Privatization

One of the most important reforms of Turkmenistan's economic plan is privatization. Article 9 of the 1992 constitution guarantees citizens the right to own capital, land, and other material or intellectual property, but no law has stipulated the source from which land could be acquired. No fund of land available for private purchase has been established. A law on land ownership allows every citizen the right to own and bequeath to heirs plots smaller than fifty hectares, so long as they are continuously cultivated, and to obtain a long-term lease on up to 500 hectares. Such land may not be bought or sold, however. In 1993 only about 100 peasant farms were privately run, and they were leased rather than owned. Nevertheless, after the government announced the 1993 law allowing fifty-hectare plots, it soon received more than 5,000 applications.

In February 1993, a State Committee on Land Reform was established, with a goal of privatizing 10 to 15 percent of all agricultural land. Beginning in May 1993, the state began leasing land on the condition that 35 percent of the state procurement for cotton be surrendered, with no monetary compensation, as payment of rent. Estimates of the irrigated land since leased or under private ownership range from 3 to 12 percent. The state also intends to privatize all unprofitable agricultural enterprises.

The privatization process is managed by the Department of State Property and Privatization, which is part of the Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Banking. Short-term plans call for continued state control of the gas, oil, railway, communications, and energy industries and agriculture—sectors that combine to account for 80 percent of the economy. Laws on leasing, joint-stock companies, and entrepreneurship were adopted in the early 1990s. A general privatization law passed in 1992 describes the gradual denationalization of state property through a variety of methods.

In 1992 only 2,600 small enterprises—mostly individual ventures such as trading outlets and home-worker operations—were privately owned. Through the end of 1993, only a few small trade and service enterprises had moved to private ownership, mostly sold to foreign buyers. Plans called for conversion of large manufacturing firms into joint-stock enterprises by the end of 1994, and private ownership of all trade and service-sector enterprises with fewer than 500 employees by the

end of 1995. However, the state would maintain a "controlling interest" in businesses that become joint stock companies and would retain control over profitable larger concerns.

A second important component of Turkmenistan's economic development plan is marketization. To promote this process, a decree was issued in March 1993 for the formation of a joint-stock bank, the granting of additional credits to the Agroindustrial Bank for the development of entrepreneurship, and the establishment of seven free economic zones. Agricultural entrepreneurs are to be granted special profits tax and land payment exemptions. Within free economic zones, companies with more than 30 percent foreign ownership are to receive special exemptions from profit tax and rental payments.

Fiscal and Monetary Conditions

In the first half of the 1990s, Turkmenistan slowly established independent fiscal and monetary institutions and policies to replace the centralized Soviet system upon which the republic had relied prior to independence. These innovations have included a separate national currency, an independent national bank, and mechanisms to control budgetary deficits.

Banking System

Until Turkmenistan became independent, its banks essentially functioned as accounting branches of the Soviet State Bank. Especially after introducing its own currency in November 1993, Turkmenistan experienced a need to develop a true banking system. The current structure, defined by the 1993 State Banking Law, includes a central bank (called by the Russian term Gosbank) that is responsible for the conduct of monetary policy and supervision of the banking system, a state-run savings bank (called by the Russian term Sberbank) and an external trade bank (called by the Russian term Vneshekonombank), and commercial banks such as the Turkmenistan International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The latter institution is designed specifically to attract investments and promote exports in the gas and oil industries.

Turkmenistan's banks are expected to operate under a fractional reserve system that allows commercial banks to set interest rates based upon the increase or decline of their reserves in the state bank, giving them an incentive to allocate credit more easily or stringently as the market allows. However, in reality

the republic's Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Banking determines the levels of bank access to central bank credit.

The central bank favors credits to lower-level banks for supporting privatization, developing market infrastructures, expanding exports, and strengthening the banking structure. Generally, foreign companies are encouraged to seek external sources for financing projects in the republic. Banking policies include loans at significantly lower interest rates for agriculture than those granted to industrial enterprises. Goods purchased from state administrations can be paid for by checks that will be debited to accounts in the commercial banks.

Currency

Turkmenistan introduced its own currency, the manat, in November 1993, beginning at an exchange rate of two manat to one United States dollar and one manat to 500 rubles (for value of the manat—see Glossary). Manat banknotes are printed in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 500, and tenge coins (100 tenge to 1 manat) are minted in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, and 50.

Procedures were devised to prevent a run on the currency and to stabilize the economy as much as possible during the introduction of the manat, including the closing of currency stores, posting of new prices that were to remain stable until an exchange rate had been reached, limiting the conversion of rubles to manat to a one-time 30,000 rubles exchange, and giving everybody sixty manat gratis. However, people began to produce false passports to get the free manat and to exceed the 30,000-ruble exchange limit. The state did not have enough stocks of the new currency to satisfy those who had "overcome their suspicions of the banking system."

Following the inauspicious introduction of the manat, Turkmenistan's government has not tried to artificially support official exchange rates, which have varied significantly from those in illegal money markets. By May 1994, the official rate was 60 manat to US$1, while in black markets it was 80–85 manat to US$1. In January 1996, the official rate was 200 manat per US$1.

Fiscal Policy

Turkmenistan was the only CIS country to have a balanced budget in 1992. Under the Interrepublican Memorandum of Understanding of October 1991, Turkmenistan's share of the

Soviet Union's remaining international debt was fixed at 0.7 percent, or about US$420 million. An agreement with Russia in July 1992 erased this debt entirely when Turkmenistan renounced claims to former Soviet assets. This agreement virtually eliminated all of Turkmenistan's hard-currency debt.

In 1993 increases in the minimum wage and social safety net strained fiscal discipline, but the government introduced a "sub-soil" tax on oil and gas exploration by Turkmengaz and other companies, as well as a value-added tax (VAT—see Glossary) of 20 percent and a profits tax of 30–45 percent to increase government revenues for its social programs. Despite this strategy, the 1993 deficit was estimated at 10 percent of GDP, far more than the 2–3 percent projected by the government.

By the mid-1990s, increased entitlements such as free utilities had combined with careless monetary management to reduce investment and raise deficit spending and inflation. Until other gas pipelines are opened up to paying customers, experts predicted that Turkmenistan's hard currency reserves (estimated at US$500 million in 1993) would not remain at a high enough level to cover the government's undisciplined approach to budgeting.

Foreign Trade

In the early 1990s, Turkmenistan's foreign trade remained completely under the control of the central government. During that period, the most important trading partners remained the former republics of the Soviet Union, with which the great majority of trade had been conducted during the Soviet era. Natural gas is the most profitable item available for foreign sale.

Trade Structure

In controlling Turkmenistan's trade sector, the main goal of government policy is to maintain and expand foreign markets for gas, fuel products, electricity, and cotton. Just prior to independence, trade with other Soviet republics accounted for 93 percent of Turkmenistan's exports and 81 percent of its imports. In the mid-1990s, the country's main trading partners (as they were in 1990) were Russia, Kazakstan, and Uzbekistan in the CIS and Germany and countries in Eastern Europe outside the CIS (see table 20, Appendix). In 1990 nearly 27 percent of exports were mineral products, 6 percent were

chemical industry products, 46 percent were some form of cotton fiber, and 17 percent were processed food products.

In 1991 the largest components of Turkmenistan's imports were food (17 percent of the total), chemical products (6 percent), light industry products including textiles (22 percent), and machinery (30 percent). Among Western countries, Turkmenistan imported the most goods from Finland, France, and Italy in 1992.

In 1990, the overall trade deficit was US$500 million, which declined to $US300 million in 1991. In 1991 the trade deficit constituted some 13.9 percent of the net material product (NMP—see Glossary). In 1992 the deficit with Russia, Turkmenistan's main trading partner, was about US$38 million. That year the value of exports to Russia was 52.7 percent of the value of imports from Russia, the highest percentage among Russia's CIS trading partners. However, because it exports fuel, in the mid-1990s Turkmenistan maintained a positive trade balance at world prices with the CIS as a whole, making it the only republic besides Russia to do so.

In 1993 Turkmenistan's main CIS import partners were (in order of import volume) Russia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Tajikistan. The main CIS customers were (in order of export volume) Ukraine, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakstan, and Georgia. In 1992 Turkmenistan had bilateral trade surpluses with Ukraine, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Georgia.

Russia continues to trade with Turkmenistan in much the same way as in the Soviet era, although by 1992 trade with the other republics was curtailed by difficulties in collecting payments and other factors. Central Asian republics traditionally traded more with Russia than with each other; the conditions of the 1990s promote even less regional trade because several of the republics specialize in similar products. For example, cotton and gas are the chief export products of both Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Because of its specialization in cotton and natural gas, Turkmenistan imports a large percentage of the food it consumes. In 1991 the republic imported 65 percent of its grain consumption, 45 percent of its milk and dairy products, 70 percent of its potatoes, and 100 percent of its sugar—a profile typical of the Central Asian republics. In 1991 the trade deficit was 684 million rubles in food goods, compared with a deficit of 1.25 billion rubles in non-food goods.

Turkmenistan's cotton exports follow the pattern of other Central Asian republics. Governments of these countries have raised the price of cotton for trade with their Central Asian neighbors nearly to world market levels while discounting their cotton on the world market because of its relatively poor quality and less reliable delivery. Since 1991, Central Asian countries have more than doubled their exports of cotton to countries outside the CIS, accounting for 70 percent of West European cotton imports. Exports to the Far East and Mexico also have increased. In 1992 Turkmenistan cut its cotton export prices by 30 percent to stimulate sales. In response, the National Cotton Council of America refused to make subsidized shipments of cotton to Russia, where around 350 textile mills were threatened with closure because of insufficient imports, unless Central Asian republics reversed their aggressive stance in the world cotton market.

Natural gas, Turkmenistan's main export for foreign currency, accounted for an estimated 70 percent of its exports in 1993. Planners expected per capita earnings from sales of gas in 1993 to approach US$1,300, but Azerbaijan and Georgia failed to make payments. Turkmenistan, like Russia, has introduced a policy of cutting off gas supplies in response to such situations. In the case of Azerbaijan and Georgia, supply was curtailed until the bills were paid. In the mid-1990s, the practice of shutting off delivery was a thorny issue between Turkmenistan and Ukraine, which owns the main pipeline to Europe but has failed to pay for gas deliveries on many occasions (see Transportation and Telecommunications, this ch.).

CIS agreements on tariffs and customs have been worked out, but in reality a "legal vacuum" exists with regard to interrepublic economic ties. Technically, CIS members are not allowed to discriminate against one another in trade, but trade wars began to break out immediately upon independence. As a result, most republics have made a series of bilateral accords. A month before the major CIS agreement was worked out in 1992, Turkmenistan signed a customs union agreement with Russia and the other Central Asian republics. Later, it renegotiated its terms with Russia.

In a move toward trade liberalization in early 1993, Turkmenistan abolished import duties on around 600 goods, including all CIS goods. Imports from former Soviet republics outside the ruble zone (see Glossary) were prohibited. Tariffs for goods exported for hard currency have remained in place

to increase government revenue and prevent capital flight; thus, for natural gas the tariff is 80 percent; for oil, 20 percent; and for chemicals, 15 percent. The state can fix the volume, price, and tariff of any export leaving Turkmenistan.

Beginning in November 1993, Turkmenistan stopped the Soviet-era practice of accepting goods in exchange for natural gas, restricting payments to hard currency, precious metals, and precious stones. However, this policy may not be successful because Russia buys gas from Turkmenistan and then redistributes it to CIS customers rather than to Europe. Under these conditions, some customers may turn to Uzbekistan, which sells its gas directly and at a much lower price. Turkmenistan found it necessary to negotiate barter agreements with certain nonpaying customers such as Azerbaijan and Georgia. Until the end of 1994, Kazakstan was the only CIS customer to pay in cash.

In 1993 gas constituted 66.2 percent of Turkmenistan's exports to non-CIS countries, cotton 26.1 percent, and other goods 7.7 percent. Turkmenistan barters large quantities of cotton for textile-processing equipment from Italy, Argentina, and Turkey. Almost half of cotton exports (more than 20 percent of total exports) have been diverted to non-CIS customers since 1992. An increase in barter trade with China and Iran partially offsets the collapse of interrepublic supply. In 1994 Iran bought 20,000 tons of cotton fiber, a volume expected to increase by five times in 1995. Turkmenistan also will sell surplus electrical power via Iran.

Despite payment problems, Turkmenistan's export position has improved substantially since independence. Its consolidated current account surplus rose from US$447 million to US$927 million between 1991 and 1992, so that the increase in gas and cotton exports has offset the increase in imports. By mid-1994, the United States Export-Import Bank extended US$75.7 million to insure Turkmenistan's trade deals, and the United States Department of Agriculture offered US$5 million in grain credits. Turkey's export-import bank extended a credit line worth $US90 million to Turkmenistan to help cover the growing volume of trade between these two countries. Japan's Eximbank allocated $5 million in trade credits for machinery.

Investments from Abroad

In November 1991, Turkmenistan officially opened its system to foreign economic activity by ratifying the laws "On

Enterprises in Turkmenistan" and "On Entrepreneur Activity in Turkmenistan." Subsequent laws on foreign investment have covered protection against nationalization, tax breaks on reinvestment of hard currency obtained for profits, property ownership, and intellectual property rights protection to attract foreign investment, and the important 1993 decree allowing domestic enterprises to form joint ventures with foreign oil companies. The Ten Years of Prosperity plan envisages "free economic zones, joint enterprises, and a broadening of entrepreneurship."

Foreign investors have been attracted by the republic's calm and receptive atmosphere. In 1993 parts of the country took on the appearance of a huge construction site, with twenty-six foreign joint ventures operating there. Turkish joint ventures alone were building sixty factories for the processing of agricultural produce. Despite official discouragement of economic activity on the grounds of human rights violations in Turkmenistan, United States business people have been attracted by the republic's stable conditions, and they have invested in a number of significant projects. In the early 1990s, United States companies paid particular attention to the oil and gas industry, establishing investment agreements with the consultative aid of former United States secretaries of state Alexander Haig and James Baker.

Economic Agreements Abroad

In the formative phase following independence, Turkmenistan concluded several key agreements with trade partners. In December 1991, President Niyazov became the first Central Asian leader to secure cooperation agreements with Turkey on trade, rail and air links, communications, education, and culture. Turkmenistan also secured Turkey's agreement on a gas pipeline routed through its territory and assistance in the trading of petroleum, electricity, and cotton. Also in 1991, Turkmenistan established terms with Russia on cotton-for-oil trades, as well as for other industrial goods such as automobiles. In 1992 agreements with Iran established Iranian aid to Turkmenistan's gas and oil industry and its livestock raising, grain, sugar beet, and fruit sectors, in return for aid to Iran's cotton sector. At the same time, Iran pledged support for Turkmenistan's pipeline project through Iran to Turkey.

Since its initial agreement, Turkmenistan has pursued its trade relationship with Iran with great vigor. Agreements focus

on the pipeline project that will bring gas from Turkmenistan to Europe via Iran and Turkey, transportation projects such as the Tejen-Saragt-Mashhad railroad link, whose construction was undertaken in 1993, and development of the oil and gas industries, including the establishment of a joint venture in Turkmenistan for the transport of petroleum products and construction of a plant to produce motor oil. Cooperation in mining and other fields also has been discussed.

At the beginning of 1992, Turkmenistan, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakstan formed the Caspian States Cooperation Organization to reach regional agreements on fishing, shipping, environmental protection, and cooperation among the member nations' oil and gas operations. Iran also has sought to gain support for a project, discontinued in 1979, that would replenish the sturgeon population of the Caspian Sea.

The participation of foreign companies in the development of Turkmenistan's oil industry is expected to triple extraction by the year 2000. In February 1993, the United States firm Vivtex designed a competition among oil companies to win contracts in Turkmenistan. The "winners" for three of the seven blocks put up for bid were Larmag Energy of the Netherlands, Noble Drilling of the United States, Eastpac of the United Arab Emirates, and the Bridas firm of Argentina. Just for holding the competition, Turkmenistan received an initial non-returnable "bonus" payment of US$65 million. The total investment of competition winners was to amount to US$160 million over the course of three years. Turkmenistan would receive between 71 and 75 percent of the profits from these joint enterprises.

In the mid-1990s, Turkmenistan has sought to establish a natural gas pipeline that would pass through Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China to reach Japan, as well as an interim rail line for liquefied gas through China until the pipeline is finished. President Niyazov visited Beijing in November 1992 for talks on the pipeline, at the same time securing credits of 45 million Chinese yuan to be repaid after two years. Niyazov then held talks with representatives of the Japanese firm Mitsubishi and the Chinese Ministry of Oil in December 1992. A delegation of Japanese experts visited Ashgabat in February 1993 to discuss prospects for aid. Declaring Turkmenistan the "most solvent" of the Central Asian republics, the delegation signed agreements for the development of oil deposits in the Caspian shelf, communications, and water desalinization.

In the mid-1990s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF—see Glossary) denied assistance to Turkmenistan on the grounds that Turkmenistan has not taken the required human rights steps for economic cooperation. However, in March 1993, the United States conferred most-favored-nation trading status on Turkmenistan.

