

Afghanistan Humanitarian Situation and Security Problems after Coming to Power the Taliban^{*1} movement: A view from Tajikistan

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Abstract. The article analyzes the attitude of Tajikistan to the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and to security problems in this country after the Taliban^{*} came to power in August 2021. Unlike many states in the region, which were not particularly worried about the transition of Afghanistan under the control of a terrorist organization, this event negative reaction in the Tajik society. It perceived the threat to the Tajiks of Afghanistan as a threat to itself, its language, culture, values and, in general, the very existence of the nation. Tajik President Emomali Rahmon openly insisted on the formation of an inclusive government, on the obligatory consideration of the interests of ethnic Tajiks, who are about 46 percent of the population of Afghanistan. The consequences of the coming of the Taliban^{*} to power are for the first time seen in Tajikistan as a threat to the national identity of the Tajiks, Tajiks as a nation.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Taliban^{*}, humanitarian situation, Tajiks, Tajikistan, security

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Introduction

After the flight of the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, M.A.Ghani, from Afghanistan on August 15, 2021, and the transition to the control of the «Taliban»^{*} throughout the country, a difficult socio-economic, political, and humanitarian situation has developed. Events developed rapidly, and perhaps, with the exception of the president himself and his closest aides, no one could have imagined that the state would disintegrate so quickly and most importantly without resistance, just its surrender to the «Taliban»^{*} terrorist organization, the 300,000-strong army trained according to NATO standards would crumble. But if you analyze the whole situation of recent years, you can understand that the collapse of the republic was not sudden, it happened gradually. The prerequisites were laid back in 2014, when a deep political crisis began as a result of massive falsification of the results of the presidential elections, and the legitimacy of the political power of Afghanistan was called into question. Although the formation of the Government of National Unity temporarily mitigated the severity of the crisis, the ineffective policy and political ambitions of President M.A.Ghani, his selfishness, and an unprecedented level of corruption led to a weakening of the state, discontent among the population and the political elite of the country. This could not but affect the mood in the army, the policy of foreign countries towards the regime of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

During the period of negotiations between the United States and the «Taliban»^{*}, in the capitals of some leading countries and states of the region, aspirations to establish broader cooperation with the «Taliban»^{*} intensified, and the rhetoric towards this terrorist organization changed. Many countries offered assistance in holding a meeting between the «Taliban»^{*} and representatives of other political forces in Afghanistan. A campaign began on the pages of the press and on television to create a new image of the «Taliban»^{*} movement, which began to be called a “political organization”, a “national movement”, was considered almost the only real force in the fight against ISIS-Khorasan^{*3}, etc.

This process, in a situation where the «Taliban»^{*} was banned as a terrorist organization in these countries, and its leaders were blacklisted by the UN, looked strange in Tajikistan.

Unlike other countries, Tajikistan's policy towards the «Taliban»^{*} has not changed. Tajikistan did not take part in behind-the-scenes games with the «Taliban»^{*} and, given the experience of the 1990s, adhered to a clear and unambiguous policy that viewed the «Taliban»^{*} as a terrorist organization with all the ensuing consequences. The leadership of Tajikistan has always advocated a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.

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There are not many scientific works on this topic yet. The author used the works of both domestic and foreign authors, which touch upon such issues as the history of the resettlement of Afghan tribes to the north of Afghanistan, attempts to limit the scope of the Dari language and the monopolization of power by the nationalist circles of the Pashtun establishment, which have not lost their relevance today. In particular, this is the work of P.Alekseenkov [1], R.Makhmadshoev [3], Kh.Nazarov [5], Afghan historian M.S.Farhang [6]. The security problems of the region in the context of the coming to power of the «Taliban»* are considered, in particular, in the works of J.Latifov [2], Sh.Rizoen and M.Giyosov [4], and others.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the current situation in Tajikistan and the security problems in Afghanistan after the «Taliban»* came to power.

Materials and Methods

The study used the historical method, as well as methods of comparative analysis, induction and deduction, observation, etc.

The material was: speeches and interviews of the Presidents of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin, of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon and former President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.Karimov, of the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation S.Shoigu, Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation N.Patrushev and Director of the Second Department of Asia of the Russian Foreign Ministry Z.Kabulov and others, who served as the most important sources for writing this work.

