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**Ideology of Uzbek language
Jihadist movements**



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Foreword from the Expert Working Group

The present paper analyzes one of the most vital but not well studied issues – ideology of Uzbek language jihadists from the viewpoints of their ideological roots, major actors and their interplay with similar forces on the regional and international levels, the jihadists’ role in the world geopolitics, in particular in the geopolitics of neighboring Afghanistan.

While preparing this paper for publication we together with the author have felt that the selected topic is not simple and it is well possible that the author and the Expert Working Group supporting this research might draw the same not simple reaction, even a negative one, from the representatives of a whole variety of stakeholders, including the representatives of jihadist organizations, Islamic clerics and scholars, and the government. Nevertheless we think that the present research has reached its expected result. The paper provides an objective and balanced analysis of Uzbek language jihadist movements, points out to major risks and threats, factors bringing to such risks, and also presents an exit strategy and most possible scenarios of development for future.

It is doubtless that the present paper is the first step on the way to study the targeted phenomenon and its broader role. Moreover, the research issue in this paper will long remain topical in the light of continuing confrontation of freedom of religion and government in Uzbekistan, deteriorated by current social-economic problems and authoritarian character of the governance in the country.

Freedom of religion and studying the government policy on religious extremism in Uzbekistan is one of the major programs of the Expert Working Group.

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Foreword from the research author

The idea of a research paper on two jihadist organizations which use Uzbek as a mean of communication – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and “Mavaraunnahr” branch of Islamic Jihad Union – has long been in my mind. According to my plan such research had to focus on those organizations’ main terminology, notions, motivations and ideology.

In late 2010 I have raised the importance of such research idea with Sukhrobjon Ismoilov, head of the Expert Working Group, and shared the research plan which could try to analyze at least some aspects of the ideologies of the above mentioned two organizations.

I am grateful to Sukhrobjon Ismoilov as he accepted my suggestion to cooperate on carrying out the proposed research and prepare the present paper within the Expert Working Group programs. I am also thankful to him for assisting in reaching a common understanding with some important parties the support of whom were meaningful for this research. As we say here in France: “*Merci beaucoup*”.

Although it took almost half a year to complete this paper I didn’t succeed in systematizing its content well. I would like to ask the readers to accept the observations and conclusions in this paper as an entry point to studying this complex phenomenon.

I am confident that the issue raised in the present paper is so extremely topical that it won’t lose its significance in the coming years and would require many more researches.

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20th century became a period of worldwide atheism. In the prevailing background of the world perception of unavoidable and irreversible leaving of religion to the annals of history beginning approximately mid 20th century or even its last quarter the youngest monotheist religion in the Earth – Islam started demonstrating unexpected and to some extent strange for the external world dynamism. During the first half of 20th century the Islamic world had been in search of its own way between the two world systems competing with each other: socialism and democratic capitalism. The Islamic thinkers of those times have created different, sometimes hybrid concepts in which part of the ideas were borrowed from Islam and the other part from one of the above mentioned two guiding world systems.

However the second half of the 20th century brought many disappointments to the Muslim world; it has been full of ordeals, difficulties and wars. During the last quarter of the 20th century the Muslim world turned into a source of several events which have brought to an end the global perception that religion left the consciousness of the mankind and political scene forever.

Islam's internal dynamism and political revival falls into several directions. Majority of the Muslim world turns over and over to Islam for its established ideology of SOCIAL JUSTICE. Most historical events within the Muslim countries were and remain linked to the main perception of Islam by its followers as criterion of social justice.

Another direction was linked to an unavoidable and natural role of Islam as IDEOLOGY OF RESISTANCE in territories facing different conflicts and confrontations. This direction has demonstrated itself during exhausting processes in North Africa, Middle East, in particular Palestine and other territories of the Muslim world. Interpretation of religion as resistance ideology has several vectors. Conservative Islamic thinkers have always rejected socialism, nationalism and liberalism for the sake of Islam. And practical aspects of the resistance ideology have expressed itself during physical confrontations.

A separate vector of Islam's dynamism can be seen in the perception of this religion by Muslims as an IDEOLOGY OF INTEGRATION of the Muslim world. Integrism (Integration + ism) as a political ideology has been installed into deep consciousness of Islamic Umma throughout its formation. It can be expected that the vector of political activism of Islam will have a significant importance in the future – upcoming phases of globalization when the world would be forced to look for more global forms of identity, formats of cooperation and integration. All those new directions in social-political activism of Muslims come together in the common platform which can be named as an IDEOLOGY of ABSOLUTISM, in other words a set of ideas and directives originating from the God Almighty and his last prophet Muhammad.

Islam as a resistance ideology has a long and complicated history. The end of 20th century and beginning of 21st century are marked by phenomenal burst out of religiously motivated resistance actions and confrontations both within and around the Muslim world. During the events of 9/11 (2001), events in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan the phenomenon of jihad became a major form of resistance / confrontation. It is noteworthy that to the end of 20th century jihad which doesn't care too much about public opinion has turned into a separate political-philosophic trend inside Islam.

In the second place after Middle East Afghanistan became the second center for world jihadist movements for the last decade. It is in Afghanistan where people and groups which were born in one of the latest atheist empires of the world USSR fight in war in close coordination with Pashtu dominated Taliban. It is the empire which lost after series of exhausting military campaigns and wars here in Afghanistan. Former Soviet pioneers, Komsomols and members of the Communist Party from the Central Asian socialist republics, in particular from Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan are today in war against the United States of America and NATO troops in Afghanistan.

The Mujahids (people who carry out jihad) from Uzbekistan are not just joining the struggle. As the time goes by they have managed to establish a settled ideology of jihad. Today there is no serious literature or fundamental scientific researches on liberalism or democracy in Uzbek language

but Internet space is collecting many materials on jihadist activity in Uzbek. The Uzbekistani society which finds itself in brutal, long-going and existentially ideiless authoritarianism faces unseen moral-intellectual crisis. The jihadist organizations which communicate in Uzbek language – The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (the IMU) and “Mavaraunnahr” branch of Islamic Jihad Union (the IJU) on the contrary are taking significant measures to attract to themselves the attention of the Uzbekistani society and grasp the consciousness of the Muslim population of the country by their ideology.

The monitoring of the situation indicates that the IMU set alone annually publishes from 30 to 50 informative-propaganda materials (videos and audio documents, statements, reactions, magazines and articles, poems, stories). Through different mass media the IMU makes public its full-length films not only in Uzbek, but also in Russian, German, Pashtu, Arabic, English and Turkish.

I n s t i t u t e o f j i h a d i n I s l a m

Most commentaries and analysis on phenomenon of jihad are either too emotional or too ideological and political. In non-Muslim world the mass perception on jihad almost equals to terrorism, uncompromised struggle of religious radicals. In its turn pro-governmental religious authorities in the Muslim world insist on labeling mujahids “as people under delusion who hide their crimes behind the mask of Islam”. In general the Muslim world breaks up into several groups which fiercely argue with each other on consequences of activities, thought and behavior of the jihadist organizations and persons.

As they say war is far from romance. War, military and paramilitary groups and those who are at war do not usually demonstrate mutual sympathy to each other. When the focus of the issue are such complex phenomena as jihad and mujahids researchers, public figures and lay-people very often apply moral-ethical criteria of evaluation. However the task of an impartial researcher is not in emotional evaluation of jihad and behavior of those who claim to be carrying out jihad. A researcher should do strive to provide an adequate explanation for a contradictory and complex situation on often arguable notions such as “jihad” and “mujahid” and not try to criticize or whitewash the sides based on ideological motives.

I fully understand that touching upon an unpopular and maybe dangerous topic. Most of my friends and people whom I respect, both from among secular and religious groups, might accept the present paper with watchful reaction and skepticism. But the reality and problems exist by themselves and can't be avoided just by ignorance. That is why I have decided to look into several aspects in the ideologies of the IMU and “Mavaraunnahr” branch of the IJU. It is not a direct focus of this paper to research the organizations themselves, their current situation, number and structure of their membership, their links and plans. But the set of ideas which those two organizations formulate is turning into a separate factor which doesn't depend anymore on the status of those organizations. It is known that ideas don't die, especially under ongoing circumstances of globalization and information era.

As far as ideology of jihadist movement concerned for understanding its thought, internal logic and mechanisms it would be correct to identify this phenomenon in the context of complex and contradictory situation in which this institute of Islam finds itself, and based on this to try reaching a balanced conclusion. In other words it is necessary to identify that definition of jihad which most adequately expresses its historical background, motives of those who resort to jihad.

Adequate understanding of jihad's purposes from the point of view of Islam and motivations of its followers to apply this institute in different situations could be helpful for getting a more objective picture of a complex reality and thus assist in taking more responsible and adequate decisions at different levels. Under globalization when issues of security, stability and development are intertwined the need for adequate understanding of conditions which bring to emergence and end of such movements and organizations gains a significant importance and becomes one of the major conditions of maintaining security and development.

Islam is a civilization which looks into the other world, life after death. Life which according to Islam undoubtedly comes after a person or the whole humanity finds death. Islam pictures the other

world with its eternal character as more important than life in the present world. A short-term life in this world as a final test for every person represents the main indicator of the fate of the same person in the other world.¹ Thus Islam wants to warn everyone and all of the other world. The other world in which award or punishment awaits a person depending on his / her thought and deeds. A condition for being entitled to the award or avoiding the punishment is to fear the God and be righteous.

