



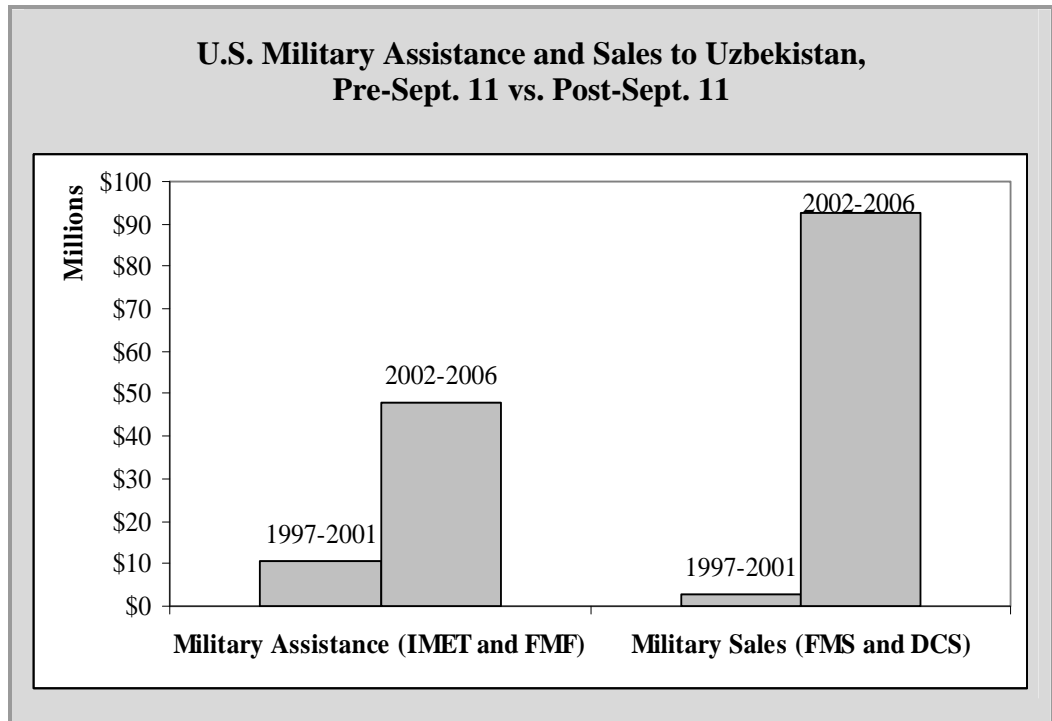
UZBEKISTAN

Background

After the dissolution of the Russian Empire, which conquered and colonized Central Asia in the 19th century, the Soviets established the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924. In 1991, Uzbekistan became an independent state after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Islam Karimov, who was part of the former Communist Party leadership in Uzbekistan, was elected the country's

first president in an election deemed neither free nor fair by international observers, and which was contested by only one other candidate who eventually fled the country after claiming election fraud. Since 1991, Karimov has remained president of Uzbekistan. Subsequent presidential elections have been marked by unusually high turnout in favor of Karimov, who has faced no more than one opposing candidate in each election. The OSCE refused to monitor the 2000 presidential elections on the grounds that the premises for the election were neither free nor fair. Parliamentary elections have been contested exclusively by pro-government parties – as registration is denied to opposition parties – and most parliamentary elections have also been criticized by international observers for their lack of fairness and openness.

Dissatisfaction with the government is high among the population; pervasive corruption within the government has contributed to a stagnating economy that already featured high unemployment. Protests and demonstrations against government policies are regularly met with further repression by the government. On May 13, 2005, several hundred Uzbeks were killed in Andijan, where citizens had gathered for months to protest the government's imprisonment of several businessmen accused of supporting Islamic extremism. As the protests grew in size, some protestors armed themselves and



stormed the prison, releasing the men and those who were imprisoned for supporting them. In response, even larger numbers of peaceful activists took to the streets to demonstrate until government armored vehicles arrived and opened fire on the crowd. The Karimov government maintains that those killed at Andijan were all armed Islamic militants attempting a violent overthrow of the state while other independent observers, many of whom have been jailed, reported that the nearly 500 dead were all unarmed civilians. No independent investigation has been conducted into the incident.

