

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Academy for Genocide Prevention

**Monitoring Roundtable: North Caucasus
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Please view the film on Islam in Russia at: <http://www.nytimes.com/weekinreview/>

Sources of Conflict:

Violence in the North Caucasus is escalating :

From November 17 to November 23 at least 21 people were killed and 14 were wounded in the course of combat in Ingushetia, Dagestan and Chechnya. From November 11 to November 17, at least 19 were killed and 18 were wounded. A year ago, during the same week there were at least 6 killed and 32 wounded. (Data compiled weekly from official press statements on voienet.ru)

The Chechen War:

The Chechen war was the primary tumor, now the cancer is metastasizing. Basaev's message: drive out the Russians from North Caucasus, bring war to opponent's territory. Quotations from June 2005 interview with Babitsky. What is his appeal?

Operation "Successor" writ small:

Ingushetia, from Aushev to Zyazikov in spring 2002, "managed" elections.
Dagestan, from Magomedov to ?? (when?? And whom?? this will escalate conflict)
North Ossetia, from Dzasokhov to Mansurov (05 Putin appointment of Kozak's pick)
Kabardino-Balkaria, Kokov to Kanokov, (05 Putin appointment of Kozak's pick)

State Failure :

The first lesson that people in the region drew from Beslan is that they are utterly unprotected. The second lesson they drew is that the government is lying to them. The official investigation and Putin's meeting with Beslan mothers was an exercise in cynicism. The state had always failed to provide social services, rule of law, and other types of good governance, but now it exhibited utter cynicism in the face of the ultimate tragedy.

Racism:

The recent Rogozin add on Russian television which says "clean up the trash" with reference to Caucasian migrants is but one example. Beating of diplomats in Moscow in 2002 were so numerous that European embassies made a joint complaint to the Russian government. According to sources in Dushanbe, at least one Tajik laborer is killed each day in Russia.

- **Islam in Russia**

Official and unofficial faith. The Spiritual Administration – Orwellian concept. Fourteen Muslim organizations designated as terrorist – therefore membership is tantamount to terrorism – and having a leaflet is tantamount to membership.

Milestones in the future:

- **Independence for Kosovo?**

We forget now that the initial context for the war in Chechnya was the war in Serbia. This was the comparison drawn for the first two years of the war, before September 11 created a new context. I have now twice heard senior Georgian officials say that if Kosovo is granted independence, Russia may recognize Abkhazia, in which case Georgia will recognize Chechnya.

- **Russia will chair G-8 and Council of Europe in 2006**

This may pose both complications and opportunities.

- **Kozak's reforms**

Does he really represent a different approach? Will he be successful? Some analysts have invested a lot of hope in Dmitri Kozak improving governance in the North Caucasus. Will new leaders in North Ossetia or Kabardino Balkaria bring about civilian control, and end to violence, and improved governance in these regions?

Opportunities for engagement:

- **International working group on conflict in the Caucasus**

Building on the meeting organized in Berlin in May 2005 to bring together donors, practitioners, policy makers to overcome the policy dead-end in which we are since the killing of Maskhadov in March last year. There needs to be much greater coordination among US and European donors.

- **Draw lessons from other conflicts**

People who work on Chechnya want to learn about analogous conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the conflict over Northern Ireland. What levers were used by the US and international organizations to bring Israel or Great Britain to negotiate/make concessions?

- **Improve treatment of refugees throughout Europe and NIS, permit immigration to United States, using Jackson-Vanik or Meskhetian Turks as a model.**

- **Build Diaspora institutions**