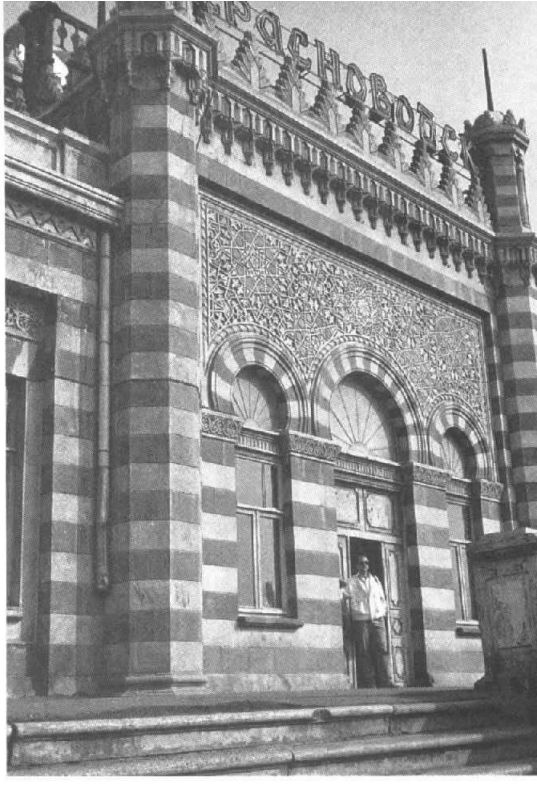
Transportation and Telecommunications

The current government has an aggressive program aimed at developing a transport infrastructure both within the republic and to the outside world (see Foreign Trade; Foreign Policy, this ch.). The highest priorities of this program are railroads and interstate gas pipelines. The capabilities of the various components of Turkmenistan's transport system to carry freight are indicated by the following percentages: railroads 37.4 percent, highways 56.1, pipelines 4.4, and internal waterways 2.0. In the early 1990s, air transport accounted for only 0.02 percent of total freight.

Railroads

Turkmenistan inherited from the Soviet Union 2,120 kilometers of railways, all 1,000-millimeter gauge, a length insufficient to serve even the current economy of the republic. In addition, it received 13,000 highly depreciated railway cars, outdated signaling and communications systems, and deteriorating depots. The Ashgabat line of the Central Asian Railway has been especially neglected and poorly administered. In 1993 the State Railway Administration assumed responsibility for the railroad system, and moved immediately to join the International Union of Railroads. Membership in this organization will alleviate the problem of standardization created by Turkmenistan's wider Soviet-gauge rails and rolling stock, which do not match the specifications of non-CIS neighbors.

The primary railroad line in Turkmenistan is the Turkmenbashy-Ashgabat-Chärjew Line, which links Turkmenistan with Uzbekistan and European countries. It was built in the 1880s as a military line to facilitate Russian maneuvers in the "Great Game" played with the British Empire over dominance of Central Asia. Other major lines are the Mary-Gushgy Line and the Bukhoro-Kerki-Termez Line (via the Chärjew Line), both of which provide transport to the Afghani border,



Train station entrance, Turkmenbashy
Courtesy A. James Firth, United States Department of Agriculture

while smaller branch lines such as the Nebitdag-Vyshka railroad are used to transport oil, workers, and supplies.

Plans call for building 1,000 kilometers of new rail lines, improving signaling and communications, reconstructing depots, and computerizing operations. One priority in railroad development is the construction or expansion of branch lines and links with Turkey via Iran; in the mid-1990s, new lines were underway at Saragt, Kerki, Kernay, Kulisol, Gyzylgaya, and Gyzyletrek, some of which will be combined and linked to the West Kazakstan Line along the Caspian Sea. Efforts also are being made to overhaul and acquire rolling stock.

Roads

An upgraded highway system is especially important in the mountains and deserts of the republic, where only camels provide an alternate means of transport. In 1926, the republic had 5,716 kilometers of roads, 3,310 kilometers of which were "camel paths" and the rest "somewhat passable" for wheeled transport. By 1975, 9,000 kilometers of roads existed, 6,000 kilometers of which were paved. By 1990 this number had increased dramatically to 23,000 kilometers, of which 15,300 were paved; concomitant increases in freight and passenger traffic strain the system, however.

Eastern Turkmenistan is connected with western Turkmenistan by the Turkmenbashy-Ashgabat-Chärjew highway. Other important highways are the Chärjew-Dashhowuz (520 kilometers), the Chärjew-Kerki (225 kilometers), and the Mary-Gushgy. Stable motor vehicle routes to Iran have been established, and border-crossing procedures have been simplified and regularized.

Pipelines

The interstate pipeline system retained its value at the time of independence and is a priority of the republic's economic development plans. The government has pursued international projects to build gas pipelines through Iran to Turkey, through Afghanistan to Pakistan, and through Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China to Japan.

Despite Russia's opposition and United States pressure not to do so, in August 1994, President Niyazov signed an agreement with Iran to begin the Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey-Europe gas pipeline. The pipeline will extend 4,000 kilometers through Iran, Turkey, and Bulgaria, with an initial capacity of 15 billion cubic meters annually, later to be expanded to 28 billion cubic meters. The project will cost US$8 billion, of which Iran will finance US$3.5 billion, and construction will begin in 1998.

After a Japanese delegation held talks in Ashgabat in 1992, the Mitsubishi corporation developed plans to build a 6,700-kilometer gas pipeline through Uzbekistan, Kazakstan, and China to the Yellow Sea coast opposite Japan, where a natural gas liquefaction plant will be built to convert the gas prior to shipment. The plan calls for constructing a pipeline with a capacity of 30 billion cubic meters annually at a cost of US$12 billion. Turkmenistan, Kazakstan, and Uzbekistan also have petitioned the Russian Federation to help them build a new 725-kilometer gas pipeline through Russia and Ukraine for exporting natural gas to Ukraine and Europe.

Of the two main existing lines, the Shatlik-Khiva line running south-north from near Saragt to Khiva connects with a pipeline from the Uzbekistan gas field near Bukhoro. Intersecting this line is the Mary-Ashgabat line running east-west from near Mary to Ashgabat. The other main line is the Central Asia-Center line running north from Okarem to Nebitdag, northwest to the Garabogaz Gulf on the Caspian Sea, and connecting with the main line to Europe through Ukraine.

Airlines

Turkmenistan has seven airports, of which four have permanent-surface runways between 1,200 and 2,500 meters in length. The main international airport in Ashgabat includes a new terminal complex constructed by companies from Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Plans call for using Boeing aircraft alongside the current stock of Aeroflot aircraft belonging to Turkmenistan Air Lines. Current routes provide service to China, India, Pakistan, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Slovakia, and Italy. The two other international facilities, located at Chärjew and Dashhowuz, serve mostly flights within Central Asia. Local airports also exist at Mary, Nebitdag, and other locales. The national administration of Turkmenistan Civil Aviation has been admitted as a member of the International Commercial Aviation Organization. Membership enables Turkmenistan Airlines to have its routes entered into all major airline computer terminals and scheduling references and thus to issue international airline tickets.

Merchant Marine

Turkmenistan has a main Caspian Sea port at Turkmenbashy and a shipping line running from that port to Astrakhan in the Russian Federation on the north shore of the Caspian. However, the majority of freight is shipped from Turkmenbashy to Baku on the western shore of the Caspian. Other ports are Alaja, Okarem, and Chekelen, all of which were slated for reconstruction in the mid-1990s. In 1993 Turkmenistan bought two ships from Slovakia to use for export from the port at Sukhumi in Georgia. They are currently stationed at Novorossiysk on the Black Sea coast.

Telecommunications

Turkmenistan's Ministry of Communications is the sole supplier of telecommunications services in Turkmenistan; the ministry also operates the postal and special delivery services and the delivery of press publications. Because of very low state-fixed rates, the ministry's budget is inadequate to perform all these services adequately.

There are two television broadcasting centers, the Orbita satellite station in Ashgabat and a second one in Nebitdag. The State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting is

responsible for both. Through Orbita and Intelsat satellite transmissions, broadcasts reach all cities and rural centers. Broadcasting centers are linked by landline or microwave to other CIS states and Iran. Since 1992, the republic has received daily transmissions from Turkey.

Turkmenistan experiences many problems concerning communications technology. The telephone network is poorly developed. Only 28 percent of households have a telephone, and 550 villages lacked telephone service entirely in 1994. More than one-third of all subscribers use telephone exchanges that are thirty to forty years old and highly depreciated. Between 1986 and 1991, the number of telephones per 1,000 outlet accesses increased from 61 to 75, which represents 140 for urban and 22 for rural citizens. In 1994 there were eight main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants.

The Turkish government, working through the private Netas company of Turkey, began upgrading Turkmenistan's phone system in the early 1990s. The first electronic exchange was installed in Ashgabat. Implementation of the Intelsat IBS earth station, which will provide international circuit capacity via Ankara, is expected to improve the operation of local, long-distance, and international networks in the republic. Two telex networks provide telex and telegraph services. Only twenty international subscribers are linked via Moscow, and a few other specialized networks exist.

Government and Politics

The post-Soviet government of the Republic of Turkmenistan retains many of the characteristics and the personnel of the communist regime of Soviet Turkmenistan. The government has received substantial international criticism as an authoritarian regime centering on the dominant power position of President Saparmyrat Niyazov. Nevertheless, the 1992 constitution does characterize Turkmenistan as a democracy with separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

Centers of Political Power

In 1994 members of the former Communist Party of Turkmenistan continued to fill the majority of government and civic leadership posts, and much of the ideologically justified Soviet-era political structure remained intact. Besides serving as head

of the Democratic Party (as the reconstituted Communist Party of Turkmenistan is called) and chairman of the advisory People's Council and the Cabinet of Ministers, Niyazov also appoints the procurator general and other officers of the courts. In criticizing Turkmenistan's political leadership, experts have cited the single-party system, strict censorship, repression of political dissent, and the "cult of personality" that has formed around President Niyazov. Niyazov's name has been given to streets, schools, communal farms, and numerous other places; his portrait and sayings receive prominent public display; the country's mass media give him extensive exposure that always characterizes him in a positive light; and a law "Against Insulting the Dignity and Honor of the President" is in force.

At the same time, Western and Russian criticism generally has revealed misunderstandings and stereotypes of the political and social dynamics of the region that dilute the authority of such evaluations. Beneath the surface of the presidential image, political life in Turkmenistan is influenced by a combination of regional, professional, and tribal factors. Regional ties appear to be the strongest of these factors; they are evident in the opposing power bases of Ashgabat, center of the government, and Mary, which is the center of a mafia organization that controls the narcotics market and illegal trade in a number of commodities. Although both areas are settled primarily by Turkmen of the Teke tribe, factions in Ashgabat still express resentment and distrust of those in Mary for failing to aid the fortress of Gokdepe against the 1881 assault that led to Russian control of the Turkmen khanates (see Incorporation into Russia, this ch.).

Political behavior also is shaped by the technocratic elites, who were trained in Moscow and who can rely on support from most of the educated professionals in Ashgabat and other urban areas. Most of the elites within the national government originate from and are supported by the intelligentsia, which also is the source of the few opposition groups in the republic.

Tribal and other kinship ties rooted in genealogies play a much smaller role than presumed by analysts who view Turkmen society as "tribal" and therefore not at a sophisticated political level. Nonetheless, clan ties often are reflected in patterns of appointments and networks of power. Regional and clan ties have been identified as the bases for political infighting in the republic. For example, in the early 1990s power

bases pitted the Mary district chieftain Gurban Orazov against the Ashgabat millionaire and minister of agriculture Payzgeldi Meredov, and the Teke clan's hold on power through Niyazov conflicted with the Yomud clan's hold on the oil and gas industry through minister Nazar Soyunov. In July 1994, Niyazov removed both Meredov and Soyunov from office on the basis of evidence that the two ministers had misappropriated funds obtained from the sale of state-owned resources. To correct such problems, a Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations was formed to handle exports and imports, and a Control and Revision Commission was established to review contracts with foreign firms.

According to a law passed in December 1992, all permanent residents of Turkmenistan are accorded citizenship unless they renounce that right in writing. Non-residents may become citizens if they can demonstrate that they have resided in Turkmenistan for the past seven years and that they have some knowledge of the Turkmen language. Dual citizenship with certain other former Soviet republics is permitted. The CIS summit held in Ashgabat in December 1993 resulted in an accord on dual citizenship between the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, allowing Turkmenistan's 400,000 ethnic Russians to achieve that status.

In May 1992, Turkmenistan became the first newly independent republic in Central Asia to ratify a constitution. According to the constitution and to literature printed by the government, Turkmenistan is a democratic, secular, constitutional republic based on law and headed by a president. It is also termed a "presidential republic," one that is "based on the principles of the separation of powers—legislative, executive, and judicial—which operate independently, checking and balancing one another."

Government Structure

The government of Turkmenistan is divided into three branches—the executive branch headed by the president, the legislative branch consisting of the National Assembly (Milli Majlis), and the judicial branch embodied in the Supreme Court. A People's Council nominally has the ultimate power to oversee the three branches. A Council of Elders exists as an advisory body to the government, everyday affairs of which are conducted by a Cabinet of Ministers appointed by the president.

President

The office of president (*türkmenbashi,* "Leader of the Turkmen") was established in conjunction with the ratification of the 1992 constitution. The president functions as head of state and government and as commander in chief of the armed forces, serving for an elected term of five years. Presidential powers include the right to issue edicts having the force of law, to appoint and remove state prosecutors and judges, and to discontinue the National Assembly if it has passed two no-confidence votes on the sitting government (Cabinet) within an eighteen-month period. The government is administered by the Cabinet of Ministers, who are appointed by the president with National Assembly approval.

Niyazov, who was president of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic at the time of independence, is a Turkmen of the Teke tribe who was born in 1940. Trained as an engineer, Niyazov rose through the ranks of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, reaching the top of the party hierarchy as first secretary in 1985. During his tenure, Niyazov remained aloof from *glasnost* and *perestroika,* the reforms of CPSU First Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev, even terming Gorbachev's program "pseudo-reform." When Moscow hard-liners attempted to unseat Gorbachev in the coup of August 1991, Niyazov refrained from condemning the conspiracy until after its failure was certain. After his appointment as president of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic in October 1990, Niyazov ran as an uncontested candidate in the republic's first presidential election in June 1991, winning over 99 percent of the vote. From that position, he presided over the declaration of independence in October 1991. The 1992 constitution of the independent Republic of Turkmenistan called for a new presidential election, which Niyazov won in June 1992. In January 1994, a referendum extended his presidency from a five-year term to a ten-year term that would end in the year 2002; of the 99 percent of the electorate that voted, officially only 212 voted against the extension.

Legislative Branch

The 1992 constitution provides for a legislative body called the National Assembly, a body that retains the structure and procedures of the Soviet-era Supreme Soviet. The body's fifty members are elected directly to five-year terms, and they are prohibited from holding other offices during their tenure. The

National Assembly is charged with the enactment of criminal legislation and approving amendments to the constitution. It also ratifies legislative bills introduced by the president, the Cabinet of Ministers, and individual members of the National Assembly.

Supreme Court

Established by the 1992 constitution, the Supreme Court comprises twenty-two judges appointed by the president to five-year terms. Of the three branches of government, the judiciary has the fewest powers; its prescribed functions are limited to review of laws for constitutionality and decisions concerning the judicial codex or Supreme Law.

National Council

The 1992 constitution also established the National Council (Halk Maslahati) to serve as "the highest representative organ of popular power." Intended to unite the three branches of government, it comprises the president of Turkmenistan; the deputies of the National Assembly; members of the Supreme Court, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Supreme Economic Court; sixty people's representatives elected from the districts specifically to the National Council; and officials from scientific and cultural organizations. Members of the National Council serve for five years without compensation. This body meets at the request of the president or the National Assembly, or when mandated by a one-third vote of its members. Functions of the National Council include advising the president, recommending domestic and foreign policy, amending the constitution and other laws, ratifying treaties, and declaring war and peace. In theory, its powers supersede those of the president, the National Assembly, and the Supreme Court. However, the council has been described as a kind of "super-congress of prominent people" that rubber-stamps decisions made by the other national bodies, in most cases the executive.

Council of Elders

In addition, the constitution created the Council of Elders, which is designed to embody the Turkmen tradition of reliance on the advice of senior members of society in matters of importance. According to the constitution, the president is bound to consult with this body prior to making decisions on both domestic and foreign affairs. The Council of Elders also is

assigned the task of selecting presidential candidates. Its chairman is the president of Turkmenistan.

Political Parties

Although the constitution guarantees the right to form political parties, in fact the former Communist Party of Turkmenistan has retained the political control exercised by its predecessor. Opposition parties and other politically active groups have remained small and without broad support.

Democratic Party of Turkmenistan

At the twenty-fifth congress of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan held in December 1991, the party was renamed the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, and Niyazov was confirmed as its chairman. According to its new program, the Democratic Party serves as a "mother party" that dominates political activity and yet promotes the activity of a loyal political opposition. Following a proposal of Niyazov, a party called the Peasant Justice Party, composed of regional secretaries of the Democratic Party, was registered in 1992 as an opposition party.

The Democratic Party of Turkmenistan essentially retains the apparatus of the former communist party. Party propaganda aims at explaining the need for preserving stability, civil peace, and interethnic accord. Party publications boast that its primary organizations operate in every enterprise, organization, and institution, and that its membership includes over 165,000, whereas critics claim that most citizens hardly are aware of the party's existence.

Opposition Parties

The 1992 constitution establishes rights concerning freedom of religion, the separation of church and state, freedom of movement, privacy, and ownership of private property. Both the constitution and the 1991 Law on Public Organizations guarantee the right to create political parties and other public associations that operate within the framework of the constitution and its laws. Such activity is restricted by prohibitions of parties that "encroach on the health and morals of the people" and on the formation of ethnic or religious parties. This provision has been used by the government to ban several groups.

In the mid-1990s, Niyazov described opposition groups as lacking both popular support and political programs offering constructive alternatives to existing policy. He has cited these

qualities in disqualifying groups from eligibility to register as opposition parties. Insofar as such groups have the potential to promote ethnic or other tensions in society, they may be viewed as illegal, hence subject to being banned under the constitution.

Given such an environment, opposition activity in Turkmenistan has been quite restrained. A small opposition group called Unity (Agzybirlik), originally registered in 1989, consists of intellectuals who describe the party program as oriented toward forming a multiparty democratic system on the Turkish model. Unity has devoted itself to issues connected with national sovereignty and the replacement of the communist political legacy. After being banned in January 1990, members of Unity founded a second group called the Party for Democratic Development, which focused on reforms and political issues. That party's increasing criticism of authoritarianism in the postindependence government led to its being banned in 1991. The original Unity group and its offspring party jointly publish a newspaper in Moscow called *Daynach* (Support), distribution of which is prohibited in Turkmenistan. In 1991 these two opposition groups joined with others in a coalition called Conference (Gengesh), aimed at effecting democratic reforms in the republic.

