176.

283. Dubnov.

284. Elder.

285. Ibid.

286. Ibid.

287. Denis Dyomkin, "Russian-led Bloc Undecided on Aid for Kyrgyzstan," Reuters, August 20, 2010, available from *http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLDE67J1KU*.

288. Mrvaljevic.

289. Joshua Kucera, "CSTO Faces New Wave of Criticism over Ineffectiveness," Eurasianet, April 14, 2015, available from *https://www.eurasianet.org/node/72956.*

290. Smith, "Most NATO Members."

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfPak	Afghanistan and Pakistan
APC	armored personnel carrier
APV	armored personnel vehicle
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRDF	Collective Rapid Deployment Forces
CRRF	Collective Rapid Reaction Force (KFOR, in Russian)
CST	Collective Security Treaty
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EMERCOM	Ministry of Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters
EU	European Union
EurAsEc	Eurasian Economic Community
FGA	fighter ground attack
FSB	Russian Federal Security Service
GDP	gross domestic product
IJU	Islamic Jihad Union
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IS	Islamic State
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Islamic State, (Daesh, in Arabic)
JADS	Joint Air Defense System
km	kilometer
KSBR TsAR	Central Asian Regional Collective Rapid Deployment Force
MCM	Mine countermeasures
MD	Military District
MOD	Ministry of Defense (Russia)
MRD	Motorized Rifle Division
MRL	multiple rocket launcher
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ODKB	Collective Security Treaty Organization (*Organizacija Dogovora o Kollektivnoj Bezopasnosti*, in Russian)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PMC	private military and security companies
RATS	Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the SCO
SAM	surface-to-air missile
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SSM	surface-to-surface missile
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

APPENDIX I

CURRENT COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION (CSTO) MEMBERS

See figure I-1 for a map of the countries that are current members of the CSTO.

Figure I-1. Map of the Current CSTO Member Countries[1]

ENDNOTES - APPENDIX I

1. Image modified from Wikimedia Commons contributors, "File:CSTO in CIS Map.png," Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository, last revised December 6, 2014, available from *https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:CSTO_in_CIS_Map.png&oldid=141607379*.

APPENDIX II

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION (CSTO)

See figure II-1 for an illustration of the organizational structure of the CSTO.

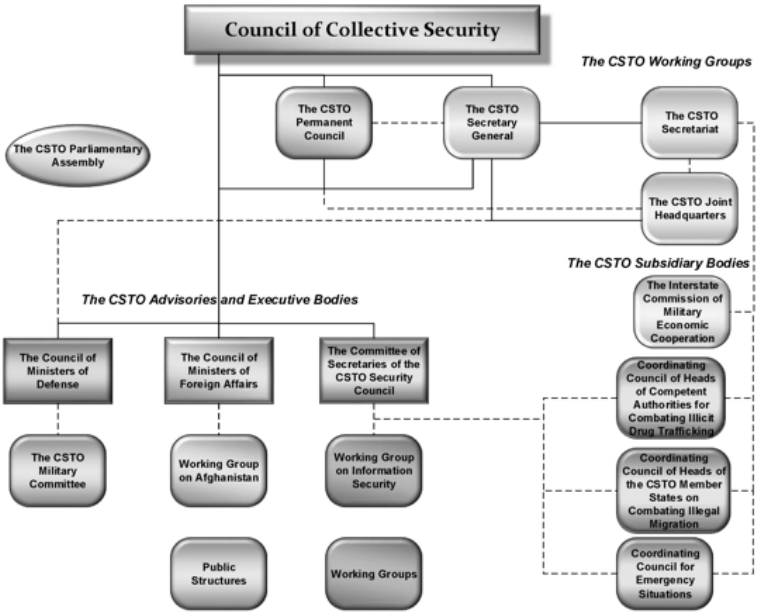


Figure II-1. Organizational Structure of the CSTO[1]

ENDNOTES – APPENDIX II

1. Image translated and reconstructed by Madina Rubly from "Collective Security Treaty Organization," CSTO website, n.d., available from *http://www.odkb-csto.org/structure/*.

