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Thugs and Drugs: The Terrorists and Drug Networks of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

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Thugs and Drugs^{*}:

The Terrorists and Drug Networks of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Ian Nash
Honors Thesis
Western Kentucky University

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^{*} Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, *New Friends, New Fears in Central Asia*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, Issue 2, April 2002, Pg. 61-70. References a sub heading in the article. Thugs should also not be confused with the Sikh group.

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Abstract:

Recent analyses of terrorist groups reveal their dependency on complex logistical, financial, and operational relationships with other groups. Advantaged by the technological advancements of the last two decades, many terrorist and criminal organizations are now linked through complicated networks. Therefore, experts dedicated to uncovering and unraveling terrorist strategy, can easily get lost in the scattered patterns of today's terrorism. A web-like structure allows for flexible, though well-connected leadership, and widespread recruitment opportunity. One recent terrorist group that has benefited from network organization is the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The IMU was a formidable group because of its experienced and charismatic leadership and significant fund raising abilities made possible by various criminal ties. A case study of the rise and fall of the IMU will help to reveal the multifaceted structure of networked terrorism, particularly in Central Asia and along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border region. Understanding a group's ties helps in assessing its true motivations. The IMU was often characterized as a purely militant Islamic group, when its ties to the drug trade were far stronger. This study questions the former classification and as a result is useful in assessing other groups in the region with criminal ties.

Acknowledgements:

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Introduction

To say, in the post-September 11 era, that *terrorism* has become a topic of increased discussion and debate, may be the understatement of the young century. While the

various mainstream news media bombard the public with vague and often misleading information regarding terrorist networks, one undeniable truth is consistently clear: terrorism, as a research topic and as an enemy, is an unconventional study. Furthermore, trying to navigate the often hysteria driven landscape of terrorism literature can be very difficult. Terrorism should not be viewed as something new, for it has always existed. Nor should it be viewed as an act that only a small barbarous group commits, since states perpetrate terrorism as well. A fair and instructive definition for terrorism is given by leading expert Bruce Hoffman as “the deliberate exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.”¹ The IMU fits into the category of a group seeking to gain power from a state through acts of violence.²

This study will specifically focus on the IMU in Central Asia. The IMU was an insurgent group that carried out violent attacks against Uzbekistan. It has used armed struggle and terrorism to try and overthrow the Karimov regime. It claimed to want to replace it with an Islamic state. The IMU has also been linked to regional Islamic networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan, narcotics networks, and international terrorist networks such as Usama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda. But, as will be shown, just because there are links and evidence of a relationship does not mean the two parties are in complete agreement. The IMU’s gradual increase in the narcotics trade has orientated its

¹ See Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism, revised and expanded edition*, 2006, Pg. 40-1. Hoffman continues arguing that “all terrorist acts involve violence or the threat of violence . . . specifically designed to have far reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) . . . meant to instill fear, and thereby intimidate, a wider “target audience.” Terrorism is a difficult term to define as the literature on it shows. Key words for a definition often include purposeful, violence, fear, victim, and audience. A definition should allow for the term to be used broadly, such as coercive violence done by groups and states. However, Hoffman does define the term as being perpetrated by non-state entities. Jonathan R. White, *Terrorism and Homeland Security*, 2006, Pg. 3-7, cites Walter Laqueur who claims it is difficult to define because the meaning changes through history, and Alex Schmid’s consensus definition where terrorism is seen “as a method of combat in which the victims serve as symbolic targets.” White concludes simplicity is preferred. To aid in this the above Hoffman definition will be used.

² Terrorism perpetrated by a state can be seen in the Uzbekistan government under President Islam Karimov, often in response to attacks perpetrated or believed to be by the IMU. As will be shown it is clearly debatable whether the IMU’s main focus was political.

motivations away from a purely political nature. This is not an isolated case, but an example of how a group operating outside the law, has adapted to a post-Cold War environment. However, the IMU's life span was cut short by the U.S.-led campaign against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. This resulted in the death of the IMU's military commander, Juma Namangani, the destruction of their bases, and the dispersal of the remaining members. Although severely weakened its remaining members and support base in the Fergana valley and region could be a destabilizing force in the future for Central Asia.

This study will have four distinct parts. The first will consist of an investigation of current network theory, and how it applies to terrorist and criminal entities. Second, a brief history of the region will aid in providing background to the IMU. It will include the Soviet-Afghan War, the rise of Islamic networks along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border, the collapse of Soviet power in Central Asia, and the narcotics trade in the region. Third, basic network theories will be used in a case study of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and how the IMU fits into the broader criminal and Islamic networks of Central Asia. Drawing upon network analysis, the conclusions from this study will help to increase our understanding of the IMU's structure and its myriad of relationships. These conclusions, particularly the IMU's narcotic ties, will demonstrate its dual nature as a terrorist and criminal group, and how the IMU is a good example of the increasing overlap between terrorist and criminal groups since the end of the Cold War.³

³ For a similar study about terrorism and criminal networks in the Caucasus see Colleen M. Traugher, *Terror-Crime Nexus?: Terrorism and Arms, Drug, and Human Trafficking in Georgia*, Masters of Arts in Law Diplomacy Thesis, Spring 2007, The Fletcher School, Tufts University.

1 Network theory

What is a network? At its most basic level a network is “a collection of objects connected to each other in some fashion.”⁴ Under such broad guidelines anything can be a network. Social networks focus on human interaction and the relationships that arise from them. Theories on how social networks operate are some of the newest ideas today. Many of these theories are the best ways we have currently to describe and understand specific human interaction. Mark Buchanan, author of *Nexus*, describes how experiments and research in many different fields of study, including math, physics, biology, and the social sciences, have overlapped; and leading numerous scientists “to talk meaningfully about the architecture of networks of all kinds, and to perceive important patterns and regularities where they could see none before.”⁵

For the purposes of the social sciences this new theory is helping to advance the study of relationships among individuals and how, in this case terrorists and criminals, interact and use their networks of relations to their benefit. Buchanan mentions current global political trends and the breaking down effect terrorism, multinational corporations, and information technologies have on nation-state power.⁶ “We face a decentralized network of terrorist cells that lacks . . . hierarchical command structure and is distributed through out the world.”⁷ Still, the basic building blocks to a network, i.e. *nodes* (actors) and *links* (ties), need explanation. A node can be an individual or group, and on paper

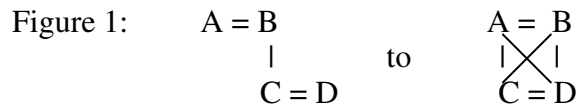
⁴ Duncan J. Watts, *Six Degrees*, 2003, Pg. 27. Regardless of the objects in question certain elements are universal, such as hubs, clusters, and strong and weak ties. Each will be described below. For more see Watts, and Mark Buchanan, *Nexus*, 2002.

⁵ Buchanan, Pg. 19.

⁶ Buchanan, Pg. 21. See also Tamara Makarenko, “Terrorism and Organized Crime: the emerging nexus,” in *Transnational Violence and Seams of Lawlessness in the Asia-Pacific: Linkages to Global Terrorism*, ed. Paul Smith, Hawaii: Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2002. She argues that “the territorial sovereignty of state actors has been questioned . . . and the state as the central focus of international affairs has given way to a host of non-state actors.”

⁷ *Ibid.*

would appear as a dot, while a link, represented as a line, is the connection between two nodes.⁸ The question then becomes how strong is the link between two nodes in which information or ideas are often exchanged. A simple example will help answer this question.



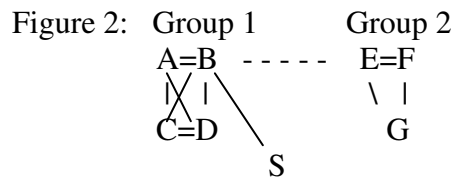
The diagram above has two individuals, A and B, and they both are acquainted with one another.⁹ But how well are they acquainted? The link between them, or the tie strength “would largely be governed by the amount of time spent together by the pair.”¹⁰ Strong links would have regular interaction, such as family ties, while weak links would have less interaction. A good way to visualize link strength is to envision a spectrum scale with one side being strong and the other weak and varying degrees of strength in between. The interesting thing is that the weak links are more important than the stronger ones. Why? To explain this let us add two more individuals, C and D, to our previous example. A and B have a strong link, because they are brothers, and C and D have a strong link because they have worked together for the last ten years. But B and C know each other because they fought together in the military and knew each other about two years. The link then, between B and C is weak since they see each other once or twice a year. To continue, say A asks B for help on something and B is sure C can assist. B then goes to C, or gets A into contact with C. Because of meeting through B, A and C become acquaintances and soon D comes into contact with the other three. After three or four

⁸ John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, eds, *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy*, Rand, 2001, Pg 316.

⁹ Buchanan, Pg. 30.

¹⁰ Valdis E. Krebs, *Uncloaking Terrorist Networks*, First Monday, vol. 7, No. 4, Apr. 2002.

meetings where all four attend they all decide to form a group and pursue a cause of their choosing. Thus, as Buchanan concludes, citing research in the field, “weak links are often of greater importance than strong links because they act as the crucial ties that sew the social network together.”¹¹ If it were not for B and C’s relationship, the group probably would not have been formed.



Hubs are centrally located nodes with many strong and weak links.¹² To add to the model A, B, C, and D, form Group One, which has made B in charge of acquiring supplies for the group. B then gets into contact with other individuals who may be able to help, such as E, a member of another group and S, a lone supplier. The interaction between Groups One, Two, and S are all linked together through B, who is acting as the hub.

Clusters, also called a *clustered network*, is “mostly comprised of strong links between people, endowed with history and cemented with frequent interaction.”¹³ Such ties often create a high trust level and cooperation between members.¹⁴ This allows for the clustered group to accomplish its desired goals and to be more productive. Group One has become a clustered group. As a whole it has developed trust, while the relationships between A/B, and C/D already have a higher level of trust because of there past history.

¹¹ Buchanan, Pg. 43.

¹² Buchanan, Pg. 123-4.

¹³ Buchanan, Pg. 202.

¹⁴ Buchanan, Pg. 200-4.

Duncan J. Watts points out in his book, *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age*, that what is different about today's understanding of networks is they are not static, but "continuously evolving."¹⁵ Referring back to the diagram, one could ask, what are the intentions of Group One? In order to better answer this question understanding the histories of the four individuals who comprise it, how they all met, and their environment is necessary. Therefore, viewing a network as continuously doing something, such as exchanging ideas, money, or information, rather than as a static entity, reveals a far more accurate picture of the *network*. Such a picture aids in answering what a groups intentions are, and even more importantly, what a groups capabilities are.

A simple social network should have strong links at least between two to three members, forming a cluster, and have at least one individual that can be identified as a hub. More advanced networks would expand upon this simple model and require some amount of differentiation. Further description of a more advanced network and its components will be explained below. This definition, while recognizable in all human networks, helps to narrow our focus to describe networks that operate outside the law.

Terrorist and Criminal Networks:

Two defense scholars, John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt, have studied threats to society such as terrorism and organized crime from a social network perspective for the last few decades. From their research they have proposed a different understanding to this phenomenon, which they call 'netwar':

"refers to an emerging mode of conflict (and crime) at societal levels, short of traditional military warfare, in which the protagonists use network forms of organization and related doctrines, strategies, and technologies attuned to the information age. These protagonists are likely to consist of dispersed organizations, small groups, and individuals who

¹⁵ Watts, Pg. 29.

communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns in an internetted manner, often without a precise central command.”¹⁶

The above description provides a good definition for a terrorist network in today’s world. Their netwar premise was something Arquilla and Ronfeldt had repeatedly proposed in early research throughout the 1990’s. One of the main intentions was to “call attention to the prospect that networked based conflict and crime will become a major phenomenon in the decades ahead.”¹⁷ Published just prior to the September 11 attacks, many of the current threats faced by the United States from terrorist, and other non-state actors, have validated much of this theory. Their work is broad and covers not only terrorist and criminal groups, but also new anarchist and environmental radicals and activists. However, according to Arquilla and Ronfeldt there is a similar underlying pattern among these groups, “the use of network forms of organization, doctrine, strategy, and technology attuned to the information age.”¹⁸

In addition to the terms mentioned above there are other important characteristics of a social network. First, there are three basic organizational designs. The *chain* network is a smuggling chain where people, goods, or information move along a line of separated contacts.¹⁹ A *star* network is a set of actors that are tied to a central (but not hierarchical) node, and must go through that node to communicate and coordinate with each other.²⁰ The *all-channel* network is essentially when everybody in the group is connected to

¹⁶ Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

everybody else.²¹ It is important to point out that many combinations and variants are possible among the three designs.²²

Two other typical characteristics of a network are that it has a core and a periphery. To differentiate these two zones the network has to be of substantial size and reflect a power center.²³ The core, or decision-making body, guides the network and is defined by “bonding mechanisms that help to create high degrees of trust and cohesion” among its members.²⁴ This is similar to Buchanan’s clusters of strong links, norms, and expectations.²⁵

The network periphery is just the opposite of the core and contains less dense patterns of interaction and more casual relationships, but this zone has a critical role in a network, exploiting ‘the strength of weak ties.’²⁶ These ties “allow the network to operate at a far greater distance – both geographically and socially – than would otherwise be the case.”²⁷ As groups become more transnational in character they depend on these weak ties for success. For example, narcotics networks transport heroin from Afghanistan where it is grown, to the streets of Europe where it is sold. Such a long journey for the heroin could not occur without a series of weak ties.

Divisions of labor among members are another common feature to networks.²⁸ It is possible to distinguish certain roles that are crucial to the function of a given network. Much of this research has derived from analysis of organized crime, but similar

²¹ Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 7-8.

²² Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 8.

²³ Phil Williams in *Networks and Netwars*, Arquilla and Ronfeldt eds., Pg. 72.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Buchanan, Pg. 202.

²⁶ Phil Williams in *Networks and Netwars*, Arquilla and Ronfeldt eds., Pg. 73, and Buchanan both cite Mark Granovetter’s ‘The Strength of Weak Ties’ (1973) when discussing this term.

²⁷ Phil Williams in *Networks and Netwars*, Arquilla and Ronfeldt eds., Pg. 73.

²⁸ Phil Williams in *Networks and Netwars*, Arquilla and Ronfeldt eds., Pg. 82.

inferences can be made to the world of terrorist organizations. Such roles as *organizer*, the planner, and *communicator*, the one who passes commands from the top leadership to the rest of the group, are obvious, but other key roles are not so well known.²⁹ For example, an *extender*, the individual whose role it is to extend the network by recruiting new members, and the *crossovers*, the individuals who have been recruited into a network but who continue to operate in legal institutions, whether governmental, financial, or commercial.³⁰ Even more specific specialties are often required such as a bomb maker, or computer expert, which further divides the networks labor needs. Identifying what role an individual plays helps law and intelligence agencies in designating which roles are vital to monitor.³¹

Growing alliances:

The rise of ‘the matrix of relationships’ is a key factor to describe today’s terrorists groups.³² This interaction became more prevalent in the 1970s and has only continued to spread and evolve. A good example is Carlos Ramirez, (aka the Jackal). At the peak of his fame in the 1970s he had numerous connections and interactions with

²⁹ Phil Williams in *Networks and Netwars*, Arquilla and Ronfeldt eds., Pg. 82-3. In addition to *organizers*, *communicators*, *extenders*, and *crossovers*, there are *insulators*, whose role it is to keep the core from being compromised, *guardians*, whose concern is with the security of the group and network, and *monitors*, who ensure the effectiveness of the network and report to the core weaknesses and problems that need to be fixed.

³⁰ *Ibid.* See Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad*, Yale University Press, 2002, Pg. 142-3, as example of crossover role, which was very important as Tajik government officials aided the IMU, such as Mirzo Ziyoyev, head of the Emergency Ministry.

³¹ Stuart Koschade, *A Social Network Analysis of Jemaah Islamiyah*, Studies in Conflict and Terror, Pg. 560.

³² Matthew Levitt, *Untangling the Terror Web*, SAIS Review, 2004, Pg. 34. This article points out that careful study of the matrix unveils that “key nodes” are preferred facilitators for multiple terrorists and terrorist groups in executing operations. Al Qaeda is an example of this as it forged relationships with many groups throughout the world.

many different groups and individuals.³³ Although groups may have different goals and histories, they very often have similar needs. Weapons, training sites, technical expertise, and intelligence are a few of what is commonly shared. When it comes to Islamic groups there is even more intersection of interaction and support since they often have family or clan ties and religion in common.³⁴

Just as interaction between terrorist groups has increased so has the activity between terrorist groups and organized crime.³⁵ Such interaction has always occurred and many experts believe it to be rising.³⁶ This rise suggests a new trend is emerging that is questioning how each, terrorists and criminals, is viewed as threats on the international stage. Tamara Makarenko, a leading scholar on terrorist/criminal cooperation, has proposed a new model that helps to explain the emerging threats that interact, and at times converge.³⁷ The Crime Terror Continuum (CTC) illustrates major relationships that exist between the terrorist and criminal worlds, “from strategic cooperation and alliance formations to the complete convergence of motivations.”³⁸ While political and religious

³³ Ovid Demaris, *Brothers in Blood*, 1977, Pg. 59-60. Bassam Abu Sharif, a leader for the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), has said, “In our business people like Carlos are indispensable, and we have people like him everywhere.” Carlos was just one of many who formed a ‘terrorist bank’ from which specific people or groups could draw from for various operations. Demaris, Pg. 22, Carlos is believed to have had ties to the Soviet KGB as well as Cuban Intelligence, Palestinian groups, the Japanese Red Army, the Irish Republican Army, the Baader-Meinhof gang, and Turkish and Basque separatist movements. Makarenko, *Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime: the emerging nexus*, 2002, also historically frames this phenomenon as starting in the 1970s.

³⁴ Levitt, Pg. 36. This article also gives many examples of network relationships among many Islamic terrorist groups. Walter Lacqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, 1987, Pg. 286-7fn. Lacqueur notes Mid-East groups very often have familiar and clannish ties, which stay the same even when doctrines or ideology changes.

³⁵ Makarenko, *Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime: the emerging nexus*, 2002, defines organized crime as “consisting of at least three or more people that are gathered for a prolonged period of time . . . suspected or convicted of committing serious criminal offences with the object of pursuing profit and/or power.”

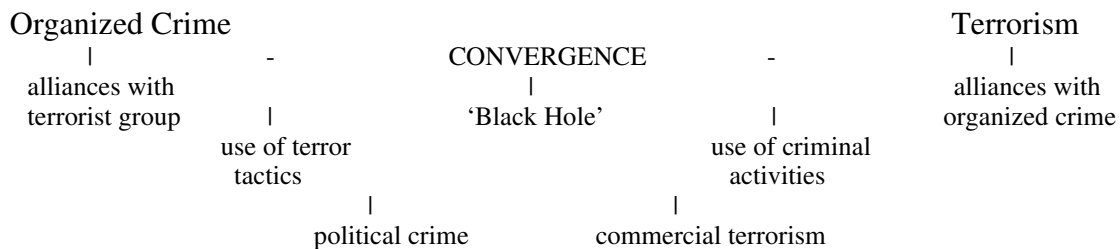
³⁶ See Thomas M. Sanderson, *Transnational Terror and Organized Crime*, SAIS, 2004, Pg. 49. Makarenko, *Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime: the emerging nexus*, 2002, and Chris Dishman, *The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 28: 237-252 2005, which also emphasize increasing terrorist and criminal cooperation.

³⁷ Makarenko, *Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime: the emerging nexus*, 2002.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

concerns often motivate terrorist groups, and profit the motive for crime rings, their operation outside the law often creates the need for similar resources.³⁹ Network connections involving terrorists and criminals are not just made on ideological lines but cover a spectrum of reasons for existence.⁴⁰ This model will be used to analyze the IMU's motivations later in the study.

Crime Terror Continuum⁴¹



There are two major reasons for the growing cooperation. Since the end of the Cold War groups that often receive money, aid, and/or shelter from either side has ended. The second reason is since September 11, many sources for terrorist funding have been frozen, or more closely monitored causing groups to look elsewhere for funds.⁴² In order to maintain existence terrorist groups have looked to other sources for funds, such as organized crime, and shelter in failed states rather than rely on state sponsorship. The end of the bipolar economic structure has also allowed organized crime to expand into new

³⁹ Sanderson, Pg. 53.

⁴⁰ Sanderson, Pg. 54. His article mentions the IRA and FARC, and al Qaeda and Hezbollah as examples of terrorist and/or criminal organizations cooperating.

⁴¹ Tamara Makarenko, *A Model of Terrorist-Criminal Relations*, Jane's Intelligence Review, August 1, 2003. The four general crime-terror relationships are *alliances*, *operational tactics*, *motivational convergence*, and *'black hole'*. Black hole is a point that the convergence between criminal and political motivations with in a single group allows it to gain economic and political control over a state.

⁴² Sanderson, Pg. 50.

areas, and thus putting them in more frequent contact with a range of political groups. Slow liberal-democratic reform in many of the former Soviet-bloc nations, such as Central Asia, has created weak and corrupt governments and an environment suitable for organized crime to flourish.

A third crucial factor is the rise of information technology and increased connectivity from globalization since the end of the Cold War. This has allowed for terrorist and criminal groups to have transnational capabilities that few had before, and allowed both the ability to challenge nation-state power. The transnational element has made such resources as false identification, shipping documents, and transportation networks in high demand and furthered cooperation between criminal and terrorist groups.⁴³ Finally, the dealing of narcotics, a known cornerstone of organized crime, is a common alternative increasingly used by terrorist groups.⁴⁴ This trade combines many elements previously discussed, facilitates interaction, transnational in character, and a lucrative business providing quick and large sums of money. It will be dealt with later in the study.

Research on terrorist and criminal networks has grown, particularly since September 11. Studies by Makarenko, Cornell, Koschade, Pedahzur and Perliger, and journals such as *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, have expanded the field.⁴⁵ They include investigating for patterns, identifying central hubs, and mapping and measuring relationships in terrorist and criminal groups. But, Arquilla and Ronfeldt are quick to

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Sanderson, Pg. 52.

⁴⁵ See Makarenko, *A model for terrorist-criminal relations*, 2003; Svante E. Cornell, *Narcotics and Armed Conflict: Interaction and Implications*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 30:207-227, 2007; Stuart Koschade, *A Social Network Analysis of Jemaah Islamiyah: The Applications to Counter-Terrorism and Intelligence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29:559-575, Pg. 559-61; Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, *The Changing Nature of Suicide Attacks: A Social Network Perspective*, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 4; also see Saxena, Sudhir, K. Santhanam and Aparna Basu, *Application of Social Network Analysis (SNA) to Terror Networks in Jammu & Kashmir*, *Strategic Analysis*, Pg. 87.

mention, “there is no standard methodology for analyzing network forms of organization.”⁴⁶ Their research “indicates that the design and performance of such networks depend on what happens across five levels of analysis.”⁴⁷ These levels are *organizational, narrative, doctrinal, technological, and social*.⁴⁸ Arquilla and Ronfeldt conclude that for a network to function well all five levels must be integrated.⁴⁹ This five-point methodology, although not perfect, gives a basis for more acute study of terrorist networks.

2 Nexus origins

Before any analysis of a social network can begin it is necessary to understand the physical environment of the network.⁵⁰ The IMU grew out of the post-Cold War landscape. The aftermath of the Soviet-Afghan War, an Islamic revival in Central Asia, the existing narcotics trade, and the Afghan Civil War all influenced the creation and rise of the IMU.

The Soviet-Afghan War:

The Soviet Red Army invaded Afghanistan on Christmas Eve of 1979 to prop up the Marxist regime that had come to power in an April 1978 coup. The Communist government of Afghanistan was struggling to maintain law and order as a result of its

⁴⁶ Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 323.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ See Arquilla and Ronfeldt, Pg. 324-343. The five levels are: *organizational*, meaning its organizational design; *narrative*, meaning the story being told; *doctrinal*, meaning the collaborative strategies and methods; *technological*, meaning the information systems used; and *social*, meaning the personal ties that assure loyalty and trust.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Koschade, Pg. 562.

attempt at Marxist reforms on a poor and uneducated population. Prior to the Soviet invasion, growing unrest had been building from the population. Although the Soviet leadership was certainly aware of the recent Iranian Revolution and its own large Muslim population and factored both into their decision-making, they were more concerned about U.S. aid and influence replacing theirs in Afghanistan than an Islamic revival challenging their power. Trapped by Cold War strategy and the current Afghanistan regime losing control, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev authorized the invasion.⁵¹ The Soviets were not expecting such international outrage, nor were they prepared for the resistance that followed.⁵²

The U.S. response to the invasion called for the CIA, with funds from Saudi Arabia, to work through Pakistan and its intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Weapons and other supplies were sent to aid the Afghan resistance, the mujahideen.⁵³ In addition to weapons, money, and supplies, camps were set up along the Afghan border run by the ISI to help train the mujahideen.⁵⁴ The conflict quickly became a war of attrition and lasted almost ten years with neither side achieving any decisive victories. Negotiations for an end to the war started in 1987, finalized in 1988, and by early 1989 the Soviets had withdrawn.⁵⁵

In the wake of the war lay an environment replete with refugees, bands of fighters, and stockpiled weaponry. The Communist Afghan regime was struggling to maintain power in Kabul, while Pakistan's ISI was trying to capitalize on the Soviet

⁵¹ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban*, 2002, Pg. 233.

⁵² Tanner, Pg. 241.

⁵³ Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 2004, Pg. 58. This book is considered by many to provide the best over all history of the Soviet-Afghan War to date.

⁵⁴ Coll, Pg. 64.

⁵⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics*, Perennial, 2002, Pg. 233.

withdrawal and secure a favorable regime to its west. Loose alliances between the many factions of mujahideen were quickly dissipating with the exit of their common enemy. Although Islam was a commonality among most in the region, numerous sects and divisions existed within. The region was radicalized politically from the war especially along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border where the majority of refugee and training camps were still present. Many political and religious views grew out of the war torn landscape. Three important and interdependent features assisted the rise of radical sentiment that laid the foundations for an Islamic network to grow.

First, the camps built to train mujahideen were not abandoned or dismantled when the Soviets left Afghanistan. Instead the camps stayed and were maintained by the ISI. The ISI continued to train recruits for the civil war in Afghanistan and for Pakistan's fight with India in Kashmir. Training camps on the Afghan side of the border were heavily influenced by the ISI, and at no time from their "conception to their destruction" by U.S. bombs in late 2001 were they empty.⁵⁶ Physical places to meet and train became sanctuaries for individuals seeking training in jihad, and to more focused individuals who desired to commit deadlier acts. Initially, these camps drew veterans from the Soviet-Afghan war.