The nature of the work required the analysis of a large amount of empirical material in the Tajik segment of Facebook, books of poems published in support of the struggle of the Panjshirs, and the author's personal observations of the reaction of Tajiks to the events in Afghanistan.

Results

On February 29, 2020, in the capital of Qatar, Doha, an Agreement was signed between the United States and the «Taliban»*, which, according to many experts, created all the prerequisites for the transfer of power to the «Taliban»*. In the opinion of Professor J.Latifov, "the participation of the «Taliban»* in the negotiations was a screen, a spectacle behind which the goal of seizing power was hidden" [2:69].

April 14, 2021, when US President Joe Biden announced the complete withdrawal of the American military contingent from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021, should be considered the starting point for the collapse of the state. Until that time, some circles still hoped for intra-Afghan talks in Doha, for the results of the Istanbul Conference and formation of a coalition government.

The «Taliban»*, apparently, were looking for an excuse to refuse to participate in the Istanbul Peace Conference in order to seize power by force. Therefore, J. Biden's statement

on the completion of the withdrawal of troops by September 11, 2021 was considered a violation of the Doha Agreement, which provided for the complete withdrawal of American troops by May 1, 2021. The «Taliban»* announced their refusal to take part in the work of the Istanbul Peace Conference and in general from participating in any or negotiations until foreign troops are withdrawn. The «Taliban»* leaders said they considered themselves free from their obligations and promised to take "adequate measures". The result was a massive forceful seizure of territories under the control of the state.

It is noteworthy that representatives of leading countries, including the United States, publicly warned the «Taliban»* during the negotiations to refuse to seize power by force, called for the formation of a coalition transitional government, and spoke about the inadmissibility of the revival of the regime of the Islamic Emirate by the «Taliban»*. They promised that otherwise the «Taliban»* regime would be isolated and without financial assistance. Such statements were made by representatives of Troika (USA, Russia, China) and Troika Plus (USA, Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran) in Moscow. Now they watched the "triumphal procession" of the «Taliban»*, and then de facto recognized the Islamic Emirate of the «Taliban»*.

It seems that many leading countries and countries of the region were aware of the behind-the-scenes games taking place; they were not particularly worried about the transition of Afghanistan under the control of the «Taliban»* terrorist organization. In Russia, some official circles also believed that the «Taliban»* did not pose a threat to the countries of Central Asia. Moreover, Zamir Kabulov, Special Representative of the Russian President for Afghanistan, Director of the Second Asian Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, speaking at a round table organized by the Foundation for the Support of Public Diplomacy named after Gorchakov said that "the presence of the «Taliban»* in northern Afghanistan will curb the growth of threats from the Islamic State terrorist group"⁴ concerning the countries of Central Asia".⁵

The only country that from the very beginning was concerned about the ongoing transition under the control of the «Taliban»* of vast territories without resistance and by order from Kabul was the Republic of Tajikistan. The leadership of Tajikistan was especially worried that the collapse of the Afghan state and the transition under the control of terrorists began from the northeastern provinces, from areas directly bordering Tajikistan. In the 1990s, the «Taliban»*, despite repeated attempts, failed to capture the northeastern provinces, which served as the main base of the anti-«Taliban»* resistance under the command of Ahmad Shah Massoud. This time, the «Taliban»* took into account the experience of the 1990s, and, in an effort to prevent the formation of a new anti-«Taliban»* resistance in the north, they took control of the entire territory along the perimeter of the

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⁵ The Foreign Ministry explained the need for the presence of the «Taliban»* in Afghanistan. Available from: <https://ria.ru/20210803/afghanistan-1744148413.html?ysclid=li8xk6jtpb591177251> (accessed 20.02.2023).

Afghan-Tajik border. Hundreds of government troops crossed into Tajikistan without much resistance.

After the transition of the border districts of Afghanistan under the control of the «Taliban»*, as the National News Agency of Tajikistan (NIAT) Khovar wrote, “On July 22, 2021, at four o’clock in the morning, by order of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Tajikistan, for the first time in the history of the independent state of Tajikistan, throughout the republic began checking the combat readiness of the Armed Forces, law enforcement agencies and personnel of mobilization reserves under the name “Marz-2021” (“Border-2021”). 100,000 servicemen of the Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies, as well as 130,000 officers and soldiers of the mobilization reserve, a total of 230,000 people, gathered in response to an alarm signal in the areas of operation and checked their combat readiness. 20 thousand officers and soldiers of the mobilization reserve were additionally sent to the border regions of Tajikistan with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to replenish the units of the Border Troops.⁶ All this testified to the special concern of the leadership of Tajikistan in connection with the current “extremely complex and uncertain situation” in the neighboring country.