APPENDIX III

RUSSIA'S MAJOR CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TRANSFERS TO OTHER COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION (CSTO) MEMBERS

See tables III-1 through III-5 and figures III-1 through III-15 for an in-depth look at Russia's major conventional weapons transfers to other CSTO members, by country.[1]

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
2K11 Krug/SA-4	SAM	1993/1994	9
3M8M1/SA-4	SAM	1993/1994	349
9M111 Fagot/AT-4	Anti-tank missile	1993/1993-1996	945
9M33/SA-8	SAM	1993/1993-1994	40
BRDM-2	Tank Destroyer	1993/1995-1996	4
T-72	Tank	1994/1994-1996	84
9P117/Scud-B TEL	Mobile Surface-to-Surface Missile (SSM) Launcher	1995/1996	8
BM-21 Grad 122mm	Self-propelled Multiple Rocket Launcher (MRL)	1995/1995-1996	18
BMP-2	IFV	1995/1995-1996	50
D-1 152mm	Towed gun	1995/1995-1996	18
D-20 152mm	Towed gun	1995/1995-1996	18
D-30 122mm	Towed gun	1995/1995-1996	36

Table III-1. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Armenia

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
Igla/SA-18	Portable SAM	1995/1995-1996	200
R-17 Elbrus/Scud-B	SSM	1995/1996	24
I1-76M	Transport aircraft	2004/2004	2
5V55U/SA-10C	SAM	2007/2009-2010	144
S-300PS/SA-10B	SAM system	2007/2009-2010	2
Tigr	Armored Personnel Vehicle (APV)	2010/2011	10
Ig1a-S/SA-24	Portable SAM	2012/2013	200
9P78 Iskander	SSM	2013/2016	4
Iskander	SSM	2013/2016	25
T-90S	Tank	2014/2016	1
BM-9A52 Smerch	Self-propelled MRL	2015/2016-2017	6
Igla-S/SA-24	Portable SAM	2015/2016	200
Verba/SA-25	Portable SAM	2016/2016-2017	200
9M133 Kornet/AT-14	Anti-tank missile	2017	

Table III-1. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Armenia (cont.)

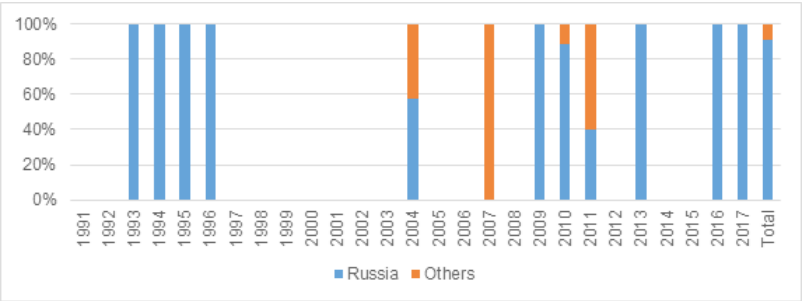


Figure III-1. Russia's Share of Armenia's Arms Imports (1991-2017)

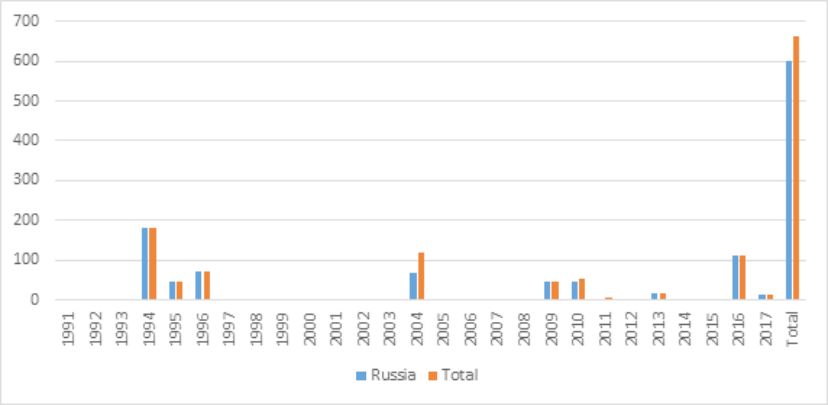


Figure III-2. Russian Arms Sales to Armenia, 1991-2017 (in millions)

