

Supplemental File

for “**Violence and the Dynamics of Political Settlements in Post-Soviet Kabardino-Balkaria**,” by Jan Koehler, Alexey Gunya, Murat Shogenov and Asker Tumov. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 14, no. 2 (April 2020).]

Case Studies

Case One: Pushing into Prielbruz

The valley leading up to Mt. Elbrus is an attractive territory for the tourism industry (skiing in particular). It was the subject of numerous federal state development programmes, mainly regarding infrastructure investments.[1] Access to local resources, land in particular, is regulated by local actors, i.e. private organisations and local self-governments.[2] As president, Kanokov attempted to acquire access to local land using the administrative resources of the KBR government as well as informal channels of pressure and influence. Official and informal pressures on the municipality of Elbrus has intensified since 2009, when the outsider Albert Nazranov, a Kabardian underworld authority, was appointed as deputy head of the Elbrus district, which is populated mainly by Balkars.

Kanokov surrounded himself with loyal people, including those with criminal connections. A clear example is Nazranov [...]. Kanokov made him deputy head of the Elbrus district in order to take control of the land in this region. However, Nazranov was soon killed in Moscow.[3]

The problems the Elbrus district has been facing is linked to land-tenure issues on the one hand, and general mistrust of the KBR government by Balkar community representatives. Many perceived Kanokov as a Kabardian nationalist who intended to capture ‘native Balkarian land’ in order to establish and promote his own personal businesses there. Numerous peaceful protests organized by Balkar social movements were held, mostly in the region but some even reaching Moscow.[4] Nevertheless, the government kept up its pressure on local communities in Elbrus. In February 2011, a lethal attack on a minibus carrying domestic tourists from Moscow to Prielbrusie was used as the pretext for declaring a state of emergency in the whole district.[5] As a result of the counter-terrorist operation, access to the Elbrus region was blocked for almost a year, disrupting the local tourism industry. The official reason for the counter-terrorist operation was the fight against radical Islamists, who had allegedly found shelter in the Elbrus region.[6] Locally, the anti-terrorism operations in mountain resorts were seen as a means for the RBK government to increase economic pressure in order to acquire control over land and re-distribute real estate in this highly profitable region.

The regional authorities have introduced a counter-insurgency regime, in order to provoke the fall of land prices and force the population of the region to sell the land. But the population did not give in, although it was hard, especially for those who took out loans.[7]

The municipality of Elbrus appears to be a rare case where there has been relatively successful consistent and strategic protection of legal control over local resources from attempts by various official as well as informal external stakeholders to access and control these resources (land, tourism and infrastructure). During the Kanokov era, this was successful because it relied on a well-secured and independent local government, able to work both the legal side and the informal network side of this long-term conflict [8]

The case, however, also shows the limits of the re-distributive narrow clientelism that replaced Kokov’s broader, more inclusive elite-balancing approach. Insecurity escalated – because of the rise in authentic and autonomous anti-state radicalisation but, possibly, also because of murky attempts by local state security organisations to benefit from having security incidents under their control.

When they [the insurgents] began to kill policemen every day, everyone thought about self-defence, because the state could not cope with it, KBR law enforcers could not cope, they were shot. Entrepreneurs turned to self-defence as a necessary measure... The security that Kokov used to provide was

gone, and everyone was thinking about how to protect their business, their families. [...] They began to attack tourists in order to discredit the state, maybe even Kanokov himself as an incapable head of the republic. [9]

At the same time, those elite representatives who lost their places at the metaphorical table where political rents were mobilised and distributed turned against the government at republican level. This loss of elite support trickled down to the broader public and resulted in a decrease of trust in the government and, eventually, the legitimacy of the state itself.

Case Two: Pushing a political competitor out (replacing local Rosneft with federal Lukoil)

After Valery Kokov's departure in 2005 several candidates were rumoured to aspire for the position of President, including Valery Kardanov – partisan of the late Kokov, deputy of the KBR Parliament and chief executive of the regional branch of Rosneft, Russia's largest oil producer.[10] Although Kanokov took the position, Kardanov remained a strong player among KBR elites and wielded considerable influence within the republic. The political rivalry between the two politicians intensified in 2008 when Kanokov introduced a new model for elections to the Parliament, following amendments in the national law. Kardanov strongly opposed the President's attempts to replace single-mandate constituencies with party lists.[11]

Shortly thereafter Kardanov allegedly became involved in a political conflict between the public authorities and the Council of Elders of the Balkarian people (SSBN). The SSBN is an ethno-nationalist organisation that focusses its activity on the rehabilitation of the Balkars after the 1944 deportations and on land-tenure issues in Balkar-dominated areas of the KBR.[12] SSBN organized numerous protest rallies across Kabardino-Balkaria, held a hunger strike in Moscow, and secured some backing in the Duma, i.e. the lower house of parliament of the Russian Federation (deputy M. Zalikhanov initiated a petition to Putin, warning about the growing emergency situation in KBR that resulted from the harassment of Balkars by Kabardinians).[13] Kardanov was accused of providing financial support to SSBN in seeking to delegitimise the Kanokov regime.[14]

[During the Kokov period] there was the Kabardino-Balkarian company Rosneft. It was a branch of the federal company but a tax resident of the republic and a budget-forming company for the republic. [The head of the company, Kardanov] had ambitions to become head of the republic after Kokov. From the very first days, a personal hostility to Kanokov developed.[15]