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The transfer of entire counties and then provinces to the «Taliban»* was explained in Kabul as a tactical retreat with a promise to return them to state control. However, as events unfolded, it became clear that no one was going not only to return the lost territories, but also to protect at least the capital of the country.

After the country’s President M. A. Ghani and his closest aides left Afghanistan, power passed to the «Taliban»*, most people in Afghanistan were horrified. People tried to leave Afghanistan as best they could, even climbing onto the on the chassis of an American transport plane.

The second period of the «Taliban»* in power caused a particularly negative reaction in Tajik society. In Tajikistan, they closely followed the events and sincerely worried how the achievements of the last 20 years were crumbling, people’s hopes for freedom of speech, for the establishment of democracy, for the observance of human rights, women’s rights, the rights of non-Pashtun ethnic groups, especially Tajiks. Various segments of the population in Tajikistan for the first time began to perceive the «Taliban»* as a threat not only to the security of Tajikistan, which has always been said, but “as an anti-Tajik phenomenon that threatens, first of all, the Persian-speaking population of Afghanistan” [4:266].

The other neighboring countries also warned about the negative consequences of the policy of discrimination and non-observance of the interests of various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. For example, on December 6, 2001, the President of Uzbekistan I. Karimov, in his speech at the VII session of the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan, noted that “based on the centuries-old history of this country, the situation requires that no one ever

⁶ “MARZ-2021”. In Tajikistan, the state of combat readiness of 230 thousand people was checked with an alarm. Available from: <https://khovar.tj/rus/2021/07/marz-2021-v-tadzhikistane-proverili-sostoyanie-boegotovnosti-230-tysyach-chelovek-s-obyavleniem-trevogi/>

forget that incomplete observance of the interests all segments of the population living on this earth, belonging to different nationalities, nationalities and religions, was the cause of many bloodshed and led to negative consequences.⁷

The Tajik intelligentsia is seriously concerned about the «Taliban»*’s policy against the Dari or Tajik language, the removal of Tajiks from power, and in general against everything Tajik in Afghan society. Thus, the formed interim government consists of Pashtuns and exclusively from among the supporters of the «Taliban»*, with the exception of the symbolic presence of representatives of Tajiks and Uzbeks in it; all government regulations are issued in Pashto only, and thus Dari is limited in government business. In the past, there have been repeated attempts to legally restrict the Dari language in office work and in the field of education, but they have not been successful. In the official newspaper *Islah*, on March 3, 1937, a decree of the king was issued on the “development and revival of the Afghan language”, according to which measures were taken to train all officials in the center and localities in Pashto language courses [6: 632]. The program was designed for 3 years, but it did not lead to results. Therefore, the government was forced to extend it for another three years. Moreover, the government unexpectedly switched all schools in the country to Pashto. According to M.S.Farkhang, “these government measures, apart from harming the education system and the country’s economy, did not lead to anything. But the greatest harm from the implementation of this program and the discriminatory policy in general, was the emergence of a feeling of distrust and enmity between different peoples” [6:634]. Although in the Constitution of Afghanistan, which was adopted in 1964, the Pashto and Dari languages were both recognized as official, however, a few years later, a group of nationalist-minded deputies in parliament initiated the issue of giving official status only to the Pashto language, which led to heated debates in parliament and resonance in society. According to H.Nazarov, “a sharp debate over the language led to an aggravation of the conflict and national-ethnic contradictions between Tajiks and Pashtuns” [5:555].

The policy of the Pashtunization of Afghanistan is clearly implemented in the personnel policy of the «Taliban»* and at the local level. At present, the governors in all provinces and responsible officials in state authorities, commanders of military corps and other units are Pashtuns.