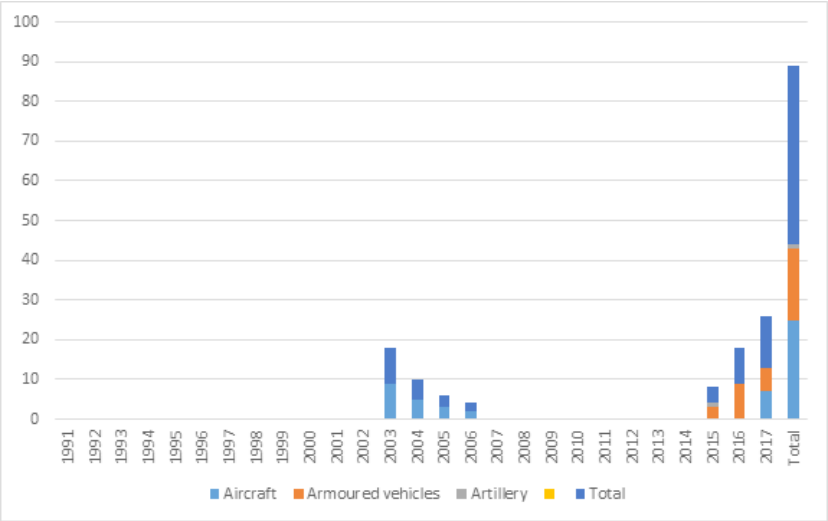


Figure III-3. Russian Arms Sales to Armenia by Category, 1991-2017 (in millions)

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
MiG-29	Fighter aircraft	1996/1998-1999	4
5V55R/SA-10B	SAM	2005/2006	150
S-300PS/SA-10B	SAM system	2005/2006	4
9M338/SA-15	SAM	2009/2011-2012	200
Tor-M1/SA-15	Mobile SAM system	2009/2011-2012	8
48N6/SA-10D Grumble	SAM	2012/2014	150
9M338/SA-15	SAM	2012/2013	100
Tor-M1/SA-15	Mobile SAM system	2012/2013	4
Yak-130	Trainer/combat aircraft	2012/2015	4
9M338/SA-15	SAM	2013/2017	100
Tor-M1/SA-15	Mobile SAM system	2013/2017	4
59N6 Protivnik-GE	Air search radar	2014/2016-2020	7/2
S-300PMU-1/SA-20A	SAM system	2014/2015-2016	4
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2015/2016-2017	12
T-72B3	Tank	2015/2017	4
Yak-130	Trainer/combat aircraft	2015/2016	4
Yak-52	Trainer aircraft	2015/2015	1
BTR-82A	IFV	2017/NA	32
Su-30MK	Fighter Ground Attack (FGA) aircraft	2017/2019-2020	12
Tor-M1/SA-15	Mobile SAM system	2017	100
Tor-M1/SA-15	Mobile SAM system	2017	4

Table III-2. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Belarus

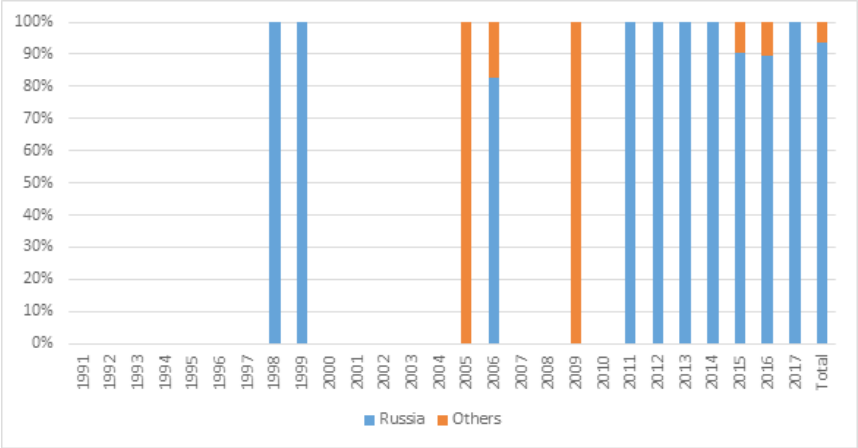


Figure III-4. Russia's Share of Belarus's Arms Imports (1991-2017)