It was these former veterans that became the second important feature of the growing radical landscape. Many foreign fighters could not return home for fear of arrest, so they stayed in Pakistan or Afghanistan.⁵⁷ Several took positions in Muslim charities varying in the level of legitimacy, in cities such as Peshawar, Pakistan and Jalalabad, Afghanistan.⁵⁸ In so doing the veterans stayed in contact with other like-minded

⁵⁶ Jason Burke, *Al Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*, I.B. Tauris, 2003, Pg. 73.

⁵⁷ Burke, Pg. 94-5.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

individuals. The relationships forged during the war were becoming stronger, providing a precursor for the core of network formation.

The third significant aspect hinged on individuals interpretations of jihad philosophy.⁵⁹ Originally, jihad had inspired many foreign fighters and Afghans and Pakistanis regardless of piety or theological understanding. However, the war helped to facilitate a more rigid interpretation of jihad. Radical and charismatic preachers who had also come to take part in the fight against the Soviets took advantage of such changes in the beliefs. The preachers cultivated and inspired new arrivals that were often uneducated.⁶⁰ This new idea of jihad, one that called for constant battle with the enemies of Islam, was rising in prominence among many of the foreign mujahideen.⁶¹ The apparent defeat of the Soviets by the mujahideen furthered the belief of the “spirit of

⁵⁹ John Esposito, an expert on Islam, defines jihad as “strive, effort, struggle” to follow Islam, and can include defense of the faith, armed struggle, and holy war. For more see his book *Islam the Straight Path*, Pg. 274.

⁶⁰ Burke, Pg. 68-72. Abdallah Azzam was a critical player in the evolution of the ideology for the mujahideen, particularly the Arab fighters. He was a Palestinian, born in 1941, who joined the Muslim Brotherhood at 18 and studied at Damascus University. He was a “charismatic, erudite, polished preacher,” and was one of Usama bin Laden’s professors when bin Laden studied in Saudi Arabia. Azzam arrived in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1984, and set up an organization to help supervise the growing volunteers and funds for the jihad in Afghanistan, in which he enlisted the help of an unknown Saudi, Usama bin Laden. The organization grew, but Azzam is best known for his speeches and “epic, mythic, fantastical language that was to become the standard mode of expression for ‘jihadi’ radicals over the next decade.” His speaking captivated many recent arrivals that were not very well educated and his lack of polished arguments could be overshadowed by his charisma and energy. Yet, as the war dragged on he did not advocate criticizing Muslim regimes in the Middle East as leading mujahideen commanders such as Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Abdurrah Rasul Sayyaf, and even bin Laden, all seemed to be openly advocating. He wanted to keep the fight in Afghanistan focused on the Soviets and the mujahideen united as much as possible.

⁶¹ Burke, Pg. 77-8. As the war continued the import of the strict Saudi interpretation of Islam, known as *Wahhabism*, which also had a strict reformist belief to it known as *salafis*, was entering into the training camps and religious schools of the border region. Saudi money also went to build mosques and religious schools, madrassas, in addition to funding the war. Burke, Pg. 38-9, continues that by the end of the war a “new worldview was constructed from the rigorous Salafi reformism of the Wahhabis, from Azzam’s call for martyrdom in a pan-Islamic international jihad against oppression, from the very real experience of the brutal violence and chaos of modern warfare, . . . the gradualism of . . . political and ideological focus had gone. In its place was a radical and violent utopianism.” It is important to remember that this new belief of jihad was still in its infancy and not prevalent, but it did have enough devote adherents that it would grow.

jihad.”⁶² However, this understanding of the events fails to take into consideration all of the players involved.⁶³

Even with the Soviet withdrawal and the mujahideen’s perceived victory, radical sentiment only increased in the region.⁶⁴ The network that had coalesced to fight the Communist threat was now taking on new enemies. The metamorphosis that took place in the aftermath of the war included a shift of power within the existing establishment. Furthermore, the network began decentralizing, allowing for the inclusion of the less significant actors that also used it.⁶⁵ Numerous entrepreneurs, (so to speak), such as the ISI, former mujahideen, drug barons, tribal leaders, and wealthy Gulf Arabs, were now taking advantage of the network for more local and/or personal reasons. At the heart of this Islamic network was the Pakistan/Afghanistan border from which many meetings took place. These meetings, acting as sanctuaries, made possible the actual transfer of ideas, information, and funds. A key urban center in this region was the Pakistan city of

⁶² George Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 2003, Pg. 521-2. Crile and other American writers often oversimplify how the Soviets were defeated. They assert millions of people grew up believing it was Allah (God) and the mujahideen that had defeated the Soviets, which is true to an extent. Crile writes (521-2) of the “dangerous legacy of the Afghan war is found in the minds and convictions of Muslims around the world. To them the miracle victory over the Soviets was all the work of Allah – not the billions of dollars that America and Saudi Arabia poured into the battle, not the ten-year commitment of the CIA that turned an army of primitive tribesmen into techno-holy warriors. The consequence for America of having waged a secret war and never acknowledging or advertising its role was that we set into motion the *spirit* of jihad and the belief in our surrogate soldiers that, having brought down one superpower, they could just as easily take on another.”

⁶³ The United States, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and their respective intelligence agencies spent millions of dollars, and untold man hours figuring out the logistics to run their secret program. Not to mention the thousands of foreign volunteers and unaccounted for private donations of money from all over the Muslim world. However, the backbone of the defense was the Afghans themselves (and lost roughly 1 million) who deserve the majority of the credit but are so often denied it.

⁶⁴ Oliver Roy, *Qibla and the Government House*, SAIS, 2001, Pg. 58. See also Coll’s *Ghost Wars* and Burke’s *Al Qaeda* for a history of how radical sentiment increased and how groups, such as the IMU, found refuge in Afghanistan.

⁶⁵ It was already to some degree a decentralized network, which is why it was successful against the more hierarchical Soviet Military. But in no way did the CIA-ISI program ever have total control. For evidence on how the CIA-ISI tried to control the mujahideen see Coll’s *Ghost Wars* and Crile’s *Charlie Wilson’s War*.

Peshawar, which lies just east of the Khyber Pass.⁶⁶ It was used for this purpose during the war and continued to be in its aftermath. Peshawar remains a key *hub* in the Pakistan/Afghanistan Islamic network that began in the 1980s.⁶⁷

Islamic Revival:

During Soviet rule Central Asia had been closed off from the rest of the Muslim world. The region had a state-supervised Islam, which was heavily regulated, and a parallel Islam (underground) that was based upon local long-held traditions. Soviet policies wrought havoc to the Muslim traditions, which for the majority of the population was a major source of its identity.⁶⁸ The breakdown of religious traditions made the region susceptible to other influences such as religious extremism and organized crime. The collapse of the Soviet Union left an “ideological, intellectual, and institutional vacuum” and further made the people and region vulnerable.⁶⁹ The people of Central Asia began to explore other political systems and ideologies and much of that was channeled into Islamic sentiment. This religious rival of sorts was not embraced by the former Communists, now the ‘democratic’ rulers of the Central Asian republics. Most of the new states continued their authoritarian ways while in Tajikistan, independence led to civil

⁶⁶ The pass is one of the few routes over the mountains connecting Pakistan and Afghanistan.

⁶⁷ Burke and Coll mention through out their books the importance of Peshawar during the last three decades. Christopher Kremmer, *The Carpet Wars: From Kabul to Baghdad, A ten-year journey along ancient trade routes*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2002, writes of the once great rug trade of the city now stagnant since the Soviet invasion when refugees, CIA money, and mujahideen all changed the city. Also, former CIA officer Reuel Marc Gerecht, *The Counterterrorism Myth*, The Atlantic Monthly, Jul/Aug 2001 wrote about how Peshawar was still an important power base for bin Laden.

⁶⁸ Shireen T. Hunter, *Religion, Politics, and Security in Central Asia*, SAIS, 2001, Pg. 68.

⁶⁹ Hunter, Pg. 72.

war.⁷⁰ But Uzbekistan also faced an organized threat of Islamic extremism from the Fergana valley.⁷¹

Narcotics Trade:

As these turbulent times held the attention of governments and their populace, another network was growing beneath the surface. The narcotics trade, an unwelcome topic of discussion in the region, was gathering prominence. Under British rule in the 18th century, opium was regulated and encouraged in the trade between India and China. When independence came to India and Pakistan in 1947, most of their policies on illegal drugs were carried over from British reign. Although illegal, enforcement of drug laws was not a priority. This all changed when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and the legacies of the colonial opium trade combined with U.S. Cold War strategy.⁷²

Pakistan had two pressing issues to deal with, coordinate and supply the unruly mujahideen. In Afghanistan mujahideen groups and foreign fighters were dependent on aid from others. Hence encouraging the production of opium generated money and did so at the local level. But this would have unintended consequences. The money generated was used to buy weapons, food, and other supplies while making some mujahideen

⁷⁰ The Tajik civil war lasted from 1992-97, and arose mainly from the lack of reform and rivalries between regionally based factions than from authentically ideological differences. It was fought between the nationalist and democratic, many of which were Islamic, elements on one side and the better organized former Communist Kulobis and Khojandis. For more on this conflict see Mariam Abou Zahab and Oliver Roy, *Islamist Networks*, 2004, Pg. 5, and Oliver Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 2000, Pg. 139-142.

⁷¹ The Fergana Valley, roughly 200 miles long and 70 miles wide, located mostly in Uzbekistan but also shared by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It has traditionally been the center of Central Asia's political and religious culture. Today it has 20% of the total population, at about 10 million, of Central Asia making it an important region. See Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad*, 2002, Pg. 18-9. The Islamic revival has proven to be not as destabilizing a factor as the regimes of the region made it out to be. Although the governments are still oppressive, extremism has failed to dominate since independence from Russia.

⁷² M. Emdad-ul Haq, *Drugs in South Asia: From the Opium Trade to the Present Day*, St. Martin's Press, 2000, Pg 5, describes in detail how the Soviet-Afghan War aided the rise of the narcotics trade.

groups more self-sufficient.⁷³ The growing of opium was a common practice in the region among the Pashtun tribes.⁷⁴ These tribes lived on either side of the Pakistan/Afghanistan border.⁷⁵ Once the demand for opium crops went up it would be hard for the Pashtun tribes and the Pakistan government to expect other crops to be grown. Opium, which did not yield much of a profit for the local farmer, still brought in more money to live on than did any other crop.

The narcotics trade steadily grew as the war continued, but the majority of the aid to the mujahideen still came from the CIA-ISI program. By the mid-1980s, the trade was increasingly evident as the Pakistan government tried to downplay direct involvement.⁷⁶ The ISI oversaw the drug trade like it did other aid networks created to fund and supply the mujahideen. For example, money from the United States and Saudi Arabia would be used to purchase weapons from China or Egypt. The weapons and other supplies would be shipped to the Pakistan port city of Karachi. There the shipments would be loaded on to trucks for the training camps and drop off points near the Pakistan/Afghanistan border. But the trucks would not leave empty. Some would be filled with opium or heroin on route back to Karachi. Since the trucks had special ISI papers giving the loads immunity from searches most shipments going in either direction traveled unmolested. When the war ended the drug network continued to function as it had become intertwined with the

⁷³ Ikramul Haq, *Pak-Afghan Drug Trade in Historical Perspective*, Asian Survey, Vol. 36, No. 10, (Oct. 1996), Pg. 954.

⁷⁴ M.E. Haq, Pg. 171-77. Provides brief history of Pashtun opium trade.

⁷⁵ The Durand Line, completed in 1897, was the work of Sir Mortimer Durand, a British foreign secretary working for the Indian government. The Line was drawn to separate the British and Russian Empires who were competing for influence in Central Asia. The arbitrarily drawn line took no consideration of the people that lived in the region. It separated tribes and villages, most notably the large Pashtun tribe that saw its population split between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pashtun refugees that fled Afghanistan for the tribal areas of Pakistan put even more pressure on support structures. The refugees also raised fears in the Pakistan government about how to govern an already semi-autonomous region, the Northwest Frontier Province.

⁷⁶ I. Haq, Pg. 955-6, and M.E. Haq, Pg. 188-9.

mujahideen networks.⁷⁷ As a result many ranking Pakistani military officials became involved, corrupted by the large sums of drug money and graft from U.S. aid.⁷⁸

The narcotics trade is clearly linked to the other clandestine programs involved in defeating the Soviets. But, as long as the Soviets were in Afghanistan, U.S. policy makers did not care where the money or support came from to aid the mujahideen, even if it stoked the fires of radical Islam or perpetuated the drug trade. It is important to note that the war aided, but did not create the growing drug syndicates. These syndicates had refinement capabilities, transportation to world markets, and at minimum, complicity by some in the Pakistan government. Coincidentally, much of the means to grow and refine the opium was in the same semi-autonomous tribal areas along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border, where the camps, veterans, radical sentiment, and millions of refugees were all in close proximity.⁷⁹ Frontier cities such as Quetta and Peshawar were hubs for illicit drug enterprises as well.⁸⁰

Networks Merge:

The civil war in Afghanistan in the 1990's only hardened the drug trade and utilized many elements of the networks described above. It was fought between a varying combination of opposing local warlords⁸¹ (former mujahideen) and regional powers,

⁷⁷ I. Haq, Pg. 954, and M.E. Haq, Pg. 202-3.

⁷⁸ I. Haq, Pg. 956. It is estimated by 1986 the trafficking industry was making in the billions and would only increase. Traveling in Pakistan in 1994, journalist Robert D. Kaplan writes, "Pakistan has already become what the former Soviet Union is in danger of becoming: a decomposing polity based more on criminal activities than on effective government." See Robert D. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, Vintage, 1997, Pg. 329.

⁷⁹ Burke, Pg. 115, Coll, Pg. 233, and M.E. Haq, Pg. 198. A key observation that all cite about how the tribal areas became shelters for drug syndicates, refugee camps, and mujahideen camps.