Righteousness is a way of thought and behavior of a person or society which comply in maximum with the desired prototype depicted in the original sources of Islam (Holy book Koran and Sunnas). In order to protect Muslims from sufferings and punishment in the other world Islam has taken good care of a powerful and steady system of maintaining righteousness.

Each civilization, religion has its own concerns and fears. In its deep consciousness Islam contains concern and fear about the fate of Muslims in “aakhira”. Islam insists that fleeting, short and mostly unconscious life of a human being in this world defines most aspects of his / her eternal life in the other world. According to Islam human beings should seriously prepare for “aakhira”. Islam has proclaimed itself as the last religion of single God and identifies itself as a successor of Judaism and Christianity. It claims that the previous religions have deviated from the path of righteousness, strictly monotheist way of the Creator which has created uncorrectable threat for security of their followers in the other world. Islam presents incomparably more information than Judaism or Christianity on heaven, hell, meaning of life, God and his directives for people. Such information is systematized into a unified logical structure. Changing even a tonality in perception of this information, violation of value systems is regarded by Islam as a crime towards fates of people in this and the other world.

That is why Islam has reserved special institutes which are ready there in all flanks for protection of the religion itself and its righteousness. In the making of Islam as religion in seventh century jihad emerged as one of the major institutes put in defense of the religion and righteousness.

Very often Islamic scholars get carried away by arguing on the notion of jihad and its different options (big, medium and small jihads) thus trying to direct its interpretation towards the trend favored mostly by the local public opinion. At the same time it is not rare that characterization of different institutes of Islam and the religion itself in general is fragmented and relies on the concrete situation. It can be suggested that jihad has an integrated logical structure and is made up of different levels.

“Jihad”, in other words “maximum efforts / activities” for maintaining, strengthening and upgrading “righteousness” gains a significant importance on the first, individual level. “A big jihad” means individual efforts on the level of individual thought and behavior for strengthening individual’s religious faith. The society is made up of individuals. Thought and behavior of individuals form up a basis for a social culture politics of the state and the whole community. Therefore the original sources of Islam and historical experience of Muslims have been oriented to strengthening and upgrading the central values in Islam – faith righteousness. “A big jihad” structurally is meant to develop from individual level to grasp the whole society.

“Medium efforts” (in other words “a medium jihad”) means a sort of mutual public self-control among the Muslims which aims at preventing deviations from the path of righteousness for the Muslim community.

“A small jihad” is the third important level of taking efforts for the interests of Islam and Muslims. This level of jihad in general can be characterized as “offensive and defensive activities” against different external threats.

It is important to adequately understand the meaning of how many times and in which context “jihad” is mentioned in the original sources of Islam. Holy book Koran and Sunnas have created basic

¹ Unfortunately an Arabic word *آخرة* [aakhira] which exists in the languages of many Muslim nations hasn’t got an exact equivalent or analogue of translation in English. According to Islamic doctrine after death people will remain under the earth for a certain period of time. When all human civilization comes to an end and all would be dead (the doomsday) God will raise from the dead all people who have lived on the earth for all times. Resurrection of all people is only beginning of “aakhira”. At this point every person will be judged through his / her deeds as a result of which they will enter either heaven or hell. Semantic translation of term “aakhira” might approximately be provided as following: “life which begins with resurrection / the last life of the whole mankind and covers the period from the resurrection to eternal residence of people whether in heaven or hell”. It should be stressed that in the conceptual level Islamic “aakhira” though complies by its functions with the Christian “doomsday” there are essential differences.

doctrinal fundament of jihad institute while the Islamic legal system has got a separate section on “fiqh (law) of jihad”.

From the beginning “a small jihad”, in other words military form of jihad has been identified in Islam as its “military-political doctrine”. Such analogy adequately enough clarifies religious-legal basis of Islam secured in the original sources of this religion and strengthened by historical experience of the first Muslim states. It should be underlined that by its nature Islam is a religion oriented to establish a state. Its strong inclination towards statehood by all consequences coming from that has turned into a distinctive feature of this religion from the others. Thus from the first centuries of its existence Islam has established its own “military-political doctrine”.

Currently all countries have their own military and military political doctrines and it is accepted as a natural part of statehood. Such doctrines set theoretical, potential and / or real threats and ways of confronting those threats. Other religions have also had similar military-political doctrines. For instance, Judaism or Christianity which have foreseen different threats to their faith and ways of confronting those threats carried out “holy wars” against others.

In Islamic history there were cases when “a small jihad” has been interpreted as a legal justification for missionary wars or so called preventive attacks. However, the original sources of Islam provide precise regulations on degrees of necessity of both offensive and defensive jihad with expected mobilization of Muslims for these causes. It is known that Islam has its own system evaluating of thought and behavior.²

According to such ranking system “preventive / offensive jihad” has the status of “farz kifaya”, in other words not all Muslim population have to participate in this type of jihad. Women, people with financial-economic problems, minors, elderly people and other socially less secured groups of the population do not have to take part in this type of jihad.

But if the Muslim land is attacked from outside jihad takes completely different status and becomes “farz ayn” which means participating in this defensive struggle is obligatory for all Muslims with almost no exclusion.

Because of significance of protection and strengthening of territories of Islamic community during the first centuries of Islam “fiqh (law) of jihad” has emerged in the Islamic legal system. This section of the Islamic law is underpinned by highly authoritative, inter-complementary sources of the Islamic law: verses from Koran, citations from the prophet, deductions recognized imams and thinkers of Islam. According to fiqh of jihad if the Muslim land, for example point “A” is attacked from the outside then for all Muslims within the radius of 85 km from point “A” jihad turns into “farz ayn” – the highest personal obligation. And for Muslims outside this radius jihad is considered to be just “farz kifaya” until defensive forces of Muslims within the 85 km around the point “A” are enough to confront the attack. If the Muslim defensive forces are not able to confront the attack then jihad turns into “farz ayn” (the highest personal obligation) even for Muslims outside the set distance. Thus the territory which falls under farz ayn of jihad can be expanded until all needs for additional forces are met.

“Fiqh of jihad” precisely sets conditions which bring to announcing jihad, allowed and not allowed forms and methods of war, ethical code of warriors (mujihids), and also rules concerning the war prisoners and enemies. In general this section of the Islamic law has answers to many questions. For instance, “is it allowed to set fire on the ripe harvest if it can be used by the enemies” or “how to be with cattle if Muslims have to abandon their places in emergency and can’t use it anymore and etc.”

² Islam intends to evaluate each deed from the religious point of view. Attaching such fundamental ranking system as “farz” (the highest degree of obligation for Muslim), “wajib” (an obligation for Muslim), “halal” (a deed which is not banned for Muslim) and “haram” (a deed which is banned for Muslim) is considered to be the prerogative of the Creator. For evaluating each deed through the prism of those dimensions there should be irrefutable proofs in Koran. Another part of evaluation system of thought and behavior in Islam is made up of “sunnas” (citations, traditions and situational approvals by the prophet) and other less significant criteria. In its turn “farz” is also divided into “farz ayn” (the highest obligation for each Muslim, including women, elderly people and others, even not most legally liable categories of persons) and “farz kifaya” (the highest obligation of Muslims which sometimes allows gender-based, social or other exclusions or mitigating circumstances).

Contemporary ideologies of jihad include several important components. First of all it has to deal with religious-political evaluation of the situation in the certain Muslim territory, for example, Afghanistan, Palestine or Iraq. Such evaluations tend to critically analyze the situation from the point of religious standards. Such critical assessment aims at justification of announcing jihad on this territory. Another important component of the contemporary jihad ideologies is fiqh of jihad per se which regulates all processes within jihad.

Let's take a simple example from the real situation: Afghanistan. From the point of view of Islam Afghanistan is a Muslim country with pre-dominantly Muslim population. From the Islamic point of view dissatisfaction with Taliban doesn't still justify overthrowing "the Islamic emirate" and "occupying the country by infidels". As a matter of fact Islam stipulates to rely on religious criteria in each case. This said through the classical Islamic prism and Muslims which strictly follow canons of classical Islam "Afghanistan is occupied by non-Muslims". Brutality and inadequacy of Taliban even towards Muslims in Afghanistan can't justify overthrowing them by external, non-Muslim forces. Based on religious centrism in Islam and conservatism of the part of Muslim world it might be suggested that "the situation in Afghanistan is ripe for introducing the institute of jihad there" which in fact has occurred.

As usual Muslims hold different views and priorities on the same issue which they face. The same factors affect the situation in Afghanistan as well. For Muslims living far away from this place the situation in Afghanistan might be accepted as an issue of geopolitics or geo-ideology. They either hold to neutrality or negatively assess the NATO operations in this country. This type of people refuses taking into consideration a steady role of Islamic factor in Afghanistan. People of this category also refuses to accept that the conditions of Islam and Muslims in this country are gradually transforming into something more complex but a more peaceful and dynamic trend.

But for the Muslims of Afghanistan who are aware of the Taliban regime not by a chance priorities could rest not only religious factor but also include issues of security, stability and freedom from different forms of coercion.