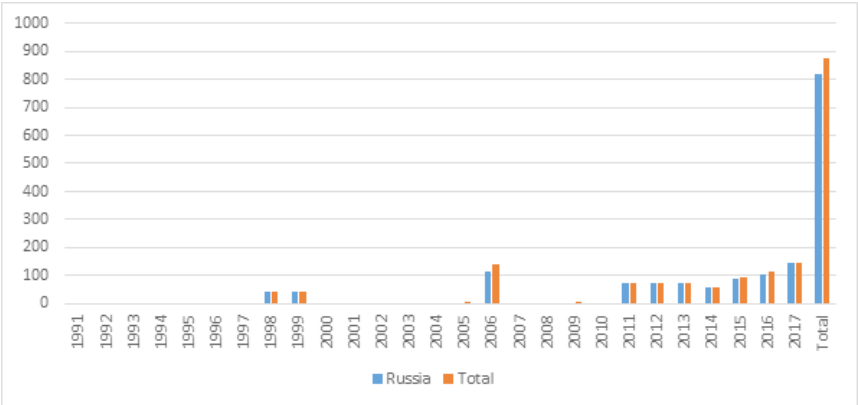


Figure III-5. Russian Arms Sales to Belarus, 1991-2017 (in millions)

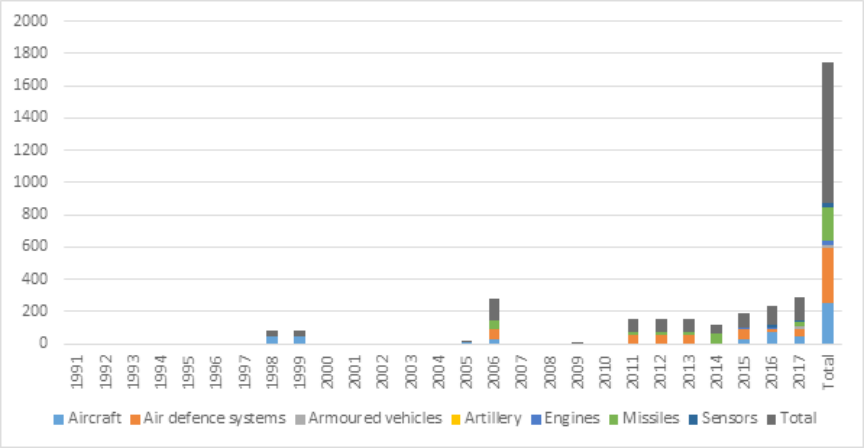


Figure III-6. Russian Arms Sales to Belarus by Category, 1991-2017 (in millions)

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
Project-22180	Patrol craft	2009/2010-2014	3
L-39C Albatros	Trainer aircraft	1995/1996-2000	13
MiG-29	Fighter aircraft	1995/1995	12
Su-25	Ground attack aircraft	1995/1997	14
Su-27S/Flanker-B	FGA aircraft	1995/199-2001	14
5V55U/SA-10C	SAM	1998/2000	40
I1-76M	Transport aircraft	1998/2000	1
S-300P/SA-10A	SAM system	1998/2000	1
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2002/2002	3
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2002/2004-2007	14

Table III-3. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Kazakhstan

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
BTR-80A	IFV	2003/2004-2005	14
BPM-97	Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)	2006/2008	18
BTR-80	APC	2006/2008	1
ANSAT	Light helicopter	2007/2008-2009	3
BTR-80A	IFV	2007/2007-2010	79
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2007/2009-2012	12
N-001 Myech	Combat ac radar	2007/2010	2
9M120 Ataka/AT-9	Anti-tank missile	2010/2011-2013	120
BMPT Terminator	Tank/armored Fighting Support Vehicle (AFSV)	2010/2011-2013	10
BTR-82A	IFV	2010/2011-2012	44
Igla-1/SA-16	Portable SAM	2010/2013-2014	20
Tigr	APV	2010/2011-2012	21
TOS-1	Self-propelled MRL	2010/2011	3
BTR-80	APC	2011/2012	17
BTR-82A	IFV	2012/2015-2017	90
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2012/2013-2015	10
5V55U/SA-10C	SAM	2013/2015	200
Project-10750/Lida	Mine Countermeasures ship (MCM)	2013/2017	1
S-300PS/Sa-10B	SAM system	2013/2015	5
Mi-35M	Combat helicopter	2015/2016	4
Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	2015/2015-2016	6
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2016/2016-2017	3
Mi-35M	Combat helicopter	2017/2018	4
Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	2017/2017	12/2

Table III-3. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Kazakhstan (cont.)