⁸⁰ I. Haq, Pg. 951.

⁸¹ See Stefan Mair, *The New World of Privatized Violence*, IPG, 2/2003, Pg. 11-28, for definitions of (ideal types) criminals, terrorists, warlords, and rebels. Also, Daniel Biro, *The (Un) bearable Lightness of . . . Violence: Warlordism as an Alternative of Governance in the "Westphalian Periphery"?*, in *State Failure*

particularly Pakistan and Iran. The different interests involved carved out their own fiefdoms, resulting in alliances of convenience and safe havens for foreign groups. With the infrastructure destroyed by years of conflict and a lack of strong central government, the continuation of opium production persisted. When the Taliban came to power they taxed the trade, while the Northern Alliance invested heavily in it, and Pakistani dealers refined the opium and transported it to world markets. The narcotics trade and safe havens, which would come to be used by al-Qaeda, the IMU, and other groups, became prevalent factors in the region. Barnett Rubin, an expert on Afghan affairs, sums up the consequences of the continued conflict in Afghanistan. He writes,

“several different conflicts became linked through flows of people, arms, ideology, and resources. Such networks crisscrossed Afghanistan, reaching into all the surrounding countries.”⁸²

Conditions were such in Afghanistan that everything was interrelated and fed off each other. The years of fighting had eroded many formal state structures such as central government, law enforcement, and infrastructure. Instead power (political control) was achieved by the strongest parties, which in Afghanistan were the warlords, drug lords, and smuggling mafias. Thus, the drug trade was secure, as were the training camps, safe havens, refugees and extremist sentiment to the landscape of the Pakistan/Afghanistan border region.

The shifting tides of the Cold War saw Soviet influence wane, and independence thrust many challenges on the new governments and people of Central Asia. Some of these social predicaments included high unemployment, uncertainty, and tribal

Revisited II: Actors of Violence and Alternative Forms of Governance, Tobias Debiel and Daniel Lambach eds., INEF Report 89/2007, provides further discussion of warlords; as does Kimberly Marten, *Warlordism in Comparative Perspective*, International Security, Winter 2006/07, Vol. 31, No. 3, Pg. 41-73. Although out of the scope of this paper further defining/discussion of the many major actors in the region, particularly warlords and the many roles they play in the region and how they relate to criminal and terrorist groups would be useful.

⁸² Barnett Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 2nd Ed, 2002, Pg. xxv of preface.

differences, while other issues brewed from the instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Still the biggest question was what role would Islam play?⁸³ The heart of Central Asia, the Fergana Valley, was historically known for strong religious sentiment. Much of the young population was demanding more political representation. The political climate was ripe for a showdown between the Uzbek government and the Islamic extremists.

3 The IMU Emerges

The IMU was a terrorist group that directed its operations and violent attacks against the Uzbekistan government. Its leaders Tahir Yuldashev and Juma Namangani met in the Namangan Uprising in the spring of 1992. As a result of their involvement in the failed uprising they were forced to leave Uzbekistan with their followers. Between 1992-97 Tahir and Juma stayed in contact with each other as Juma fought on the side of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) in the Tajik Civil War (1992-97), while Tahir traveled in the region settling in Peshawar from 1995-8. The IMU was formed in 1997 with an estimated 500-1000 member fighters. Its headquarters was in northern Afghanistan and had the blessing of the Taliban regime.

The IMU's first major armed incursion, led by Juma Namangani, with small arms, and operating out of forward bases in Tajikistan, was in the summer of 1999. Small bands of fighters infiltrated the Fergana valley, attacked border posts, and took hostages.

⁸³ This is a central question in much of the literature on Central Asia since independence from the Soviet Union. See Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, *Central Asian Security: The New International Context*, Brookings Institution Press, 2001; Gregory Gleason, *The Central Asian States*, Westview Press, 1997; Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, St. Martin's Press, 1995; Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Yale University Press, 2002; and Oliver Roy, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of States*, I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2000, for numerous views and takes on Islam in the region throughout the last 15 years.

Similar incursions occurred again in the summer of 2000, which struck even closer to the capital Tashkent. By this time it was clear that the IMU was now heavily involved with the opium trade from Afghanistan. The group's activities were not matching its strong political rhetoric calling for the overthrow of the Karimov regime with an Islamic state. Instead it appeared the IMU was moving in a more criminal direction with its increasing ties to the drug trade.

By the summer of 2001, the IMU had grown closer to the Taliban and al-Qaeda and was aiding them in their struggle to defeat the Northern Alliance. Still, the IMU maintained its ties to the drug trade, suggesting it had at least two wings, one political and one criminal. Due to the IMU alliance with the Taliban and al-Qaeda it was targeted by the United States in 2001. This resulted in the death of Juma, the destruction of their bases, and dispersal of the remaining members. The loss of a key leader and safe haven forced the remnants to decentralize.

A suspected splinter cell of the IMU, Islamic Jihad Group (IJG), claimed responsibility for the spring and summer 2004 bombings in Tashkent, and a failed attack in July of 2005. An Internet message in September 2006 by Yuldashev, believed to be hiding in the tribal areas of Pakistan, attacked the Central Asian regimes and allies of the U.S. in the region. Yet, the decentralized remnants/cells of the IMU seem to have lost their effectiveness on the political front.

This provokes the question: how should violent attacks attributed to the IMU be interpreted? First, it depends on how the IMU is defined, as a group, network, or movement.⁸⁴ Such differentiation aids in understanding the range of activities, from

⁸⁴ Brian A. Jackson, *Groups, Networks, or Movements: A Command-and-Control-Driven Approach to Classifying Terrorist Organizations and Its Application to Al Qaeda*, *Studies in Conflict and Terror*, 29, 2006, Pg. 242.

criminal acts to terrorist violence, seen in Central Asia in the last fifteen years. The following history of activities involving the IMU is meant to provide a background for making assertions about the IMU.

The rise and fall of the IMU can be split up into four different phases. This breakdown aids in describing its maturity over time as a group. By overcoming challenges and continuing to operate in an often violent and difficult environment the IMU developed as a group, gained experience, and a sense of responsibility and stability.⁸⁵ This maturity was advantageous in that it provided the IMU with credibility to associate with other groups, often criminal and terrorist like itself, in the region.⁸⁶

Revival and Revolt: Late 1989 to March 1992

This period centers around the Islamic revival that was described in Part Two. The growing tension between the former Communist governments and the new opposition parties resulted in the Namangan Revolt in the spring of 1992. Militant Islamic groups led the revolt in the Fergana Valley. Initially these groups reflected a broad political spectrum of goals that ranged from representation to Islamic revolution. They emerged

⁸⁵ Kevin C. Desouza and Tobin Hensgen, *Connectivity among Terrorist Groups: A Two Models Business Maturity Approach*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 30, 2007, Pg. 595. For background of the violent and difficult environment see Bob Baer, *See No Evil*, Three Rivers Press, 2002, about his travels as a CIA officer in the region; Christopher Kremmer's, *Carpet Wars*; and journalist Christina Lamb's, *The Sewing Circles of Heart: A Personal Voyage Through Afghanistan*, Perennial, 2002.

⁸⁶ Clearly 'might makes right' in criminal and terrorist circles, but the IMU appears to have been part of the transportation (see below for specific examples), less the growing, of the narcotics moving through the region. An element of trust and professionalism is thus expected when dealing with product worth large sums of money. If Afghan drug lords did not think the IMU and its leaders could keep their end of the bargain then they would not have done business with them. The same holds true for the IMU's ties with the Taliban and al Qaeda, both of which invested in it.

out of Gorbachev's Glasnost period of the late 1980's.⁸⁷ The first political party formed in Uzbekistan was the Islamic Revival Party (IRP), in January 1991.⁸⁸ It had moderate positions, which didn't call for an Islamic state, and tried to work with the government. The young militants did not support these positions.⁸⁹ Instead they formed their own underground religious-political groups: Adolat (Justice) and its armed wing Islam Lashkarlary (Fighters for Islam), Tauba (Repentance), and Hizb-i-Islami (Party for Islam).⁹⁰ They formed into small militias and challenged the local state authorities in the cities of Namangan, Margelan, and Andijan. Also, by this time most of the mosques in the valley were in the control of the militant groups, and the groups appeared to be gaining support from the population as mosques were filled for Friday prayer.⁹¹

The movement was being led by Adolat, whose leader was a charismatic 24-year-old underground imam named Tahir Yuldashev.⁹² In addition to Yuldashev, another prominent young figure was Juma Hojiev (later he changed his name to Namangani), a former Soviet paratrooper who had fought in Afghanistan.⁹³ The militant groups, roughly 300-500 strong,⁹⁴ put out bolder statements and believed they could overthrow the Karimov government.⁹⁵ In December of 1991 the militants took over the Communist

⁸⁷ Hunter, Pg. 73. Gorbachev's policies allowed increased political freedom compared to previous times. Unfortunately, the leaders of the Soviet Central Asian Republics did not agree with his reforms and were against the dissolution of the USSR since doing so would threaten their positions of power.

⁸⁸ Vitaly Naumkin, *Militant Islam in Central Asia: The Case of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan*, Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Working Paper Series, Spring 2003, Pg. 20. The Tajik IRP was formed first in June 1990.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* The Fergana valley groups maintain ties to the IRP in Tajikistan, particularly with radical members there.

⁹⁰ Naumkin, Pg. 21; and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 139.

⁹¹ Naumkin, Pg. 21.

⁹² Naumkin, Pg. 22; and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 139.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Bakhtiar Babadzhanov, *Islam in Uzbekistan: From the Struggle for "Religious Purity" to Political Activism*, in *Central Asia: A Gathering Storm?*, Boris Rumer ed., M.E. Sharpe, 2002, Pg 328 (fn 55).

⁹⁵ Naumkin, Pg. 22; and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 139.

Party headquarters in Namangan.⁹⁶ The militants continued with their police actions by punishing criminals and enforcing Islamic head coverings among women.⁹⁷ Tashkent's cautious response only strengthened the militant's momentum.⁹⁸ By all accounts of the government reactions they did not seem to understand what was happening in the Fergana valley.⁹⁹

The conflict peaked in early 1992 when President Karimov came to Namangan to give a speech and to try and calm the situation. Present was Yuldashev who insulted Karimov and grabbed the microphone from his hands, interrupting the speech, and shouted "now we shall speak, and you shall listen."¹⁰⁰ Embarrassed by the incident and not wanting to appear weak in front of rivals the uprising was finally addressed by Karimov. By March of that year the Karimov regime aggressively went after the radicals and any group associated with political Islam. Adolat was officially banned and 27 members arrested while the remaining membership went underground or fled to neighboring Tajikistan.¹⁰¹ The revolt is an important event for its participants. For Tahir, Juma and other individuals who took part it was an experience they all had in common. Just as the fighters from the Soviet-Afghan War had a shared experience so to did the individuals involved with the revolt. The core of the IMU was built from this shared

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* See also Mehrdad Haghighi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, St. Martin's press, 1995, Pg. 93. The city mayor refused to allow the militants to build a new mosque.

⁹⁷ Alisher Ilkhamov, *Uzbek Islamism: Imported Ideology or Grassroots Movement?*, Middle East Report, No. 221. (Winter, 2001), Pg. 44.

⁹⁸ Naumkin, Pg. 22; and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 139.

⁹⁹ Babadzhanov, Pg. 315; Naumkin, Pg. 22; and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 139, all cite how the Communist way of thinking inhibited the decision makers in Tashkent to how and why religion would be the motivating factor.

¹⁰⁰ Babadzhanov, Pg. 316, writes Tahir Yuldashev also spoke in name of theologians who were there at the speech.

¹⁰¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 140, and Haghighi, Pg. 94. By this time the Karimov regime was in control and would continue and justify its authoritarian policies with the threat of militant Islam. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, Berkely Books, 2003, Pg. 225, writes that Namangani fled to Tavildara, Tajikistan with 30 of his supporters.

experience, while some were caught, many stayed together as a group when they fled to Tajikistan.

Growth Period: March 1992 – 1997

This phase is best characterized by the relationships Tahir Yuldashev and Juma Namangani cultivated in the region. They fled south with their followers to Tajikistan in March 1992. There they separated, Juma spent most of his time in Tajikistan and Tahir traveling to Afghanistan and then Pakistan, but still maintained a relationship. This growth period ends with the formal creation of the IMU.

The newly independent state of Tajikistan was soon embroiled in civil war (1992-97). Namangani and his followers would take the side of the Islamic opposition, which were part of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO).¹⁰² During the war Juma was involved in many major battles to include one of the biggest for Haboribot Pass in 1993.¹⁰³ The conflict enabled Juma and his fighters to bond with other like-minded individuals. Juma had made ties with two important Tajik military commanders Mirzo Ziyoyev, and Hakim Kalindarov.¹⁰⁴ Mirzo Ziyoyev made Juma his first deputy in 1996,¹⁰⁵ and aided Juma in setting up bases in the Tajik towns of Karategin, Hoit, Tajikobad, and Tavildara.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 95-106, discusses the Tajik Civil War. Naumkin, Pg. 24, Juma and his Uzbek fighters were often referred to as the Namangan Battalion during the conflict. Gunaratna, Pg. 225-6, cites how UTO members aided Juma and his fighters.

¹⁰³ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 142.

¹⁰⁴ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 142-3. Ziyoyev at the time was Army Chief of Staff and would become Minister of Emergency. He was also nephew of Sayed Abdullah Nuri, one of the major UTO leaders.

