



KYRGYZSTAN

Background

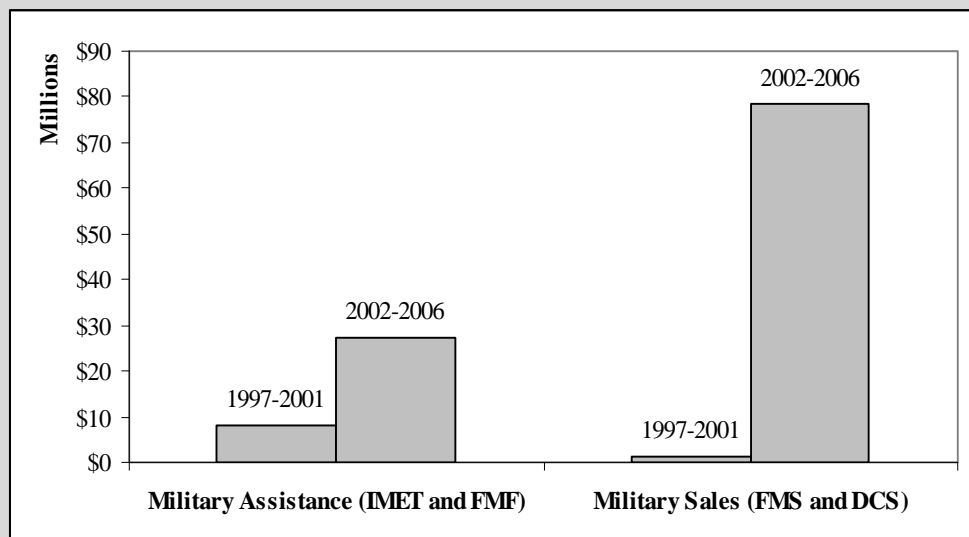
The Central Asian nation of Kyrgyzstan, also known as the Kyrgyz Republic, came under Soviet control with the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, and was formally incorporated into the USSR as the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic in 1936. After more than 100 years of Russian rule, Kyrgyzstan finally gained independence in August 1991.

Askar Akayev was elected president of the Kyrgyz Soviet

Socialist Republic in 1990, but resigned when independence was declared. In 1991, Akayev ran unopposed for president of the newly independent Kyrgyzstan. Akayev was re-elected in 1995 after running a campaign funded by government resources and disqualifying three of his six opponents. Two months after winning re-election, Akayev expanded the powers of the presidency via a constitutional referendum.

Despite a constitutional provision limiting a president to two terms in office, Akayev ran for president again in 2000 and won in elections that were not deemed free and fair. The parliamentary elections held the same year were so fraught with irregularities and election fraud that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) declared them invalid. Akayev's disputed 2000 win and worsening human rights conditions in the country created widespread anti-government sentiment. Protests erupted throughout the country in 2002, when police shot and killed a number of citizens protesting the arrest of opposition politicians. When the 2005 parliamentary elections failed to be conducted in a free and fair manner, large-scale demonstrations occurred with citizens calling for the

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Pre-Sept. 11 vs. Post-Sept. 11**



resignation of the Akayev government. In what is now known as the “Tulip Revolution,” Akayev resigned as president and fled the country. Opposition groups created a Committee of National Unity and selected long-time opposition leader Kurmanbek Bakiev to run for president. The elections in July 2005 that brought Bakiev to power “marked tangible progress” toward meeting international standards according to the OSCE, and parliamentary elections held in November 2005 were also deemed a drastic improvement over previous elections. Bakiev has pledged to shift power away from the executive branch and vest it with the Kyrgyz parliament in a move to further solidify Kyrgyzstan’s democratization.

According to the U.S. State Department’s 2006 report on human rights practices, the Kyrgyz government’s human rights record has continued to improve since the overthrow of the Akayev government. Under Akayev, freedom of speech and the press were severely restricted and opposition politicians were barred from many activities. The government did not allow for peaceful demonstrations and the police were known to use force against protestors. Since the summer of 2005, however, the media has been allowed to operate much more freely, although limitations still exist on the extent of coverage that media outlets can provide. Opposition politicians are likewise subject to far less harassment under the Bakiev government and citizens are able to organize peaceful demonstrations. However, the security forces in Kyrgyzstan continue to torture and physically abuse detainees as well as to arbitrarily detain citizens. Corrupt police officers are known to arrest citizens on false charges and demand bribes in return for their release. The judiciary is also susceptible to bribes as well as interference from the executive branch. Corruption plagues all levels of government and society.