With the advent of the «Taliban»*, the resettlement of Pashtuns from the southern and eastern regions, and even from Pakistan in the territory inhabited by non-Pashtun peoples to the north of the country and the forced resettlement of Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras from their ancestral lands, is again relevant. The resettlement policy is not new in the history of Afghanistan, it began at the end of the 19th century and is designed to ensure a Pashtun majority in areas inhabited by non-Pashtuns. The Tajik scientist R.Mamadshoev writes that the State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan has an interesting document in Tajik:

⁷ There is no other goal for us except the interests of our people, our motherland. Speech of the President Islam Karimov at the VII session of the Oliy Majlis (December 6, 2001). Available from: https://buxgalter.uz/doc?id=412972_vystuplenie_prezidenta_islama_karimova_na_vii_sessii_oliy_majlisa_6_dekabrya_2001_goda&prodid=1_vse_zakonodatelstvo_uzbekistana&ysclid=licz0ws07z265118029#

Emir Abdurakhman ordered the relocation of 50 thousand households of Afghans (Pashtuns) from the city of Herat and the Kandahar region and the region to Chorviloyat. 12,000 households have already been resettled from Herat to the river bank and endowed with land, freed from state service for 12 years... 38,000 go to Andkhoy, Akcha and Kelif on the river bank, where a place has been prepared for them... [3:162].

During the reign of Abdurrahman, the regions of Rustak and Chahab were also settled by several thousand Afghans [1:84]. The entire region between Mazar-i-Sharif and Balkh was inhabited exclusively by Afghans (Pashtuns), the indigenous population, Tajiks and Uzbeks, remained to live in islands in the Davlatabad region and several villages"[1:83]. The resettlement policy continued and continues.

Just as dangerous is the renaming of the historical names of cities by the «Taliban»*, the destruction of the historical and cultural heritage of Afghanistan. For example, the city of Charikar is renamed Imami Azam. Of particular concern is the fact that the «Taliban»* carry out their nationalist policy or the general Pashtunization of Afghanistan under the slogans of Islam. To strengthen their monopoly right to power, the «Taliban»* have closed hundreds of independent newspapers and magazines, television and radio, all political parties and public organizations have been banned, there is no constitution and parliament.

The experience of almost 30 years of «Taliban»* history shows that this organization never makes concessions in negotiations, does not deviate one iota from its principles, even for the sake of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Evidence of this is the gradual tightening of policies regarding women's rights to study, work and other freedoms, the lack of attention to the calls of the international community for the formation of an inclusive government.

Therefore, a significant part of the population in Tajikistan closely followed the events taking place in Afghanistan, especially in Panjshir, the only province that was temporarily still outside the control of the «Taliban»*, and the son of the legendary Ahmad Shah Masood, Ahmad Masood, raised the banner of anti-«Taliban»* resistance.

On the pages of the press and social networks, the level of support and solidarity of various groups and social strata with the Panjshir resistance fighters was extremely high. Many in Tajikistan, during the ««Taliban»*»* offensive against the positions of the defenders of Panjshir, did not sleep at night, calling through social networks to stay awake for Panjshir. Dozens of groups appeared in the Tajik segment of Facebook, where they shared news from Afghanistan, published articles and poems. A group called "Panjsher – marze nomus" ("Panjsher – the line of honor") was popular.

For the first time in Tajikistan, in relation to the events taking place in Afghanistan, to the policy of the «Taliban»*, solidarity with their fellow Tajiks in Afghanistan, the point of view of the official authorities and various layers of civil society were closely intertwined. The Tajik society perceived the events in Afghanistan as a threat to the Tajiks of Afghanistan, the Tajik language and culture in general.

The theme of Afghanistan and the heroic resistance in Panjshir became relevant in Tajik literature. In a short period, hundreds of poems, poems and stories appeared,

celebrating the heroism of the Panjshirs and the new leader of the resistance, the young Ahmad Massoud. Two literary collections were published and presented under the titles "Khamosai Panjsher" ("Poem of Panjsher") and "Noma ba Panjsher" ("Letter to Panjsher").

Through the media and social networks, Tajiks expressed sympathy for starving families in Afghanistan, women deprived of their rights to work and study, officials of the former government who were persecuted by the «Taliban»*, etc.

Such a radical transformation in the views of the population on the Afghan events is associated with a very bold, clear and stable position of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon in the fight against terrorism, protecting the interests of the Tajiks of Afghanistan, attitudes towards the «Taliban»*, monopolization of power and political discrimination against non-Pashtun ethnic groups.