Human Rights

President Niyazov has stated his support for the democratic ideal of a multiparty system and of protection of human rights, with the caveat that such rights protect stability, order, and social harmony. While acknowledging that his cult of personality resembles that of Soviet dictator Joseph V. Stalin, Niyazov claims that a strong leader is needed to guide the republic through its transition from communism to a democratic form of government.

Although the Niyazov government has received consistent criticism from foreign governments and international organizations such as Helsinki Watch for its restrictive policies toward opposition groups, in general the government has not taken extreme steps against its political opposition. In 1993 no political prisoners, political executions, or instances of torture or other inhumane treatment were reported. The government has made conscious efforts to protect equal rights and opportunities for groups of citizens it considers benign. Such measures have been applied especially in safeguarding the security

of Russian residents, who receive special attention because they offer a considerable body of technical and professional expertise.

Nevertheless, government control of the media has been quite effective in suppressing domestic criticism of the Niyazov regime. In addition, members of opposition groups suffer harassment in the form of dismissal from jobs, evictions, unwarranted detentions, and denial of travel papers. Their rights to privacy are violated through telephone tapping, electronic eavesdropping, reading of mail, and surveillance. United States officials have protested human rights violations by refusing to sign aid agreements with Turkmenistan and by advising against economic aid and cooperation.

Foreign Policy

Turkmenistan has declared "positive neutrality" and "open doors" to be the two major components of its foreign policy. Positive neutrality is defined as gaining international recognition of the republic's independence, agreeing upon mutual non-interference in internal affairs, and maintaining neutrality in external conflicts. The open- doors policy has been adopted to encourage foreign investment and export trade, especially through the development of a transport infrastructure. Turkmenistan gained membership in the United Nations (UN) in early 1992.

Background

Pervasive historical and geopolitical factors shape Turkmenistan's foreign policy. With the removal of the protective Soviet "umbrella," the foreign policy tasks facing independent Turkmenistan are the establishment of independent national security and economic systems, while coping with the long legacy of existence in the empires of tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union. As of 1996, all of Turkmenistan's gas pipelines went north into the Russian Federation or other CIS states, thus subordinating sectors of its economic development to that of relatively poor countries. Because Turkmenistan lacks a strong military, independence depends on establishing military pacts with Russia and on developing balanced diplomatic and economic ties with Russia and neighboring countries (see Role of Russia and CIS, this ch.).

Turkmenistan's geographical location close to conflict-riven Afghanistan and Tajikistan also requires a guarded posture toward the irredentist and Islamic forces at play in those countries. Concern over border security was heightened by an incident in October 1993 when two Afghan jets bombed Turkmen territory, despite recent talks with Afghan officials aimed at ensuring equality and non-interference.

Turkmenistan's status as an Islamic state also affects Turkmenistan's relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia. Although in need of the foreign aid and developmental opportunities offered by these countries, Turkmenistan's government also endeavors to blunt any perceived threats to its secular status that arise from Muslim activists. The Turkic identity of the bulk of its population thus far has not proven to be a significant factor in foreign affairs because Turkmenistan must compete with other Central Asian Turkic republics for markets and for closer socioeconomic ties with Turkey.

An important historical factor in current policy is that prior to independence the Soviet government conducted Turkmenistan's foreign affairs. The only involvement of republic officials in international relations was in the form of ceremonial contacts aimed at showcasing Soviet nationality policy by presenting Turkmenistan as a developmental model for Third World countries.

Foreign Relations Issues

Since independence, Turkmenistan has taken major initiatives by making national security and economic development agreements. Security agreements have focused on military cooperation with Russia and on border security with Iran and Afghanistan. In the economic area, President Niyazov has concentrated on developing gas and oil exports and the pipeline transport infrastructure, especially in cooperation with Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan.

A recent transportation dispute underscored the urgency of Turkmenistan's finding a new pipeline route by which to send its natural gas to Europe through Iran and Turkey. From February through September 1992, Turkmenistan was engaged in a gas-transport price war with Ukraine that provoked the latter to withhold food shipments. In addition, Ukraine refused to transship 500 tons of Turkmenistan's cotton to Turkey, prompting an ambitious program to build Turkmenistan's railroad links with its southern neighbors.

The United States

Initial concern over human rights policy delayed United States recognition of Turkmenistan's independence until after February 1992, when alarms over Iran's ventures in Central Asia brought a reevaluation of United States policy. Relations declined in September 1993 when the United States cut trade credits to Turkmenistan to protest the arrest of four human rights activists. Generally, such human rights violations have not impeded relations between the two countries, however. Alexander Haig, former United States secretary of state, acting as consultant to President Niyazov, played a leading role in negotiating most-favored-nation trading status for Turkmenistan in 1993.

Western Europe

President Niyazov has visited European countries and received European delegations to promote foreign investments, diplomatic ties, and applications for membership in international aid organizations. During talks with officials of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO—see Glossary) in 1993, Niyazov stated that Turkmenistan would welcome NATO assistance in the creation of its national armed forces. In April 1994, French President François Mitterrand visited Ashgabat, where he signed agreements on investments, cultural exchange, and tariffs. At that time, France also allocated US$35 million in trade credits for the construction of a presidential palace. In November 1994, Niyazov toured Austria, Romania, and Slovakia to attract oil and gas investments.

Asian Neighbors

After the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan has established its closest relations with Iran, especially on issues of joint concern within the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO—see Glossary), but also on issues of border security, transport cooperation, cultural exchange, and business ventures. In 1993 the two countries signed a joint statement emphasizing territorial sovereignty and non-interference in Tajikistan. At the same time, Turkmenistan's diplomats conveyed concern over the controversial agreement between Iran and Russia to build a nuclear power plant near the Caspian Sea and the Turkmenistan border.

In January 1994, Niyazov made an official visit to Tehran, and the two countries held a second round of talks in Ashgabat in June to create an intergovernmental center for consultation and coordination on socioeconomic questions. According to bilateral agreements, Iranian specialists will aid in renovating the Turkmenbashy Oil Refinery and the Mary Cotton Processing Plant, building the Turkmenistan-Iran-Europe Gas Pipeline, and constructing the Ashgabat-Tehran, Mary- Mashhad-Turkmenbashy, and Gudurol-Gorgan highways. In January 1996, Niyazov signed agreements with Iran linking the two countries' electric power networks, a joint dam on the Hari River, and cooperation in oil, gas, and agriculture. A joint statement expressed concern about Azerbaijan's exploitation of Caspian Sea resources, although Turkmenistan generally has sided with Azerbaijan and Kazakstan, and against Iran and Russia, on resource rights in the Caspian.

Contrary to initial expectations that Turkey would play a "big brother" role in Turkmenistan's social and cultural development following independence, Turkmenistan charts its own course in such matters. An example is the adoption of a Latin script that owes little if anything to that used for Turkish. However, Turkey has played a prominent role in the development of Turkmenistan's economic potential. Turkish firms are constructing US$1 billion worth of enterprises, stores, and hotels in Turkmenistan. The Turkish Development and Cooperation Agency manages a slate of projects in agriculture, civil aviation, education, health care, minerals extraction, reconstruction of infrastructure, initiation of small enterprises, and construction of a complex of mosques and religious schools. Turkish high schools and universities are hosting more than 2,000 Turkmenistani students, and, in 1994, Turkey began daily four-hour television broadcasts to the republic.

Because of continuing fragmentation of political power in neighboring Afghanistan and concern that civil strife in that country could threaten the security of its borders, Turkmenistan's government pursued direct agreements with the northern Afghan leader General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek. With the support of Uzbekistan's Karimov regime, Dostum had carved out an Uzbek domain controlling 600 of the 850 kilometers along the Afghan-Turkmen border. In July 1993, President Niyazov discussed border security with officials from northern Afghanistan, resulting in the establishment of consulates in the Afghan cities of Mazari Sharif and Herat.

Talks in 1994 focused on building a railroad link and supplying electricity to Herat. A direct telephone communications line was completed connecting Ashgabat and Mary with Herat.

Besides initiatives taken under the aegis of the ECO, Turkmenistan signed a cooperation agreement with Pakistan in late 1991 and obtained a promise of US$10 million in credit and goods from Pakistan in 1992. The two countries signed memoranda in 1995 for the construction of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan. The Bridas company of Argentina was engaged to do a feasibility study for the pipeline.

CIS Relations

Turkmenistan has been hesitant to sign economic agreements within the CIS framework. Niyazov has criticized the weakness of CIS mechanisms and proposed a new CIS structure that would be exclusively consultative in nature. As an example of its approach, Turkmenistan declined to attend the Surgut Conference with Russia and Kazakstan (1994), whose goal was to stabilize falling gas and oil output, stating that the domestic gas industry was sufficiently stable without CIS investment funds. At that time, Russian Federation deputy prime minister Aleksandr Shokhin declared that Turkmenistan must decide whether it is with the CIS countries or not. Despite such friction, Turkmenistan has maintained close bilateral economic and military ties with Russia.

Regional cooperation among Central Asian republics has not been as profound as anticipated upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In 1993 the other four Central Asian republics accounted for about one-fifth of Turkmenistan's imports and exports. Turkmenistan has followed its own path in all areas of post-Soviet reform, preferring bilateral to regional agreements in the economic sphere; for example, it has agreed to supply Kazakstan with electricity in return for grain. The decisions of all five republics to switch to Latin-based alphabets will not necessarily have the expected result of improving cultural ties because the romanization of distinct sounds in the respective languages will be far from uniform. Fragmentation is evident also in the introduction by all five nations of separate national currencies.

Caspian Sea Issues

An important goal of Turkmenistan's foreign policy is work-

ing in international groups to solve a range of issues involving the Caspian Sea. That body of water, which affords Turkmenistan a 500-kilometer coastline with numerous natural resources, including oil and fish, is threatened by extreme levels of pollution, as well as fluctuating water levels. In August 1993, Turkmenistani delegates attended a meeting in Moscow to discuss the status of international claims to jurisdiction over the Caspian Sea and its resources. Treaties between the Soviet Union and Iran dating from 1921 and 1940 gave each country free navigation and fishing rights within ten miles (sixteen kilometers) of the entire Caspian coastline, putting other coastal nations at a disadvantage. A second issue is the cartel formed by Turkmenistan, Kazakstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to control sales of Caspian caviar on the world market as a means of preventing individual Caspian Sea states from selling too much to obtain hard currency. Thus far, however, the cartel lacks an enforcement mechanism. Turkmenistan is a member of the Caspian Sea Forum, which includes all the nations bordering the sea. Until 1995 that organization had not taken concrete action to limit pollution by oil extraction and shipping activities of the member countries, however. In late 1994, Turkmenistan joined Kazakstan, Azerbaijan, and Russia in forming the Caspian Border Patrol force for joint border security (see Military Doctrine, this ch.). In 1995 and 1996, friction increased among the Caspian states as Iran and Russia exerted pressure for the sea's resources to be divided equally among the group, a formula that would pervent the other three countries from taking advantage of their proximity to rich offshore oil deposits.

National Security

During the Soviet era, military planners regarded Turkmenistan as a crucial border region because of its proximity to Iran and other strategic areas such as the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan. Consequently, a large number of Soviet army troops were stationed in the republic, which was virtually closed to foreigners. Since independence and the formation of a national armed force, Turkmenistan has maintained a posture of neutrality and isolationism, while at the same time pursuing a bilateral military alliance with the Russian Federation. Russia continues to regard Turkmenistan as a key element in its sphere of military interests. For that reason, Russia has secured agreements for stationing border guards and air defense forces

in Turkmenistan. Russia also supports the building of the national armed forces by providing training for officers and sharing force maintenance costs.

Strategic Considerations

The 1992 constitution provides that the republic shall maintain armed forces to defend state sovereignty and that military service for males is a universal obligation that prevails over other constitutional obligations. Turkmenistan's government is adamant about the need to develop and maintain strong, well-trained, and well-equipped armed forces to defend the country's independence. At the same time, it has stated that it will maintain a posture of "positive neutrality" in regard to national security.

Under the agreement for shared command, the presidents of Turkmenistan and the Russian Federation act as joint commanders in chief. By agreement, troops under joint command cannot act without the consent of both ministries of defense. In Turkmenistan the chief military policy-making body, the Supreme Defense Committee, consists of the president, the ministers of defense and internal affairs, the chairman of the Supreme Court, the procurator general, and the leaders of the five provinces. Prior to the creation of the Turkmenistan Ministry of Defense in January 1992, the republic's military establishment fell under the command of the Turkestan Military District of the Soviet armed forces.

Turkmenistan's dependence on the Russian Federation for security against aggressive neighbors, at least until the republic's armed forces become a viable deterrent, creates tension with the foreign policy goal of remaining as independent as possible from Russia. These conflicting national security considerations explain the Niyazov government's implementation of a bilateral military alliance with Russia while at the same time refusing to commit itself to substantial participation in regional military agreements that possibly would alienate Iran.

Military Doctrine

President Niyazov has acknowledged Russia's legitimate military interests in the region, stating that his country's security interests can be better served through cooperation with Russia than through participation in multinational military organizations. Membership in the latter contradicts its foreign policy of noninterference, as well as its military doctrine that the princi-

pal function of Turkmenistan's army is to protect the country from external aggression. Another military doctrine holds that local wars, border conflicts, and military buildups in adjacent countries are the main source of danger to Turkmenistan. Although Turkmenistan has no disputed borders, its doctrine is based on concerns about the civil conflicts in Tajikistan and the instability in northern Afghanistan, especially after the collapse of its pro-Soviet regime in 1989, as well as on traditional tensions with Iran. On the other hand, Turkmenistan's leadership completely discounts the fear that Islamic fundamentalism would spread from Iran into the republic, a prospect of low probability considering that Iranian fundamentalists adhere to the Shia branch of Islam, while the state-controlled Islam of Turkmenistan belongs to the Sunni branch. Traditional animosity between Turkmen and Iranians is also a reason for reaching this conclusion (see Religion, this ch.).

Role of Russia and the CIS

The Treaty on Joint Measures signed by Russia and Turkmenistan in July 1992 provided for the Russian Federation to act as guarantor of Turkmenistan's security and made former Soviet army units in the republic the basis of the new national armed forces. The treaty stipulated that, apart from border troops and air force and air defense units remaining under Russian control, the entire armed forces would be under joint command, which would gradually devolve to exclusive command by Turkmenistan over a period of ten years. For a transitional period of five years, Russia would provide logistical support and pay Turkmenistan for the right to maintain special installations, while Turkmenistan would bear the costs of housing, utilities, and administration.

More recent agreements between the two countries have strengthened their military alliance. In August 1992, accord was reached on the deployment of Russian border troops in the republic for a five-year period, with an option to renew for another five years. In September 1993, Turkmenistan agreed to assume all costs of maintaining forces on its soil following a five-year period of shared financing. This agreement granted Russia the right to maintain air force and air defense systems with limited control by Turkmenistan. It addressed the continuing majority of Russians in the command structure by permitting Russian citizens to perform military duty in Turkmenistan and by making allowance for the training of

Turkmenistani officers in Russian military schools. At the CIS summit held in Ashgabat in December 1993, the military alliance between the two countries was affirmed, and provisions were made for the participation of 2,000 Russian officers in Turkmenistan in the development of the national armed forces.

Despite the Russian Federation's deep involvement in Turkmenistan's military and pressures to do so, the republic has not joined the CIS collective security agreement. However, regional conflicts have led Turkmenistan to deviate from its posture of avoiding multinational commitments. The republic joined Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in drawing up a draft agreement on joint border defense along the Amu Darya. In addition, Turkmenistan has indicated willingness to cooperate in limited ways in a CIS-sponsored Central Asian Zone that would integrate military units of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, part of Kyrgyzstan, and possibly Turkmenistan, and provide joint response in cases of aggression by a southern neighbor against any member. In May 1994, Turkmenistan became the first Central Asian member nation of the Partnership for Peace, the NATO initiative offering limited participation in the Western military alliance in return for participation in some NATO exercises. As a result, Turkmenistan has pursued the possibly of training its officers with the military cadre of NATO member nations. The Russian monopoly on military training was broken by a 1994 agreement by which Pakistan would train Turkmenistani air force cadets.

When the Ministry of Defense was formed, most ethnic Turkmen appointees were former communist party and government officials, illustrating the lack of Turkmen senior officers. The first minister of defense, Lieutenant General Danatar Kopekov, had been chairman of the Turkmenistan State Security Committee. In 1994 the chief of staff and first deputy minister of defense was Major General Annamurat Soltanov, a career officer who had served in Cuba and Afghanistan; another deputy minister of defense, Major General Begdzhan Niyazov, had been a law enforcement administrator prior to his appointment. Russian commanders included Major General Viktor Zavarzin, chief of staff and first deputy commander of the Separate Combined-Arms Army of Turkmenistan, and commander of the Separate Combined-Arms Army of Turkmenistan and deputy minister of defense Lieutenant General Nikolay Kormil'tsev. Russian Major General Vladislav Shune-

vich served together with Turkmen Major General Akmurad Kabulov as joint commanders of the border troops in the Turkmen Border Guard.

Force Structure

Of the 108,000 uniformed soldiers and officers and 300 units of the former Soviet armed forces that were in Turkmenistan in April 1992, nearly 50,000 personnel and thirty units were withdrawn or disbanded within the following year. By 1993 the republic's armed forces comprised around 34,000 active-duty personnel attached primarily to the army and air force. At that point, the reduced force operated 200 military units while seventy remained under Russian control. Turned over to Turkmenistan's command were one army corps directorate, two combined arms units stationed at Gushgy and Gyzylarbat, several air defense and air force aviation units, technical support and logistical units, and virtually all the armaments and other military property. The armed forces are divided into four branches: the army, air force, and border guards. The government has announced plans to establish a naval force on the Caspian Sea.