"A religious opposition" (icon used by the Russian experts) or "rebels" (icon used by the NATO forces) in Afghanistan, in other words the Taliban and their numerous companions have announced jihad against international coalition and Afghani government forces long time ago. The Taliban hold to a rather simple system of identifying the legitimacy of the current situation in Afghanistan: under the Taliban Afghanistan has been officially proclaimed as "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan"; then the Taliban administration relied on (more precisely imitated reliance on) Islamic law – "Sharia". Whether enough or not but the Taliban administration has officially aimed at fulfilling the orders of the Creator. But the Emirate was ousted by force. Certain social and religious groups among the Muslim population of the region and world have tacitly accepted jihad launched by the Taliban against the international coalition forces in Afghanistan as a legal and legitimate form of resistance.

The global dynamics of perception and change of the phenomenon of jihad within the Muslim world requires a separate attention. Unfortunately sociological or other types of studies with clear cut comparable data and analysis at least for the last two centuries do not exist. But individual observations bring us to the conclusion that there are obvious changes. These dimensions pointing out to ongoing changes could be named "Index of jihad dynamics". In the beginning of 20th century almost all Muslim territories worldwide have faced confrontation with external powers.

The Muslim population of the present day Central Asia, then Turkestan, having confronted with the Russian Czar's forces, and later on the Soviet Red Army established their own resistance forces. The terminology, motivation and ideology of those resistance forces of national-liberation movements (those national-liberation forces were labeled as "Basmachis" under the USSR or "looters" from Uzbek language) of Turkestan against the Czarist and Red Army occupation are well studied. If we compare their terminology, motivation and ideology with the present day resistance forces in Afghanistan we reach the following conclusion: we are facing crystallization, deepening and expansion of jihad ideology. The same conclusion might be true again in the context of many events and movements in Middle East, Northern Africa and other continents of the Muslim world. However it

should be specified that we are pointing out to general comparison of the ideologies of those different forces but not the popularity and expansion of such resistance movements.

Globalization has brought to a much easier exchange, unification and transformation of ideas, including ideology of jihad.

While analyzing consequences of globalization famous US political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski often repeats the following. According to him, the major peculiarity and at the same time problem of globalization is not extremism or terrorism but total political activation of masses. “Awakening of masses” – in this way did Brzezinski characterized impetuous activation of people all over the world for the last several decades. The mass media, Internet and modern information technologies are catalyzing awakening and politicizing of wide groups of population in the planet. Brzezinski has also mentioned that terrorism is also an instrument and symptom of decease.

Historically the Muslim societies have existed in the system in which imams and other religious figures had played the major role in interpreting the original sources of Islam, and the overwhelming majority didn't use to argue with them. This had been a special type of “monopoly of the religious class in the religious field”. Such traditional system of societal relations didn't allow independent, arbitrary and individual interpretations of Koran and Sunnas. Control of the government in conjunction with the religious authorities over the society, including in interpretation of the original sources of religion, was to such extent that it practically prevented any deviations from the officially approved religious orientation. A principle of Islam not to allow free interpretation of religious canons and explicitly negative attitude to tendencies labeled as “division of Islamic Umma” or “tafrik” (sectarianism) has played the role of another powerful barrier.

Under the conditions of localism (localism unlike globalization symbolizes locality of the community, state or regions and strong restrictions for their mutual influence) a settled traditional system of religious authorities who have thoroughly controlled interpretation of the original sources of Islam prevented rising up of any circumstances which could potentially put under question their authority. The life of Muslim communities until globalization had been to that extent traditional that every person in the society “used to know their places”. The public opinion and mass consciousness were in stable “harmony”. The authority of power structures and religious figures was unquestionable.

Globalization not only presented information on surrounding world to people and provided an opportunity to deeper understand the existing problems, but also gives alternatives to which previously the Muslim societies didn't have access: alternative opinion, thought, behavior and interpretation. Nowadays the religious authorities are far from controlling their communities in the manner like it had been during the period of localism: we can already witness severe competition of interpretations of the world situations in the original sources of Islam. Moreover physically remaining in different geographical areas but in an integrated religious space like in Afghanistan, Middle East or Uzbekistan scholars, Islamists and mujahids virtually argue with each other. Each side tries to bring proofs for their own cause and righteousness. And the main arbiter in this situation is a complex Islamic religious centrism and reality in those territories hosting such discourse.

Revival and expansion of jihad ideology undoubtedly represents a product of globalization. Let's imagine a situation of confrontation of Muslims with non-Muslims in Middle East in 18th century. Then coming from this situation the Muslim scholars and governors have announced jihad. But because of variety of factors such calls on jihad would have remained exclusively just at the local level. But under current circumstances there are no obstacles between such calls on jihad and Muslim communities anywhere in the world. Globalization provides not only freedom of alternative interpretation of the original sources of religion, but also different, previously inaccessible information which causes tension among the Muslims. Ideology of jihad intensifying formidably from year to year should be added to this tendency. Observations demonstrate development of jihad ideology is inseparably related to critical rethought of the situation in the Muslim world, Islam's and Muslims status on the global level.

Jihadism is a symbiotic product of religious psychology of perception of life, death and the other world and understanding the current problems in the Muslim societies. And methods of carrying out jihad arguable under Islam – for example fidaiyya or self-victimization / suicide action) rely on the

viewpoint of mujahids on incomparable power of their opponents and extremely critical evaluation of the ongoing situation of Muslims.

It is crucial in explanation of social and religious roots of jihad psychology to understand that not new paradigms were installed into the thought of Muslims but proportions of already existing elements have strongly changed. One of Islam's interpretation mechanisms as resistance ideology against "external threats" is not a new phenomenon and has existed long time ago. But internal content of this phenomenon is facing rapid transformation. First of all it concerns emergence and expansion fidiayya (suicide action / self-victimization in the path of jihad).

Development of jihad ideology and interpretation of the original sources of Islam have always been processes which depended on the attitude of the Muslims to a certain situation. The Islamic world is geographically huge, from social-culturally so diverse. Economical resources of the Muslim societies and geopolitical expediency of Muslim countries also strongly affect the frame of minds of both lay-people and influential religious circles. Such situation causes extreme contradiction in their interests and misunderstanding of the part of the Muslim world of another. If some regions and societies of the Muslim world are going to dream about and achieve political freedoms the other parts will chase priorities of "resistance for the sake of Islam". Quite naturally all those contradictory processes and phenomena are going to take place under Islamic symbols because of religious centrism in Islam.

The major factor for interpreting the original sources of Islam is not religious authorities but social, political and religious situations. Consciousness and needs of the religious figures and Muslim societies are considered to be steady instruments of interpretation of the original sources. But the consciousness and needs are constantly changing. That which was impossible yesterday will become a reality tomorrow. Let's imagine an imam "X" who has always criticized jihadist activists for unscrupulous selection of means and inadmissible behavior towards other religious authorities. But having received information from the fields of struggle between the jihadist activists and their non-Muslim opponents this imam might dramatically change his viewpoint. Now he might demonstrate more understanding for the jihadists.

The public opinion and mass consciousness of the Muslim world in some ways resembles a live organ: societies definitely get accustomed to local conditions and coming from their own understanding, interests and priorities develop their positions. In this process Islam retains its central values and integrative potential. As an example we can take part of the Muslim societies in Afghanistan, Iraq and adjacent territories of Middle East which are naturally intended to see Islam as resistance ideology and their frame of mind in perception of jihad might strongly differ from that of the rest of the Muslim world. But majority of Muslims in more or less stable societies are tend to condemn followers of jihad. Incidentally while setting military-political dimensions of carrying out jihad Islam has also provided geographical classification of the conflict areas to clarify responsibility degree of Muslims in jihad.

Islam has got mechanisms for setting different degrees of purposefulness. Islam uses a settled logical system of perception of the surrounding world, thoughts and behavior patterns. In case of new circumstances Islam prescribes to rely on priority tasks and purposefulness. That very purposefulness becomes a starting-point for legitimization of all forms of measures for "justifying" jihadist activities, including "fidaiyya" (suicide actions / self-victimization).

Now let's look at reasons which draw new members to jihadist organizations like the IMU and IJU in Afghanistan. The reasons include both internal and external factors. Information materials of both organizations clearly point out that each year a certain number of new members from faraway countries in Northern Africa or well-being Europe. The number of such new members is not high but it exists. Such growth in the membership is apart from constant flow of new members from such countries of the region as Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russia, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. It is well established that usually people who are solvent and have found their places in life choose the path of jihad. Not easy to identify a common factor which brought crowds of people different from social and cultural point s of view in the IMU or IJU. It can be suggested even the degree of religious faith can't always be an indicator for choosing this type of life-style: there are

many people among jihadists who had poor knowledge on the religious canons when they just joined those movements.

At the same time it is possible to suggest a hypothesis that people from distant places joining the IMU and IJU and maybe Taliban are subjected to a complex combination of different factors. First, it could be dissatisfaction with individual life / or search of new feelings. Second - enhanced religious identity sometimes combined with politicized mind. Third, circumstances forcing a person to leave his home place. And at last but not the least access of a person to information on jihadist organizations in Afghanistan and ways of joining them.

Most persons choosing the way of jihad understand well that they are going to war where they will sooner or later find a biological death. Because of that factor soon after joining the jihadists psychologies of such persons transform into a specific way thought and behavior conditioned by pre-death motives. Most of them forcedly intensify components of religious viewpoint and expectations from God in their minds.



The IMU and IJU are fully guided by norms of shariat (Islamic law). If someone sins then he / she will have to face a punishment according to norms of shariat. Mujahids often claim: “It is better to face small punishments within shariat in this world then damage the reputation of a martyr in the other world”.