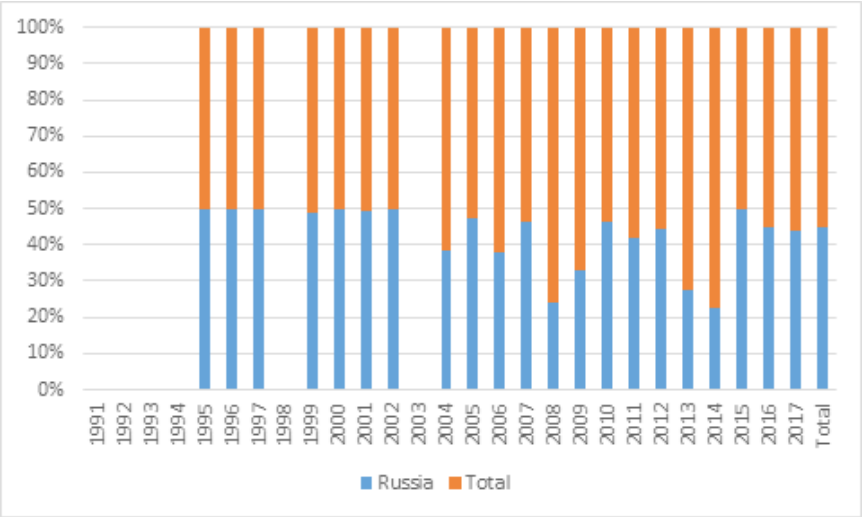


Figure III-7. Russia's Share of Kazakhstan's Arms Imports (1991-2017)

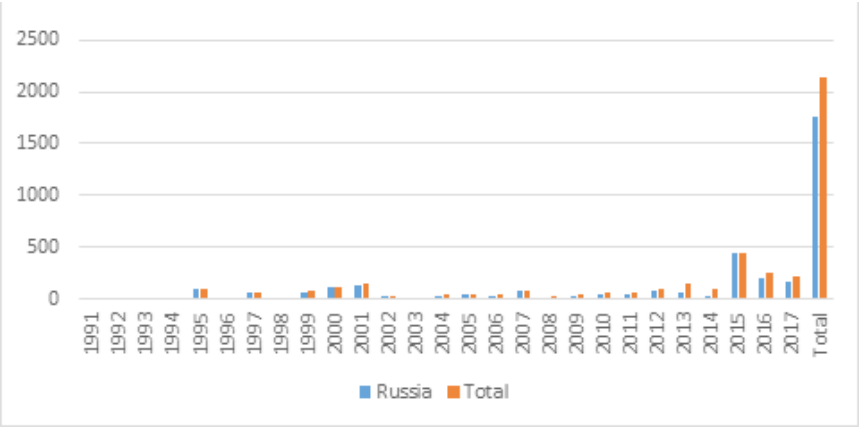


Figure III-8. Russian Arms Sales to Kazakhstan, 1991-2017 (in millions)