Army

The army, which had been reduced to about 11,000 personnel by 1996, is organized into one corps headquarters, three motorized rifle divisions, one artillery brigade, one multiple rocket launcher regiment, one antitank regiment, one engineer brigade, and one independent helicopter squadron. There are also signal, reconnaissance, and logistics support units. The three motorized rifle divisions are based at Ashgabat, Gushgy, and Gyzylarbat. The army's inventory includes about 530 M–72 main battle tanks, 338 armored infantry fighting vehicles, 543 armored personnel carriers, 345 pieces of towed artillery, sixteen self-propelled guns, 114 multiple rocket launchers, sixty-three mortars, fifty-four antitank guns, and fifty air defense guns.

Air Force

Turkmenistan's air force has four regiments with 2,000 men and 171 fighter and bomber aircraft, of which sixty-five are Su–17s. The main air force base is at Gyzylarbat. In 1994 the organization of the air force remained contingent on further negotiation on disposition and control of former Soviet units.

Army conscripts pose inside a transport aircraft, Ashgabat. Courtesy A. James Firth, United States Department of Agriculture

Pending such negotiation, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation maintained one air force and one air defense group in Turkmenistan. In the meantime, air force readiness was hampered by the resignation of most Russian pilots in the early 1990s and a shortage of trained Turkmen pilots.

Border Guards

About 5,000 personnel serve in the Turkmenistan Border Guard, which is commanded jointly by Turkmenistan and Russia. The Border Guard Command was established in 1992 to replace the Soviet-era Central Asian Border Troops District of the Committee for State Security (KGB) of the Soviet Union. The border guards patrol the wild, mountainous Afghan and Iranian frontiers, which total 1,750 kilometers and are rated the most sensitive borders of the country. The guards have small arms and some armored personnel carriers; experts evaluate them as an effective border force.

Matériel Supply

In the mid-1990s, Turkmenistan lacked adequate matériel and technical support for its armed forces. However, a protocol with the Russian Arms Company (Rosvooruzheniye) provided for delivery of much-needed arms to Turkmenistan's military in 1995–96 in return for natural gas. Under this agreement,

Turkmenistan was to supply 6 billion cubic meters of gas annually to the Russian Natural Gas Company (Gazprom) for sale to industries that will fill arms orders for Turkmenistan. Rosvooruzheniye also was to transfer 30 percent of this revenue to hard-currency accounts in Turkmenistan.

Recruitment and Training

The 1992 constitution provides for universal conscription of males for service in the national armed forces. The period of regular service is eighteen months for army draftees and one year for those with higher education. Draft deferments from active military duty are granted only to individuals involved in seasonal animal herding. A presidential decree of July 1992 allowed two-year alternative service at a state enterprise for conscripts in certain categories, but this decree was nullifed in December 1994.

Conditions of service seriously deteriorated in the years immediately following independence. Large numbers of Turkmen were absent without leave from units outside and within Turkmenistan, hazing and fighting on ethnic and regional grounds were common among conscripts, instances of insubordination and failure to comply with orders increased, and relations between the Russian officer corps and Turkmen troops were strained to the breaking point. In recent years, discipline has been strengthened somewhat by improved working conditions, amnesty for some cases of absence without leave, the removal of political organs from the armed services, and increased opportunities for service within Turkmenistan. In addition, legislation has improved pensions given to career personnel in the Ministry of Defense, the Committee for National Security, the Border Guard, and the Interior Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, when men reach the age of fifty-five and women the age of fifty.

All of the personnel except officers in the armed forces are conscripts, more than 90 percent of whom are Turkmen. By contrast, about 95 percent of the officer corps is made up of Slavs. After many Russian officers had left Turkmenistan under the negative conditions of the early 1990s, others were prevented from leaving by a September 1993 agreement giving Russian citizens the option of fulfilling their military obligation in Turkmenistan, swearing allegiance to either state, or transferring to any region of Russia after five years of service in Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistani officers are trained in military educational establishments of the Russian Federation's Ministry of Defense, while Russian officers in Turkmenistan train draftee sergeants and specialists. Some limited training is provided in the military faculty established at Turkmenistan State University. Turkmenistan has sent about 300 of its officers to training schools in Turkey, but it declined an offer from Pakistan's general staff to provide officer training in Pakistani war colleges.

Internal Security Forces

The criminal justice system of Turkmenistan is deeply rooted in Soviet institutions and practices. Its Committee for National Security, headed by chairman Saparmurad Seidov, retains essentially the same functions, operations, and personnel of the Soviet-era KGB. As it did in the Soviet period, the Ministry of Internal Affairs continues to direct the operations of police departments and to work closely with the Committee for National Security on matters of national security.

The national police force, estimated to include 25,000 personnel, is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The force is located in cities and settlements throughout the country, with garrisons in Ashgabat, Gyzylarbat, and Dashhowuz. Police departments do not have an investigative function in Turkmenistan; that role is filled by the procurator's offices in Ashgabat and other cities (see Criminal Justice, this ch.). The police role is confined to routine maintenance of public order and to certain administrative tasks such as controlling the internal passport regime, issuing visas for foreign travel, and registering foreign guests.

At the national level, the primary security concerns are prevention of trafficking in drugs and other illegal commodities, and combatting organized and international crime. In December 1994, Turkmenistan's Committee for National Security and the Russian Federation's Foreign Intelligence Service (a successor agency to the KGB) signed a five-year agreement for cooperation in state security and mutual protection of the political, economic, and technological interests of the two states.

Criminal Justice

The 1992 constitution declares that Turkmenistan is a state based on the rule of law, and that the constitution is the supreme law of the land. As one of the three branches of government, the judiciary is charged with upholding the constitu-

tion and the Supreme Law, as the national codex of civil and criminal law is called. The Ministry of Justice oversees the judicial system, while the Office of the Procurator General is responsible for ensuring that investigative agencies and court proceedings are in compliance with the constitution and the Supreme Law. The president appoints the republic's procurator general and the procurators in each province, and the procurator general appoints those for the smallest political jurisdictions, the districts and the cities.

The court system is divided into three levels. At the highest level, the Supreme Court consists of twenty-two members, including a president and associate judges, and is divided into civil, criminal, and military chambers. The Supreme Court hears only cases of national importance; it does not function as an appeals court. At the next level, appellate courts function as courts of appeal in the six provinces and the city of Ashgabat. Sixty-one trial courts operate in the districts and in some cities, with jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and administrative matters. In courts at this level, a panel of judges presides in civil and criminal suits, and typically one judge decides administrative cases. Outside this structure, military courts decide cases involving military discipline and crimes committed by and against military personnel. Also, the Supreme Economic Court performs the same function as the state arbitration court of the Soviet period, arbitrating disputes between enterprises and state agencies. The constitution stipulates that all judges at all levels are appointed by the president to terms of five years, and they may be reappointed indefinitely. Enjoying immunity from criminal and civil liability for their judicial actions, judges can be removed only for cause.

In 1996, thirteen crimes were punishable by death, but few executions were known to have been carried out. Prison riots in 1996 revealed that prison administration is corrupt and that conditions are overcrowded and squalid.

Observers of several trends in the administration of justice in this court system have concluded that rudimentary elements of legal culture are absent in the implementation of legal proceedings in Turkmenistan. First, the judiciary is subservient to the Ministry of Justice, and it is especially deferential to the wishes of the president. Second, because the Office of the Procurator General fills the roles of grand jury, criminal investigator, and public prosecutor, it dominates the judicial process, especially criminal proceedings. Third, disregard for due pro-

cess occurs frequently when higher officials apply pressure to judges concerned about reappointment, a practice known as "telephone justice." Fourth, the legal system disregards the role of lawyers in civil and criminal proceedings, and the Ministry of Justice has not permitted an organized bar. Finally, the republic's citizenry remains largely ignorant of the procedures and issues involved in the nation's legal system.

The condition of the legal system and international doubts about human rights in Turkmenistan are indicators that this potentially prosperous former Soviet republic is far from Western-style democracy, despite the stability its government has achieved and the eagerness with which Western investors have approached it. Future years will determine whether this is a transitional stage of independent democracy, whether liberation from the Soviet empire has produced a permanently authoritarian nation, or whether the independent stance of the mid-1990s will yield to closer ties and more economic and military reliance on the Russian Federation.

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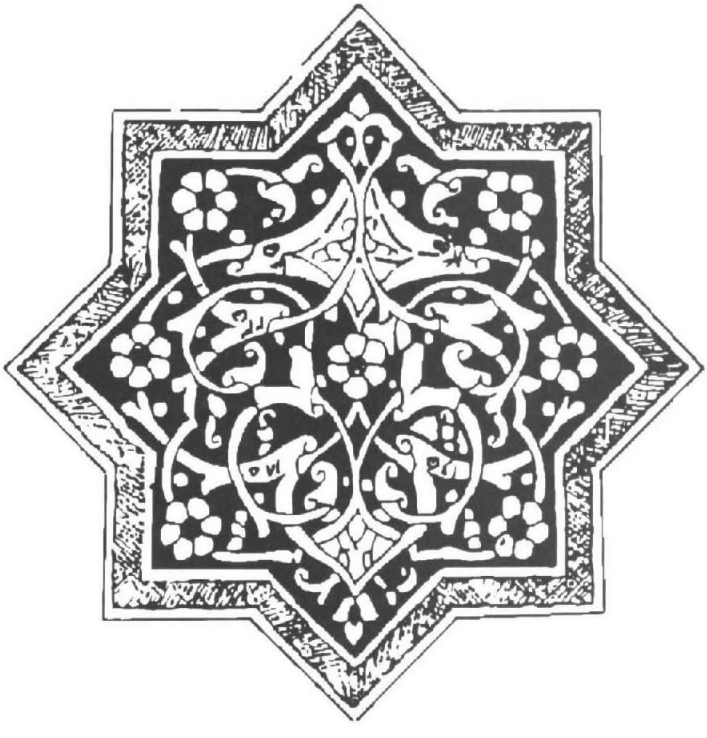
The social structure of the Turkmen people is studied in *The Yomut Turkmen* by William Irons. Traditional religious practices are described in an article by Vladimir Basilov, "Popular Islam in Central Asia and Kazakhstan," which appeared in the *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* in 1987. Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly, Jr. describe environmental and health conditions in *Ecocide in the USSR.* Detailed current information on the economy is provided in country studies by the International Monetary Fund (1994), the World Bank (1994), and the Economist Intelligence Unit. Summaries of postindependence political events are supplied by Bess Brown in a series of articles in 1992 and 1993 issues of *RFE/RL Research Report.* Concise accounts and statistics on Turkmenistan's current national security position are found in *Jane's Sentinel Regional Security Assessment: Commonwealth of Independent States,* and further statistics are available in annual issues of *The Military Balance.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. Uzbekistan



Painted design pattern in Khorazm style at nineteenth-century Pahlavan-Mahmud Mausoleum, Khiva

Country Profile

Country

Formal Name: Republic of Uzbekistan.

Short Form: Uzbekistan.

Term for Citizens: Uzbekistani(s).

Capital: Tashkent.

Date of Independence: August 31, 1991.

Geography

Size: Approximately 447,000 square kilometers.

Topography: About 80 percent flat, desert; mountain ranges dominate far southeast and far northeast and traverse middle of eastern provinces, east to west. Fergana Valley in northeast most fertile region. Few lakes and rivers; shrinking Aral Sea, shared with Kazakstan, in northwest. Most of country seismically active.

Climate: Continental; hot summers, cool winters. Annual rainfall very sparse in most regions, irrigation needed for crops.

Society

Population: Approximately 23 million, 1994; growth rate in 1995, 2.5 percent per year; 1993 population density 48.5 persons per square kilometer.

Ethnic Groups: In 1995, Uzbek 71 percent, Russian 8 percent, Tajik 5 percent, Kazak 4 percent, Tatar 2 percent, and Karakalpak 2 percent.

Language: Uzbek designated preferred language, required for citizenship, but Russian in wide official and commercial use, 1995. In 1994, Uzbek first language of 74 percent, Russian of 14 percent, and Tajik of 4 percent.

Religion: Muslim (mostly Sunni) 88 percent, Russian Ortho-

dox 9 percent, about 93,000 Jews. Islam practiced in individualized forms; little political Islam although post-Soviet religious practice greatly increased.

Education and Literacy: Literacy 97 percent, 1989. Program to restructure Soviet-era system hampered by low budget, poor condition of infrastructure, and loss of teachers. Attendance compulsory through grade nine. In 1993, 86 percent of population ages six to sixteen in regular or vocational school. Fifty-three institutions of higher learning active, 1993.

Health: Universal free health care; some private practices and health insurance introduced, early 1990s. Shortages of medicine, equipment, and trained personnel. Health crises, epidemics caused by high pollution levels, especially in Aral Sea region. Infant mortality increased very fast beginning in 1970s.

Economy

Gross National Product (GNP): In 1993, US$31 billion, or US$1,346 per capita. In 1994 growth rate –4 percent. Cautious reform avoided major post-Soviet declines of other Central Asian states; strong resource base promises prosperity given systemic reform.

Agriculture: Cotton remains primary crop, requiring heavy irrigation; entire system geared for its production. Failure to expand grain culture has led to heavy food imports. Other crops wheat, oats, corn, barley, rice, fodder crops, fruits, and vegetables.

Industry and Mining: Slow diversification, early 1990s, from Soviet-era specialization in cotton-related and mineral-processing operations. Heavy industry, centered in northeast, mainly petroleum and mineral processing, machinery, ferrous metallurgy, chemicals, and electric power. Light industry dominated by fabric and food processing. Gold, copper, zinc, lead, tungsten, uranium, molybdenum, and fluorospar mined.

Energy: Large untapped natural gas reserves, small coal and oil production; two newly tapped oil fields have high potential. Coal mainly in northeastern industrial region. Hydroelectric power system well-developed on three major rivers; thermo-

electric stations burn natural gas or coal.

Exports: Worth US$3.0 billion in 1994. As in Soviet period, dominated by minerals, cotton, cotton-related machinery, textiles, and fertilizers. Chief customers remain in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): Russia, Kazakstan, Ukraine, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Export licensing liberalized 1994, but market expansion slow.

Imports: Worth US$2.5 billion in 1994. Mostly non-textile consumer goods, grain and other foods, machinery, and ferrous metals; chief suppliers Russia, Ukraine, Kazakstan, Turkmenistan, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan. Import licensing discontinued, quotas reduced, 1994.

Balance of Payments: In 1992, US$107 million deficit.

Exchange Rate: Provisional currency unit, som, introduced November 1993, made permanent July 1994. In 1996, rate thirty-five som per US$1. Stabilized and convertibility liberalized 1995; full convertibility promised 1996.

Inflation: Hyperinflation (1,100 percent) 1993, 270 percent 1994 after second-half slide of som's value. Government control remains on prices of basic commodities and fuels, but prices of other items rose very fast after decontrol, 1992 and 1993.

Fiscal Year: Calendar year.

Fiscal Policy: Tax system reformed with addition of value-added and profits tax, beginning 1992; main revenues of 1993 state budget from value-added tax, corporate income tax, cotton marketing, and individual income tax; 1993 state budget deficit 200 million rubles, 12 percent of revenue.

Transportation and Telecommunications

Highways: About 67,000 kilometers paved. Three major roads connect Tashkent and Termiz, Samarqand and Chärjew, and Tashkent and Quqon, respectively. Fergana Ring serves industries of the northeast. Highways carry about 25 percent of freight traffic.

Railroads: About 3,500 kilometers of track, much needing repair, carry about 75 percent of freight traffic. Main line

Transcaspian Railroad connecting Tashkent with Amu Darya.

Civil Aviation: Nine airports, of which four accommodate international flights. Largest airport, at Tashkent, a hub linking Central Asia with Western Europe and United States.

Inland Waterways: Steamship travel on Amu Darya reduced because of low water levels.

Ports: None.

Pipelines: In 1992, 325 kilometers of oil pipeline, 2,470 kilometers of natural gas pipeline.

Telecommunications: Telephone service available to 7 percent of population in 1994. Much outmoded equipment remains in service; system expansion slow. Satellite television broadcasts in some regions. Radio and television controlled by Ministry of Communications.

Government and Politics

Government: Constitution, adopted 1992, provides for strong presidency, with power to appoint government and dissolve legislature. In practice, authoritarian state with all power in executive and suppression of dissent. Referendum, 1995, extended term of President Islam Karimov to 2000. Local government with little autonomy; judiciary ineffective.

Politics: Successor to Communist Party, People's Democratic Party, dominates legislature and government; other major legal party, Fatherland Progress Party, has no opposition role; opposition parties weak, fragmented, many excluded by government and their leaders exiled or jailed.

Foreign Relations: To avoid domination by Russia, wide relations sought, early 1990s. Major goal cooperation among Central Asian states, which fear domination by Uzbekistan. Free-trade zone with Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan and cooperation on Aral Sea matters are major steps. Economic and military dependence on CIS, especially Russia, continues. Renewed economic ties with Iran, Turkey, possible major role in Economic Cooperation Organization. Major aid programs from United States, Western Europe, mid-1990s.

International Agreements and Memberships: United Nations

(UN), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), North Atlantic Cooperation Council, CIS, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace.

National Security

Armed Forces: Best-equipped of Central Asian forces. Ground forces have 20,400 troops, air force and air defense forces have estimated 4,000 troops, border troops about 1,000, National Guard about 700.

Major Military Units: One ground force corps, divided into three motorized rifle brigades, one tank regiment, one airborne brigade, one engineer brigade, and support units for aviation, logistics, and communications.

Military Budget: 1995 estimate, US$315 million.

Internal Security: National Security Service continues intelligence function of Soviet-era Committee for State Security (KGB), with estimated 8,000 troops. Major crime problem narcotics sales and transport, inadequately addressed in early 1990s. Regular police force has about 25,000 troops. Political corruption and bribery widespread, including state procurator and courts.