¹⁰⁵ Igor Rotar, *What lies ahead for Tajikistan*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, 11 March 2004.

¹⁰⁶ Igor Rotar, *The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: A Resurgent IMU?*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 1, Issue 8, 18 December 2003.

Tahir Yuldashev spent a brief period in Dushambe, the Tajik capital, before leaving when the war broke out in May 1992.¹⁰⁷ He fled to Taloqan, Afghanistan, where he helped in the Tajik opposition headquarters.¹⁰⁸ By 1995 Tahir was residing in Peshawar where he would stay till 1998.¹⁰⁹ It was during these three years in Peshawar that the Jamiat-I-Ulema Islami (JUI), an extreme Pakistani organization, would help to raise funds for Yuldashev while his followers would go to the JUI madrassahs.¹¹⁰ Yuldashev would also meet Afghan-Arabs who are believed to have introduced him to other Afghan mujahideen groups and bin Laden.¹¹¹ Throughout the mid-1990s Yuldashev was ‘networking’ in the Pakistan/Afghan border region where militant ideas were prevalent. What is important about Tahir’s relationship building is making a connection with the right node/individual. It was easier for him to meet militant individuals in the border region because many had stayed.¹¹² Sageman argues, “social bonds are the critical element in this process and precede ideological commitment.”¹¹³

The Tajik Civil War finally reached a peace settlement in 1997. Namangani and his fighters were upset with the terms, but eventually accepted.¹¹⁴ He stayed in Tajikistan

¹⁰⁷ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 140, Rashid writes Tahir spent March and April in Dushambe where he met a key member of the Tajik IRP, Akbar Turajonzoda.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* Rashid writes he interacted with Pakistan’s ISI agents and other militant groups as well.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* Through out this period Yuldashev is believed to have traveled to the Persian Gulf, Chechnya, and Turkey lobbying for support. Gunaratna, Pg. 226, also discusses Tahir’s travel and that the many exiled anti-Karimov groups he met objected to the use of force and chose not to collaborate.

¹¹² Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, University of Pennsylvania, 2004, Pg. 121, argues that often this is a chance encounter between like-minded individuals.

¹¹³ Sageman, Pg. 135. If there is no physical place to meet then a potential group can’t even get started, until the Internet becomes a factor.

¹¹⁴ Naumkin, Pg. 26, argues that Yuldashev was also upset with the peace settlement and it could have been a factor in Yuldashev creating the IMU at about this time. Naumkin also points out that a rift was growing between the Uzbek extremist, who supported the Taliban, and the UTO, which strongly supported Ahmad Shah Massoud’s Northern Alliance. Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 144, cites how Ziyoyev had to convince Juma to accept the terms of the peace settlement.

after the war, and became involved in the transportation of heroin through the region.¹¹⁵ Yuldashev soon met with Namangani to discuss “their future course of action.”¹¹⁶ The decision was made to form the IMU for three reasons. The end of the Tajik Civil War meant staying in Tajikistan would be more difficult. Two, there was continued suppression of any political Islamic activity in Uzbekistan by the Karimov regime. Third, the Taliban were now in control of Kabul, Afghanistan. Tahir supported the Taliban from his time in Peshawar, and believed they would be more reliable to his cause.¹¹⁷ The newly formed IMU was now about to test the relationships Tahir and Juma had built over the last five years.

The Campaign Period: 1998 – Summer 2001

The IMU was at the peak of its power during this time. The individuals committed to the IMU were believed responsible for the 1999 Tashkent bombings, and conducted major campaigns, from 1999-2001, into the Fergana valley. Tahir had secured permission from the Taliban to operate bases in northern Afghanistan, while Juma stayed in Tajikistan for the immediate future.¹¹⁸ Tahir also continued to align the IMU with the Taliban and bin Laden’s al-Qaeda ideology throughout this period.¹¹⁹

Tahir moved to Kabul in 1998 where the Taliban gave him a residence.¹²⁰ It was during that summer that he formalized the creation of the IMU and declared jihad against

¹¹⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 144. It is believed the money generated from the trade was used to fund his fighters.

¹¹⁶ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 145.

¹¹⁷ Rashid, *Jihad*, 145-9, goes into more detail but lists these major reasons as being what originally created the IMU. Ilkhamov, Pg. 45, also mentions the end of the war, the government Uzbekistan crackdown, and the shift from Massoud to the Taliban.

¹¹⁸ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 147-8.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*. See how ideology grew in the Pak/Afghan border region in Part 2, which had Wahhabi/Deobandi sympathies, and very anti-western rhetoric common from bin Laden.

¹²⁰ Rashid, Pg. 148. Tahir was also given quarters to live in Kandahar, where Mullah Omar and bin Laden also had homes.

the Karimov regime.¹²¹ The goals were presented in a rare interview to Voice of America.¹²² In it Tahir exclaimed that the group would fight oppression and corruption in Uzbekistan, and “God willing, we will carry out this jihad to its conclusion.”¹²³

On February 16, 1999, six car bombs detonated in Tashkent in an attempt to assassinate President Karimov. He escaped but sixteen civilians died and about 100 were wounded. The attack shocked the Karimov regime, which made broad accusations of all opposition groups, but specifically accused the IMU for acts of terrorism.¹²⁴ Although competing theories still surround the incident strong ties exist to IMU militants as being the perpetrators.¹²⁵ Neither Tahir nor Juma were present for the attacks, but Tahir may have helped to finance it.¹²⁶ The Uzbek government started a wave of repression and 22 people were found guilty of the bombings.¹²⁷

As a result of the crackdown against IMU supporters many fled Uzbekistan’s Fergana valley for Tajikistan’s Tavildara region.¹²⁸ Reports suggest Juma received as many as several thousand refugees who were looking for protection and now even more willing to fight the Karimov regime.¹²⁹ The IMU kept up the rhetoric by releasing a statement on 19 March 1999 on Iranian radio. It called for the Karimov regime to resign or be removed by force and continued,

“the Russian invaders . . . have waged war against Islam. They have massacred more Muslims than their Bolshevik teachers . . . The Islamic State of Uzbekistan will never

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.* I have yet to find this VOA interview.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 151, and Naumkin, Pg. 28-9.

¹²⁵ Naumkin, Pg. 38.

¹²⁶ Naumkin, Pg. 34.

¹²⁷ Naumkin, Pg. 29-30. He continues with the verdict that accused the defendants with connections to foreign extremist groups, the purpose to overthrow the republic, seize power, establish an Islamic state, as well as received training at terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Chechnya. He also cites how some had previously been convicted of crime and having connections to organized crime.

¹²⁸ Naumkin, Pg. 38-9.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

have friendly relations with states which carry out hostile actions against Islam and Muslims, or which have been seizing Muslim lands or have supported those crimes.”¹³⁰

The next IMU actions took place in August 1999. Juma led small-armed groups from his Tavildara bases into southern Kyrgyzstan territory toward sympathetic enclaves in the Fergana valley.¹³¹ During the incursion IMU fighters were able to kidnap Kyrgyz officials on 9 August, and four Japanese geologists on 23 August.¹³² The IMU held as many as 20 hostages by the end of August, all of which were released for ransom.¹³³ A Kyrgyz Army offensive was launched to drive the IMU groups back into Tajik territory. Fighting between the two sides continued till late October when the IMU retreated back to Tajikistan.¹³⁴

By this time tensions had risen between the fragile Tajik government and Juma Namangani. He had opposed the peace deal and was now using Tajik territory as a forward base. It was at this time that Juma left Tavildara for northern Afghanistan with his fighters and their families.¹³⁵ Tahir had brokered a deal where the IMU could use Afghan territory in exchange for help against Massoud’s Northern Alliance.¹³⁶

A second similar campaign was launched in August 2000. This time the IMU groups were better armed and carried out numerous attacks. The same areas near the enclaves were descended upon again, as were hostages taken, with other IMU groups

¹³⁰ BBC monitoring Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mashhad, 19 March 1999. This is similar to the VOA statement.

¹³¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg 159-64, and Naumkin, Pg. 40-44, document the 1999 campaign. The enclaves were a result of the Soviets carving up the region and creating land locked parts of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Kyrgyzstan. The Sukh and Vorukh Enclaves maintained the most support for Islamic militancy.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.* The ransoms ranged from \$50,000 for the first officials taken to estimates of \$2million for the Japanese geologists.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 164.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.* The IMU agreed to these terms and setup bases and offices in Kabul and Mazar-I-Sharif. It is thought that the alliance towards the Taliban was one of the reasons, in addition not supporting the Peace Agreement also caused Tajik support to weaken during this time.

struck near the mountains north of Tashkent.¹³⁷ Again IMU groups fought and held out against Uzbek and Kyrgyz government forces. Newspaper reports suggest the IMU was receiving reinforcement from Tajik officials.¹³⁸ The IMU was not able to escape casualties; it is believed to have lost about 150 fighters.¹³⁹

The two campaigns against Uzbek and Kyrgyz authorities were successful in stirring up unrest between Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. The Central Asian governments responded with aggressive measures, particularly Uzbekistan. Outside observers suggested the governments of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have “greatly exaggerated” the low-level cross border operations of the IMU in their justification of repressive measures.¹⁴⁰ Still, the IMU was put on the U.S. State Departments Terrorist Watch List for their activities, and growing ties to al-Qaeda.¹⁴¹

Namangani continued his drug smuggling network during this period. By the early summer 2001 he is estimated to have overseen up to 70% of opium moved through Central Asia from Afghanistan.¹⁴² Concomitantly, it is believed the IMU changed its name, to the Islamic Movement of Turkistan, IMT.¹⁴³ This was seen as reflection of

¹³⁷ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg 167-73. He estimates no more than 200 fighters were involved.

¹³⁸ BBC monitoring *Kommersant*, 24 Aug 2000. Reports that Mirzo Ziyoyev, head of the Emergency Ministry, aided Juma Namangani and his men as they took over the Tajik Defense Ministry’s main supply base in Sagirdasht, Tajikistan. Weapons were taken and government soldiers held prisoners. The report continued that both the IMU and Ziyoyev have links to the drug mafia, and that other top Tajik officials will shelter Juma and his fighters if forced out of Uzbekistan. Even though the IMU/Tajik ties had weakened some members still openly supported Juma’s activities.

¹³⁹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 172.

¹⁴⁰ International Crisis Group, *Central Asia: Islamist Mobilization and Regional Security*, Asia Report no. 14, Executive Summary and Recommendations, 1 March 2001, crisisgroup.org.

¹⁴¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 173.

¹⁴² Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 165. UN estimates place 60% of all opium from Afghanistan traveled through Central Asia, of which Juma could have controlled up to 70%. The drug trade involved a spectrum of players, from small local groups to more transnational regional groups such as Juma’s branch of the IMU. There was no one group or individual that had a monopoly on the trade north. Also, drugs were still transported south to Pakistan and west through Iran. Other major routes include going through Turkmenistan as well. For more on this trade see Part Four.

¹⁴³ Zahab and Roy, Pg. 8, and Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 180. The IMU is believed to have changed its name in June 2001, but a spokesman for the group denied the change. See the sources for more.

Tahir's wider acceptance of jihad probably stemming from increased time with the Taliban, and bin Laden.¹⁴⁴ Late July 2001 again saw a smaller IMU attacked on the same Tajik-Kyrgyz border territory.¹⁴⁵

By September 2001 the IMU had become a permanent fixture in northern Afghanistan. Bases had been set up, Tahir and Juma met with high-ranking Taliban officials and al Qaeda members,¹⁴⁶ and the group was heavily involved with the drug trade. IMU fighters and new recruits trained at camps near the Pakistan/Afghan border, as well as continuing to fight the Northern Alliance.

The Fall of the IMU: September 11 to 2007

This last phase centers on the defense, defeat, and dispersal of the IMU in Afghanistan following the U.S. invasion. In October 2001 U.S. strike plans turned to actions.¹⁴⁷ In northern Afghanistan, aiding in the defense of the Taliban and al-Qaeda were IMU fighters led by Juma Namangani. Their bases in Taloqan, Kunduz, and Mazar-I-Sharif stood right in the path of U.S. and Northern Alliance forces. Northern Alliance commanders knew of Namangani's 'warrior' reputation, spread by word of mouth in the region, since he had led the Taliban forces in 1999 and pushed Northern Alliance fighters

¹⁴⁴ Zahab and Roy, Pg. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 180.

¹⁴⁶ Coll, Pg. 491-97. Yuldashev and Namangani are believed to have met with top Taliban and al Qaeda leaders. Coll writes that top al Qaeda leaders very rarely traveled outside of southern or eastern Afghanistan, bin Laden only went once to the north where he addressed followers in Hairaton, an Afghan town on the border with Uzbekistan (Coll, Pg. 496). al Qaeda's military chief, Mohammad Atef, traveled more frequently to the north, probably to organize operations against the Northern Alliance, and thus would have met with Namangani or other IMU members. Most likely Tahir and Juma traveled south to Kabul for the majority of meetings with Taliban and al Qaeda leadership since that is where their strongholds were.