As for internal factors of growing membership of the IMU and IJU from the citizens of Uzbekistan they are obvious. Not all above mentioned hypotheses count for the realities of Uzbekistan. A prevailing factor under the Uzbek realities could be “circumstances forcing a person to leave his / her home place”. I have kept watching the IMU and IJU for quite a long and got an impression that this factor counts for up to 60 % of cases when the Uzbek citizens decide to join those jihadist organizations. The above mentioned figure though is not corroborated by statistic data but it is the fact that by avoiding repression people run away and prefer death in freedom and war rather than in prison and from torture.

The term “repression” has a heavy semantic burden. The policy of the Uzbek leadership towards religious people could be characterized as “consecutive and brutal repression”. A repressive machine of the Uzbek authorities which can't stop anymore persecutes thousands and thousands of believers most of whom are not Islamists and moreover, not jihadists but just people with higher degree of religious faith. It is such a terrifying state machine the engine of which is overheated and breaks do not function anymore, and thus it is determined to liquidate everything on its way.

Previously people used to run away from this state repression machine to the north – to Kazakhstan and via Kazakhstan to the third countries. But recently Kazakhstan began cooperating

more with its neighbor Uzbekistan. A few weeks ago 29 asylum-seeking Muslims from Uzbekistan who have temporarily stayed in Almaty, Kazakhstan were extradited to the Uzbek authorities. Kazakhstan has decided to extradite them despite the fact that they were not jihadists, terrorists or extremists. They were extradited at the moment when Kazakhstan was chairing Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Conference. From now on the road of salvation to the north for believers from Uzbekistan is closed.

Situation in Kyrgyzstan is even worse. There cut of eyes, characteristic appearance and knowledge of Kyrgyz language can provide minimum guarantees of personal security. The last year's attempt to carry out a full-scale genocide against the Uzbek population in Kyrgyzstan has ended with less "convincing" results – crimes against humanity. Studies show that June 2010 tragic events have also influenced the growth of membership of the IMU and IJU. The latest informational materials released by those jihadist groups demonstrate that certain ethnic Uzbeks who have suffered during Osh and Djalal-Abad events in June 2010 have chosen the path of jihad and revenge. At the same time it should be stressed that the IMU and IJU have always positioned themselves as internationalist organizations. They have always criticized nationalism. The IMU and IJU unite ethnic Pashtuns, Turks, Tatars, Chechens, Kyrgyz and Kazakhs. For instance one of the field commanders in the IMU is ethnic Kyrgyz who is fluent in Uzbek too. After June 2010 events in Kyrgyzstan it was him who has made public the IMU's position titled "On announcing jihad in Kyrgyzstan in order to protect the Muslims from violence and injustice". That statement claimed under changed circumstances in the south of Kyrgyzstan fiqh of jihad enters into force. Such reaction took place in three-four months after the last year's tragic events in Kyrgyzstan. Interestingly the IMU stresses that Kyrgyz are also Muslims but the problem in Kyrgyzstan, as the IMU and IJU see it, is a marionette and infidel governors of the country.

It is noteworthy here to cite a young man from Uzbekistan who is now living in one of the Middle East countries. His saying clearly explains semi-official position of the IMU and IJU and points out to religious illegitimacy of the authorities in Kyrgyzstan: "This unmarried woman is a self-proclaimed leader who boasts of her infidelity and rejection of the Creator and claims to be an atheist. She hasn't got tired of jumping here and there as a cockroach for the sake of coming to power. This nation is governed by such people who don't believe in God or just create an impression that they are believers. They are not Muslims. They are aliens who have massively killed Uzbeks in their historical lands, in their motherland. Those infidels have massively killed grandchildren of Imams Bukhari, Termezi and Khorezmi..." At the same time it would be wrong to suppose that the IMU is far from nationalistic or ethnic viewpoints. Thoughts and behavior of the IMU retains a flexible form of Uzbek-centrism inside the capsule of Islamic centrism.

If to return to the arithmetic of expansion of the membership in jihadist organizations the existing circumstances in Uzbekistan make certain groups of men look forward to fleeing to the south – Afghanistan and joining the IMU or IJU. It can be suggested that annually from 50 to 130 persons roughly depending on different periods inside Uzbekistan leave the country and join those jihadist organizations. Such expansion of the jihadist organizations (130 persons annually) might cause death of 15-30 soldiers of the international coalition or up to 50 local soldiers or police forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan. General figures on victims of conflict from the international coalition forces and military and police groups of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and moreover incidental losses among the civil population are well reported.

The official Tashkent is most likely tired of endlessly repeating: "The Afghan issue doesn't have a military solution! It is necessary to look for political solutions!" But inside Uzbekistan the Uzbek authorities are doing everything that will cause increasing membership of jihadist organizations outside the country. Tashkent is not taking and even not planning to take any measure to find political solutions to existing problems inside the country. It seems the Uzbek political regime is not in the position to think of anything else on this issue except for repressions which are seen as the most convenient "solution". While brutally repressing ordinary religious persons at home Tashkent is ashamed of speaking for "political solutions in Afghanistan".

It is interesting to observe how the world community, in particular liberal West perceives that. Most probably West thinks the Uzbek leadership is combating against radicals although it looks like nondemocratic sometimes. On the other hand while maintaining the secularity based on violence but not deep belief of the society in Uzbekistan we can notice complicated reactions in the minds of the Uzbek people. Implementation of the task “to maintain a truly secular society in Uzbekistan” requires constant violence and victims, many more victims.

Twenty year fight of the Uzbek authorities against “extremism and terrorism” hasn’t brought to liquidation of the IMU – on the contrary the number of jihadist organizations and activists from Uzbekistan and nearby countries kept growing, a settled ideology of jihad in Uzbek language has emerged. Now these organizations are part of a more powerful jihadist movement – the Taliban. As a result of politics based on violence in Uzbekistan the political system is illegitimate and weak, the secular foundations of the government are raised on violence not confidence. The Uzbek government failed to systematically solve fundamental tasks of strengthening the government foundations. On the contrary the current government is leaving behind a set of complicated problems which are far away from their solutions. Quite understandably one of the central problems is looking for a balance between freedom of religion, security and systematic development of the country.

It can be suggested that West’s participation in forming of a civil society and building a democratic country in Uzbekistan and the whole Central Asia is not just a missionary activity or courtesy. It should be accepted as a cold-blooded expectation of creation of strong conditions for regional security and stability. If the Central Asian region with 60 million of population faces serious problems than West, in particular Europe would immediately feel possible consequences. The fact that the international coalition troops are now losing their soldiers in the fight against the Taliban and their Uzbek colleagues is needless to mention.

About activities related to self-victimization

The Islamic Jihad Union and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan as it had already been mentioned managed to formulate different aspects, including religious legal aspects of jihad in Uzbek language. Unfortunately it is impossible to systematically analyze all materials of this ideology in the present paper. We can briefly mention that the IMU and IJU in their Uzbek language magazines – “Kaboilda nima gaplar” (“What is going on among the tribes” from Uzbek) and “Sodiqqlar” (“Loyals” from Uzbek) have published hundreds of articles on ideology of jihad. Additionally those jihadist organizations have prepared and disseminated numerous audio and video materials on theoretical and practical aspects of jihad. Ideologists of the IMU and IJU have written and translated tens of fundamental articles and books. As it is impossible to bring even the titles of those works here it is necessary to bring the following excerpt from an interesting book. The book is titled “Fidoiylik amaliyotlari shariat tarozisida” which is translated from Uzbek as “Deeds of self-victimization through shariat (Islamic law) dimensions”. The book is pretty voluminous – 85 pages. As it is clear from the title the book focuses on religious legal aspects of activities related to self-victimization. The book includes the following sections:

- Permissibility of injuring one’s own life / body for the mightiness and victory of the Religion;
- Consensus agreement of the Islamic ulema (scholars) on permissibility of attacking with fatal outcome during jihad;
- On permissibility of attacking by one person against numerous enemies even if the attacking person knows that it will have a fatal outcome for him;
- A person who has decided to commit suicide for the sake of Allah, in the interests of the religion won’t be considered to violate the shariat (Islamic law) norm which bans a suicide act;
- On dignity of a person who is aware of being imprisoned but refusing to be captured and continuing his struggle till the fatal end with great endurance;
- On dignity of endurance to death and not rejecting one’s faith even at the moment of death;
- On purposefulness of committing a suicide in order to avoid disclosing secrets under torture.

As it can be sensed from the titles of the sections of the book it focuses on different circumstances in which the practice of self-victimization is legitimized in the interests of the religion. These sections analyze in details different historical examples from Islam and other monotheistic religions, provide detailed commentaries backed up by references to shariat and fiqh of jihad. The book contains several major historical stories with deep logical argumentation. While I was studying this book I had a chance to carry out an interesting experiment with it. I know several young Uzbek men who are deeply religious, have been educated in famous Islamic schools in the Arab world. They hold to pacifist views and consecutively condemn mujahids, including Osama bin Laden and the IMU.

The above mentioned book refers to complex logical arguments which I can't argue because I don't have special religious knowledge to do so. Then I decided to ask the above mentioned pacifistic oriented young religious scholars the same questions brought in the book.