Figure 13. Uzbekistan: Administrative Divisions, 1996

BEFORE THE COLLAPSE of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan was the third largest Soviet republic by population and the fourth largest in territory. Because it has a population that is more than 40 percent of the combined population of the five Central Asian states of the former Soviet Union, and because it has rich natural resources, many experts believe that Uzbekistan is likely to emerge as the dominant new state in Central Asia. But Uzbekistan's history also has given rise to serious problems: deeply rooted ethnic tensions; serious economic, political, and environmental challenges; and an uncertain security and foreign policy environment. Like its neighbors in Central Asia, Uzbekistan emerged suddenly from more than sixty years within a highly structured, and in many ways protective, political and economic system. In the years following that emergence, survival has depended on the development of new international relationships as well as on solutions to the dilemmas of the Soviet era. By 1996 Uzbekistan showed signs of progress in both directions.

Historical Background

Uzbekistan, the most populous and arguably the most powerful state in Central Asia, has a long and magnificent history. Located between two rivers—the Amu Darya to the north and the Syrdariya to the south—the region that is modern Uzbekistan has been one of the cradles of world civilization. Some of the world's oldest sedentary populations and several of its most ancient cities are located here. Beginning at the height of the Roman Empire, the region was a crossroads on the transcontinental trade routes between China and the West. Subject to constant invasion and to in-migration of nomads from the great grasslands to the north, Uzbekistan became a region of legendary conquests where various peoples with different traditions have consistently had to live together.

Early History

The first people known to have occupied Central Asia were Iranian nomads who arrived from the northern grasslands of what is now Uzbekistan sometime in the first millennium B.C. These nomads, who spoke Iranian (see Glossary) dialects, set-

tled in Central Asia and began to build an extensive irrigation system along the rivers of the region. At this time, cities such as Bukhoro (Bukhara) and Samarqand (Samarkand) began to appear as centers of government and culture. By the fifth century B.C., the Bactrian, Soghdian, and Tokharian states dominated the region. As China began to develop its silk trade with the West, Iranian cities took advantage of this commerce by becoming centers of trade. Using an extensive network of cities and settlements in the province of Mawarannahr (a name given the region after the Arab conquest) in Uzbekistan and farther east in what is today China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the Soghdian intermediaries became the wealthiest of these Iranian merchants. Because of this trade on what became known as the Silk Route, Bukhoro and Samarqand eventually became extremely wealthy cities, and at times Mawarannahr was one of the most influential and powerful Persian (see Glossary) provinces of antiquity.

The wealth of Mawarannahr was a constant magnet for invasions from the northern steppes and from China. Numerous intraregional wars were fought between Soghdian states and the other states in Mawarannahr, and the Persians and the Chinese were in perpetual conflict over the region. Alexander the Great conquered the region in 328 B.C., bringing it briefly under the control of his Macedonian Empire.

In the same centuries, however, the region also was an important center of intellectual life and religion. Until the first centuries after Christ, the dominant religion in the region was Zoroastrianism (see Glossary), but Buddhism, Manichaeism (see Glossary), and Christianity also attracted large numbers of followers.

The Early Islamic Period

The conquest of Central Asia by Islamic Arabs, which was completed in the eighth century A.D., brought to the region a new religion and culture that continue to be dominant. The Arabs first invaded Mawarannahr in the middle of the seventh century through sporadic raids during their conquest of Persia. Available sources on the Arab conquest suggest that the Soghdians and other Iranian peoples of Central Asia were unable to defend their land against the Arabs because of internal divisions and the lack of strong indigenous leadership. The Arabs, on the other hand, were led by a brilliant general, Qutaybah ibn Muslim, and they also were highly motivated by the desire

to spread their new faith (the official beginning of which was in A.D. 622). Because of these factors, the population of Mawarannahr was easily conquered. The new religion brought by the Arabs spread gradually in the region. The native cultures, which in some respects already were being displaced by Persian influences before the Arabs arrived, were displaced farther in the ensuing centuries. Nevertheless, the destiny of Central Asia as an Islamic region was firmly established by the Arab victory over the Chinese armies in 750 in a battle at the Talas River.

Under Arab rule, Central Asia retained much of its Iranian character, remaining an important center of culture and trade for centuries after the Arab conquest. However, until the tenth century the language of government, literature, and commerce was Arabic. Mawarannahr continued to be an important political player in regional affairs, as it had been under various Persian dynasties. In fact, the Abbasid Caliphate, which ruled the Arab world for five centuries beginning in 750, was established thanks in great part to assistance from Central Asian supporters in their struggle against the then-ruling Umayyad Caliphate.

During the height of the Abbasid Caliphate in the eighth and the ninth centuries, Central Asia and Mawarannahr experienced a truly golden age. Bukhoro became one of the leading centers of learning, culture, and art in the Muslim world, its magnificence rivaling contemporaneous cultural centers such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba. Some of the greatest historians, scientists, and geographers in the history of Islamic culture were natives of the region.

As the Abbasid Caliphate began to weaken and local Islamic Iranian states emerged as the rulers of Iran and Central Asia, the Persian language began to regain its preeminent role in the region as the language of literature and government. The rulers of the eastern section of Iran and of Mawarannahr were Persians. Under the Samanids and the Buyids, the rich culture of Mawarannahr continued to flourish.

The Turkification of Mawarannahr

In the ninth century, the continued influx of nomads from the northern steppes brought a new group of people into Central Asia. These people were the Turks who lived in the great grasslands stretching from Mongolia to the Caspian Sea. Introduced mainly as slave soldiers to the Samanid Dynasty, these

Turks served in the armies of all the states of the region, including the Abbasid army. In the late tenth century, as the Samanids began to lose control of Mawarannahr and northeastern Iran, some of these soldiers came to positions of power in the government of the region, and eventually they established their own states. With the emergence of a Turkic ruling group in the region, other Turkic tribes began to migrate to Mawarannahr.

The first of the Turkic states in the region was the Ghaznavid Empire, established in the last years of the tenth century. The Ghaznavid state, which ruled lands south of the Amu Darya, was able to conquer large areas of Iran, Afghanistan, and northern India during the reign of Sultan Mahmud. The dominance of Ghazna was curtailed, however, when large-scale Turkic migrations brought in two new groups of Turks who undermined the Ghaznavids. In the east, these Turks were led by the Qarakhanids, who conquered the Samanids. Then the Seljuk family led Turks into the western part of the region, conquering the Ghaznavid territory of Khorazm (also spelled Khorezm and Khwarazm).

Attracted by the wealth of Central Asia as were earlier groups, the Seljuks dominated a wide area from Asia Minor to the western sections of Mawarannahr, in Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq in the eleventh century. The Seljuk Empire then split into states ruled by various local Turkic and Iranian rulers. The culture and intellectual life of the region continued unaffected by such political changes, however. Turkic tribes from the north continued to migrate into the region during this period.

In the late twelfth century, a Turkic leader of Khorazm, which is the region south of the Aral Sea, united Khorazm, Mawarannahr, and Iran under his rule. Under the rule of the Khorazm shah Kutbeddin Muhammad and his son, Muhammad II, Mawarannahr continued to be prosperous and rich. However, a new incursion of nomads from the north soon changed this situation. This time the invader was Chinggis (Genghis) Khan with his Mongol armies.

The Mongol Period

The Mongol invasion of Central Asia is one of the turning points in the history of the region. That event left imprints that were still discernible in the early twentieth century. The Mongols had such a lasting impact because they established the tra-

dition that the legitimate ruler of any Central Asian state could only be a blood descendant of Chinggis Khan.

The Mongol conquest of Central Asia, which took place from 1219 to 1225, led to a wholesale change in the population of Mawarannahr. The conquest quickened the process of Turkification in the region because, although the armies of Chinggis Khan were led by Mongols, they were made up mostly of Turkic tribes that had been incorporated into the Mongol armies as the tribes were encountered in the Mongols' southward sweep. As these armies settled in Mawarannahr, they intermixed with the local populations, increasingly making the Iranians a minority. Another effect of the Mongol conquest was the large-scale damage the warriors inflicted on cities such as Bukhoro and on regions such as Khorazm. As the leading province of a wealthy state, Khorazm was treated especially severely. The irrigation networks in the region suffered extensive damage that was not repaired for several generations.

The Rule of Timur

Following the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227, his empire was divided among his three sons. Despite the potential for serious fragmentation, Mongol law maintained orderly succession for several more generations, and control of most of Mawarannahr stayed in the hands of direct descendants of Chaghatai, the second son of Chinggis. Orderly succession, prosperity, and internal peace prevailed in the Chaghatai lands, and the Mongol Empire as a whole remained strong and united.

In the early fourteenth century, however, as the empire began to break up into its constituent parts, the Chaghatai territory also was disrupted as the princes of various tribal groups competed for influence. One tribal chieftain, Timur (Tamerlane), emerged from these struggles in the 1380s as the dominant force in Mawarannahr. Although he was not a descendant of Chinggis, Timur became the de facto ruler of Mawarannahr and proceeded to conquer all of western Central Asia, Iran, Asia Minor, and the southern steppe region north of the Aral Sea. He also invaded Russia before dying during an invasion of China in 1405.

Timur initiated the last flowering of Mawarannahr by gathering in his capital, Samarqand, numerous artisans and scholars from the lands he had conquered. By supporting such people, Timur imbued his empire with a very rich culture. During

Timur's reign and the reigns of his immediate descendants, a wide range of religious and palatial construction projects were undertaken in Samarqand and other population centers. Timur also patronized scientists and artists; his grandson Ulugh Beg was one of the world's first great astronomers. It was during the Timurid dynasty that Turkish, in the form of the Chaghatai dialect, became a literary language in its own right in Mawarannahr—although the Timurids also patronized writing in Persian. Until then only Persian had been used in the region. The greatest Chaghataid writer, Ali Shir Nava'i, was active in the city of Herat, now in northwestern Afghanistan, in the second half of the fifteenth century.

The Timurid state quickly broke into two halves after the death of Timur. The chronic internal fighting of the Timurids attracted the attention of the Uzbek nomadic tribes living to the north of the Aral Sea. In 1501 the Uzbeks began a wholesale invasion of Mawarannahr.

The Uzbek Period

By 1510 the Uzbeks had completed their conquest of Central Asia, including the territory of the present-day Uzbekistan. Of the states they established, the most powerful, the Khanate of Bukhoro, centered on the city of Bukhoro. The khanate controlled Mawarannahr, especially the region of Tashkent, the Fergana Valley in the east, and northern Afghanistan. A second Uzbek state was established in the oasis of Khorazm at the mouth of the Amu Darya. The Khanate of Bukhoro was initially led by the energetic Shaybanid Dynasty. The Shaybanids competed against Iran, which was led by the Safavid Dynasty, for the rich far-eastern territory of present-day Iran. The struggle with Iran also had a religious aspect because the Uzbeks were Sunni (see Glossary) Muslims, and Iran was Shia (see Glossary).

Near the end of the sixteenth century, the Uzbek states of Bukhoro and Khorazm began to weaken because of their endless wars against each other and the Persians and because of strong competition for the throne among the khans in power and their heirs. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Shaybanid Dynasty was replaced by the Janid Dynasty.

Another factor contributing to the weakness of the Uzbek khanates in this period was the general decline of trade moving through the region. This change had begun in the previous century when ocean trade routes were established from Europe to India and China, circumventing the Silk Route. As

Bazaar outside Bibi Khanym Mosque, built by Timur, Samarqand
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss

European-dominated ocean transport expanded and some trading centers were destroyed, cities such as Bukhoro, Merv, and Samarqand in the Khanate of Bukhoro and Khiva and Urganch (Urgench) in Khorazm began to steadily decline.

The Uzbeks' struggle with Iran also led to the cultural isolation of Central Asia from the rest of the Islamic world. In addition to these problems, the struggle with the nomads from the northern steppe continued. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Kazak nomads and Mongols continually raided the Uzbek khanates, causing widespread damage and disruption. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Khanate of Bukhoro lost the fertile Fergana region, and a new Uzbek khanate was formed in Quqon.

Arrival of the Russians

The following period was one of weakness and disruption,

with continuous invasions from Iran and from the north. In this period, a new group, the Russians, began to appear on the Central Asian scene. As Russian merchants began to expand into the grasslands of present-day Kazakstan, they built strong trade relations with their counterparts in Tashkent and, to some extent, in Khiva. For the Russians, this trade was not rich enough to replace the former transcontinental trade, but it made the Russians aware of the potential of Central Asia. Russian attention also was drawn by the sale of increasingly large numbers of Russian slaves to the Central Asians by Kazak and Turkmen tribes. Russians kidnapped by nomads in the border regions and Russian sailors shipwrecked on the shores of the Caspian Sea usually ended up in the slave markets of Bukhoro or Khiva. Beginning in the eighteenth century, this situation evoked increasing Russian hostility toward the Central Asian khanates.

Meanwhile, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries new dynasties led the khanates to a period of recovery. Those dynasties were the Qongrats in Khiva, the Manghits in Bukhoro, and the Mins in Quqon. These new dynasties established centralized states with standing armies and new irrigation works. But their rise coincided with the ascendance of Russian power in the Kazak steppes and the establishment of a British position in Afghanistan. By the early nineteenth century, the region was caught between these two powerful European competitors, each of which tried to add Central Asia to its empire in what came to be known as the Great Game. The Central Asians, who did not realize the dangerous position they were in, continued to waste their strength in wars among themselves and in pointless campaigns of conquest.

The Russian Conquest

In the nineteenth century, Russian interest in the area increased greatly, sparked by nominal concern over British designs on Central Asia; by anger over the situation of Russian citizens held as slaves; and by the desire to control the trade in the region and to establish a secure source of cotton for Russia. When the United States Civil War prevented cotton delivery from Russia's primary supplier, the southern United States, Central Asian cotton assumed much greater importance for Russia.

As soon as the Russian conquest of the Caucasus was completed in the late 1850s, therefore, the Russian Ministry of War

Registan, an architectural monument of the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries, Samarqand
Courtesy Tom Skipper

began to send military forces against the Central Asian khanates. Three major population centers of the khanates—Tashkent, Bukhoro, and Samarqand—were captured in 1865, 1867, and 1868, respectively. In 1868 the Khanate of Bukhoro signed a treaty with Russia making Bukhoro a Russian protectorate. Khiva became a Russian protectorate in 1873, and the Quqon Khanate finally was incorporated into the Russian Empire, also as a protectorate, in 1876.

By 1876 the entire territory comprising present-day Uzbekistan either had fallen under direct Russian rule or had become a protectorate of Russia. The treaties establishing the protectorates over Bukhoro and Khiva gave Russia control of the foreign relations of these states and gave Russian merchants important concessions in foreign trade; the khanates retained

control of their own internal affairs. Tashkent and Quqon fell directly under a Russian governor general.

During the first few decades of Russian rule, the daily life of the Central Asians did not change greatly. The Russians substantially increased cotton production, but otherwise they interfered little with the indigenous people. Some Russian settlements were built next to the established cities of Tashkent and Samarqand, but the Russians did not mix with the indigenous populations. The era of Russian rule did produce important social and economic changes for some Uzbeks as a new middle class developed and some peasants were affected by the increased emphasis on cotton cultivation.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, conditions began to change as new Russian railroads brought greater numbers of Russians into the area. In the 1890s, several revolts, which were put down easily, led to increased Russian vigilance in the region. The Russians increasingly intruded in the internal affairs of the khanates. The only avenue for Uzbek resistance to Russian rule became the Pan-Turkish movement, also known as Jadidism, which had arisen in the 1860s among intellectuals who sought to preserve indigenous Islamic Central Asian culture from Russian encroachment. By 1900 Jadidism had developed into the region's first major movement of political resistance. Until the Bolshevik Revolution (see Glossary) of 1917, the modern, secular ideas of Jadidism faced resistance from both the Russians and the Uzbek khans, who had differing reasons to fear the movement.

Prior to the events of 1917, Russian rule had brought some industrial development in sectors directly connected with cotton. Although railroads and cotton-ginning machinery advanced, the Central Asian textile industry was slow to develop because the cotton crop was shipped to Russia for processing. As the tsarist government expanded the cultivation of cotton dramatically, it changed the balance between cotton and food production, creating some problems in food supply—although in the prerevolutionary period Central Asia remained largely self-sufficient in food. This situation was to change during the Soviet period when the Moscow government began a ruthless drive for national self-sufficiency in cotton. This policy converted almost the entire agricultural economy of Uzbekistan to cotton production, bringing a series of consequences whose negative impact still is felt today in Uzbekistan and other republics.

Entering the Twentieth Century

By the turn of the twentieth century, the Russian Empire was in complete control of Central Asia. The territory of Uzbekistan was divided into three political groupings: the khanates of Bukhoro and Khiva and the Guberniya (Governorate General) of Turkestan, the last of which was under direct control of the Ministry of War of Russia (see fig. 3). The final decade of the twentieth century finds the three regions united under the independent and sovereign Republic of Uzbekistan. The intervening decades were a period of revolution, oppression, massive disruptions, and colonial rule.

After 1900 the khanates continued to enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in their internal affairs. However, they ultimately were subservient to the Russian governor general in Tashkent, who ruled the region in the name of Tsar Nicholas II. The Russian Empire exercised direct control over large tracts of territory in Central Asia, allowing the khanates to rule a large portion of their ancient lands for themselves. In this period, large numbers of Russians, attracted by the climate and the available land, immigrated into Central Asia. After 1900, increased contact with Russian civilization began to have an impact on the lives of Central Asians in the larger population centers where the Russians settled.