¹⁴⁷ The U.S. military plan was to insert Special Forces teams to link up with Northern Alliance commanders, and to aid them with air support and supplies in the coming fight with Taliban and al Qaeda forces. For detail on the initial phases of U.S. operations in Afghanistan see Robin Moore, *The Hunt for Bin Laden: Task Force Dagger*, Random House, 2003; Gary C. Schroen, *First In: An Insider's account of how the CIA spearheaded the War on Terror in Afghanistan*, Ballentine Books, 2005; and Gary Berntsen and Ralph Pezzullo, *Jawbreaker: The Attack on Bin Laden and al Qaeda*, Three Rivers Press, 2005.

out of Taloqan.¹⁴⁸ Those same commanders believed he was made a Taliban commander in recent months and put in charge of 2,500 – 5,000 fighters based near Taloqan in October 2001.¹⁴⁹ Expectations of the upcoming battle from those on the ground, and veterans of the Soviet-Afghan War, were that it would be tough.¹⁵⁰

Broadly speaking the IMU had been discussed among U.S. military commanders. In meetings, before and after September 11, involving General Tommy Franks, President Karimov, and their respective officials, the IMU threat was mentioned.¹⁵¹ Having been placed on the State Departments Terrorist Watch list in 2000, and an ally of al-Qaeda the United States was happy to oblige Karimov's concerns.¹⁵² Uzbekistan had been most enthusiastic for a U.S. strike against Afghanistan since it meant aggressive action might be taken against the IMU. President Bush cited the IMU publicly in statements prior to the invasion to help secure Uzbek cooperation in the military campaign with Afghanistan.¹⁵³

By 14 November Mazar-I-Sharif and Taloqan had fallen to Northern Alliance commanders supported by U.S. Special Forces Teams, and Kunduz was surrounded.¹⁵⁴ The combination of negotiations and air strikes led to remaining Taliban fighters to

¹⁴⁸ David Filipov, *Feared Mercenary Draws Focus*, The Boston Globe, 26 October 2001.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Douglas Birch, *Veteran Warns of Afghan fight*, The Baltimore Sun, 21 September 2001, and Paul Hampel, *Ex-Russian Soldier Fears for US in Afghanistan*, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 24 September 2001, Reported other Russian veterans, some from Central Asia, echoed these sentiments in newspaper reports. See also Christina Lowe, *Afghan warriors fearsome but not invincible: Soviet veteran*, Agence France-Presse, 9 November 2001.

¹⁵¹ Tommy Franks with Malcolm McConnell, *American Soldier*, Regan Books, 2004, Pg. 256.

¹⁵² International Crisis Group, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir: Implications of the Afghanistan Campaign*, Asia Briefing No. 11, 30 January 2002, crisisgroup.org.

¹⁵³ Franks, Pg. 286, In exchange for basing rights (at K2 air base) in Uzbekistan the U.S. military would ensure the destruction of the IMU. Also see and Franks, Pg. 345, also cites conversation where Rumsfeld says, "President Karimov will be pleased," in response to reports of IMU deaths. This is an example of 'omnibalancing' by a Third World state that wants to counter an internal or external threat. For more on this see Steven R. David, *Explaining Third World Alignment*, World Politics, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Jan., 1991), Pg. 233-256.

¹⁵⁴ Moore, Pg. 108.

surrender on 27 November to Uzbek warlord and Northern Alliance commander Abdul Rashid Dostum.¹⁵⁵ The events on the ground occurred so quickly that the few U.S. forces had trouble containing all of the enemy fighters. Surviving elements of Taliban, al-Qaeda, and IMU either blended into the surround areas or fled southeast toward the Pakistan border.¹⁵⁶

The death of Juma Namangani, which occurred in November 2001, is an important event in the history of the IMU.¹⁵⁷ Juma's nephew and former IMU fighter, Bakhtier Uzakov, says he was killed in an air strike and that he personally buried him in November 2001. He continues that his uncle's death has not hurt the organization.¹⁵⁸ A Kyrgyz IMU member, Sheraly Akbotoyev, says he attended Nangani's funeral at a mosque on 10 November 2001 in Logar province south of Kabul. He also mentions Namangani was killed by an air strike near Mazar-I-Sharif.¹⁵⁹ Juma's death along with the loss of hundreds of IMU fighters and bases crippled the group. It also allowed Tahir Yuldashev to become the sole leader and decision maker leading the surviving IMU elements east toward Pakistan.

In late December 2001 Uzbek president Islam Karimov and Tajik president Rahmonov convened to discuss the U.S. military success in Afghanistan. They both

¹⁵⁵ Moore, Pg. 155.

¹⁵⁶ Moore, Pg. 156-7. Mop up operations continued for weeks as Taliban and al Qaeda fighters were rooted out.

¹⁵⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *They're Only Sleeping*, The New Yorker, 14 January 2002. He cites how after Namangani's death his HQ in Kunduz became a N/A barracks.

¹⁵⁸ Igor Rotar, *The IMU: A Resurgent IMU?*; Calum McLeo, *Uzbek ally of bin Laden reportedly killed in attack*, The Washington Times, 23 November 2001. Reported that three sources, N/A commander Dostum, Tajik military forces, and Taliban sources quoted through Pakistani media cited Juma Namangani's death.

¹⁵⁹ Steven Lee Myers and James Dao, *A Nation Challenged: The Battle; US Stokes the Fire, Adding Gunships and More*, The New York Times, 22 November 2001, cites an intelligence official making claims that Juma Namangani and Mohammed Atef, al Qaeda's military chief, were killed in air strikes. Christian Caryl, *Collateral Victory*, Washington Monthly, November 2002, interviewed Sheraly Akbotoyev in NA prison in Afghanistan fall 2001; BBC monitoring Erlan Satybekov article on Vecherniy Bishkek web site, Bishkek, *Is founder of Islamic Movement alive or dead?*, 14 February 2003, here Sheraly is also cited about the death of Juma. Article also says he was sentenced on 4 February 2003 to 25 years for membership in the IMU and other terrorist offenses.

‘hailed’ President Bush’s determination to fight terrorism.¹⁶⁰ Questioned on the death of Juma Namangani they welcomed the news of his death. Asked about Yuldashev’s they both said he would probably regroup in Pakistan.¹⁶¹

The prevailing theory is once forced out of Kunduz many IMU fighters headed south through Logar and Paktia provinces toward Tora Bora and Gardez.¹⁶² After the intense bombing of Tora Bora in December 2001 remaining Taliban, al-Qaeda, and IMU elements continued south on two escape routes. One led to the tribal region of Pakistan the other led to eastern Afghanistan.¹⁶³ Military intelligence estimates place a large number of remaining fighters near the Shahikot valley. *Operation Anaconda*, 2-18 March 2002, was designed to be a quick strike to mop up Taliban, al-Qaeda, and IMU remnants. There was no evidence of any senior al-Qaeda or Taliban members, but Tahir Yuldashev was thought to be there.¹⁶⁴ The fighting was intense but U.S. forces prevailed. At the conclusion of the battle Tahir Yuldashev and his remaining IMU fighters are believed to have escaped east into the tribal areas of Pakistan.

After the Spring of 2002 the IMU appeared to have lost much of its vitality. Former members thought it safe to reveal the truth about internal relations of the group. In September 2003, The Washington Post reported that a former IMU member, and

¹⁶⁰ BBC monitoring Uzbek Radio, 27 December 2001.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Sean Naylor, *Not a Good Day to Die: The Untold Story of Operation Anaconda*, Berkley Books, 2005, Pg. 65. This does coincide with eyewitness accounts of IMU fighters who attended Namangani’s funeral.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Naylor, Pg. 138-9. Two Navy Seal snipers conducting a recon mission which further backed up this intelligence. They photographed an enemy machine gun nest. One of the occupants had Mongol features and the other was Caucasian with reddish brown hair strongly suggesting the presence of non-native IMU members. The operation was a learning experience for both sides. Taliban, al Qaeda, and IMU forces learned the United States was not a paper tiger; while the U.S. soldiers on the ground found a competent and disciplined force. See Naylor, Pg. 175. See Naylor’s book for complete detail of the entire battle, and Paul L. Hastert, *Operation Anaconda: Perception Meets Reality in the Hills of Afghanistan*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 28: 11-20, 2005, for a brief analysis. Hastert, Pg. 19, gives evidence that IMU fighters, trained and battled hardened, were present and formidable adversaries and not the average Taliban or al Qaeda foot soldier. Still the battle demonstrated that the Taliban, al Qaeda, or IMU fighters could not hold large areas of territory or form a large military force against U.S. forces.

bodyguard to Yuldashev, escaped and returned to Namangan, Uzbekistan. Khasanboy Sotimov, 27, said,

“all he [Yuldashev] has left are women and old people and injured fighters. The IMU’s back has been broken. The rest have left him. There is no unity like there used to be.”¹⁶⁵

In a March 2004 interview, another IMU defector, Hoyaberda Aripov, said that those who became disillusioned were killed. Aripov believed he joined for legit reasons.¹⁶⁶

Other former members of the IMU corroborate the disillusionment.¹⁶⁷ Alibek Hujayyef and Hassan Boies Saltimov claim they were tricked into joining. At 20, Hujayyef left home with his girlfriend for Tajikistan because he was told he could make some money. It was there that he met bearded Uzbek fighters that forced him to become a member. Hujayyef claims our money and passports were taken and that if we tried to leave we would be shot. Saltimov also claims he was tricked into joining when he traveled to Tajikistan for business. He was promoted and made one of Yuldashev’s personal bodyguards. Saltimov says Yuldashev spoke of

“the injustice in Uzbeksitan and the need to overthrow the government, but first we needed to help the Taliban take over Afghanistan. Then we would build an Islamic caliphate that would rule the world.”¹⁶⁸

When Saltimov traveled to Taliban controlled Afghanistan in 2000 with other IMU fighters and their families he met many other Islamic militants from Chechnya, Pakistan, and the Arab world. Saltimov’s says,

“his disillusionment stemmed from seeing Yuldashev live extravagantly in a large house with parties, women and television, while other fighters were poor and hungry. Yuldashev loved power and used religion to try and win control of Uzbekistan.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Peter Baker, *Government Crackdown Threatens to Radicalize Previously Non-Violent Groups*, The Washington Post, 27, September 2003, Pg A19.

¹⁶⁶ Stephen Schwartz, *Uzbekistan and War on Terror*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, 11 March 2004.

¹⁶⁷ The story on Hujayyef and Saltimov is from Ivan Watson reporting for *All Things Considered*, Profile: Two former members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan claim they were tricked into joining the militant group, NPR, 9pm-10pm, 9 June 2004.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid,

Saltimov escaped a few days before September 11 and Hujayyef escaped to Pakistan with many other fighters. Both were given amnesty by the Uzbek government and have returned to their homes in the Fergana Valley.¹⁷⁰ These testimonies suggest internal cohesion was at times lacking and challenge Tahir's leadership.

Militant activity in Uzbekistan was down until Spring 2004. On 28-31 March 2004 multiple bombings in Tashkent and subsequent shootouts occurred in which 33 militants died, 7 were women.¹⁷¹ A 19-year-old Uzbek woman who detonated explosives strapped to her body in Tashkent's Choru Market carried out one of the March bombings. The Islamic Jihad Group took responsibility¹⁷² for the attack, a suspected radical offshoot of the IMU.

Later, on 30 July 2004 attacks occurred in Tashkent at the Prosecutor General's Office, U.S. Embassy, and Israeli Embassy. Several days after the IMU took responsibility on a website. Four days earlier the trial for several individuals charged with the series of bombings in March and April 2004 had begun.¹⁷³ Experts have described the above attacks as "freelance, amateur jihadist, . . . not closely aligned with the IMU."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Michael Scheuer, *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror*, Brassy's, INC., 2004, Pg. 100, cites the attack in a broad array of Islamic militant attacks since September 2001. He also lists 14 Uzbeks killed, 10 are policemen, and 35 wounded.

¹⁷² See Katharina von Knop, *The Female Jihad: al Qaeda's Women*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 30: 2007, Pg. 402, for more on Dilnoza and women in jihadi terrorism. She points out that it was vague as to when and how Dilnoza was recruited. This was also the first instance of an IMU women suicide bomber. Dilnoza Holmuradova was a computer programmer from a middle class family, who began studying Islam with her older sister in 2002. They became more conservative as their religious studies continued and both left home in January 2004 never to return.

¹⁷³ Igor Rotar, *Why extremism is on the rise in Uzbekistan*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, 12 August 2004. He write about one of the defendants, Farkhod Kazakbaev, 22, admitted that the Zhamoat (society) a network of extremist groups was allegedly operating in Uzbekistan. They claim to have ties to al Qaeda, Hizb -ul Tahrir, and Nasriddin Jalalov their leader, is a close associate to Mullah Omar.

¹⁷⁴ Stephen Schwartz, *Hizb ul Tahrir in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan compared*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, 12 August 2004.

The failed Tashkent attack in 2005 seems to echo this lack of sophistication, and that the IMU and its offshoots, are in ‘eclipse.’¹⁷⁵

Sporadic fighting in 2004-5 in Waziristan, (western Pakistan) revealed IMU remnants led by Tahir Yuldashev, had been fighting the Pakistani Military.¹⁷⁶ Tahir’s September 2006 threats against the U.S. effort and its allies in Afghanistan, an attempt at maintaining relevancy, was just fiery rhetoric.¹⁷⁷ Overall, as 2007 comes to a close almost a decade has passed since the conception of the IMU. Its political goals, removal of the Karimov regime from power, and replacement with an Islamic state for Uzbekistan and greater Central Asia, have not been fulfilled.

Profile of IMU:

How should the IMU be defined? The IMU is best understood as a group that tried to cultivate a broader movement. Its two branches, political and military, operated as two linked networks. Each network developed its goals around its respective leader, Tahir as political and Juma as military.

The IMU’s ideology is based on Salafi, puritanical, teachings of Islam.¹⁷⁸ These ideas can be traced back to the 1970’s when underground spiritual leaders, such as Mohammad Rustamov Hindustani, brought them to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.¹⁷⁹ Hindustani’s students, namely Allama Rahmatullah, helped to spread these teachings the

¹⁷⁵ Stephen Schwartz, *IMU: A Terrorist Movement in Eclipse*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 3, Issue 3, 10 February 2005.