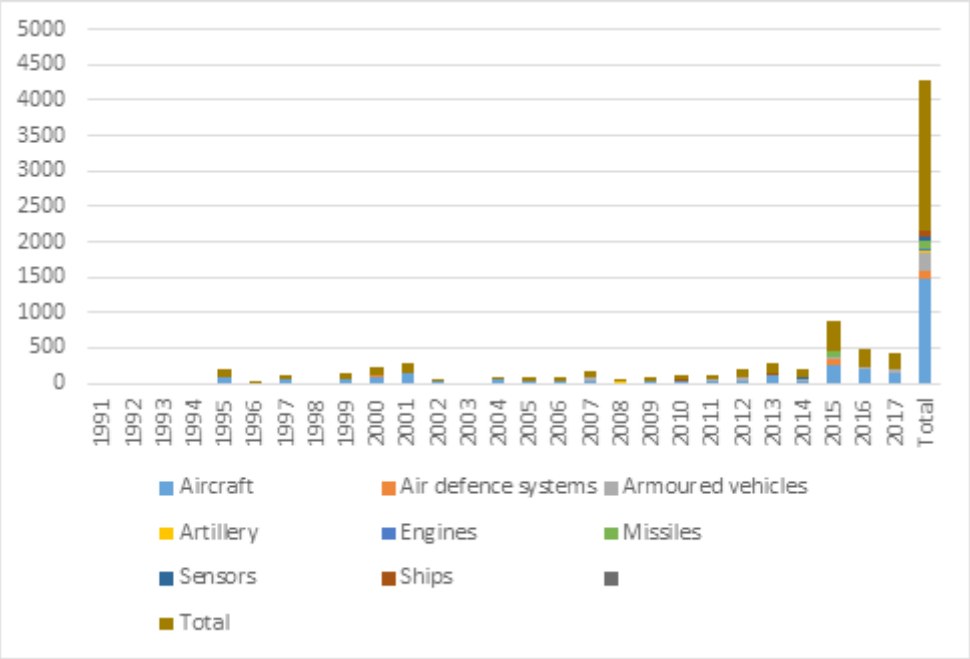


Figure III-9. Russian Arms Sales to Kazakhstan by Category, 1991-2017 (in millions)

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2003/2003	2
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2005/2005	1
D-30 122mm	Towed gun	2014/2015	10
BTR-70	APC	2015/2015-2017	60
An-26	Transport aircraft	2017/2017	2

Table III-4. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Kyrgyzstan

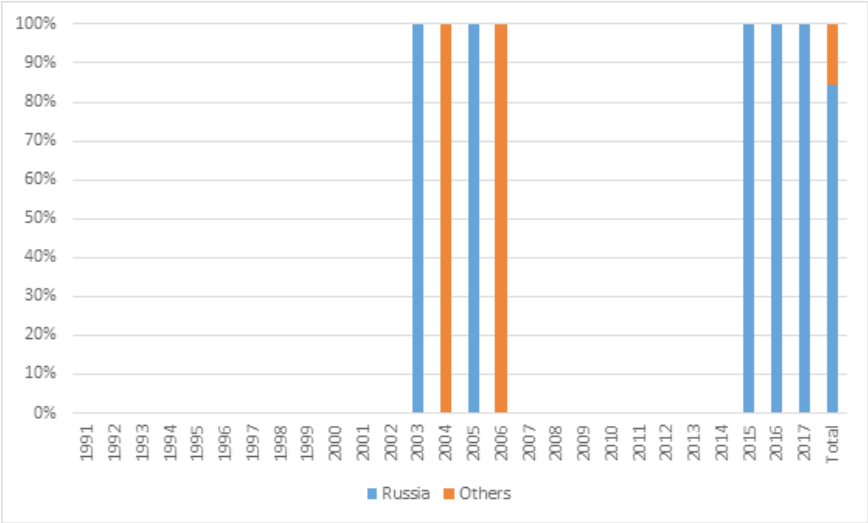


Figure III-10. Russia's Share of Kyrgyzstan's Arms Imports (1991-2017)

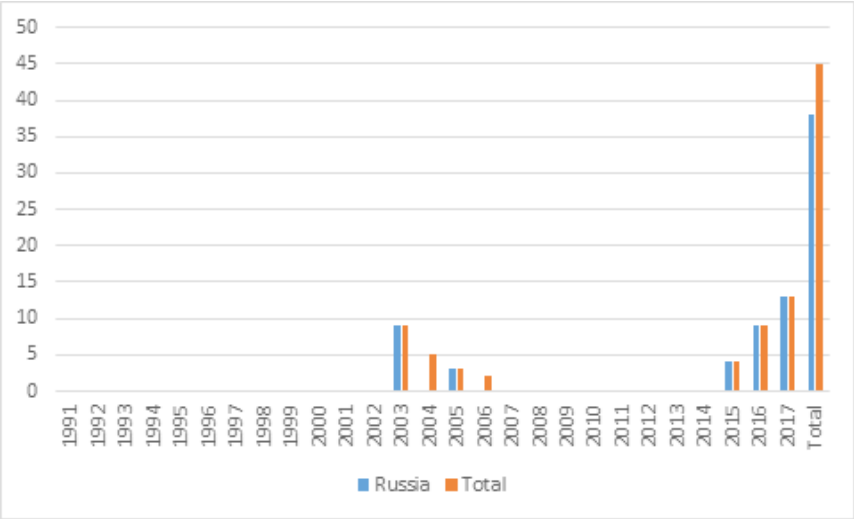


Figure III-11. Russian Arms Sales to Kyrgyzstan, 1991-2017 (in millions)