The Jadidists and Basmachis

Russian influence was especially strong among certain young intellectuals who were the sons of the rich merchant classes. Educated in the local Muslim schools, in Russian universities, or in Istanbul, these men, who came to be known as the Jadidists, tried to learn from Russia and from modernizing movements in Istanbul and among the Tatars, and to use this knowledge to regain their country's independence. The Jadidists believed that their society, and even their religion, must be reformed and modernized for this goal to be achieved. In 1905 the unexpected victory of a new Asiatic power in the Russo-Japanese War and the eruption of revolution in Russia raised the hopes of reform factions that Russian rule could be overturned, and a modernization program initiated, in Central Asia. The democratic reforms that Russia promised in the wake of the revolution gradually faded, however, as the tsarist government restored authoritarian rule in the decade that followed 1905. Renewed tsarist repression and the reactionary

politics of the rulers of Bukhoro and Khiva forced the reformers underground or into exile. Nevertheless, some of the future leaders of Soviet Uzbekistan, including Abdur Rauf Fitrat and others, gained valuable revolutionary experience and were able to expand their ideological influence in this period.

In the summer of 1916, a number of settlements in eastern Uzbekistan were the sites of violent demonstrations against a new Russian decree canceling the Central Asians' immunity to conscription for duty in World War I. Reprisals of increasing violence ensued, and the struggle spread from Uzbekistan into Kyrgyz and Kazak territory. There, Russian confiscation of grazing land already had created animosity not present in the Uzbek population, which was concerned mainly with preserving its rights.

The next opportunity for the Jadidists presented itself in 1917 with the outbreak of the February and October revolutions in Russia. In February the revolutionary events in Russia's capital, Petrograd (St. Petersburg), were quickly repeated in Tashkent, where the tsarist administration of the governor general was overthrown. In its place, a dual system was established, combining a provisional government with direct Soviet power and completely excluding the native Muslim population from power. Indigenous leaders, including some of the Jadidists, attempted to set up an autonomous government in the city of Quqon in the Fergana Valley, but this attempt was quickly crushed. Following the suppression of autonomy in Quqon, Jadidists and other loosely connected factions began what was called the Basmachi revolt against Soviet rule, which by 1922 had survived the civil war and was asserting greater power over most of Central Asia. For more than a decade, Basmachi guerrilla fighters (that name was a derogatory Slavic term that the fighters did not apply to themselves) fiercely resisted the establishment of Soviet rule in parts of Central Asia.

However, the majority of Jadidists, including leaders such as Fitrat and Faizulla Khojayev, cast their lot with the communists. In 1920 Khojayev, who became first secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, assisted communist forces in the capture of Bukhoro and Khiva. After the amir of Bukhoro had joined the Basmachi movement, Khojayev became president of the newly established Soviet Bukhoran People's Republic. A People's Republic of Khorazm also was set up in what had been Khiva.

The Basmachi revolt eventually was crushed as the civil war in Russia ended and the communists drew away large portions of the Central Asian population with promises of local political autonomy and the potential economic autonomy of Soviet leader Vladimir I. Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP—see Glossary). Under these circumstances, large numbers of Central Asians joined the communist party, many gaining high positions in the government of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (Uzbek SSR), the administrative unit established in 1924 to include present-day Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The indigenous leaders cooperated closely with the communist government in enforcing policies designed to alter the traditional society of the region: the emancipation of women, the redistribution of land, and mass literacy campaigns.

The Stalinist Period

In 1929 the Tajik and Uzbek Soviet socialist republics were separated. As Uzbek communist party chief, Khojayev enforced the policies of the Soviet government during the collectivization of agriculture in the late 1920s and early 1930s and, at the same time, tried to increase the participation of Uzbeks in the government and the party. Soviet leader Joseph V. Stalin suspected the motives of all reformist national leaders in the non-Russian republics of the Soviet Union. By the late 1930s, Khojayev and the entire group that came into high positions in the Uzbek Republic had been arrested and executed during the Stalinist purges.

Following the purge of the nationalists, the government and party ranks in Uzbekistan were filled with people loyal to the Moscow government. Economic policy emphasized the supply of cotton to the rest of the Soviet Union, to the exclusion of diversified agriculture. During World War II, many industrial plants from European Russia were evacuated to Uzbekistan and other parts of Central Asia. With the factories came a new wave of Russian and other European workers. Because native Uzbeks were mostly occupied in the country's agricultural regions, the urban concentration of immigrants increasingly Russified Tashkent and other large cities. During the war years, in addition to the Russians who moved to Uzbekistan, other nationalities such as Crimean Tatars, Chechens, and Koreans were exiled to the republic because Moscow saw them as subversive elements in European Russia.

Russification and Resistance

Following the death of Stalin in 1953, the relative relaxation of totalitarian control initiated by First Secretary Nikita S. Khrushchev (in office 1953–64) brought the rehabilitation of some of the Uzbek nationalists who had been purged. More Uzbeks began to join the Communist Party of Uzbekistan and to assume positions in the government. However, those Uzbeks who participated in the regime did so on Russian terms. Russian was the language of state, and Russification was the prerequisite for obtaining a position in the government or the party. Those who did not or could not abandon their Uzbek lifestyles and identities were excluded from leading roles in official Uzbek society. Because of these conditions, Uzbekistan gained a reputation as one of the most politically conservative republics in the Soviet Union.

As Uzbeks were beginning to gain leading positions in society, they also were establishing or reviving unofficial networks based on regional and clan loyalties. These networks provided their members support and often profitable connections between them and the state and the party. An extreme example of this phenomenon occurred under the leadership of Sharaf Rashidov, who was first secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan from 1959 to 1982. During his tenure, Rashidov brought numerous relatives and associates from his native region into government and party leadership positions. The individuals who thus became "connected" treated their positions as personal fiefdoms to enrich themselves.

In this way, Rashidov was able to initiate efforts to make Uzbekistan less subservient to Moscow. As became apparent after his death, Rashidov's strategy had been to remain a loyal ally of Leonid I. Brezhnev, leader of the Soviet Union from 1964 to 1982, by bribing high officials of the central government. With this advantage, the Uzbek government was allowed to merely feign compliance with Moscow's demands for increasingly higher cotton quotas.

The 1980s

During the decade following the death of Rashidov, Moscow attempted to regain the central control over Uzbekistan that had weakened in the previous decade. In 1986 it was announced that almost the entire party and government leadership of the republic had conspired in falsifying cotton pro-

duction figures. Eventually, Rashidov himself was also implicated (posthumously) together with Yuriy Churbanov, Brezhnev's son-in-law. A massive purge of the Uzbek leadership was carried out, and corruption trials were conducted by prosecutors brought in from Moscow. In the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan became synonymous with corruption. The Uzbeks themselves felt that the central government had singled them out unfairly; in the 1980s, this resentment led to a strengthening of Uzbek nationalism. Moscow's policies in Uzbekistan, such as the strong emphasis on cotton and attempts to uproot Islamic tradition, then came under increasing criticism in Tashkent.

In 1989 ethnic animosities came to a head in the Fergana Valley, where local Meskhetian Turks were assaulted by Uzbeks, and in the Kyrgyz city of Osh, where Uzbek and Kyrgyz youth clashed. Moscow's response to this violence was a reduction of the purges and the appointment of Islam Karimov as first secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. The appointment of Karimov, who was not a member of the local party elite, signified that Moscow wanted to lessen tensions by appointing an outsider who had not been involved in the purges.

Resentment among Uzbeks continued to smolder, however, in the liberalized atmosphere of Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* (see Glossary) and *glasnost* (see Glossary). With the emergence of new opportunities to express dissent, Uzbeks expressed their grievances over the cotton scandal, the purges, and other long-unspoken resentments. These included the environmental situation in the republic, recently exposed as a catastrophe as a result of the long emphasis on heavy industry and a relentless pursuit of cotton (see Environmental Problems, this ch.). Other grievances included discrimination and persecution experienced by Uzbek recruits in the Soviet army and the lack of investment in industrial development in the republic to provide jobs for the ever-increasing population.

By the late 1980s, some dissenting intellectuals had formed political organizations to express their grievances. The most important of these, Birlik (Unity), initially advocated the diversification of agriculture, a program to salvage the desiccated Aral Sea, and the declaration of the Uzbek language as the state language of the republic. Those issues were chosen partly because they were real concerns and partly because they were a safe way of expressing broader disaffection with the Uzbek gov-

ernment. In their public debate with Birlik, the government and party never lost the upper hand. As became especially clear after the accession of Karimov as party chief, most Uzbeks, especially those outside the cities, still supported the communist party and the government. Birlik's intellectual leaders never were able to make their appeal to a broad segment of the population (see Opposition Parties, this ch.).

Independence

The attempted coup against the Gorbachev government by disaffected hard-liners in Moscow, which occurred in August 1991, was a catalyst for independence movements throughout the Soviet Union. Despite Uzbekistan's initial hesitancy to oppose the coup, the Supreme Soviet of Uzbekistan declared the republic independent on August 31, 1991. In December 1991, an independence referendum was passed with 98.2 percent of the popular vote. The same month, a parliament was elected and Karimov was chosen the new nation's first president.

Although Uzbekistan had not sought independence, when events brought them to that point, Karimov and his government moved quickly to adapt themselves to the new realities. They realized that under the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS—see Glossary), the loose federation proposed to replace the Soviet Union, no central government would provide the subsidies to which Uzbek governments had become accustomed for the previous seventy years. Old economic ties would have to be reexamined and new markets and economic mechanisms established. Although Uzbekistan as defined by the Soviets had never had independent foreign relations, diplomatic relations would have to be established with foreign countries quickly. Investment and foreign credits would have to be attracted, a formidable challenge in light of Western restrictions on financial aid to nations restricting expression of political dissent. For example, the suppression of internal dissent in 1992 and 1993 had an unexpectedly chilling effect on foreign investment. Uzbekistan's image in the West alternated in the ensuing years between an attractive, stable experimental zone for investment and a post-Soviet dictatorship whose human rights record made financial aid inadvisable. Such alternation exerted strong influence on the political and economic fortunes of the new republic in its first five years (see International Financial Relations, this ch.).

Physical Environment

With an area of 447,000 square kilometers (approximately the size of France), Uzbekistan stretches 1,425 kilometers from west to east and 930 kilometers from north to south. Bordering Turkmenistan to the southwest, Kazakstan to the north, and Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to the south and east, Uzbekistan is not only one of the larger Central Asian states but also the only Central Asian state to border all of the other four. Uzbekistan also shares a short border with Afghanistan to the south (see fig. 1).

Topography and Drainage

The physical environment of Uzbekistan is diverse, ranging from the flat, desert topography that comprises almost 80 percent of the country's territory to mountain peaks in the east reaching about 4,500 meters above sea level. The southeastern portion of Uzbekistan is characterized by the foothills of the Tian Shan mountains, which rise higher in neighboring Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and form a natural border between Central Asia and China. The vast Qizilqum (Turkic for "red sand"—Russian spelling Kyzyl Kum) Desert, shared with southern Kazakstan, dominates the northern lowland portion of Uzbekistan (see fig. 2). The most fertile part of Uzbekistan, the Fergana Valley, is an area of about 21,440 square kilometers directly east of the Qizilqum and surrounded by mountain ranges to the north, south, and east. The western end of the valley is defined by the course of the Syrdariya, which runs across the northeastern sector of Uzbekistan from southern Kazakstan into the Qizilqum. Although the Fergana Valley receives just 100 to 300 millimeters of rainfall per year, only small patches of desert remain in the center and along ridges on the periphery of the valley.

Water resources, which are unevenly distributed, are in short supply in most of Uzbekistan. The vast plains that occupy two-thirds of Uzbekistan's territory have little water, and there are few lakes. The two largest rivers feeding Uzbekistan are the Amu Darya and the Syrdariya, which originate in the mountains of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively. These rivers form the two main river basins of Central Asia; they are used primarily for irrigation, and several artificial canals have been built to expand the supply of arable land in the Fergana Valley and elsewhere.

Another important feature of Uzbekistan's physical environment is the significant seismic activity that dominates much of the country. Indeed, much of Uzbekistan's capital city, Tashkent, was destroyed in a major earthquake in 1966, and other earthquakes have caused significant damage before and since the Tashkent disaster. The mountain areas are especially prone to earthquakes.

Climate

Uzbekistan's climate is classified as continental, with hot summers and cool winters. Summer temperatures often surpass 40°C; winter temperatures average about –23°C, but may fall as low as –40°C. Most of the country also is quite arid, with average annual rainfall amounting to between 100 and 200 millimeters and occurring mostly in winter and spring. Between July and September, little precipitation falls, essentially stopping the growth of vegetation during that period.

Environmental Problems

Despite Uzbekistan's rich and varied natural environment, decades of environmental neglect in the Soviet Union have combined with skewed economic policies in the Soviet south to make Uzbekistan one of the gravest of the CIS's many environmental crises. The heavy use of agrochemicals, diversion of huge amounts of irrigation water from the two rivers that feed the region, and the chronic lack of water treatment plants are among the factors that have caused health and environmental problems on an enormous scale.

Environmental devastation in Uzbekistan is best exemplified by the catastrophe of the Aral Sea. Because of diversion of the Amu Darya and Syrdariya for cotton cultivation and other purposes, what once was the world's fourth largest inland sea has shrunk in the past thirty years to only about one-third of its 1960 volume and less than half its 1960 geographical size. The desiccation and salinization of the lake have caused extensive storms of salt and dust from the sea's dried bottom, wreaking havoc on the region's agriculture and ecosystems and on the population's health. Desertification has led to the large-scale loss of plant and animal life, loss of arable land, changed climatic conditions, depleted yields on the cultivated land that remains, and destruction of historical and cultural monuments. Every year, many tons of salts reportedly are carried as far as 800 kilometers away. Regional experts assert that salt and

View of Qizilqum Desert, Daugyztau
Courtesy Larry Drew

dust storms from the Aral Sea have raised the level of particulate matter in the earth's atmosphere by more than 5 percent, seriously affecting global climate change.

The Aral Sea disaster is only the most visible indicator of environmental decay, however. The Soviet approach to environmental management brought decades of poor water management and lack of water or sewage treatment facilities; inordinately heavy use of pesticides, herbicides, defoliants, and fertilizers in the fields; and construction of industrial enterprises without regard to human or environmental impact. Those policies present enormous environmental challenges throughout Uzbekistan.

Water Pollution

Large-scale use of chemicals for cotton cultivation, ineffi-

cient irrigation systems, and poor drainage systems are examples of the conditions that led to a high filtration of salinized and contaminated water back into the soil. Post-Soviet policies have become even more dangerous; in the early 1990s, the average application of chemical fertilizers and insecticides throughout the Central Asian republics was twenty to twenty-five kilograms per hectare, compared with the former average of three kilograms per hectare for the entire Soviet Union. As a result, the supply of fresh water has received further contaminants. Industrial pollutants also have damaged Uzbekistan's water. In the Amu Darya, concentrations of phenol and oil products have been measured at far above acceptable health standards. In 1989 the minister of health of the Turkmen SSR described the Amu Darya as a sewage ditch for industrial and agricultural waste substances. Experts who monitored the river in 1995 reported even further deterioration.

In the early 1990s, about 60 percent of pollution control funding went to water-related projects, but only about half of cities and about one-quarter of villages have sewers. Communal water systems do not meet health standards; much of the population lacks drinking water systems and must drink water straight from contaminated irrigation ditches, canals, or the Amu Darya itself.

According to one report, virtually all the large underground fresh-water supplies in Uzbekistan are polluted by industrial and chemical wastes. An official in Uzbekistan's Ministry of Environment estimated that about half of the country's population lives in regions where the water is severely polluted. The government estimated in 1995 that only 230 of the country's 8,000 industrial enterprises were following pollution control standards.

Air Pollution

Poor water management and heavy use of agricultural chemicals also have polluted the air. Salt and dust storms and the spraying of pesticides and defoliants for the cotton crop have led to severe degradation of air quality in rural areas.

In urban areas, factories and auto emissions are a growing threat to air quality. Fewer than half of factory smokestacks in Uzbekistan are equipped with filtration devices, and none has the capacity to filter gaseous emissions. In addition, a high percentage of existing filters are defective or out of operation. Air pollution data for Tashkent, Farghona, and Olmaliq show all

three cities exceeding recommended levels of nitrous dioxide and particulates. High levels of heavy metals such as lead, nickel, zinc, copper, mercury, and manganese have been found in Uzbekistan's atmosphere, mainly from the burning of fossil fuels, waste materials, and ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy. Especially high concentrations of heavy metals have been reported in Toshkent Province and in the southern part of Uzbekistan near the Olmaliq Metallurgy Combine. In the mid-1990s, Uzbekistan's industrial production, about 60 percent of the total for the Central Asian nations excluding Kazakstan, also yielded about 60 percent of the total volume of Central Asia's emissions of harmful substances into the atmosphere. Because automobiles are relatively scarce, automotive exhaust is a problem only in Tashkent and Farghona.

Government Environmental Policy

The government of Uzbekistan has acknowledged the extent of the country's environmental problems, and it has made an oral commitment to address them. But the governmental structures to deal with these problems remain confused and ill defined. Old agencies and organizations have been expanded to address these questions, and new ones have been created, resulting in a bureaucratic web of agencies with no generally understood commitment to attack environmental problems directly. Various nongovernmental and grassroots environmental organizations also have begun to form, some closely tied to the current government and others assuming an opposition stance. For example, environmental issues were prominent points in the original platform of Birlik, the first major opposition movement to emerge in Uzbekistan (see The 1980s, this ch.). By the mid-1990s, such issues had become a key concern of all opposition groups and a cause of growing concern among the population as a whole.

In the first half of the 1990s, many plans were proposed to limit or discourage economic practices that damage the environment. Despite discussion of programs to require payments for resources (especially water) and to collect fines from heavy polluters, however, little has been accomplished. The obstacles are a lack of law enforcement in these areas, inconsistent government economic and environmental planning, corruption, and the overwhelming concentration of power in the hands of a president who shows little tolerance of grassroots activity (see Postindependence Changes, this ch.).