¹⁷⁶ Daan Van Der Schriek, *Recent Developments in Waziristan*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, 11 Mar 2005. Reports have also surfaced suggesting the tribes there no longer wish to protect and thus allow the IMU refuge. See John C.K. Daly, *Uzbek Fighters in Pakistan Reportedly Return to Afghanistan*, Jamestown: Terrorism Focus, Vol. 4, Issue 7, 27 March 2007.

¹⁷⁷ Hayder Mili, *IMU Leader Yuldashev Issues Warning to Central Asian Government*, Jamestown: Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 3, Issue 37, 26 September 2006.

¹⁷⁸ Naumkin, Pg. 48.

¹⁷⁹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 97-102, and Naumkin, Pg. 15-24.

Fergana valley.¹⁸⁰ Allama Rahmatullah inspired Tahir Yuldashev and others who would later become members of the IMU.¹⁸¹ Naumkin argues that the IMU's ideological origins can be traced back to the militant organizations in the Fergana valley. It was then that these organizations, led by Adolat, practiced Islamic puritanism, attempted to assume responsibility for public order, called for social justice, and advocated state rule by Sharia law.¹⁸² He does stress that there was a 'power' component to the militants from the very beginning.¹⁸³ They attempted to enforce Islamic norms, trained special squads in policing and martial arts, stockpiled arms and trained youth how to use them, and advocated the overthrow of a secular regime by force and intimidation in the form of terror.¹⁸⁴ Naumkin concludes that the Islamic militants not only were Salafis but jihadists, since "they were committed to violent struggle against a secular regime in the name of Islam."¹⁸⁵ He does note that the subsequent military actions in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, and thus the armed activity came to dominate over the ideological Salafi activity.¹⁸⁶ Still, to argue that the IMU is void of Islamic sentiment would be incorrect, like most groups it changed over time. It has become less political in nature, while the militant operations and the need to fund such activity, with the drug trade, has become more dominant.¹⁸⁷ Naumkin suggests this has become a contentious issue for the top leadership of the IMU about which direction to continue with.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ See also Oliver Roy, *The New Central Asia: The creation of nations*, I.B. Tauris, 2000, Pg. 154-7, for more on Islamic radicalization, Hindustani, and the ideological origins of the IMU/Fergana valley groups. These ideas were also very prevalent in Tajikistan as well.

¹⁸² Naumkin, Pg 48.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Naumkin, Pg. 48-9.

¹⁸⁵ Naumkin, Pg. 49.

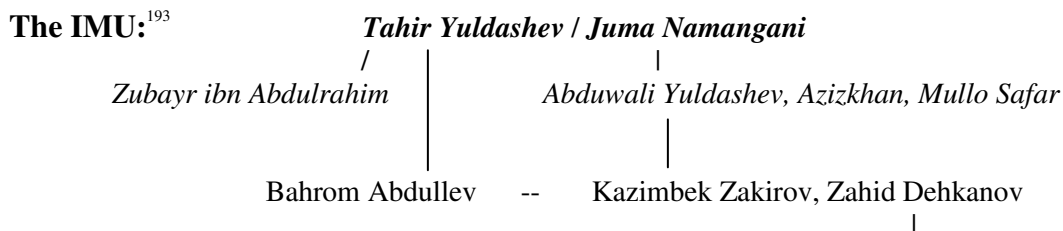
¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ This change involving the drug trade will be discussed in more detail below.

¹⁸⁸ Naumkin, Pg. 43.

The stated objectives of the IMU are the overthrow of the Karimov regime and the creation of an Islamic state in Uzbekistan. These declarations were formally issued in 1998, and issued again for the August 1999 campaign.¹⁸⁹ The objectives are believed to have widened to bring Islamic government to all of Central Asia in the summer of 2001, mostly likely as a result of a growing relationship with the Taliban and al Qaeda.¹⁹⁰

The IMU has a classic pyramid structure, in which Tahir and Juma are the leaders and decision makers. The secrecy of the group has inhibited creating a complete roster, but evidence suggests Yuldashev and Namangani did have deputies. Under Yuldashev was Zubayr ibn Abdulrahim, head of the Supreme Religious Council.¹⁹¹ Namangani had at least three lieutenants Abduwali Yuldashev, Azizkhan, and UTO commander Mullo Safar that served with him.¹⁹² A tentative outline of IMU membership is below. Member strength at its peak was between 500-1000, but estimates reaching 2000 were possible. The IMU's periphery support included family members that stayed at their compounds, and sympathetic villages in the Fergana valley, and Tavildara, Tajikistan.



¹⁸⁹ "The Call to Jihad by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," which was written in Uzbek and appeared on the Internet in English. See Rashid, *Jihad*, Appendix Pg. 247-9.

¹⁹⁰ See Phase Three above.

¹⁹¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 180; Zahab and Roy, Pg. 8; and HD Study, Pg. 21.

¹⁹² No relation between the Yuldashev's. For more on Juma's LT's see Naumkin, Pg. 45-7.

¹⁹³ The roster comes from Naumkin, Pg. 41-7. A. Yuldashev died in Kyrgyzstan in the summer of 1999. Under A. Yuldashev were Kazimbek Zakirov and Zahid Dehkanov. Bahrom Abdullev was appointed by T. Yuldashev in September 1998 as a recruiter for Uzbekistan. In October of 1998 B. Abdullev and K. Zakirov were sent to Turkmenistan to set up a cell. There were caught and extradited to Uzbekistan. M. Mamatov, Z. Mahmudov, K. Nazarov, and T. Nuraliev are all believed to have been ranking foot soldiers for the group. The members who spoke out in Phase Four probably fit into the third tier with the foot soldiers.

Tahir Yuldashev was born 2 October 1968, and grew up in Fergane.¹⁹⁴ He attended Bukhara Technological Institute before dropping out.¹⁹⁵ He did receive a secular education before embracing militant ideology. At 24 he led the Namangan Revolt with other young imams from Namangan.¹⁹⁶ As the Phases (above) suggest he spent much of his life in the company of radical ideas and individuals. But, despite his networking and oratory skills Namangani's accomplishments seem to have overshadowed Yuldashev's.

Juma Namangani's reputation as a 'legend' of Central Asia has aroused much controversy. The rumors are worth presenting:

“The ghost of the former student at SPTU-28 (special vocational training college No 28) in the (eastern Uzbek) town of Namangan, former Soviet Army paratrooper, gangland boss nicknamed Ninja, drug and emerald smuggler, irreconcilable mujahid and master of partisan warfare, friend of Usama Bin Laden and head of Livo, who was sentenced to death in absentia by the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, still haunts Central Asia.”¹⁹⁷

He was born 12 June 1969, and little else is known about his childhood.¹⁹⁸ He did serve with the Soviet Army as a paratrooper in Afghanistan. Some reports have him attaining the rank of sergeant; others say he was a sniper. What can be mentioned is that he served, roughly 1988-89, in Afghanistan. He was exposed to a declining Soviet Army and in contrast, 'inspired' by the mujahideen.¹⁹⁹ He was influential in the region till his death.

¹⁹⁴ Zahab and Roy, Pg. 7-8.

¹⁹⁵ Haghayeghi, Pg. 93-4.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* See also Zahab and Roy, Pg. 8.

¹⁹⁷ Vecherniy Bishkek website. Much of this description is embellishment on the part of rumors, which Juma seem to use to his advantage. Livo was another name for the group of fighters he led.

¹⁹⁸ Zahab and Roy, Pg. 8.

¹⁹⁹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 138. The conditions by this time for Soviet soldiers were bad and getting worse. Moral was down and the mujahideen continued to fight fiercely. It is very possible Juma was inspired.

Financial support came early on from lobbying, mostly conducted by Tahir, of sympathetic people, governments, and intelligence services.²⁰⁰ Drug trafficking has also provided revenue, conducted by Juma, and steadily increased. Alliances with other groups also provided benefits such as money donations from Osama bin Laden.²⁰¹ Since Tajikistan and Afghanistan had weak infrastructures it was often common to make exchanges with commodities instead of cash.²⁰² This would also facilitate the drug trade since Juma could trade in opium/heroin, gold, gems, or arms. Al-Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan used the ultimate network exchange system, *hawalas*.²⁰³ This was a social system of exchanging money built on trust, family relationships, and regional affiliations.²⁰⁴ The system was ideal for a lawless state containing a myriad of smuggling networks.²⁰⁵

Many individuals, groups, and broad movements have associated with the IMU. However, it is difficult to verify the strength of some of these ties. The strongest support has obviously come from groups and individuals with direct ties to the Fergana valley, Tajik Islamic groups/UTO, and Tahir and Juma themselves. Many Uzbek supporters have found refuge in Tajikistan during the crackdowns of the Karimov regime, and continued to Afghanistan. Tahir Yuldashev's time in Peshawar facilitated much association with Pakistani groups.²⁰⁶ These relationships certainly led to meeting members of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. One of the most important relationships the IMU had was with al-Qaeda

²⁰⁰ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 140-1.

²⁰¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 166.

²⁰² Douglas Farah, *Blood From Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror*, Broadway books, 2004, Pg. 112-3. Cites how weak states facilitate deals made with commodities.

²⁰³ Farah, Pg. 109. See also Angel Rabasa . . . [et al.], *Beyond Al Qaeda: Part One*, Rand, 2006, Pg. 59.

²⁰⁴ For a definition of *Hawalas*, see Farah, Pg. 113-6, and White, Pg. 69.

²⁰⁵ It is important to differentiate between licit and illicit deals, of which the former is more prevalent. Still it is easy for criminals and terrorists to take advantage of the system. Also, the system can prosper in legitimate functioning states as well. Dubai is a city where "few questions are asked." Farah Pg. 109.

²⁰⁶ Zahab and Roy, see Chapter 5.

demonstrated by the fact that the IMU fought with it in Afghanistan after September 11.²⁰⁷ Interaction with Hizb ut Tahrir is likely since both share geography and goals, but hard to prove. Interaction with Chechen and Uighur separatist groups seems mostly to have been for exchanging of recruits and training purposes.²⁰⁸ Government officials have interacted with the IMU such as the Taliban, Tajik officials Nuri and Ziyoyev, and Pakistan's ISI.²⁰⁹ The latter usually did so clandestinely.

The IMU's area of operations was Central Asia, to include Afghanistan and Pakistan. Considerable time was spent in Tajikistan, where it had forward operating bases, and the majority of its activities were along the southern Fergana valley where Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan meet. The group headquarters was in the northern Afghanistan cities of Mazar-I-Sharif and Kunduz from 1998-2001. The group also had offices and residences in Kabul. After the alliance with the Taliban and al-Qaeda it is thought the IMU used their camps for training.

The major tactics and capabilities of the IMU were centered on small mobile groups, armed attacks with small arms, and kidnappings. Bombing, as a tactic, was used only in February 1999 and again in 2004 in combination with suicide attacks.²¹⁰ Both occurred in Tashkent. Top IMU leadership was present for neither and this suggests some element of local operational autonomy. Also, the suicide element in 2004 is a new step suggesting desperation and/or a more fanatical nature.

²⁰⁷ For more on their relationship see Angel Rabasa . . . [et al.], *Beyond al Qaeda: Part One*, Pg. 112-7.

²⁰⁸ Rashid, *Jihad*, Pg. 151.

²⁰⁹ Zahab and Roy, Pg. 64. They cite how the ISI aided IMU escape from Afghanistan. Naumkin, Pg. 48, cites Massoud's intelligence sources confirmed ISI over cite when IMU led attacks against him in Northern Afghanistan. See also Coll, Pg. 531-2.

²¹⁰ Direct links to the bombings with top IMU leaders is not solid, see Phases above, while the 2004 bombings seem to have been committed by an IMU splinter group IJG. Little is known about them.

Notebooks found in the region reveal some of the indoctrination and training Islamic militants went through in the 1990s.²¹¹ It is similar to the training and tactics found in the camps in and along the Pakistan/Afghan border region.²¹² However, the introductory nature of the notebooks challenges the threat their students could actually have been.

As the groups activities progressed (see Phases above) its goals changed. Tahir and Juma always maintained contact, and collaborated, but there was always distance, physically and in their relationship. Success was found not on Tahir's political but Juma's criminal front. This orientation and distance created disagreement between Tahir and Juma about where to lead the group.²¹³

4 Conclusions:

Why did the IMU become more involved with the drug trade? What were the major smuggling routes, who was involved, and how much financial gain was there? As mentioned above since the end of the Cold War terrorist and criminal groups had adapted to their new environment, often by cooperating in the drug trade. The IMU is a clear example of this change.

²¹¹ See Martha Brill Olcott and Bakhtiyar Babajanov, *The Terrorist Notebooks*, Foreign Policy, March/April 2003, Pg. 31-40.

²¹² The similar nature of tactics and arguments is logical since many militant members in Central Asia traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan War. Also, the Islamic revival brought new ideas into the region, many of which were militant and similar to what was preached in the Pak/Afghan border camps.

²¹³ Naumkin, Pg. 43, suggests from the very beginning during the 1999 campaign there was disagreement over how long to keep the hostages. Tahir wanted to holdout till political demands were met, while Juma was more concerned with short-term gain of the money.