On August 25, in Dushanbe, President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon received the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Makhdum Shah Mahmoud Qureishi. During the meeting, it was noted that today one of the main threats to regional security is the situation in Afghanistan.

The main points of the position of Tajikistan regarding the situation in Afghanistan, stated at this meeting are the following:

- "In order to urgently solve the political security problems of a neighboring country, it is necessary to create an inclusive government with the participation of all national minorities, including the Tajiks of Afghanistan, who make up more than 46% of the population of this country.
- The state system in Afghanistan should be determined by the will and taking into account the position of all citizens of the country.
- Tajikistan will not recognize any other government formed in this country through oppression and persecution, without taking into account the position of the entire Afghan people, especially all their national minorities.
- Tajiks should take their rightful place in the future government of Afghanistan"⁸.

At the current stage of the crisis in Afghanistan, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon pays special attention, along with security problems, to the ethnic component of the crisis in this country. Never before has the President of Tajikistan so openly and persistently insisted on the obligatory consideration of the interests of ethnic Tajiks when forming a new government in Afghanistan. He said for the first time that Tajiks make up about 46 percent of the population of Afghanistan and should take their rightful place in the government. The consequences of the coming of the «Taliban»* to power are seen in Tajikistan as a threat to the national identity of the Tajiks, in general for the Tajiks as a nation.

For the first time, the Tajiks of Tajikistan so solidarily recognized the Tajiks of Afghanistan as their fellow tribesmen. Never at the level of government and society has there been such solidarity with the Tajiks of Afghanistan as this time.

⁸ Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Makhdum Shah Mahmoud Qureishi. Available from: <http://www.president.tj/ru/node/26368>

In Tajikistan, except for specialists and part of the creative intelligentsia, even after Tajikistan gained its independence, all citizens of Afghanistan were always called "Afghans", there was no perception of them as the same Tajiks, but living on the other side of the Pyanj – Amu Darya River. The author of these lines grew up on the banks of the Pyanj River in Tajik Darvaz and remembers that in childhood, the word "Afghan" was not used in relation to the inhabitants of Afghan Darvaz, they were called "Ubarachi", i.e. living on the other side (Panja). Gradually, the word "Ubarachi" disappeared from the lexicon of the inhabitants of Darvaz, and the Darvazians of this side of the river began to call the Darvazians of that bank "Afghans".

Thus, the arrival of the «Taliban»* and the establishment of strict rules, the implementation of a policy of oppression and discrimination against Tajiks contributed to a greater sense of solidarity with the Tajiks of Afghanistan and a clearer knowledge of their ethnic community.

However, such support for the Tajiks and rejection of the «Taliban»* does not mean that there were not and are not any supporters of the «Taliban»* ideology in Tajikistan. Although a small but part of the religiously inclined youth did not hide in social networks their joy from the «Taliban»* and the "establishment of a true Islamic regime" in Afghanistan.

In the mosques of Dushanbe, under the influence of tough measures by the «Taliban»*, including the ban on music, traditional games, and the education of girls, some worshipers cautiously began to propagate and talk about the alleged existence of a verse in the Koran about the impermissibility of music in Muslim society.

With the strengthening of the terrorist regime of the «Taliban»*, some sympathizers in Tajikistan in conversations in the markets, in transport and other public places began to openly express their support for them. All this testified that the probability of spreading the radical views of the «Taliban»* and other extremist and terrorist groups located in Afghanistan remains very high.

The expert community of Tajikistan and law enforcement agencies noted that there are favorable conditions for the spread of the radical ideology of Talibanism* through social networks, the press and other means, which is assessed as a threat to national security.