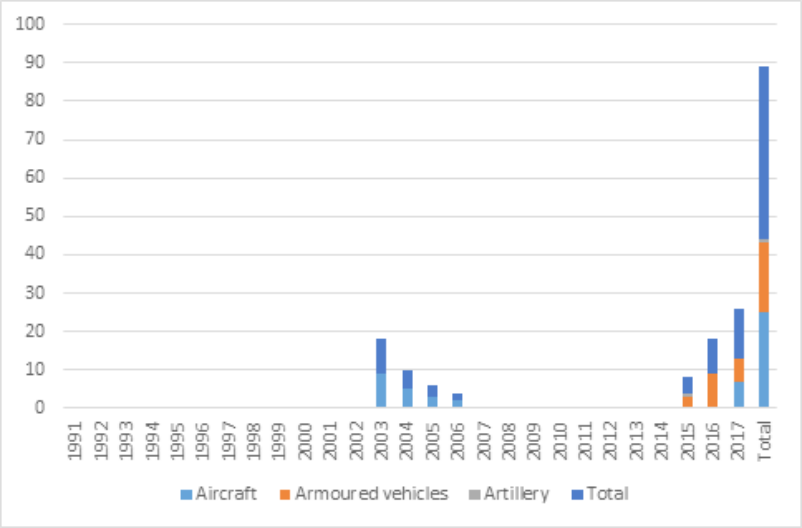


Figure III-12. Russian Arms Sales to Kyrgyzstan by Category, 1991-2017 (in millions)

Weapon Description	Designation	Year of Order/ Deliveries	Number Produced/ Delivered
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	1993/1994	10
Mi-24P/Mi-35P	Combat helicopter	2006/2006	2
Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2006/2006	2
L-39C Albatros	Trainer aircraft	2007/2007	4
S-125 Pechora-2M	SAM system	2007/2009	1
V-601/SA-3B	SAM	2007/2009	50
BTR-70	APC	2015/2016	26

Table III-5. Major Arms Transfers from Russia to Tajikistan

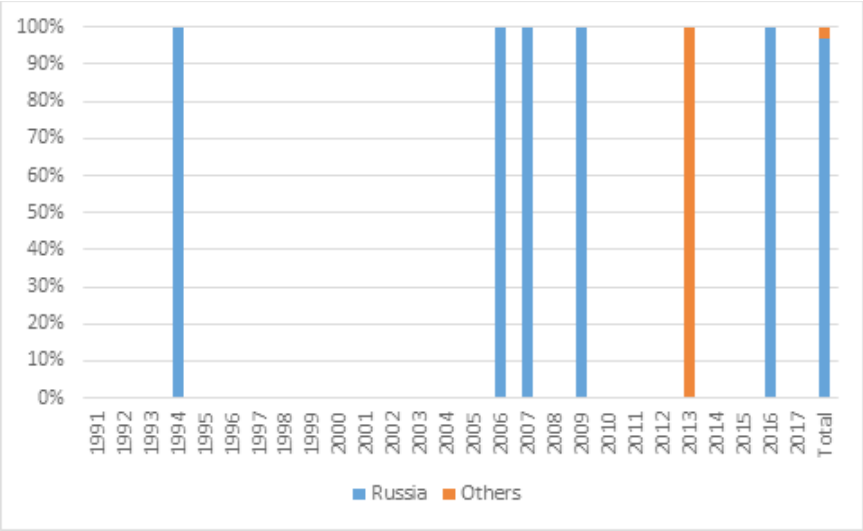


Figure III-13. Russia's Share of Tajikistan's Arms Imports (1991-2017)