First I have clarified their opinion on those persons who choose the path of "shahid" (self-victimization). They have brought many references to me proving "so called shahids indeed are sinners as Islam strictly bans all forms of suicide". Then I have asked them a question from the above mentioned book. There is a question of Algerians asked from then Supreme Mufti (the highest Islamic clergyman in the country) of Saudi Arabia Muhammad Ibragim. Mufti's response further on became a fetva # 1479 (approval of action or new regulations in Islam provided by the highest religious authority) in the collection of fetvas. So the Algerians mujahids have asked the following question from Sheikh Muhammad Ibragim:

"Nowadays our enemies are very strong in carrying out combatant activities. If they catch even one mujahid they will make injections on him in order to extract information on places where we hide our arms and ammunitions. As a result the imprisoned mujahid loses control over his mind. If the imprisoned mujahid is an important person and well informed he might reveal our secrets after the injection. The influence of the injection is so strong that the person will totally lose control over himself. Without questioning or thinking on consequences he will start responding each question correctly. If this is the condition can a person commit suicide? Mujahids say if there is such threat and torture I would rather die as shahid".

As soon as I asked the same question my interlocutor who was communicating with me via Skype exclaimed: "It is a completely separate case, a serious one...". He immediately became thoughtful. Then a young religious scholar who had been emotionally condemning the practice of self-victimization five minutes ago said: "What was the response of the Mufti of Saudi Arabia?" I have repeated the question to him: "If a group of people asked you the same question and you had to answer them what would be your response within the Islamic law?" As far as I remember he said: "If the imprisoned person doesn't commit a suicide he will anyway be killed in the hands of enemies, and then he will disclose all the secrets of Muslims as a result of which they will also be killed...wow..."

Mufti Muhammad Ibragim's response to Algerian mujahids' question was as follows:

"If the circumstances are truly identical to what you have described then it is permissible to commit suicide. Arguments favoring such decision are brought in the stories "We have trusted the youngster to God" and another story from fiqh (the Islamic law) titled "Situation on the burning ship".³ But there are several other points related to committing a suicide. There is a significant different between the problem of committing a suicide and other issues (disclosing mujahids' secrets)". A Collection of Fetvas and articles by Ooli Sheikh Muhammad ibn Ibragim, page 208, Fetva # 1479⁴.

As a matter of fact the above mentioned book similar to most other articles on this topic is rich with stories backed up by logical conclusions. It should be mentioned that the major goal here is to attempt legalizing actions of self-victimization. After citing the above mentioned fetva the author of the book reaches the following conclusions:

We can reach the following important conclusions from Sheikh Muhammad Ibragim's fetva:

³ By referring to an analogy with "Situation on the burning ship" the Mufti wants to say that both scenarios – being imprisoned and committing a suicide – cause death for a mujahid. That is why the action of self-victimization is a preferable option motivated by intention to protect the secrets

⁴ "Ooli Sheikh" is a specific status of religious authority in the Arab Muslim world. It means "the supreme sheikh of Islam"

1. On permissibility of committing a suicide by person in order to protect the mujahids' secrets. And by no means this is considered to be an act of suicide banned under the shariat;
2. Committing a suicide in order to protect the mujahids' secrets is not considered to be a violence against oneself; it is not also considered to be an unrestricted permissibility. On the contrary it should be regarded as help to Allah, his prophet, religion of Allah and Muslims;
3. References by Sheikh Muhammad Ibragim to the arguments in the story of "Youngster" indicate that all of those who have demonstrated faith in the youngster's religion have committed a suicide.⁵ And this story of "Youngster" becomes a fully-fledged shariat argument in favor of all activities related to self-victimization (activities related to fidaiyya);
4. According to the rule of prevention of bigger damage through allowing smaller damages» a potential damage from disclosing secrets of the Muslims is prevented by self-victimization act of one of the Muslims.

Speaking on this topic a famous writer Hasan Ayubiy (rahimahullah) stipulates that under the shariat committing a suicide is banned, and a person who commits a suicide is considered to be a sinner. Though further elaborating on this subject he mentions:

"But in some cases a warrior or fidaiy can be imprisoned by the enemy. Then the enemy might torture him. For instance, the enemy might burn different parts of his body, cut his limbs, hang on from his feet to the ceiling, apply electric shock, and use similar ill-treatment invented by the communists and fascists. Such torture is applied dogs in the mask of human-beings who are far from humanity and mercy. If a person is subjected to these types of torture would he be entitled to commit a suicide? Having studied the texts of shariat and opinions of ulems (Islamic scholars) I have reached the following conclusion:

If shariat justifies and approves committing a suicide and in case it is useful for a Muslim, or if rejection of committing a suicide will damage a Muslim, then committing a suicide is permitted. This verdict also covers the situation when a person subjected to torture might disclose secrets and names of fidiays (persons who have joined jihad for committing an act of self-victimization or suicide), plans of Islamic warriors, places where the latter hide their arms and ammunition, and also all other types of information and knowledge disclosure of which to the enemies might damage security, honor and dignity of the Islamic warriors and ordinary Muslims. When the enemy might make an injection as a result of which the imprisoned person might lose control over his mind and disclose all the secrets to the enemies committing a suicide is also permitted..." Hasan Ayubiy, "Jihad and fidaiyya in Islam", page 166.

If committing a suicide is allowed only for protection of the secrets than for a Muslim it is more preferable to commit fidaiyya attacks (attacks with self-victimization or fatal outcome for the attacker) on the enemy which might lead to greater moral-material damage for the enemy. This type of fidaiyya act is fully approved under the shariat⁶.

The above mentioned excerpt though shortly but provides some proofs of the depth and width of the jihad ideology, including efforts for legalization of different ways of struggle within the Islamic shariat.

It should be mentioned that the language of the book in Uzbek is ideal: without grammar and style errors. It is difficult to make complex sentences in Uzbek because of some specific features of this language. But the text of the above mentioned book in Uzbek is written very successfully which makes it easy to read and understand for each reader. This indicates that a serious work has been done on the text of the book.

The major goal of the book is impartial and maximum justification and approval of activities related to self-victimization. The author tries to beat all possible religious mechanisms which could withstand the phenomenon of self-victimization. At the same time examples and circumstances described in the book make thoughtful even the most serious religious scholars.

⁵ The reference is about the story of "Youngster" which is based on a sura from Koran titled "Minarets" (sura # 85 of the Koran)

⁶ "Deeds of self-victimization through shariat (Islamic law) dimensions", pages 82-83

In general terms “Bayaat” (بيعة) could be translated from Arabic as “an oath”. In the context of carrying out jihad this word acquires a meaning of “oath to be loyal and strict obedience”. The military-political concept of Islam attaches very important meaning to “bayaat”. This institute has its own doctrinal basis in shariat and fiqh with precise religious-legal regulations and functional mechanisms.

It is noteworthy that the researchers pay too little attention to institute of “bayaat” while analyzing the phenomenon of jihadist organizations. This is a serious shortcoming as this institute can explain and indicate the pyramid of hierarchy, system of interaction and cooperation in jihadist and Islamist organizations.

Under the fiqh of jihad and shariat all Muslims entering a war have to give an oath of loyalty and strict obedience to their political / military leaders. At the same time it is very important to maintain undivided authority of the supreme leader in such system. “Bayaat” has the following major functions: First, bayaat is meant to provide for a unified and centralized management and control over the actions. According to the shariat each structured organization must be run by a one-man management system, and such system goes all the way to the top of the organization. If a misunderstanding occurs at some point when two and more persons start claiming for the management role then a procedure for identifying the later claimants will start of. The oath is considered to be valid only towards the first person it was taken to. All the following persons to whom the oath was taken are considered to be illegitimate, and in some cases should be liquidated. Such strict rules have most likely been conditioned by fear of disintegration of the Islamic community and strengthened after several historical experiences of struggling for power.

Under globalization most jihadist organizations and activists are looking for a formula of building a unified hierarchy. Striving to follow religious requirements on bayaat they try to coordinate their efforts on the global level through a single leader (emir).

It is the institute of bayaat which has up until now significantly affected the behavior of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and “Mavaraunnahr” branch of the Islamic Jihad Union. In the future mutual obligations of the IMU and IJU within bayaat might bring to serious and long-term consequences in Afghanistan and Central Asian region.

Most observers tend to think that Osama bin Laden during his lifetime was the top leader of the jihadist organizations and controlled the processes in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However according to the shariat bin Laden was a guest in the territory of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, in other words he was a guest of the Taliban leader Mulla Omar. Mulla Omar is recognized leader among the Taliban. All members of the Taliban have made an oath of loyalty and strict obedience to him. Having arrived to Afghanistan Osama bin Laden regardless of his influence have also taken an oath of loyalty and strict obedience to the emir of the region which was receiving him – in other words to the emir of Afghanistan.

A former emir of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Tahir Yuldashev has mentioned several times in different videotape recordings of “Jundullah” studio of the IMU that he has personally made an oath of loyalty and strict obedience to Mulla Omar. He also reminds that deputy head of Al Qaeda Aiman Az-zavahiri and bin Laden himself have also made an oath of loyalty and strict obedience to emir of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Mulla Omar. Thus some perceptions about full independence and even superiority of Al Qaeda over the Taliban are not true. It can be suggested that the central organization among the jihadist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan is the Taliban led by Mulla Omar. Al Qaeda, the IMU and IJU have a subordinate status towards the Taliban. Obviously the degree of mutual independence from and coordination of those jihadist organizations with the Taliban is different. It seems Al Qaeda headed by bin Laden and Az-zavahiri has always been significantly autonomous from Mulla Omar. Recent statements by the Taliban first about not recognizing bin Laden’s death, and then much harsher statements on his death indicate that between the Taliban and Al Qaeda there is a significant vacuum of coordination.