Of course, the attention of the security agencies and the government of Tajikistan is focused on the activities of terrorist organizations, including those of foreign origin, in northern Afghanistan. According to information coming from Afghanistan, more than 20 terrorist organizations of foreign origin operate in Afghanistan with the support of the ««Taliban»*». Among them, more than 10 groups are similar to «Al-Qaeda»*⁹ in their ideological postulates and radical views. These are «ISIS-Khorasan»*¹⁰, the Islamic

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Movement of East Turkestan*¹¹, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan*¹²; Jamaat Ansarullah (Tajikistan)*¹³, Katibat-al Imam Bukhari*¹⁴, Jaishi Muhammad*¹⁵, Tahrek «Taliban»* Pakistan («Taliban»* Movement of Pakistan)*¹⁶, Tatbike Shariati Muhammad (Implementation of Sharia Mohammad)*¹⁷, Jamaat Ahror*¹⁸, Mujahideen al-Badr*¹⁹, Lashkar Tayiba*²⁰, Kashmir Mujahideen Movement*²¹, etc. The «Taliban»* protect these groups despite the demands of the international community According to various sources, «ISIS-Khorasan»* in northern Afghanistan has recently increased its activities, it was reported that it was formed in July 2022, organization «Tahreke Talebane Tajikistan»*²² («Taliban»* Movement of Tajikistan"

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based on the terrorist organization Ansarullah^{*23}, consisting of people from Tajikistan.

What worries the Tajiks is that Tajiks are part of many terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan, including «ISIS-Khorasan»*. This is evidenced by published data on the perpetrators of terrorist acts in Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, etc.

The expert community of Tajikistan believes that Afghanistan, especially the north of the country, is turning into a haven for international terrorist groups, into a training center for terrorists. Some Tajik experts write about the trend of Badakhshan turning into a new North Veziristan, and Afghanistan into a new world center of attraction for Islamic radicals. This can be facilitated by the creation of numerous schools of jihad in every province, a network of madrasahs and mosques, like Pakistan.

Therefore, the decisive statements of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and his firm position regarding the formation of an inclusive government with the participation of representatives of all major ethnic groups, including Tajiks, as conditions for recognizing the government, proceed from the national interests of Tajikistan, the interests of peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region as a whole.

Of course, for many observers in Tajikistan and for international partners, this decisive statement by the President of Tajikistan came as a surprise. Especially against the background of how the main allies of Tajikistan in the CSTO and the SCO, including the Russian Federation, China, Uzbekistan, have taken not only a wait-and-see, but clearly benevolent position towards the «Taliban»*, building relationships. The author witnessed how, at various scientific conferences, some experts from different countries close to government circles criticized the President of Tajikistan for his «tough and special position» against the «Taliban»*.

But President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon has not changed his position on the events in Afghanistan. He argued it, and it seems to us, he was able to some extent to convince the leaders of the allied countries about the tragic consequences of the policy of discrimination pursued by the «Taliban»* against non-Pashtun peoples, the monopolization of power by the «Taliban»*, about the existing clear threats to the security of the region from the «Taliban»* Afghanistan.

For example, in his statement, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin at a meeting of the Valdai International Club confirmed E. Rahmon's words about the number of Tajiks in Afghanistan. According to him, the composition of the government formed by the «Taliban»* movement consists mainly of Pashtun groups. "But there are Tajiks there," Putin said. "And they are from 40 to 47 percent according to various estimates. Look, that's a lot."²⁴

Statements by representatives of Russia's power structures and special services also

²³ *The organization has been recognized a terrorist organization by the Russian Supreme Court. Unified federal list of organizations, including foreign and international organizations, recognized as terrorist in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (as of June 25, 2023). Available from: <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/npd/terror.htm> (accessed: 25.06.2023);18+

²⁴ There are many Tajiks in Afghanistan. This was stated by Russian President Vladimir Putin at a meeting of the Valdai International Club. Available from: <https://khovar.tj/rus/2021/10/tadzhikov-v-afganistane-mnogo-ob-etom-zayavil-prezident-rossii-vladimir-putin-na-zasedanii-mezhdunarodnogo-kluba-valdaj/?ysclid=ldblc80ucy349551446>

indicate that the presence of international terrorist groups in Afghanistan and the policy of the regime seriously worry them, the hope for the «Taliban»*, who can effectively fight «ISIS-Khorasan»*, is not justified.

The Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, General of the Army Sergei Shoigu, at a meeting of the Ministers of Defense of Russia and the states of Central Asia in June 2022, said that "the leaders of international terrorists consider Afghan territory as a base for infiltrating neighboring countries and creating an extensive network of jihadist underground, replenished, in including through the transfer of militants from hot spots."²⁵ And the head of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, N.P.Patrushev, in his interview to "Arguments and Facts" on January 10, 2023, in fact, equates the «Taliban»* movement with such odious terrorist groups as «Al-Qaeda»* and «ISIS»*.