According to the 2006 State Department report on human rights practices, Uzbekistan's poor human rights record "continued to worsen during the year." Although Uzbekistan is technically a republic with three constitutionally separated branches of government, in reality, the executive branch controls the others in a decidedly authoritarian fashion. Uzbekistan has made little progress on implementing democratic reforms and the State Department ultimately does not consider Uzbekistan to be a democracy. Security forces routinely employ torture against prisoners and detainees and those arrested on suspicion of affiliation with Islamic militants are treated significantly more harshly than other prisoners. Corruption is rampant among the national police and officers often arbitrarily arrest and detain citizens in order to collect bribes for their release.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press are both highly restricted in Uzbekistan and self-censorship appears to be expanding. There are no privately-owned newspapers in Uzbekistan and criticism of the government is forbidden; journalists who do so face harassment and imprisonment. Freedom of religion is limited to the freedom to worship within state-sanctioned religious institutions, whose content is monitored by the executive branch of the government. Discrimination against and trafficking of women and girls continues to be a pervasive problem as well, occasionally involving corrupt state officials. The right to privacy is only vaguely respected, and the government regularly engages in wire-tapping and other forms of surveillance against private citizens. NGO activity is likewise highly restricted, although in 2002 and 2003, two independent human rights organizations were allowed to register in Uzbekistan.

Despite the government's entrenched political stability, security forces have continuously clashed with militant Islamic organizations operating in Uzbekistan, and the 2006 State Department report on terrorism noted a, "clear potential for Islamic extremism and acts of international terrorism in Uzbekistan." Uzbekistan, like its Central Asian neighbors Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, borders Afghanistan 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 Uzbekistan, along with its Central Asian neighbors, have banned the organization and have arrested those distributing HT materials for attempting to incite violence. The government of Uzbekistan has also been targeted by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), an armed group believed to have links to al-Qaida that has declared jihad on the governments of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

IMU has either claimed responsibility for or has been blamed by the Karimov government for several bombings in Tashkent over the past few years including 16 coordinated car bombings in 1999, three suicide bombings in March 2004, and the July 2004 bombing of the U.S. and Israeli embassies. The government has taken advantage of the threat of Islamic terrorists to prosecute anyone suspected of extremist sympathies. Bombings that took place in Tashkent prior to the embassy bombings in the spring of 2004 were immediately attributed to Islamic militants by the government, although there was no evidence to suspect them. Likewise, the events at Andijan in May 2005 stemmed from protests against the imprisonment of local men accused of religious extremism.

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

Prior to Sept. 11, 2001, Uzbekistan received a minimal amount of U.S. military assistance. Uzbekistan began receiving U.S. military assistance in fiscal year 1995 (FY 95) and between FY 95 and FY 01, the country received \$2.7 million in International Military Education and Training (IMET) and \$8.4 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF). Although DCS was limited prior to FY 01, Uzbekistan concluded nearly \$3 million in FMS between FY 99 and FY 01, purchasing predominantly military trucks and communications equipment. Uzbekistan also received mountaineering equipment through the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program in FY 00.

Between 1991 and 2001, Uzbekistan did not report any imports of major conventional weapons systems from the United States to the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

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

Immediately after Sept. 11, 2001, Uzbekistan became a key, strategic ally of the United States in the “war on terrorism.” The country allowed the deployment of U.S. troops in Uzbekistan in order to conduct missions in Afghanistan, as well as affording overflight rights to the coalition forces operating in Afghanistan. Negotiations and cooperation with the United States afforded Uzbekistan guarantees of military and other financial assistance in exchange for certain political and human rights reforms. This arrangement was contained in a 2002 joint declaration signed by the United States and the Central Asian states in 2002.

The allocation of assistance in FY 02 and FY 03 was contingent on a determination by the U.S. Secretary of State that Uzbekistan has made “substantial and continuing progress” as per the joint agreement. In both FY 02 and FY 03, former Secretary of State Colin Powell declared that Uzbekistan was making progress and funding levels demonstrated this new cooperation. Uzbekistan received an unprecedented \$36.2 million in FMF in FY 02 alone, and although the FY 03 appropriation of \$8.6 million was significantly smaller, it was still more than all previous FMF appropriations Uzbekistan had received since independence combined.

In FY 04 and FY 05, however, the Secretary of State gave an unfavorable determination of Uzbekistan’s progress in implementing democratic reforms. No FMF and IMET was allocated in either year, with the exception of \$484,000 in IMET funds that were dispersed in FY 04 prior to the Secretary’s July 2004 determination. The certification requirement was renewed in the FY 06 Foreign Operations budget but, military assistance has remained limited as the Secretary of State has not been able to certify that Uzbekistan has made requisite reforms. The FY 08 Foreign Operations budget will likely retain the certification requirement for military assistance to Uzbekistan and, as a result, such assistance remains limited. Despite all of these restrictions, however, Uzbekistan still received nearly four times more military assistance in the five years after Sept. 11 (FY 02-FY 06) than it did in the five years prior (FY 97-FY 01).