International donors and Western assistance agencies have devised programs to transfer technology and know-how to address these problems (see International Financial Relations, this ch.). But the country's environmental problems are predominantly the result of abuse and mismanagement of natural resources promoted by political and economic priorities. Until the political will emerges to regard environmental and health problems as a threat not only to the government in power but also to the very survival of Uzbekistan, the increasingly grave environmental threat will not be addressed effectively.

Population

The population of Uzbekistan, estimated in 1994 at about 23 million, is the largest of the Central Asian republics, comprising more than 40 percent of their total population. Growing at a rapid rate, the population is split by ethnic and regional differences. The Russian component of the population shrank steadily in the years after independence.

Size and Distribution

Relative to the former Soviet Union as a whole, Uzbekistan is still largely rural: roughly 60 percent of Uzbekistan's population lives in rural areas (see Table 3, Appendix). The capital city is Tashkent, whose 1990 population was estimated at about 2.1 million people. Other major cities are Samarqand (population 366,000), Namangan (308,000), Andijon (293,000), Bukhoro (224,000), Farghona (200,000), and Quqon (182,000).

The population of Uzbekistan is exceedingly young. In the early 1990s, about half the population was under nineteen years of age. Experts expected this demographic trend to continue for some time because Uzbekistan's population growth rate has been quite high for the past century: on the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union, only Tajikistan had a higher growth rate among the Soviet republics. Between 1897 and 1991, the population of the region that is now Uzbekistan more than quintupled, while the population of the entire territory of the former Soviet Union had not quite doubled. In 1991 the natural rate of population increase (the birth rate minus the death rate) in Uzbekistan was 28.3 per 1,000—more than four times that of the Soviet Union as a whole, and an increase from ten years earlier (see table 2, Appendix).

Typical neighborhood in old section of Tashkent

These characteristics are especially pronounced in the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan (the Uzbek form for which is Qoroqalpoghiston Respublikasi), Uzbekistan's westernmost region. In 1936, as part of Stalin's nationality policy, the Karakalpaks (a Turkic Muslim group whose name literally means "black hat") were given their own territory in western Uzbekistan, which was declared an autonomous Soviet socialist republic to define its ethnic differences while maintaining it within the republic of Uzbekistan. In 1992 Karakalpakstan received republic status within independent Uzbekistan. Since that time, the central government in Tashkent has maintained pressure and tight economic ties that have kept the republic from exerting full independence.

Today, the population of Karakalpakstan is about 1.3 million people who live on a territory of roughly 168,000 square kilometers. Located in the fertile lower reaches of the Amu Darya where the river empties into the Aral Sea, Karakalpakstan has a

long history of irrigation agriculture. Currently, however, the shrinking of the Aral Sea has made Karakalpakstan one of the poorest and most environmentally devastated parts of Uzbekistan, if not the entire former Soviet Union (see Environmental Problems, this ch.).

Because the population of that region is much younger than the national average (according to the 1989 census, nearly three-quarters of the population was younger than twenty-nine years), the rate of population growth is quite high. In 1991 the rate of natural growth in Karakalpakstan was reportedly more than thirty births per 1,000 and slightly higher in the republic's rural areas. Karakalpakstan is also more rural than Uzbekistan as a whole, with some of its administrative regions (*rayony*; sing., *rayon*) having only villages and no urban centers—an unusual situation in a former Soviet republic.

The growth of Uzbekistan's population was in some part due to in-migration from other parts of the former Soviet Union. Several waves of Russian and Slavic in-migrants arrived at various times in response to the industrialization of Uzbekistan in the early part of the Soviet period, following the evacuations of European Russia during World War II, and in the late 1960s to help reconstruct Tashkent after the 1966 earthquake. At various other times, non-Uzbeks arrived simply to take advantage of opportunities they perceived in Central Asia. Recently, however, Uzbekistan has begun to witness a net emigration of its European population. This is especially true of Russians, who have faced increased discrimination and uncertainty since 1991 and seek a more secure environment in Russia. Because most of Uzbekistan's population growth has been attributable to high rates of natural increase, the emigration of Europeans is expected to have little impact on the overall size and demographic structure of Uzbekistan's population. Demographers project that the population, currently growing at about 2.5 percent per year, will increase by 500,000 to 600,000 annually between the mid-1990s and the year 2010. Thus, by the year 2005 at least 30 million people will live in Uzbekistan.

High growth rates are expected to give rise to increasingly sharp population pressures that will exceed those experienced by most other former Soviet republics. Indeed, five of the eight most densely populated provinces of the former Soviet Union—Andijon, Farghona, Tashkent, Namangan, and Khorazm—are located in Uzbekistan, and populations continue to grow rapidly in all five. In 1993 the average population

density of Uzbekistan was about 48.5 inhabitants per square kilometer, compared with a ratio of fewer than six inhabitants per square kilometer in neighboring Kazakstan. The distribution of arable land in 1989 was estimated at only 0.15 hectares per person. In the early 1990s, Uzbekistan's population growth had an increasingly negative impact on the environment, on the economy, and on the potential for increased ethnic tension.

Ethnic Composition

Population pressures have exacerbated ethnic tensions. In 1995 about 71 percent of Uzbekistan's population was Uzbek. The chief minority groups were Russians (slightly more than 8 percent), Tajiks (officially almost 5 percent, but believed to be much higher), Kazaks (about 4 percent), Tatars (about 2.5 percent), and Karakalpaks (slightly more than 2 percent) (see table 4, Appendix). In the mid-1990s, Uzbekistan was becoming increasingly homogeneous, as the outflow of Russians and other minorities continues to increase and as Uzbeks return from other parts of the former Soviet Union. According to unofficial data, between 1985 and 1991 the number of nonindigenous individuals in Uzbekistan declined from 2.4 to 1.6 million.

The increase in the indigenous population and the emigration of Europeans have increased the self-confidence and often the self-assertiveness of indigenous Uzbeks, as well as the sense of vulnerability among the Russians in Uzbekistan. The Russian population, as former "colonizers," was reluctant to learn the local language or to adapt to local control in the post-Soviet era. In early 1992, public opinion surveys suggested that most Russians in Uzbekistan felt more insecure and fearful than they had before Uzbek independence.

The irony of this ethnic situation is that many of these Central Asian ethnic groups in Uzbekistan were artificially created and delineated by Soviet fiat in the first place. Before the Bolshevik Revolution, there was little sense of an Uzbek nationhood as such; instead, life was organized around the tribe or clan (see Entering the Twentieth Century, this ch.). Until the twentieth century, the population of what is today Uzbekistan was ruled by the various khans who had conquered the region in the sixteenth century.

But Soviet rule, and the creation of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in October 1924, ultimately created and solidified

a new kind of Uzbek identity. At the same time, the Soviet policy of cutting across existing ethnic and linguistic lines in the region to create Uzbekistan and the other new republics also sowed tension and strife among the Central Asian groups that inhabited the region. In particular, the territory of Uzbekistan was drawn to include the two main Tajik cultural centers, Bukhoro and Samarqand, as well as parts of the Fergana Valley to which other ethnic groups could lay claim. This readjustment of ethnic politics caused animosity and territorial claims among Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, and others through much of the Soviet era, but conflicts grew especially sharp after the collapse of central Soviet rule.

The stresses of the Soviet period were present among Uzbekistan's ethnic groups in economic, political, and social spheres. An outbreak of violence in the Fergana Valley between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks in June 1989 claimed about 100 lives. That conflict was followed by similar outbreaks of violence in other parts of the Fergana Valley and elsewhere. The civil conflict in neighboring Tajikistan, which also involves ethnic hostilities, has been perceived in Uzbekistan (and presented by the Uzbekistani government) as an external threat that could provoke further ethnic conflict within Uzbekistan (see Impact of the Civil War, ch. 3). Thousands of Uzbeks living in Tajikistan have fled the civil war there and migrated back to Uzbekistan, for example, just as tens of thousands of Russians and other Slavs have left Uzbekistan for northern Kazakstan or Russia. Crimean Tatars, deported to Uzbekistan at the end of World War II, are migrating out of Uzbekistan to return to the Crimea.

Two ethnic schisms may play an important role in the future of Uzbekistan. The first is the potential interaction of the remaining Russians with the Uzbek majority. Historically, this relationship has been based on fear, colonial dominance, and a vast difference in values and norms between the two populations. The second schism is among the Central Asians themselves. The results of a 1993 public opinion survey suggest that even at a personal level, the various Central Asian and Muslim communities often display as much wariness and animosity toward each other as they do toward the Russians in their midst. When asked, for example, whom they would not like to have as a son- or daughter-in-law, the proportion of Uzbek respondents naming Kyrgyz and Kazaks as undesirable was about the same as the proportion that named Russians. (About

10 percent of the Uzbeks said they would like to have a Russian son- or daughter-in-law.) And the same patterns were evident when respondents were asked about preferred nationalities among their neighbors and colleagues at work. Reports described an official Uzbekistani government policy of discrimination against the Tajik minority.

Other Social Affiliations

Other social factors also define the identities and loyalties of individuals in Uzbekistan and influence their behavior. Often regional and clan identities play an important role that supersedes specifically ethnic identification. In the struggle for political control or access to economic resources, for example, regional alliances often prevail over ethnic identities. A United States expert has identified five regions—the Tashkent region, the Fergana Valley, Samarqand and Bukhoro, the northwest territories, and the southern region—that have played the role of a power base for individuals who rose to the position of first secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. Often clan-based, these regional allegiances remain important in both the politics and the social structure of post-Soviet Uzbekistan.

Language and Literature

As with ethnic patterns and boundaries of post-Soviet Uzbekistan, the dominant native language, Uzbek, is in many ways a creation of the Soviet state. Indeed, until the beginning of the Soviet period, the languages spoken among the native population presented a colorful and diverse mosaic. Under Soviet rule, officially at least, this mosaic was replaced by Uzbek, which almost overnight became the official language of the Turkic population of the republic. But Russian, which at the same time was declared the "international language" of Uzbekistan, was favored above even Uzbek in official usage. Many Russian words made their way into Uzbek because Russian was the language of higher education, government, and economic activity throughout the Soviet era. In the 1980s, Uzbeks began a strong effort to eliminate the recent Russian borrowings from the language. The Latin alphabet was introduced to begin a gradual process of replacing the Cyrillic alphabet. But in the mid-1990s Russian still was widely used in official and economic circles.

Linguistic Background

Uzbek is a Turkic language of the Qarluq family, closely related to Uyghur and Kazak. Although numerous local dialects and variations of the language are in use, the Tashkent dialect is the basis of the official written language. The dialects spoken in the northern and western parts of Uzbekistan have strong Turkmen elements because historically many Turkmen lived in close proximity to the Uzbeks in those regions. The dialects in the Fergana Valley near Kyrgyzstan show some Kyrgyz influence. Especially in the written dialect, Uzbek also has a strong Persian vocabulary element that stems from the historical influence of Iranian culture throughout the region (see Early History, this ch.).

Uzbek has a relatively short history as a language distinct from other Turkic dialects. Until the establishment of the Soviet republic's boundaries in the 1920s, Uzbek was not considered a language belonging to a distinct nationality. It was simply a Turkic dialect spoken by a certain segment of the Turkic population of Central Asia, a segment that also included the ruling tribal dynasties of the various states. The regional dialects spoken in Uzbekistan today reflect the fact that the Turkic population of Southern Central Asia has always been a mixture of various Turkic tribal groups (see Ethnic Groups, ch. 1; Social Structure, ch. 2; Population, ch. 5). When the present-day borders among the republics were established in 1929, all native peoples living in Uzbekistan (including Tajiks) were registered as Uzbeks regardless of their previous ethnic identity.

Until 1924 the written Turkic language of the region had been Chaghatai, a language that had a long and brilliant history as a vehicle of literature and culture after its development in the Timurid state of Herat in the late fifteenth century. Chaghatai also was the common written language of the entire region of Central Asia from the Persian border to Eastern Turkestan, which was located in today's China. The language was written in the Arabic script and had strong Persian elements in its grammar and vocabulary. Experts identify the Herat writer Ali Shir Nava'i as having played the foremost role in making Chaghatai a dominant literary language.

In modern Uzbekistan, Chaghatai is called Old Uzbek; its origin in Herat, which was an enemy state of the Uzbeks, is ignored or unknown. Use of the language was continued by the Uzbek khanates that conquered the Timurid states. Some early Uzbek rulers, such as Mukhammad Shaybani Khan, used

Chaghatai to produce excellent poetry and prose. The seventeenth-century Khivan ruler Abulgazi Bahadur Khan wrote important historical works in Chaghatai. However, all of those writers also produced considerable literature in Persian. Chaghatai continued in use well into the twentieth century as the literary language of Central Asia. Early twentieth-century writers such as Fitrat wrote in Chaghatai.

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Chaghatai was influenced by the efforts of reformers of the Jadidist movement, who wanted to Turkify and unite all of the written languages used in the Turkic world into one written language (see The Russian Conquest, this ch.). These efforts were begun by the Crimean Tatar Ismail Gaspirali (Gasprinskiy in Russian), who advocated this cause in his newspaper *Terjuman* (Translator). Gaspirali called on all the Turkic peoples (including the Ottoman Turks, the Crimean and Kazan Tatars, and the Central Asians) to rid their languages of Arabic, Persian, and other foreign elements and to standardize their orthography and lexicon. Because of this effort, by the early 1920s the Turkic languages of Central Asia had lost some of the Persian influence.

Influences in the Soviet Period

Unfortunately for the reformers and their efforts to reform the language, following the national delimitation the Soviet government began a deliberate policy of separating the Turkic languages from each other. Each nationality was given a separate literary language. Often new languages had to be invented where no such languages had existed before. This was the case for Uzbek, which was declared to be a continuation of Chaghatai and a descendant of all of the ancient Turkic languages spoken in the region. In the initial stage of reform, in 1928–30, the Arabic alphabet was abandoned in favor of the Latin alphabet. Then in 1940, Cyrillic was made the official alphabet with the rationale that sharing the Arabic alphabet with Turkey might lead to common literature and hence a resumption of the Turkish threat to Russian control in the region.

Because of this artificial reform process, the ancient literature of the region became inaccessible to all but specialists. Instead, the use of Russian and Russian borrowings into Uzbek was strongly encouraged, and the study of Russian became compulsory in all schools. The emphasis on the study of Rus-

sian varied at various times in the Soviet period. At the height of Stalinism (1930s and 1940s), and in the Brezhnev period (1964–82), the study of Russian was strongly encouraged. Increasingly, Russian became the language of higher education and advancement in society, especially after Stalin orchestrated the Great Purge of 1937–38, which uprooted much indigenous culture in the non-Slavic Soviet republics. The language of the military was Russian as well. Those Uzbeks who did not study in higher education establishments and had no desire to work for the state did not make a great effort to study Russian. As a result, such people found their social mobility stifled, and males who served in the armed forces suffered discrimination and persecution because they could not communicate with their superiors. This communication problem was one of the reasons for disproportionate numbers of Uzbeks and other Central Asians in the noncombat construction battalions of the Soviet army.

Language in the 1990s

The official linguistic policy of the Karimov government has been that Uzbek is the language of the state, and Russian is the second language. Residents of Uzbekistan are required to study Uzbek to be eligible for citizenship. Following similar decisions in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, in September 1993 Uzbekistan announced plans to switch its alphabet from Cyrillic, which by that time had been in use for more than fifty years, to a script based on a modified Latin alphabet similar to that used in Turkey. According to plans, the transition will be complete by the year 2000. The primary reason for the short deadline is the urgent need to communicate with the outside world using a more universally understood alphabet. The move also has the political significance of signaling Uzbekistan's desire to break away from its past reliance on Russia and to limit the influence of Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, which use the Arabic alphabet. A major project is under way to eradicate Russian words from the language and replace these words with "pure" Turkic words that have been borrowed from what is believed to be the ancient Turkic language of Inner Asia. At the same time, Uzbekistan's linguistic policies also are moving toward the West. In the early 1990s, the study of English has become increasingly common, and many policy makers express the hope that English will replace Russian as the language of international communication in Uzbekistan.

Literature

Uzbekistan's literature suffered great damage during the Stalinist purges of the 1930s; during that period, nearly every talented writer in the republic was purged and executed as an enemy of the people. Prior to the purges, Uzbekistan had a generation of writers who produced a rich and diverse literature, with some using Western genres to deal with important issues of the time. With the death of that generation, Uzbek literature entered a period of decline in which the surviving writers were forced to mouth the party line and write according to the formulas of socialist realism. Uzbek writers were able to break out of this straitjacket only in the early 1980s. In the period of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, a group of Uzbek writers led the way in establishing the Birlik movement, which countered some of the disastrous policies of the Soviet government in Uzbekistan. Beginning in the 1980s, the works of these writers criticized the central government and other establishment groups for the ills of society.

A critical issue for these writers was the preservation and purification of the Uzbek language. To reach that goal, they minimized the use of Russian lexicon in their works, and they advocated the declaration of Uzbek as the state language of Uzbekistan. These efforts were rewarded in 1992, when the new national constitution declared the Uzbek language to be the state language of the newly independent state. At the same time, however, some of these writers found themselves at odds with the Karimov regime because of their open criticism of post-Soviet policies.

Religion

Islam is by far the dominant religious faith in Uzbekistan. In the early 1990s, many of the Russians remaining in the republic (about 8 percent of the population) were Orthodox Christians. An estimated 93,000 Jews also were present. Despite its predominance, Islam is far from monolithic, however. Many versions of the faith have been practiced in Uzbekistan. The conflict of Islamic tradition with various agendas of reform or secularization throughout the twentieth century has left the outside world with a confused notion of Islamic practices in Central Asia. In Uzbekistan the end of Soviet power did not bring an upsurge of a fundamentalist version of Islam, as many

had predicted, but rather a gradual reacquaintance with the precepts of the faith.