Coordination of the IMU and IJU activities with the Taliban has always been on more intense. Video recordings, informational materials of the two organizations confirm that they have both cooperated with the Taliban on a serious level rather than cooperating with each other. Series of video films titled “Kaboilda nima gap” (“What is new among the tribes” from Uzbek language) and separate other video recordings focused on the events in Afghanistan and Pakistan demonstrate that the IMU and IJU carry out majority of their important activities jointly with the Taliban.

Thus the institute of bayaat precisely regulates spheres of responsibility, limits of obedience and coordination, and also autonomous elements of behavior of the jihadist organizations of Afghanistan and Pakistan which communicate in Uzbek.

In procedural aspect accomplishing bayaat depends on the number of the membership of the organization. For instance, accomplishing bayaat is simpler for the IMU as the latter is smaller than for example the Taliban. The IMU has many times demonstrated in its informational materials the procedure and content of bayaat between the emir and members of the organization.



The leadership and field commanders of the IMU during their bayaat to former emir of the Movement Tahir Yuldashev. Approximately the first half of 2009. After Yuldashev’s death in 2009 all members of the IMU accomplished bayaat to new emir Usman Odil.



Men in this video recording speak out the following words: “I will fulfill all your orders within the terms of righteousness, in the path of Allah. I take this oath to carry out jihad until the moment when I become shahid (self-victimizer). I take this oath that on the day you allow I will commit a self-sacrificing act. As soon as you allow – I will commit a self-sacrificing act. I take this oath – as soon as you allow at the same moment I will commit a self-sacrificing act!” As it can be seen

people taking oath often repeat the same intentions by different words. But not all IMU members take oath of self-sacrificing. Most members restrict themselves to taking oath of loyalty and strict obedience.

Bayaat is carried out only among men though the age of men taking oath of loyalty and strict obedience is not restricted. The IMU has a tradition of even minor males – sons of the members of the Movement carrying out bayaat to emir. This practice makes it clear that all male membership and their sons in the IMU are bound under bayaat to the head of the organization. The procedure of bayaat is pretty simple: regardless of the total number of the membership of the organization members in the group of four or five men approach the emir of the organization. They put their right hand under emir's hand and one of the members speaks out the words of oath of loyalty and strict obedience. According to the shariat the number of people taking oath together shouldn't exceed four or five persons.

Words spoken out during bayaat depend on the intention and capacity of the members of the Movement. Most IMU members take oath of the following content: "In the name of Allah, in the presence of Allah and our brothers-muhahids I take this oath to strictly obey your orders. I will strictly obey your orders until I have strength to do that and until I am alive". At the same time some average age members of the Movement carry out bayaat to attack the enemy with the fatal end for themselves. The informational materials disseminated by the IMU in the first half of 2009 demonstrated that several IMU members take oath to emir Takhir Yuldashev by the following words: "I take this oath before Allah – as soon as you allow me I will become shahid (an act of self-sacrificing) – I will do that. As soon as you allow me – I will carry out an act of fidaiyya (an act of self-sacrificing)".

While carrying out bayaat the members of the IMU and IJU understand well that they are on war and might die anytime. That is why the bayaat procedure takes place in a very emotional context. As it happens often both those who carry out bayaat and the leaders of the jihadist organizations weep during the ceremony. Former IMU leader Takhid Yuldashev has been an extraordinary speaker. He has also been known for his impressionability. He mentioned in 2009 that during the years of his leadership in the IMU more than 500 martyrs of the organization died during their struggle. During one of the bayaat ceremonies several members of the organization have taken oath to die as shahid (an act of self-sacrificing). They held Takhir Yuldashev's hand with both hands and have repeated the words of the bayaat for many times while Yuldashev wept all the time during the ceremony.

Though under the Islamic law carrying out bayaat for the first time is considered to be enough most jihadist organizations tend to "renew bayaat". Very often for renewal of bayaat it is enough to repeat the same procedure which has taken place before.

Importance of carrying out bayaat and its implementation have deep religious-legal basis. For example, the IMU scholars remind the members of the Movement if a mujahid hasn't managed to take the oath of loyalty and strict obedience and dies in the struggle against the enemies then his status of martyr (shahid) remains unclear. Such position is supported by references to the original sources of the religion.

The following are excerpts from a speech of former IMU emir Takhir Yuldashev in 2009:

... You have given oath of loyalty to us. In its turn, we also promise that we would refrain from giving orders to you not mentioned in the Holy Book and Sunnas. God willing we will give only those orders within the terms of the shariat and request you to obey us only within the approved terms...

... As Allah mentions in one of the qudsiy hadith ⁷ "I will regard three types of persons as my personal enemies on the doomsday. First - the persons who have taken oath in my name but failed to implement it". We are united around the religion. Thanks to God, five hundred persons have become shahids under my guidance. I am an emir of shahids! I am an emir of loyal people but not liars. I am not an emir of betrayers! God save us from these types of deeds...

... We used to avoid the oath previously but lately we started pondering on the question: "Dear brother, why you haven't taken the oath yet?" According to direct proofs and precise warnings in the

⁷ Hadith Qudsiy – according to the Islamic doctrine "hadith qudsiy" refer to the words of Allah communicated through the Prophet but not mentioned in the Koran. Hadith – a.k.a. Sunnas, the second original source of Islam after Holy Book Koran

original sources of the religion if a person dies in the struggle without taking the oath then he dies as an ignoramus! There are many weighable words in favor of such statement! There are 500 shahids in Chechnya, Dagestan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan who have directly or through other persons have taken the oath of loyalty and strict obedience to me. Thanks to Allah, they have been representatives of different ethnic groups and countries. This oath is an agreement with Allah! Let's become one of the two: those who become shahids; or those who are in the path of shahid. God, save us from belonging to the third group: those who betray their promises and oath and leave.

The new members of the jihadist organizations who join the groups several times a month are brought to the emir of the organizations to whom they take the oath of loyalty and strict obedience. If emir is absent for any reason the new members might temporarily take the oath of loyalty to the field commanders or other leaders of the jihadists groups. Thus when there is a need the jihadist organizations can rely on both "pyramid" (vertical) and direct systems of carrying out bayaat.

Institute of bayaat in the IMU and IJU's experience is not restricted only by vertical or direct schemes. Having carried out bayaat the members of the jihadist organizations deliver a collective prayer led by the emir. Following the collective prayer the leader of the organization might explain to the new members religious-legal bases of the bayaat institute. Former IMU leader Takhir Yuldashev was used to repeat the following principles and obligations of the emir to those members who have taken oath of loyalty and strict obedience.

First, the emir of the organization will manage the activities of all members exclusively within the terms of the shariat. If the emir departs from the norms of Islam he deserves punishment set by the religion.

Second, the military-political priorities of the organization are established in conjunction with the allies (the Taliban) and Council of Movement's Scholars (Shura).

At the same time there are certain principles which hold central role in the thought and behavior of most jihadist organizations. One of such principles is refusal of any form of cooperation and / or negotiations with "the infidel", in other words the enemies. Cooperation and / or negotiations are allowed in extreme cases as just one of the tactics leading to the achievement of the major goal, and by no means can be taken as a strategy. Former IMU emir Takhir Yuldashev used to often brag that influential and powerful representatives of "the infidel" such as the Russian Federation or the US gave a hand to him but he has never cooperated with them consecutively. He used to insist: "I swear before the Almighty – we have never lead negotiations with the infidel. We won't even greet the infidel. If it need be we will cut off our hands but won't shake hands with the infidel..." This is a position popularly accepted in many jihadist organizations.

Term "infidelity" ("kufir" in Uzbek, the word borrowed from Arabic) has a broad meaning. Jihadists attach to its meaning not only the West or representatives of other religions, atheists or representatives of different civilizations, but also ethno-Muslims or Muslims with high level of religious practice who support or do not oppose West's policy in Afghanistan, Palestine and other places.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan associates the infidelity first of all with the Uzbek government led by incumbent president I. Karimov and only then coalition troops in Afghanistan, the Afghani and Pakistani governments.

From time to time observers ignore situational, changing reasons of legitimacy and needs. Let's imagine the civic population of Afghanistan which longs for peace, security and public welfare. Despite the fact that they nourish mixed or negative feelings about the Taliban Islam remains as one of the major forms of self-identification for them. They consider themselves Muslim. Under certain circumstances, for example, under propaganda (forced or not necessarily) priorities of the population might change in favor of the Taliban. Under specific circumstances the population might become more sympathetic to the resistance ideology against the international coalition troops.

Jihadist activities as a situational product of the youngest and dynamic religion of the world have always had geopolitical dimensions. It should be noted that the jihadist movement itself has a biased and jealous geopolitical thought. Moreover jihadist movement is characterized as a not standardized and conflicting sector of one of the greatest geo-ideologies of the contemporary life – Islam.

The history of 20th century has many examples when jihadist movements have been used in conflicts among states, super-powers and civilizations. During the second half of the last century when the whole mankind faced a threat of nuclear war between the two confronting sides with unpredictable consequences jihadist activities were used as a completely successful factor of restraint against each other. Afghanistan became one of such fields for testing and developing jihadist organizations and ideologies. Events in Afghanistan has discovered, intensified and speeded up tendencies which brought to a change of the world geopolitical landscape in the end of 20th century.