First, the IMU existed in a criminalized world of post-Soviet Central Asia where “drug trafficking . . . can provide opportunities for insurgent groups.”²¹⁴ This activity was heightened for states bordering Afghanistan, which suffered spillover effects of drug trafficking and warfare.²¹⁵ Through out the 1990s Afghanistan’s civil war was an example of armed conflict being extended by a ‘lootable resource’, opium.²¹⁶ It has also been argued that during the Tajik Civil War factions turned to the drug trade to finance military campaigns.²¹⁷ The weaker parties, which usually rely on the loutable resource, were the Islamic factions of the UTO; they became involved with the trade. It was these parties that were allies to Juma’s militants and together both benefited from the trade out of Afghanistan.

Second, the smuggling routes changed during the 1990s. Most of the opium/heroin traveled west through Iran, via Turkey and the Balkans, to Western Europe. The routes changed because of the Balkan conflict, and a crackdown by the Iranian government.²¹⁸ Since the Soviet Union no longer existed to impede major shipments the smuggling routes took a decidedly northern turn, through Central Asia and the Caucasus

²¹⁴ See Phil Williams, *Criminalization and Stability in Central Asia and South Caucasus*, in *Faultlines of Conflict In Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the U.S. Army*, edited by Olga Oliker and Thomas S. Szayna, Rand Arroyo Center, 2003, Pg. 72. He mentions similar areas such as the Balkans and Columbia where this criminalization also takes place. For more on the convergence of Crime and Terrorism see Chapter 7 Angel Rabasa . . . [et al.], *Beyond al Qaeda Part Two: The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe*, Rand, 2006.

²¹⁵ See Phil Williams, *Criminalization and Stability in Central Asia and South Caucasus*, Pg. 75. Also see Part Two for background.

²¹⁶ See Svante E. Cornell, *Narcotics and Armed Conflict: Interaction and Implications*, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30:207-227, 2007. He argues the Afghan warlords fought over the drug trade, and weaker factions often relied on the trade to fight longer. He also suggests links between organized crime and terrorism often enhances this theory.

²¹⁷ See Martha Brill Olcott and Natalia Udalova, *Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road: The Security Environment in Central Asia*, Carnegie Endowment Working Papers, Russian and Eurasian Program, No. 11, March 2000, Pg. 11.

²¹⁸ Olcott and Udalova, Pg. 8. The dissolution of Yugoslavia occurred first, 1991-95, then the Iranian governments aggressive attempt to stop the trade through its country. The trade still went through these areas but in much smaller quantities.

where law enforcement was weak. Organized crime was already prevalent in these regions and they quickly embraced the opportunity.

A brief mention of specific routes will help illustrate. Drugs would enter Tajikistan headed for Kyrgyzstan via the Osh-Khorog route.²¹⁹ By 1998 new routes through the Garm regions of Tajikistan and Batken of Kyrgyzstan became popular.²²⁰ From Osh, Kyrgyzstan and other major hubs in Central Asia most of the drugs travel by truck through Kazakhstan to Moscow or St. Petersburg where it was redistributed to mid-level dealers for Western Europe.²²¹ The IMU had bases in Garm, and made incursions into Batken from 1999-2001.

The money being made is what drives the trade. A kilogram of opium cost roughly \$50 in Afghanistan, is \$200 in Tajikistan, and \$10,000 by the time it reaches Moscow; and one kilogram of heroin at the Tajik border is \$7,000-10,000 and around \$150,000 in Moscow.²²² About half of the value is in the consumer countries. But with Central Asia as one of the poorer regions in the world, and Tajikistan having the lowest per-capita-income,²²³ even at the lowest levels the money made is significant.

Third, the triumph of the Taliban over most of Afghan territory was important. They controlled the southern provinces where most opium is grown, and by 1998

²¹⁹ Olcott and Udalova, Pg. 12. This route goes from northeastern Afghanistan, through eastern Tajikistan, into southern Kyrgyzstan.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ For more detail on the routes see Glenn E. Curtis, *Involvement of Russian Organized Crime Syndicates, Criminal Elements in the Russian Military, and Regional Terrorist Groups in Narcotics Trafficking in Central Asia, The Caucasus, and Chechnya*, Library of Congress – Federal Research Division, October 2002, Pg. 18-23. This article also illuminates how the trade travels through Russia and explains how Russian officials take part in the trade. See also Kairat Osmonaliev, *Developing Counter-Narcotics Policy in Central Asia: Legal and Political Dimensions*, Silk Road Studies Program and Central Asia – Cascaus Institute, January 2005, Pg 17 (fn23).

²²² Olcott and Udalova, Pg.13.

²²³ See *Faultlines in Conflict*, Pg. 49.

provided even more stability for the trade to flourish.²²⁴ The gradual move north of the heroin laboratories, where opium becomes heroin, is evidence of the trades growth and stability.²²⁵ The IMU was thus in a perfect position, geographically and socially, to benefit from the drug trade.

Makarenko and Cornell have championed this argument, that the IMU was more than just a terrorist group and also deeply involved in the drug trade.²²⁶ They continue that a better understanding of the group's motivations is derived from this view. Specifically, Cornell writes,

“The geographic juxtaposition of the IMU's camps and its activities in the late 1990s with the main areas of drug trafficking into Kyrgyzstan point, at the very least, to a symbiosis between the group and drug trafficking networks. However, as the 1999 events suggest, the IMU has also in all likelihood been a leading actor in its own right in the drug trade.”²²⁷

The timing of the late summer incursions, starting in 1999, concur with the harvesting of the Afghan opium crop, the well establish links with Tajik officials and Taliban and al Qaeda members, the groups bases in northern Afghanistan and forward bases in Tajikistan, and the real purpose of the incursions – to divert attention away from shipments passing through – all point to the IMU's involvement in the drug trade.²²⁸

²²⁴ See Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban*, Yale University Press, 2000, Pg. 118-20.

²²⁵ See Osmonaliev, Pg. 27, describes the labs popping up in northern cities such as Kunduz.

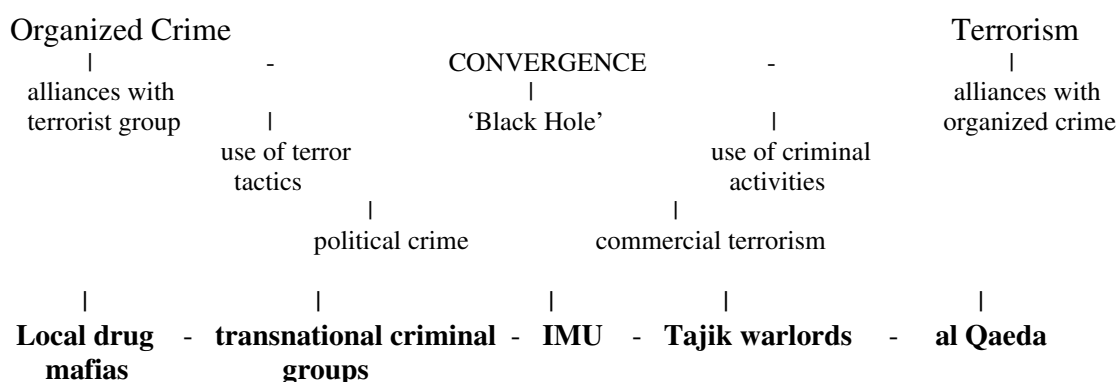
²²⁶ See Svante E. Cornell and Regina A. Spector, *Central Asia: More than Islamic Extremists*, The Washington Quarterly, 25:1, Winter 2002, Pg. 193-206. Svante E. Cornell, *Narcotics, Radicalism, and Armed Conflict in Central Asia: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan*, Terrorism and Political Violence, 17:577-597, 2005. Svante E. Cornell and Niklas L.P. Swantstrom, *The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security*, Problems of Post-Communism, Vol. 53, No. 4, July/August, 2006, Pg. 10-28. Tamara Makarenko, *Crime, Terror, and the Central Asian Drug Trade*, Harvard Asia Quarterly, Vol. 6, No. 3, (Summer 2002).

²²⁷ Cornell, *Narcotics, Radicalism, and Armed Conflict in Central Asia*, 2005, Pg 588.

²²⁸ See Cornell, *Narcotics, Radicalism, and Armed Conflict in Central Asia*, 2005, Pg. 588, and Makarenko, *Crime, Terror, and the Central Asian Drug Trade*, 2002.

The IMU's activities, and links to crime and terrorism best place it in the 'black hole' area of the Crime Terror Continuum, as a narco-terrorist group.²²⁹ The following version of the CTC contains the IMU and other groups it interacted. This is to provide perspective on the range of their activities.

Crime Terror Continuum²³⁰



This case study gives evidence for the following: The IMU was essentially a group comprised of two linked networks. Clearly the military wing, led by Juma Namangani, which conducted narco-terrorist activities, was more successful than Tahir Yuldashev's political wing. The group gradually moved from right to left on the CTC. Juma's central location seems to be the key to understanding this transition.

²²⁹ See Johan Engwall, *Stability and Security in Tajikistan: Drug Trafficking as a Threat to National Security*, arbetsrapporter Working Papers No. 86, Department of East European Studies Uppsala University, January 2005, Pg. 26, he believes the IMU is best described as a narco-terrorist group. See Emma Bjornehed, *Narco-Terrorism: The Merger of the War on Drugs and the War on Terror*, Global Crime, Vol. 6, No. 3&4, August-November 2004, Pg. 306-7. As this article points out this term can have a dual meaning, in the narcotics trade and terrorism. But it can also be used to emphasize both elements, which in the case of the IMU it does.

²³⁰ The placement of the IMU and other groups is from Engwall, Pg. 22. This author agrees with the conclusions reached by Engwall, Makarenko, and Cornell, who all place the IMU, to varying degrees in the convergence 'black hole' zone. Other groups that area often placed on the CTC are Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), Abu Sayyaf, and FARC.

Juma's location to three key elements; coercive power, usually expressed in violence; tangible goods or commodities, such as narcotics and weapons; and centrally located in Tajikistan or having forward operating bases there, allowed him to lead his chain network²³¹ far more effectively. Also, his experience as a veteran from the Soviet-Afghan War and the Tajik Civil War endowed him with the ability to lead and build trust with Tajik members who would later play crucial 'crossover' roles. His style of leadership was much more hierarchical and fit the type of smuggling group he was operating. Finally, he was able to build off success, which furthered his power in the IMU and influence in the regional drug trade until his death.

Tahir lacked the proximity Juma possessed. However, he was centrally located in the militant Islamic worlds of Peshawar and later Kabul. The problem was translating a narrow ideology into effective action, particularly in Uzbekistan. Tahir operated a loose star network with himself as the main hub. Since it was more decentralized from Juma's, and Tahir's IMU cells had to contend with the respective security services in the countries they operated in, he only had limited command and control. Success could not be built upon from sporadic bombings, incursions, and fiery rhetoric. The large mass arrests and aggressive police tactics also took their toll on IMU members in Uzbekistan. Since Tahir was not in Uzbekistan to maintain vigilance, the group suffered.²³² Instead he chose to stay in a safer area, Taliban controlled Afghanistan. This led to him and the political wing drifting away from their initial national purposes, and taking on the more global aims of al Qaeda. Which could in the future mean a better chance of success, by association, rather than continued slow headway in achieving the groups goals in

²³¹ A smuggling, or chain, network is also easier to control since it is based on single node-to-node interaction making command and control easier.

²³² Tahir's absence from Uzbekistan could be interpreted as being cowardly, or maybe he knew he would get caught and then what good could he accomplish.

Uzbekistan. Clearly that changed with the U.S. military action in Afghanistan and the IMU's political activities, or its splinter groups have been similar to its past ones, sporadic and unsuccessful.

The two IMU networks combined reveal success in a certain area, the drug trade. Thus the motivations of the group could be said to have orientated in that direction over time, while still putting up the “veneer” of Islamic change.²³³ Also, the testimony of former members challenges the Islamic vigor of the group, particularly Tahir's. One could make a case that the IMU was two groups and not one. Still, the IMU is best viewed as part of the rising crossover of criminal and terrorist networks in a post-Cold War world. However, Cronin suggests that a group ceases being a terrorist group when it makes that shift “to another modus operandi.”²³⁴ Exactly when this shift occurs, or did occur for the IMU requires more research.

Since September 11 many generalizations of terrorism have ruled over more specific analysis, often at the expense of accuracy. The IMU's potential has often been hyped, which benefits both the IMU and its antagonists, by many of these generalizations.²³⁵ At its peak the IMU was certainly a dangerous organization capable of inflicting damage on economic and political fronts and causing fear. But it is crucial to examine its actual record of activities, studying its criminal and terrorist networks, rather than believe the political rhetoric of the Central Asian rulers. What poses, as the biggest threat to Central Asia is not Islamic militancy, or ideology, but rather the basic human condition. The continued corruption among the region's governments, their arrogant

²³³ See Makarenko, *Crime, Terror and the Central Asian Drug Trade*, 2002. She cites Ahmed Rashid making this observation.

²³⁴ Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups*, International Security, Summer 2006, Vol. 31, No. 1, Pg. 31. This article provides an excellent discussion on the topic

²³⁵ The IMU has benefited because the hype has aided propaganda activities. The Uzbekistan government has benefited in the amount of aid it receives from Western nations because of the IMU threat.

leaders, ethnic divisions, thriving organized crime, all intoxicated with the dream of power and fear of humiliation.²³⁶ Fueling many of these nefarious ‘dealings’ are the relationships surrounding the drug trade. The trade continues to grease these various networks with unlimited supplies of money. Thus continuing to keep real progress and reform from taking hold in the post-Soviet era.

²³⁶ The civil wars in Afghanistan and Tajikistan were often about lust for power and ethnic conflict rather than any one particular ideology. One can translate much of the same motivation to the IMU. Oliver Roy and his analysis of the Tajik Civil War has made this argument.

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