Kanokov's government responded with determination: in 2008 the KBR authorities signed an agreement with another national-scale oil company, Lukoil, attempting to oust Rosneft from the local market. In 2009 Kardanov failed to win in the parliamentary elections and lost his mandate as deputy.[16] In 2010, he suffered another defeat when Rosneft suspended its previous plans for building a refinery in Kabardino-Balkaria and constructed the plant in Chechnya instead.[17] After revenues to Rosneft dropped, Kardanov lost his position as chief executive. In 2013, Rosneft claimed to have discovered large-scale embezzlement. Police opened a criminal case into Kardanov's alleged fraud and later accused him of the illegal privatization of the recreational compound in Prielbrusie.[18] Judicial proceedings are ongoing at the time of writing.[19]

There was a story about the illegal privatization of a company hotel in the Elbrus area, a criminal case was brought and he [Kardanov] went on the run. The company had gone. Rosneft was replaced by a network of petrol stations run by Lukoil, which is not a tax resident of the republic. Rosneft's petrol stations received a powerful competitor that they could not match... Or maybe he [Kanokov] even sacrificed the company in order to deprive Kardanov of that source of income. Until then, Rosneft petrol stations had had a monopoly in this field.[20]

This case shows some of the costs of changing from a (mostly informal) regime of inclusive and balanced rent-distribution to a new, less inclusive regime of inner-circle nepotism and wider clan-based clientelism, relying more on the distribution of rents drawn from federally provided business opportunities than from central

transfer budgets (*dotations*). Elite representatives from the previous regime tend to be more socially embedded and may have a broad support base among various kinds of politically relevant elites (in this example: both main ethnic groups). Hence, political competition between these representatives may be fierce and prone to escalation, which in turn may hurt the local economy and prove politically disruptive.

Notes

[1] On the Tour Cluster Development Programme, see Kazenin, Konstantin and Irina Starodubrovskaya. 2014: Severnyj Kavkaz: Quo Vadis? (14 June 2014), available at: <http://polit.ru/article/2014/01/14/caucasus/#ultr006>; 01.01.2019.

[2] For a more detailed account, see Koehler, Jan, Gunya, Alexey and Tenov, Timur, 2017: Governing the Local in the North Caucasus, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 58: 5, 502–532.

[3] Timur Tenov (Interviewee). The interview took place in Nalchik on 1 August 2019. Tenov is a prominent political expert in Kabardino-Balkaria who works in local university and is able to provide fascinating information on political processes in KBR.

[4] V Moskve provodyat golodovku balkartsy [Balkarians go on hunger strike in Moscow] (10 July 2010), *Caucasus Knot*, at: <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/171420>; 21 December 2019.

[5] Жаркий курорт. В Приэльбрусье застрелили туристов из Москвы и взорвали канатную дорогу [Tourists from Moscow shot dead and cableway blown up in Prielbrusie] (21.02.2011), *Lenta.ru*, available at: <https://lenta.ru/articles/2011/02/21/elbrus/>; 12.02.2020.

[6] ПЦ ‘Мемориал’: КТО в Приэльбрусье довело жителей до грани выживания [Human rights organization ‘Memorial’: CTO in Prielbrusie drove locals to the verge of mere subsistence] (21.02.2012), *Caucasus Knot*, available at: <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/201569/>; 12.02.2020.

[7] Interview with representative of the local self-administration of the village of Elbrus, Summer 2013.

[8] See Jan Koehler et al., 2017.

[9] S.M. (Interviewee). The interview took place in Nalchik from 6 to 8 November 2019. The expert wished to remain anonymous; he is a 48-year-old businessman, Kabardian, familiar with business elites and republican top officials, and has chaired or participated in precinct election commissions work during the republican president and parliament campaigns.

[10] Muradin Rakhaev (Interviewee). The interview took place in Nalchik on 12 September 2017. Rakhaev had been a head of village Bezenghi until he was displaced by order of President Kanokov. Rakhaev thereafter led numerous Balkar protests against republican authorities.

[11] Альберт Кажаров: Иные времена, иные речи, – комментарии к выступлению депутата В. Карданова на заседании парламента КБР [Albert Kazharov: Other times, other words – comments to the speech by deputy V. Kardanov] (24.06.2008), sk-news.ru, available at: <https://sk-news.ru/news/analitic/7292/>; 12.02.2020.

[12] Как борьба за власть превратила славное будущее Кабардино-Балкарии в бесславное настоящее [How a power struggle turned glorious future of Kabardino-Balkaria into inglorious present] (04.01.2019), sk-news, available at: <https://sk-news.ru/news/authority/57666/#>; 10.02.2020.

[13] Общественные организации Кабардино-Балкарии обвиняют депутата-’единоросса’ в провокации [Public organizations in Kabardino-Balkaria shame a ‘United Russa’ deputy for a provocation] (16.10.2008), *Caucasus knot*, available at: <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/142928>; 12.02.2020.

[14] Как борьба за власть превратила славное будущее Кабардино-Балкарии в бесславное настоящее [How a power struggle turned glorious future of Kabardino-Balkaria into inglorious present] (04.01.2019), sk-news, available at: <https://sk-news.ru/news/authority/57666/#>; 10.02.2020.

[15] S.M. (Interviewee), Nalchik, 6–8 November 2019.

[16] Уважаемый человек попался на турбазе [Respectable man got hooked for a camp site], in: Эксперт Юг 279: 30–40, available at: <https://expert.ru/south/2013/40/uvazhaemyj-chelovek-popalsya-na-turbaze/>; 10.02.2020.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Как борьба за власть превратила славное будущее Кабардино-Балкарии в бесславное настоящее [How a power struggle turned glorious future of Kabardino-Balkaria into inglorious present] (04.01.2019), sk-news, available at: <https://sk-news.ru/news/authority/57666/#>; 10.02.2020.

[19] Maratova, Lyudmila, 2020: Валерию Карданову стало плохо во время заседания суда, in: Kavkazkiy Uzel, available at: <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/345244/>; 10.02.2020.

[20] S.M. (Interviewee), Nalchik, 6–8 November 2019.