U.S. arms sales to Uzbekistan since Sept. 11 have consisted predominantly of non-lethal communications equipment and electronics, but have dramatically increased since Sept. 11. Between FY 97 and FY 01, Uzbekistan concluded less than \$3 million in arms sales, as compared to more than \$90 million between FY 02 and FY 06.

Since FY 05, the United States has also provided Uzbekistan with several sources of counterterrorism training and funding, which are not contingent on State Department certification. Uzbekistan is a beneficiary of the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) receiving \$200,000 in FY 05 and FY 06 and will receive an additional \$25,000 in FY 07. Uzbekistan has also 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. Uzbekistan received \$2.4 million in FY 05, but was not allocated any funds in FY 06 and is only slated to receive \$500,000 in FY 08.

Recently, relations between the United States and Uzbekistan have cooled considerably. Following the governmental crackdown in Andijan in May 2005, increased U.S. and European pressure on Uzbekistan to reform caused President Karimov to abruptly rescind U.S. access to the Karshi-Khanabad airbase, which the U.S. military has used to support ongoing operations in Afghanistan. The United States was reportedly given six months to withdraw, and the last U.S. planes left Uzbekistan in November 2005. The United States retains its overflight rights and Uzbekistan maintains that it has not rescinded its cooperation in international counterterrorism efforts; Uzbekistan participates in multilateral efforts to reign in regional terrorism as a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and cooperates with other international counterterrorism processes, such as those through the OSCE. The FY 08 congressional budget justification for foreign operations acknowledges that, "Uzbekistan is a stakeholder in regional stability and supports the Global War on Terror," and as a result, the United States continues to seek limited engagement with Uzbekistan for the foreseeable future.

U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Uzbekistan, 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1995	\$95,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
1996	\$293,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1997	\$286,000	\$1,000,000	\$6,000	\$0	\$0
1998	\$457,000	\$1,550,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
1999	\$526,000	\$1,650,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$0
2000	\$547,000	\$1,750,000	\$0	\$2,354,000	\$209,169
2001	\$494,000	\$2,445,000	\$0	\$348,000	\$0
1990-2001	\$2,698,000	\$8,395,000	\$10,000	\$2,727,000	\$209,169
1997-2001	\$2,310,000	\$8,395,000	\$6,000	\$2,727,000	\$209,169
2002	\$880,000	\$36,207,000	\$0	\$3,126,000	\$0
2003	\$1,104,000	\$8,600,000	\$0	\$33,971,000	\$0
2004	\$484,000	\$0	\$358,000	\$1,717,000	\$0
2005	\$0	\$0	\$51,439,000	\$1,752,000	\$0
2006	\$594,000	\$0	\$134,000	\$0	\$0
2002-2006	\$3,062,000	\$44,807,000	\$51,931,000	\$40,566,000	\$0
2007	\$95,000	\$0	\$393,000	\$0	\$0
2008	\$0	\$0	\$636,000	\$0	n/a

Sources

- U.S. Department of State, “Uzbekistan,” 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights, March 8, 2006. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61684.htm>.
- U.S. Department of State, “Uzbekistan,” Background Notes, March 2007. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2924.htm>.
- U.S. Department of State, “Europe and Eurasia Overview,” Country Reports on Terrorism, April 7, 2007. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/82732.htm>
- U.S. Department of State, Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, FY 02-07.
- Defense Security Cooperation Agency, DSCA Facts Book, FY 99-05.
- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Fact Book,” 2007.
- UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, “United National Register of Conventional Arms.”
- International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), “The Military Balance: 2005-2006,” October 2005.
- Robin Wright, “Uzbeks Stop Working with U.S. Against Terrorism,” *Washington Post*, September 30, 2005.
- U.S. Department of State, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Assistance to Uzbekistan—Fiscal Year 2006,” November 28, 2006.
- Seth G. Jones, et., al., *Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform?: U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes*, RAND Corporation, 2006.
- Connie Veillette and Susan B. Epstein, “State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs: FY 2008 Appropriations,” Congressional Research Service, June 13, 2007.