Jihadist movement in general and those jihadist organizations which communicate in Uzbek have multi-level and different geopolitical dimension. Jihadist movement represents both an actively used object and an important subject of the geopolitics.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan as well as “Mavaraunnahr” branch of the Islamic Jihad Union aim at changing the situation in Uzbekistan. According to their plans the situation should be changed to the extent that it would be hard to recognize Uzbekistan in its previous appearance. Taken into consideration that Uzbekistan is a country with almost 30 million of population (by 2014 the population of Uzbekistan would most probably reach this number) sharing borders with all Central Asian countries and Afghanistan the jihadists’ goal means changing a status quo in the whole region.

The IMU and IJU’s intention wouldn’t have a significant weight if there wasn’t one major circumstance. Leaders of both jihadist organizations gave oath of loyalty and strict obedience to the Taliban emir Mulla Omar. And the Taliban have also given oath in the name of God and religion at the presence of numerous witnesses that those two jihadist organizations are considered to be under their patronage and protection. If the Taliban come to power they will have a commitment to provide those two jihadist organizations all possible support (moral, material and military) so that now they reach their goal.

At present when the coalition forces headed by the US have announced about their plan to leave Afghanistan in the coming years the IMU and IJU feels on rise with their normal expectation that such decision would result in critical change in the balance of forces between the conflicting sides.

The IMU with approximately 700-800 members and the IJU with approximately 450-500 members (about 130-160 members out of this number belong to “Mavaraunnahr” branch of the Islamic Jihad Union which communicate in Uzbek). These human resources are enough for becoming “a factor of concern” for Tashkent but they are not enough for being taken as “a factor of challenge which can potentially change the situation to other direction”. But both jihadist organizations are in subordinate position with a more powerful organization – the Taliban. Evaluation of the Taliban’s real human resources differs very much. According to some western and Russian experts up to 80 thousand persons might be considered as active participants of the Taliban movement. But some sources which have been among the jihadist activists in the conflict areas and had to quit those processes tell that real number of the Taliban is much higher than the mentioned figure. For example, one of such sources insisted that the total number of the Taliban human resources reach up to one million people. That source seemingly kept in mind not only real participants of the Taliban movement but also people among the Afghan and Pakistani population who potentially sympathetic to the Taliban.

Most influential western mass media report that Western and US political figures and thinkers have already admitted the fact that the Taliban is a more long-term and steady factor than they could have suggested before. They don’t hide that the operations in Afghanistan will end for the US with the same result like in Vietnam: “negotiations with the insurgents”. Such way out will have serious long-term consequences both for Afghanistan and countries neighboring with it, in particular northern neighbors and Uzbekistan. Natives of Uzbekistan make up the most significant forces among Taliban’s

foreign soldiers in the wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Natives of Uzbekistan, ethnic Uzbeks of from Afghanistan and countries neighboring with Uzbekistan have always been important forces. Some researchers pointed out by their number and political weight Uzbeks prevail over Chechens, Uyghurs, Tatars, Arabs and other ethnic groups supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan.

If the Taliban succeed in receiving their status quo and a chance to influence the situation in Afghanistan within the legal framework then for Uzbekistan it could only have one meaning – the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Islamic Jihad Union would have either legal or semi-legal status in Afghanistan. Of course it is possible that the Taliban would turn its back on those jihadist organizations which have taken oath of loyalty and strict obedience to Taliban emir Mulla Omar in return of patronage, support and assistance by the Taliban in achieving long-term goals of those jihadist movements. However if we keep in mind that the Taliban hasn't agreed to return their status quo and statehood by handing over Osama bin Laden to the US then reacquiring their previous position after many years of war and forcing the West to submit to new circumstances it is not likely that the Taliban would refuse to support the IMU and IJU in the future.



The existing numerous informational materials demonstrate that the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and “Mavaraunnahr” branch of the Islamic Jihad Union maintain mutually trusting relations with the Taliban movement. They carry out their military operations and drills together. Their relations are based on the principle of “cooperation but not merger”. This picture described joint operations of the Taliban with the IMU.

The expected armistice in Afghanistan won't bring to automatic activation of the IMU and IJU towards the northern vector. The Taliban would supposedly ask their Uzbek colleagues to take a break while their joint position inside Afghanistan would become more or less stable. But at the end of the day Taliban's legalization would have the most serious consequences. Those consequences depending on further development of the circumstances might happen in the following ways.

Afghanistan would become even more attractive for Taliban's sympathizers. The country might turn into a much open and safer space for potential and real supporters of the IMU and IJU from the Central Asian countries. Though the process of new members joining those organizations from the north has never stopped before under Taliban and their companions from north and east legalized in Afghanistan the numbers of new members joining those movements from the other bank of Amu-Darya River, including persons fleeing from repressive policies against religious groups, would considerably grow.

In the long run Afghanistan might again turn into an epicenter and exporter of jihadist persons and organizations which direct their energy to their target countries. In case of the IMU and IJU it would be first of all Uzbekistan, and then Central Asian countries.

Those possible case scenarios could only be neutralized then when the Taliban and their Uzbek language companions would be removed from the Afghan scene. Despite their exhausting situation the Taliban understand well that they are approaching to that point of the events having endured which they might face a full victory. Many factors favor the Taliban: time; knowledge of the local conditions; chances to forcedly involve the local population in their cause; foreign sympathizers; situational

dissatisfaction with the actions of the international troops in Afghanistan; unstable western public opinion; and at last the upcoming rapid withdrawal of the international coalition forces from the country. Recent statements of the US leadership on rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan were accepted by the armed Afghan opposition as western desertion from the war.

Quite expectedly for certain circles Afghanistan is the same trap for the West, especially for the Far West as it had been before for the late USSR. At the end of 70th of the last century the USSR also went on a war in Afghanistan for its geopolitical interests and security. It got seriously wounded and exhausted there. Having returned home in the beginning of 90s the USSR unexpectedly died soon. Now the western international coalition troops came to the country and just like it was last time jihad plays the role of an iron trap waiting for them in ambush.

Current geopolitical processes and to some extent a competition is considerably concentrated between the Far West and Far East. Although close to each other geographically the US and China are divided by a wide Greenwich line. Interestingly their intense economic cooperation is accompanied by deep geopolitical competition. Having unexpectedly announced about its decision to withdraw from Afghanistan the US plans to save its resources and focus more on its internal affairs. However, the war the US launched in Afghanistan is not over. The Taliban also wounded are not beaten. They are still hiding away in the mountains. There are Uighurs among them. It seems the US decision to rapidly withdraw from Afghanistan would please most of all China. However... Figuratively we can imagine the US in the Afghan mountains withdrawing from the country and muttering the following words: *"...Why would spend money and lives of my sons...I am anyway heavily in debt... From now on I would focus more on protecting my homeland and that is it. Let the Taliban be a problem for Chinese, Russians and their alliance... We will see how they will cope with the Taliban... I will rather run away so that I avoid repeating the fate of the late USSR ..."*

Jihadist movement as a global one has got a dichotomy-like geopolitical thought which dreams about global changes and acts in this direction. According to jihadist ideology Islam is one of the two global geo-ideologies, and the western ideology confronts it. Liberalism and democracy is explained by jihadists as "a fully-fledged alternative religion". When jihadists label liberalism as "a religion" their original approach and absolutism of perception mesmerizes the mind.

However "the Arab spring" have demonstrated that the center of the Muslim world is thinking and moving towards a different way in comparison with the direction of Islamists, especially jihadists. Noteworthy that up until now not a single jihadist organization managed to formulate its position clearly on the events of "the Arab spring". Difficulty of formulating a clear position on "the Arab spring" events by the jihadist movements can be explained by a problem in world outlook of the latter: the Muslim population has massively ousted dictatorial and authoritarian regimes. Their methods, at least intention and beginning of the actions were peaceful as it traditionally accepted in the West. The masses have announced that their uprising is not Islamic but popular. People insisted that the political system should be re-built in that way so the society might control those who govern which means democracy and which the jihadists can't accept. Jihadists see all processes, ideas and motivations in a straightforward, unequivocal and idealistic way. They are not in the position to understand a different angle. That is why jihadists have found themselves in a difficult position: their enemies – unreligious regimes and pro-western autocrats are ousted but the people are not behaving in the way the jihadists might have dreamt of – the people call for freedom and democracy. At the same time jihadists can't criticize the people because in this situation the people are majority and moreover what the people has achieved is a noble goal – getting rid of tyrants and violence. Probably this is a major reason why the Al-Qaeda, Taliban, IMU and IJU haven't managed to make public their clear position on popular uprisings in the Arab countries.

A problem with the phenomenon of jihadist persons and movements is not per se in them because their emergence in certain situations from the point of religion is quite natural. A problem is in an amorphous situation the Muslim world finds itself as a result of which it is not in the position to effectively solve its internal contradictory problems through political and diplomatic methods. Both influential Muslim countries and structures like the Organization of Islamic Conference do not demonstrate enough will, legitimacy and resources to solve global problems around some parts of the

Muslim world. The OIC has been constructed only in the format of “benevolent brotherly doors” between the high walls – state borders of the Muslim member-countries during the prosperous epoch of nation-states. The doors which are used to open from time to time so that leaders of brotherly nations could shake hands greeting each other but no more than that.