Kyrgyzstan has been targeted several times by international terrorists and is a hotbed of activity for Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), an organization dedicated to spreading radical Sunni ideology. Although not designated by the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, as HT is not directly linked to any acts of international terrorism, the government of Kyrgyzstan along with its Central Asian neighbors have banned the organization and have arrested those distributing HT materials for attempting to incite violence. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), an armed group that has declared jihad on the governments of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and is believed to have links to al-Qaida, is also known to operate in Kyrgyzstan. The IMU has conducted raids within Kyrgyzstan during which the group attacked police stations, stole weapons, and blew up a money exchange office. In May 2006, attacks allegedly conducted by Islamic militants killed six people at Kyrgyz and Tajik border crossings. In response to these attacks, the Kyrgyz government created the Southern Group of Forces made up of approximately 6,000 personnel tasked with defending against terrorist incursions into its territory and in October 2006, created a national office to oversee all counterterrorism activities. Kyrgyzstan also participates in multilateral efforts to reign in regional terrorism as a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

U.S. Military Assistance Prior to Sept. 11, 2001

Kyrgyzstan concluded a small amount of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) with the United States (\$1.4 million) between fiscal year 1991 (FY 91) and FY 01, consisting mostly of communications equipment and other non-lethal supplies. No Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) took place during this time. Kyrgyzstan began receiving IMET in 1994 and FMF in 1997 and received consistent levels of both types of funds during the 1990s through 2001.

As no major conventional weapons systems were imported from the United States between 1993 and 2001, Kyrgyzstan did not submit any reports on U.S. imports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Kyrgyzstan likewise did not receive any defense articles through the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program.

U.S. Military Assistance Since Sept. 11, 2001

According to the FY 07 congressional budget justification, Kyrgyzstan provides “crucial support” to the United States for Operation Enduring Freedom and the “war on terrorism.” After Sept. 11, 2001, Kyrgyzstan quickly offered support to Operation Enduring Freedom by allowing the U.S. military to base its forces at Manas International Airport, located near the capital city of Bishkek.

Due to the terrorist attacks that have occurred on its own soil, border security in Kyrgyzstan has become a top priority. In 2004, the United States allowed Kazakhstan to retransfer two U.S.-origin MI-8 MTV-1 attack helicopters to Kyrgyzstan, in support of an export control and border security program. Kyrgyzstan reported this import to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. FMF for Kyrgyzstan is specifically earmarked for the creation of a rapid response unit in the border regions near Uzbekistan, where the IMU operates.

In the five years since Sept. 11, Kyrgyzstan has seen a more than a 200 percent increase in U.S. military assistance compared to the five years prior to Sept. 11. FMF appropriations to Kyrgyzstan peaked at an unprecedented \$11 million in FY 02. FMF appropriations have decreased since FY 02, but IMET appropriations have remained consistently higher than pre-Sept. 11 levels. Kyrgyzstan is slated to receive more than \$2 million in IMET and FMF in both FY 07 and FY 08.

The United States has provided Kyrgyzstan with several sources of counterterrorism training and funding. Kazakhstan is a beneficiary of the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) and received \$200,000 in FY 05, \$175,000 in FY 06, and will receive an additional \$125,000 in FY 07. Since FY 05, Kyrgyzstan has received funding to expand its counterterrorism capabilities, through the Foreign Operations budget’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance program (NADR-ATA), which is part of the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Activities account. Kyrgyzstan received \$2.1 million from this account in FY 06 and the FY 08 foreign operations budget includes a request for \$1.5 million more.

U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Kyrgyzstan, FY 90 - FY 08					
	IMET	FMF	DCS	FMS	EDA
1990	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a
1991	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a
1992	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a
1993	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1994	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1995	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1996	\$231,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1997	\$257,000	\$800,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
1998	\$336,000	\$1,350,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
1999	\$383,000	\$1,550,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
2000	\$358,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$726,000	\$0
2001	\$380,000	\$1,846,000	\$0	\$690,000	\$0
1990-2001	\$2,055,000	\$6,546,000	\$0	\$1,416,000	\$0
1997-2001	\$1,714,000	\$6,546,000	\$0	\$1,416,000	\$0
2002	\$600,000	\$11,000,000	\$0	\$2,250,000	\$0
2003	\$1,068,000	\$3,900,000	\$0	\$2,746,000	\$0
2004	\$1,041,000	\$4,075,000	\$24,000	\$4,722,000	\$0
2005	\$1,039,000	\$1,984,000	\$6,636,000	\$1,908,000	\$0
2006	\$887,000	\$1,881,000	\$55,289,000	\$5,028,000	\$0
2002-2006	\$4,635,000	\$22,840,000	\$61,949,000	\$16,654,000	\$0
2007	\$1,085,000	\$1,500,000	\$230,000	\$0	\$0
2008	\$1,200,000	\$1,500,000	\$39,000	\$0	n/a

Sources

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