They (that is USA – K.I.) themselves created terrorist organizations such as «Al-Qaeda»*, the «Taliban»* or «ISIS»* to achieve their goals, and they themselves fought against them. Arranging a demonstration liquidation of terrorist leaders like Osama bin Laden, a hundred new ones were trained and armed, he said.²⁶

The well-known Russian expert A.Serenko, in his article in "Nezavisimaya Gazeta", quotes the theses of the speech of the «Taliban»* leader Maulavi Haibatullah Akhund before the ulema (Islamic scholars) in Kabul, which cannot but disturb the leaders of the countries of the region. Haibatullah Akhund, in particular, stated that "the establishment of Sharia in Afghanistan is only the first stage of the successful jihad of the «Taliban»* (the organization is banned in the Russian Federation)." According to him, "in the future, the «Taliban»* and the Afghan ulema are obliged to lead the whole world to Sharia leadership."²⁷ Thus, the leader of the «Taliban»* made it clear that the jihad of his militants would not be limited to the territory of Afghanistan.

Certain circles in Russia, Iran, China and Uzbekistan are beginning to realize the futility of cooperation with the «Taliban»* against the backdrop of the «Taliban»* regime unwilling to compromise and the intensification of the terrorist activity of «ISIS-Khorasan»* and other terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

However, the participants of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of Afghanistan's neighbors in Samarkand, which was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, called on the new Afghan authorities to form an inclusive government, lifting all restrictions on women and national minorities called on the United States to lift sanctions on the country. This was reported by

²⁵ Sergei Shoigu: international terrorists consider Afghanistan as a base for infiltration into Available from: neighboring countries <https://paodkb.org/events/sergey-shoigu-mezhdunarodnye-terroristy-rassmatrivayut-afganistan-kak>

²⁶ "They want to turn Russia into Muscovy." Nikolai Patrushev – about the West and Ukraine. Available from: https://aif.ru/politics/world/rossiyu-hotyat_prevratit_v_moskoviyu_nikolay_patrushev_o_zapade_i_ukraine

²⁷ Serenko A. The leader of the "Taliban" proclaimed a course for global jihad. Available from: https://www.ng.ru/world/2023-03-29/100_world29032023.html

“Nezavisimaya Gazeta” on April 13, 2023.²⁸ However, this does not mean that the «Taliban»* leadership is ready to hear the calls of the conference participants.

Under these conditions, some experts believe that the «Taliban»*, like the American project in Afghanistan, will never be allies and friends of the countries of the region. Therefore, in the face of the activation of terrorist groups and the growing threat emanating from Afghanistan, they have no other way but to resort again to the support of the National Resistance Front under the leadership of Ahmad Massoud or to try to help to create a broader anti-«Taliban»* front on its basis.

Conclusions

Thus, for many reasons, Tajikistan is following the developments in Afghanistan with concern and concern.

In Tajikistan, they are sure that the «Taliban»* with their ideology, their interpretation of Sharia, Pashtun nationalism poses a threat to the Tajiks of Afghanistan. Tajiks under the «Taliban»* are removed from power; the policy of the «Taliban»* will lead to a restriction of the use of the Dari-Tajik language, which for more than a thousand years was the state language, the language of interethnic communication in this country. The «Taliban»* regime threatens to destroy the centuries-old historical and cultural heritage of Tajiks in this country.

In Tajikistan, they are concerned about the possibility of members of terrorist groups penetrating the territory of Tajikistan and spreading the radical ideology of «Taliban»*ism. Despite assurances from the «Taliban»* not to threaten neighboring countries, the presence of dozens of terrorist organizations in this country cannot but worry the leadership of Tajikistan.

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²⁸ Petrov G. Russia and Afghanistan's neighbors called on the United States to give money to Kabul. Available from: https://www.ng.ru/world/2023-04-13/6_8706_afghanistan.html?ysclid=li8xpjfwre45289478

²⁹ The organization has been recognized a terrorist organization by the Russian Supreme Court. Unified federal list of organizations, including foreign and international organizations, recognized as terrorist in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (as of June 25, 2023). URL: <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/npd/terror.htm>; 18+

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