At present the Muslim world and the whole global system of security and stability needs such global Islamic mechanism which has a variety of resources for solving the most complicated tasks like the situation in Afghanistan. The researchers and politicians know well the seriousness and scales of mutual mistrust and suspiciousness among the Muslim countries on one hand, and other global actors on the other hand. Sooner or later the world will recognize that under present conditions with about 1.5 billion Muslim population an authoritative and responsible body able to assist in bringing stability and development of the Muslim countries, provide for a balance between protection of the interests of the Islamic world and global security and development turns into a necessity. This point doesn't pursue idealism but stresses the existing huge institutional vacuum which indeed needs and should be filled in.

Islam is not a militant religion. Those who depict Islam as a militant religion and their consciousness maybe fall under a huge influence conflict points in the world where Muslims confront with others. Islam highly prefers peace, order and security, condemns conflicts and violence. Islam seeks peace and order, first of all to provide for necessary conditions for its followers to prepare for the other responsible world.

At the same time it would have been a mistake to present Islam as an exclusively peaceful religion. Islam, for instance, is not like Buddhism- it doesn't propagate philosophy of resignation and peace. For protection and strengthening its fundamental values seen as pre-conditions of security and salvation of a human being in the other world – “aakhira” Islam establishes institutes of protection and resistance.

Jihadists represent social-political and religious marginal class for now although they have developed considerably well-formulated, strong ideology. Jihadists in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other places in the world are of small numbers, they don't enjoy much public popularity in order to attract more people. But globalization has not only economic aspects; it also has political, geopolitical orientation which strongly influences forms and balances of identity for an individual, society and mankind in general.

The contemporary history knows several examples when certain religious authorities or political figures have called for jihad. Before his collapse Saddam Huseyn of Iraq has called his compatriots and Muslims of the world for jihad. As he had neither religious authority, nor political legitimacy his call on jihad went unnoticed.⁸

The other story is related to a Russian religious leader. In the background of informational campaign of Russia, France and Germany against the US intervention into Iraq the Russian chief mufti Talgat Tadjutdin holding a sword on his hands announced jihad against the US. This happened in beginning of April 2003. Tadjutdin has called on the Muslims of Russia to help the Iraqi Muslims. Despite of Vladimir Putin's huge dissatisfaction with the way the US has chosen on Iraq he was afraid of the calls of the Russian chief mufti. Implementation of Tadjutdin's call on jihad could have the most serious consequences for Russia.

Politicians, statesmen and public figures have always had deeper historical imagination though very often they prefer to hide it.

Here it is worth to mention thoughts of one of the young men from Uzbekistan who lives abroad now. He has been hardly influenced by the ideas of geopolitics of the Muslim world. According

⁸ In March 2003 Saddam's address to the Iraqi people was broadcasted by the national TV channels. Saddam has said in particular the following: “Long live jihad and Iraq, death to aggressors! I don't have even to tell you what to do to protect our country. You all know it well. But what you should know is the fact that each person confronting this aggression would enter the heaven...” Interestingly it was a nationalist and bassist who made such calls. Noteworthy that Saddam's attempt to mobilize the Iraqi people within the institute of jihad is characteristic for Muslim societies. Further development of events in Iraq has demonstrated that the US forces in this country were confronted by the local groups which have motivated their actions and resistance within the terms of jihad. Later on this became a central factor which forced the US to withdraw from the country

to him under extremely critical circumstances the authoritative leaders of the Muslim world may refer to some conserved institutes of Islam in order to change the unfavorable situation for the own benefit. So, in a nut-shell his idea sounded as following:

“In several decades confrontation and misunderstanding between the West and Muslim world are still far away from their solutions but exacerbating. The problem of the Middle East is not solved; there is no a state of Palestine; and Israel is expanding and expanding. A general mistrust towards the US is growing in the Muslim world. Attempts of the several US presidents to stabilize and pacify the US relations with the Muslim world have failed. As a result of several internal and external factors the Saudi Arabia stopped being the US ally. On the contrary having understood its role in the Muslim world the Saudi Arabia has chosen the way of building its own system of geopolitics with the epicenter in the Saudi Kingdom. Turkey has also considerably changed – it has distanced from the West more confidently and further than the Saudi Arabia.

As a result of the latest elections a neo-conservator with interventionist thought came to power in the US. Washington doesn't hide its concerns over establishment of a new geopolitical pole of the Muslim world. After several events the US begins discussing the issue of a military operation against “terrorists” in the Saudi Arabia. The Saudi authorities react to this option as a threat for stability and unity of the country and a challenge for a political-religious regime. The US military fleet is already drawn to the Arabic Sea. The political leadership of the Saudi Arabia urgently calls a meeting of the leaders of Muslim countries – political allies of the Saudi Kingdom among which are representatives of the most countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa, Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia. As a result of multi-hour consultations and collective prayer the King of the Saudi Arabia, Turkish president and leaders of several other Muslim countries make a public address to the world Islamic umma (public). This public address of the Muslim leaders is worldwide broadcasted via TV channels and Internet. The whole world is waiting for the decision of the leaders of the Muslims. Many suggest that the Saudi Arabia is trying to establish a sort of alliance against the US.

But unexpectedly several leaders of the Muslim world announce jihad – a holy war against the US and its allies. Following an emotional address by the King of the Saudi Arabia and leaders of the Muslim countries lasting for more than three hours numerous well-known imams of the Muslim world have continuously made calls for getting ready to immediate war situation. Hundreds and thousands of fetvas (an authoritative conclusion by recognized Islamic scholars on how to act in certain situations) equaling attempts to avoid jihad to greatest sins. Interestingly the King of the Saudi Arabia in his long address has mentioned all resentment that has been caused on the Muslims by the West for the last three centuries.

Some were seriously panicking that several big cities of the Saudi Kingdom will be attacked by nuclear bombs. Having heard of calls on jihad of the whole Muslim world the US was scared to death and immediately changed its decision. Europe has clearly distanced itself from the US; moreover the European began condemning Washington. China and Russia were also scared but didn't know how to behave.

But it has been too late. As soon as jihad was announced the world found itself in chaos...Chaos with no analogue even in the super fantasy movies...”

The above mentioned thoughts were told to me online via Skype. I had to modify the story a little bit to make its volume fit the present paper. But the essence of imagination is kept as in the original and remains without change. Thank to God in the real life the world is far from such terrifying scenarios. But it should be kept in mind – the history of mankind can't be protected from fatal mistakes which could potentially bring to similar circumstances as described in the above mentioned story.

Islam has undergone several technological and intellectual revolutions, a multi-century transformation of the human consciousness on religion. It has survived fully and integrally and made its way to the 21st century to new phases of globalization. From now one of the new tasks of the global security system is preventing emergence of the situation when charismatic leaders and religious authorities of the Muslim world can't stand a seduction to refer to some conserved but viable institutes of Islam.

Conclusion

Jihadist activities as phenomenon and ideology have social, political and religious conditions which might rise or diminish. Nowadays attempting to terminate jihadist organizations exclusively by forced methods can't bring to wanted results.

Having emerged in the beginning of the national independence of Uzbekistan the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan has undergone a long evolution. It began as an Islamist organization then forcedly and naturally has grown into a jihadist organization. The IMU has also affected emergence of a separate Uzbek language branch within another jihadist organization Islamic Jihad Union – “Mavaraunnahr” branch. Emergence, evolution and strengthening of the above mentioned jihadist organizations were strongly influenced by the internal situation in Uzbekistan. It should be mentioned that even in the absence of the current repressive policies against religious groups inside Uzbekistan jihadists would have still existed but their number would have been considerably less than now.

In order to decrease attractiveness of jihadist organizations and creating conditions for stability and consecutive development under current situation in Uzbekistan it is necessary to reconsider the government policy on religion and civil society. Despite criticism of democracy by Islamists and jihadists, and fear of liberals about strengthening the Islamist positions as a result of free democratic elections consecutive and true democratic reforms are considered to be a stabilizing factor for a peaceful channelizing of the problems of the population, including the religious groups. As a matter of fact Islam in Uzbekistan doesn't nourish political programs or ambitions to take power. The Muslim population of the country wants creation of such condition under which it would be possible to satisfy existing religious needs. Needs which for now are outlawed under the Uzbek legislation.

It should be stressed that jihadist activities are not attractive for the majority of the Uzbekistani Muslims – not now and in the nearest future. As it had been mentioned previously most people from Uzbekistan joining jihadist organizations do so as an extreme measure because they see no other way to go. As in other Muslim societies Uzbekistan also has “a majority factor” which rejects confrontational ways of implementing their thoughts. Under a democratic regime the same majority might withstand the attractiveness of jihadist organizations. In other words democracy in Muslim societies may affect emergence of Islamists but at the same time it can affect gradual termination of jihadists.

Uzbekistan is on the doorstep of big changes. Those long-awaited changes are related to the condition of power structures in the country. Most likely the supreme power of the country has already chosen its potential successor who however unfortunately is not in the position to solve the piled up problems, including the task of putting away tensions over religious factors by political reforms. There is a risk that intolerance of the Uzbek authorities to criticism might considerably grow further. Such circumstances in the background of a complicated situation in Central Asian region and Afghanistan might strengthen positions of the jihadist organizations communicating in Uzbek for many years.

EXPERT WORKING GROUP ЭКСПЕРТНАЯ РАБОЧАЯ ГРУППА

The Expert Working Group is a non-governmental non-commercial network of independent Uzbek experts and researchers who are engaged in studying the issues of relation between laws and public interests, fundamental human rights and freedoms, rule of law, democratization and liberalization and development of free market economy in Uzbekistan.

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