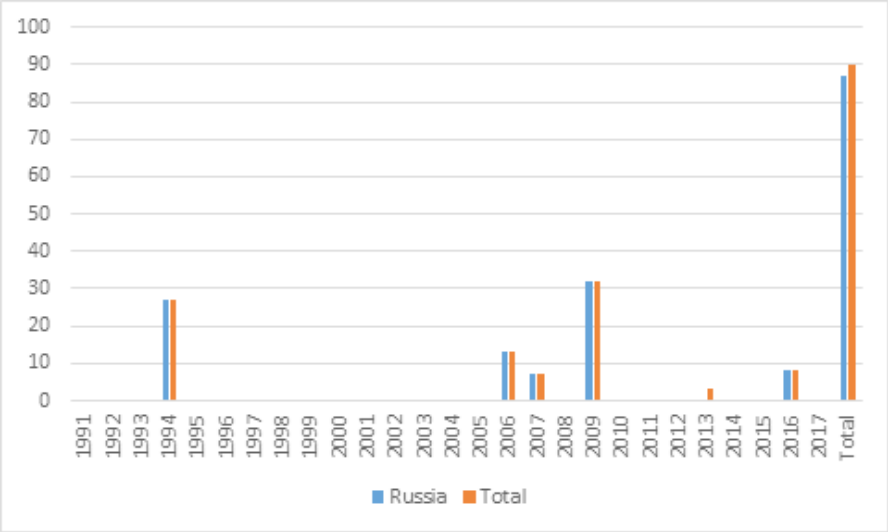


Figure III-14. Russian Arms Sales to Tajikistan, 1991-2017 (in millions)

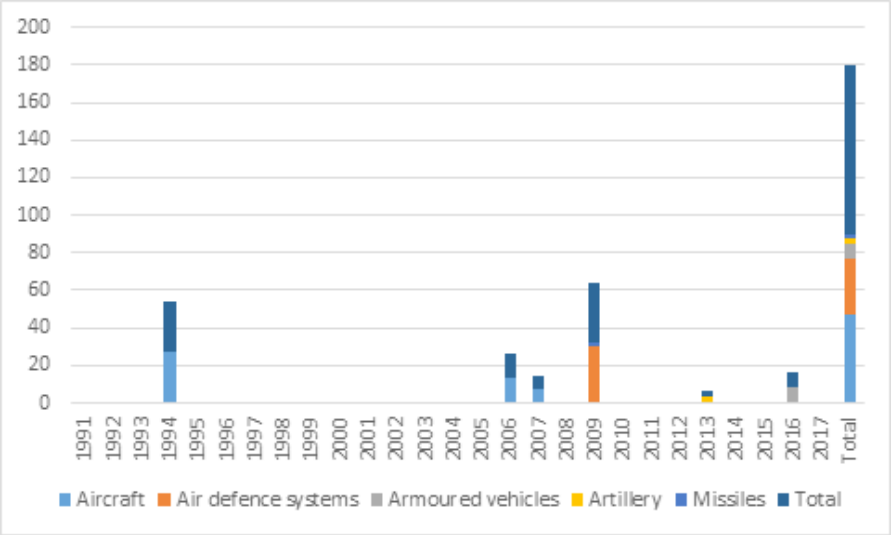


Figure III-15. Russian Arms Sales to Tajikistan by Category, 1991-2017 (in millions)

ENDNOTES APPENDIX - III

1. All monetary figures used to create tables III-1 through III-5 and figures III-1 through III-15 in this appendix are in U.S. dollars, data sourced from "SIPRI Arms Transfers Database," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, March 12, 2018, available from *https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers*, accessed June 25-26, 2018.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General John S. Kem
Commandant

*****

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
AND
U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE PRESS

Director
Professor Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr.

Director of Research
Dr. Steven K. Metz

Author
Dr. Richard Weitz

Editor for Production
Dr. James G. Pierce

Publications Assistant
Ms. Denise J. Kersting

*****

Composition
Mrs. Jennifer E. Nevil

U.S.ARMY

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE

STRENGTH and WISDOM

FOR THIS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS, VISIT US AT

https://www.armywarcollege.edu/

ISBN 1-58487-793-6

9 781584 877936

90000 >

This Publication

SSI Website

USAWC Website