Islam in the Soviet Era

Soviet authorities did not prohibit the practice of Islam as much as they sought to coopt and utilize religion to placate a population that often was unaware of the tenets of its faith. After its introduction in the seventh century, Islam in many ways formed the basis of life in Uzbekistan. The Soviet government encouraged continuation of the role played by Islam in secular society. During the Soviet era, Uzbekistan had sixty-five registered mosques and as many as 3,000 active mullahs and other Muslim clerics. For almost forty years, the Muslim Board of Central Asia, the official, Soviet-approved governing agency of the Muslim faith in the region, was based in Tashkent. The grand mufti who headed the board met with hundreds of foreign delegations each year in his official capacity, and the board published a journal on Islamic issues, *Muslims of the Soviet East.*

However, the Muslims working or participating in any of these organizations were carefully screened for political reliability. Furthermore, as the Uzbekistani government ostensibly was promoting Islam with the one hand, it was working hard to eradicate it with the other. The government sponsored official antireligious campaigns and severe crackdowns on any hint of an Islamic movement or network outside of the control of the state.

Moscow's efforts to eradicate and coopt Islam not only sharpened differences between Muslims and others. They also greatly distorted the understanding of Islam among Uzbekistan's population and created competing Islamic ideologies among the Central Asians themselves.

The Issue of Fundamentalism

In light of the role that Islam has played throughout Uzbekistan's history, many observers expected that Islamic fundamentalism would gain a strong hold after independence brought the end of the Soviet Union's official atheism. The expectation was that an Islamic country long denied freedom of religious practice would undergo a very rapid increase in the expression of its dominant faith. President Karimov has justified authoritarian controls over the populations of his and other Central Asian countries by the threat of upheavals and instability

Wedding party at the Summer Palace, a traditional stopping place, Bukhoro
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss

caused by growing Islamic political movements, and other Central Asian leaders also have cited this danger.

In the early 1990s, however, Uzbekistan did not witness a surge of Islamic fundamentalism as much as a search to recapture a history and culture with which few Uzbeks were familiar. To be sure, Uzbekistan is witnessing a vast increase in religious teaching and interest in Islam. Since 1991, hundreds of mosques and religious schools have been built or restored and reopened. And some of the Islamic groups and parties that have emerged might give leaders pause.

Mainstream Islam in the 1990s

For the most part, however, in the first years of independence Uzbekistan is seeing a resurgence of a more secular

Islam, and even that movement is in its very early stages. According to a public opinion survey conducted in 1994, interest in Islam is growing rapidly, but personal understanding of Islam by Uzbeks remains limited or distorted. For example, about half of ethnic Uzbek respondents professed belief in Islam when asked to identify their religious faith. Among that number, however, knowledge or practice of the main precepts of Islam was weak. Despite a reported spread of Islam among Uzbekistan's younger population, the survey suggested that Islamic belief is still weakest among the younger generations. Few respondents showed interest in a form of Islam that would participate actively in political issues. Thus, the first years of post-Soviet religious freedom seem to have fostered a form of Islam related to the Uzbek population more in traditional and cultural terms than in religious ones, weakening Karimov's claims that a growing widespread fundamentalism poses a threat to Uzbekistan's survival. Available information suggests that Islam itself would probably not be the root cause of a conflict as much as it would be a vehicle for expressing other grievances that are far more immediate causes of dissension and despair. Experts do not minimize the importance of Islam, however. The practice of the Islamic faith is growing in Uzbekistan, and the politicization of Islam could become a real threat in the future.

Education

In developing a national education system to replace the centralized education prescriptions of Moscow, Uzbekistan has encountered severe budgeting shortfalls. The education law of 1992 began the process of theoretical reform, but the physical base has deteriorated, and curriculum revision has been slow.

Education System

Education is supervised by two national agencies, the Ministry of People's Education (for primary, secondary, and vocational education) and the Ministry of Higher Education (for postsecondary education). In 1993 Uzbekistan had 9,834 preschool centers, most of which were run by state enterprises for the children of their employees. An estimated 35 percent of children ages one to six attend such schools, but few rural areas have access to preschools. In the early 1990s, enterprises began closing schools or transferring them to direct adminis-

tration of the Ministry of People's Education. A modest government construction program adds about 50,000 new places annually—a rate that falls far short of demand. Although experts rate most of Uzbekistan's preschools as being in poor condition, the government regards them as contributing vitally to the nutrition and education of children, especially when both parents work, a situation that became increasingly frequent in the 1990s.

In 1993 enrollment in regular and vocational schools, which covered grades one through eleven (ages six through sixteen), was 4.9 million of the estimated 5.7 million children in that age-group. Because of funding shortages, in 1993 the period of compulsory education was shortened from eleven to nine years. The infrastructure problem of schools is most serious at the primary and secondary levels; the government categorizes 50 percent of school buildings as unsuitable, and repair budgets are inadequate. Construction of new schools has been delayed because the boards of capital construction of the two education ministries do not have direct control over contractor pricing or construction practices at local levels. School nutritional levels often are below state standards; an estimated 50 percent of students do not receive a hot meal. In 1992 about 5,300 of Uzbekistan's 8,500 schools had double shifts; because most of these schools were rural, this situation affected only 25 percent of students, however.

In 1993 an estimated 220,000 students were in vocational training programs, with about 100,000 students graduating annually from 440 schools. Working in close cooperation with local employers, the schools choose from 260 trades to offer instruction conforming with industrial needs. In the post-Soviet era, vocational curricula were modified to accommodate an upsurge in light industry. Experts agree that, as the national economy diversifies and expands, the vocational program must expand its coverage of key industries and streamline its organization, which suffered disorientation in its transition from the rigid Soviet system.

In 1992 some 321,700 students were enrolled in institutions of higher learning; of those, about 43 percent were in evening or correspondence courses. The enrollment represented about 19 percent of the seventeen to twenty age-group, a decrease from the more than 23 percent reported in 1990. In 1992 enrollment declined because an entrance examination was used for the first time, Russian emigration continued, and the

economy's demand for college graduates fell. Experts predicted that the government would restrict admittance levels until its policies succeed in expanding the economy. Fifty-three institutions of higher learning, many with productive research programs, were active in 1993. Higher education is hindered, however, by a shortage of laboratories, libraries, computers and data banks, and publishing facilities to disseminate research findings.

The state higher education system includes three universities, located at Nukus, Samarqand, and Tashkent. Tashkent State University, which has 19,300 students and 1,480 teachers, is the largest university in Central Asia; it has sixteen full departments, including three devoted to philology and one to Asian studies. Some twenty research institutes offer courses in specialized areas of medicine, veterinary science, and industry and technology. Another thirty institutes of higher learning offer postsecondary studies in medicine, agriculture, teaching, engineering, industrial technology, music, theater, economics, law, pharmacy, and political science; seventeen of the latter category are located in Tashkent.

Curriculum

In the early 1990s, the greatest controversy in curriculum policy was which language should be used for teaching in state schools. In 1992 Uzbek and the other Central Asian languages were made the official languages of instruction, meaning that Uzbek schools might use any of five Central Asian languages or Russian as their primary language. Uzbek and Russian language courses are taught in all schools. After independence, a new emphasis was placed on courses in Uzbek history and culture and on increasing the short supply of textbooks in Uzbek in many fields. For a time, the Karimov regime closed Samarqand University, which taught in Tajik, as part of a broader crackdown on the country's Tajik minority.

The expansion of curricula, including the addition of courses in French, Arabic, and English, has placed new stress on a limited supply of teachers and materials. In the mid-1990s, a major curriculum reform was underway to support the post-Soviet economic and social transformation. Among the changes identified by Western experts are a more commercial approach to the mathematics curriculum, more emphasis in economics courses on the relationship of capital to labor, more emphasis in social science courses on individual responsibility

for the environment, and the addition of entirely new subjects such as business management. Because such changes involve new materials and a new pedagogical approach by staff, the reform period is estimated at ten to fifteen years.

Instruction

In the early 1990s, the thirty-six technical schools and six teacher colleges produced about 20,000 new teachers annually for the primary and secondary levels, and another 20,000 for higher education. In 1993 the ratio of staff to students was 1 to 12 in preschool institutions, 1 to 11.5 in primary and secondary schools, 1 to 12 in vocational schools, and 1 to 6.8 in institutions of higher education. The range of these ratios indicates that Uzbekistan prepares too many teachers for the needs of the existing student population, but experts do not consider the existing staff adequately trained to deal with upcoming curriculum changes and with the need to teach in Uzbek.

Experts have noted that the teacher training program must be reduced to concentrate government funds on a few high-quality research and training centers. Such a shift would free resources for material support, salaries, and administrative and supervisory personnel, all in short supply in the mid-1990s. Currently, teachers for preschool and grades one through four are trained at technical schools; those for grades five through eleven must train at the university level. The technical school program is five years beginning after grade nine, and the university program is four years beginning after grade eleven. Both programs combine pedagogical and general courses.

In the early 1990s, the government made significant improvements in teacher salaries and benefits. Many top teachers were lost to other sectors, however, because salaries still were not competitive with those elsewhere in the economy. In higher education, salaries were competitive with those in other occupations in Uzbekistan but not with those on the international teaching market.

Health

As Uzbekistan struggled to revise its Soviet-era health care system, the physical condition of its population was exacerbated by severe environmental conditions that were inherited from the Soviet period and were not addressed effectively in the first years of independence. Key health indicators showed a

correlation between the high level of air and water pollution and health problems (see table 5, Appendix).

Health Care System

In the mid-1990s, Uzbekistan continued a health care system in which all hospitals and clinics were state owned and all medical personnel were government employees. Although health care ostensibly was free of change, this rarely was the case in practice. In the early 1990s, some private medical practices have supplemented state facilities to a small extent. In 1993 Uzbekistan undertook a program of privatization that began with the introduction of health insurance and continued with the gradual privatization of health care facilities, which is optimistically projected at about three years. Under the new program, the government would require private health facility owners to maintain the same standards as state facilities and to offer minimum free health care for the indigent. In the first few years of the program, however, only pharmacies and small clinics were privatized. Plans for 1995 called for privatizing twenty-four dental clinics and twelve prenatal clinics. In 1995 no plan provided for government divestiture of medium-sized health care facilities.

The government disburses its funds through the national Ministry of Health, through the health agencies of local and province governments, and through specialized facilities serving ministries and state enterprises. Treatment in the last two categories is generally better than in general state facilities because staff salaries and work conditions are better. As in the Soviet system, special facilities exist for top political, cultural, and scientific dignitaries. In 1994 some US$79 million, or 11.1 percent of the annual budget, was allocated for health care. Of that amount, about 60 percent went to state hospitals, 30 percent to outpatient clinics, and less than 6 percent to medical research.

Despite marked growth throughout the Soviet era, the public health care system in Uzbekistan is not equipped to deal with the special problems of a population long exposed to high levels of pollutants or with other health problems. Although the numbers of hospitals and doctors grew dramatically under Soviet rule—from almost no doctors in 1917 to 35.5 doctors per 10,000 population and to 1,388 hospitals and clinics per 10,000 population in 1991—the increasing incidence of serious

disease raises questions about the effectiveness of care by these doctors and their facilities.

In 1993 a total of 16.8 million patients were treated, of whom 4.8 million were treated in hospitals and about 275,000 in outpatient clinics—meaning that the vast majority of patients received treatment only at home. Experts predicted that this trend would continue until the level of care in government facilities improved substantially.

Among the serious problems plaguing health care delivery are the extremely short supply of vaccines and medicines in hospitals; the generally poor quality of medical training; and corruption in the medical profession, which exacerbates the negative impact of changes in the system for the average patient and diverts treatment to favored private patients. According to a 1995 private study, the state system provided less than 20 percent of needed medicine and less than 40 percent of needed medical care, and budget constraints limited salaries for medical professionals. In 1990 the percentage of children receiving vaccines for diphtheria, pertussis, measles, and polio averaged between 80 and 90 percent. That statistic fell sharply in the first years of independence; for example, in 1993 fewer than half the needed doses of measles vaccine were administered.

The Ministry of Health has recognized that Uzbekistan has a serious narcotics addiction problem; illicit drug use reportedly stabilized between 1994 and 1996. The seven substance abuse rehabilitation clinics treat both alcoholism and narcotics abuse. The Ministry of Health has identified the following as its priorities, should expansion of services become possible: improvement of maternal and infant health care, prevention of the spread of infectious disease, and improvement of environmental conditions leading to health problems. In 1995 Uzbekistan was receiving aid from the United States Agency for International Development (AID), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO) for improving infant and maternal health care and for storage and distribution of vaccines.

Health Conditions

According to experts, the most immediate impact of the environmental situation in Uzbekistan is on the health condition of the population (see Environmental Problems, this ch.). Although it is difficult to establish a direct cause and effect

between environmental problems and their apparent consequences, the cumulative impact of these environmental problems in Uzbekistan appears to have been devastating. Frequently cited in Uzbekistan's press are increasing occurrences of typhoid, paratyphoid, and hepatitis from contaminated drinking water; rising rates of intestinal disease and cancers; and increased frequency of anemia, dystrophy, cholera, dysentery, and a host of other illnesses. One Russian specialist includes among the ailments "lag in physical development," especially among children. According to this observer, sixty-nine of every 100 adults in the Aral Sea region are deemed to be "incurably ill." In 1990 life expectancy for males in all of Uzbekistan was sixty-four years, and for females, seventy years. The average life span in some villages near the Aral Sea in Karakalpakstan, however, is estimated at thirty-eight years.

In the early 1990s, only an estimated 30 percent of women in Uzbekistan practiced contraception of any kind. The most frequently used method was the intrauterine device, distribution of which began in a government program introduced in 1991. In 1991 the average fertility rate was 4.1 children per woman, but about 200,000 of the women in the childbearing age range have ten or more children.

Infant mortality increased by as much as 49 percent between 1970 and 1986 to an average of 46.2 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 1990 the average rate of mortality before age one for the entire country was sixty-five deaths per 1,000 live births. In the mid-1990s, official data estimated the level of infant mortality in parts of Karakalpakstan at 110 per 1,000 live births; unofficial estimates put the level at twice that figure. In 1992 the national maternal mortality rate was 65.3 per 100,000 live births, with considerably higher rates in some regions.

According to the WHO, Uzbekistan reported one case of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) in 1992, one in 1993, and none in 1994. No treatment centers or AIDS research projects are known to exist in Uzbekistan.

The Economy

Chief among the causes of dissension and despair in Uzbekistan is the country's economic situation. According to United Nations (UN) figures, in 1994 Uzbekistan was one of the poorest of the developed countries in the world, with the average monthly wage less than US$50. But vast natural resources sug-

gest the potential for Uzbekistan to become one of the most prosperous countries in Central Asia, provided the necessary reforms can be made to unleash that potential. At the end of the Soviet era, Uzbekistan was rated as one of the least industrialized Soviet republics. Government reform, with the theoretical goal of achieving a market economy, moved cautiously and unevenly in the directions of industrialization and market reform in the early 1990s. By the mid-1990s, signs indicated a more serious reform effort (see table 6, Appendix).

Mineral Resources

One of Uzbekistan's most abundant and strategic resources is gold. Before 1992, Uzbekistan accounted for about one-third of Soviet gold production, at a time when the Soviet Union ranked third in world gold production. The Muruntau Gold Mine, about 400 kilometers northwest of Tashkent in the Qizilqum Desert, is estimated to be the largest gold mine in the world, and other gold reserves are located in the Chadaq area of the Fergana Valley, on the southern slopes of the Qurama Mountains. In 1992, a reported 80 tons of gold were mined in Uzbekistan, making it the eighth largest producer of gold in the world. Fluorospar, the most important source of fluorine, is mined at Tuytepa between Olmaliq and Tashkent. In the region of Olmaliq, southeast of Tashkent, are deposits of copper, zinc, lead, tungsten, and molybdenum that are used in the well-developed metallurgical processing industries centered in northeastern Uzbekistan. Uranium is mined and processed on the slopes of the Chatkal and Qurama ranges that surround the Fergana Valley.

Energy

Uzbekistan is also rich in energy resources, although it was a net importer of fuels and primary energy throughout the Soviet period. The republic was the third largest producer of natural gas in the former Soviet Union behind Russia and Turkmenistan, producing more than 10 percent of the union's natural gas in the 1980s. In 1992 Uzbekistan produced 42.8 billion cubic meters of natural gas; although this output was used mostly within the republic in the Soviet period, pipelines to Tajikistan, Kazakstan, and Russia exported increasing amounts of natural gas to those countries in the early 1990s. Gas reserves are estimated at more than 1 trillion cubic meters. Deposits are concentrated mainly in Qashqadaryo Province in

the southeast and near Bukhoro in the south-central region. Bukhoro gas is used to fuel local thermoelectric power plants. The biggest gas deposit, Boyangora-Gadzhak, was discovered in southeastern Surkhondaryo Province in the 1970s.

Uzbekistan also has small coal reserves, located mainly near Angren, east of Tashkent. In 1990 the total coal yield was 6 million tons. Oil production has likewise been small; Uzbekistan has relied on Russia and Kazakstan for most of its supply. Oil production was 3.3 million tons in 1992. But the discovery in 1994 of the Mingbulak oil field in the far northeastern province of Namangan may ultimately dwarf Uzbekistan's other energy resources. Experts have speculated that Mingbulak may prove to be one of the world's most productive oil fields. Located in the central basin of the Fergana Valley, the deposits could produce hundreds of millions of dollars worth of oil in the late 1990s. Qoqdumalaq in western Uzbekistan also has rich oil and natural gas deposits, reportedly containing hundreds of millions of tons of oil.

The coal deposits on the Angren River east of Tashkent and the natural gas deposits near Bukhoro are prime fuels for Uzbekistan's thermoelectric power plants. The well-developed hydroelectric power generating system utilizes the Syrdariya, Naryn, and Chirchiq rivers, all of which arise to the east in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Agreements with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, through which the Syrdariya also flows, ensure a continued water flow for Uzbek power plants.

Agriculture

Uzbekistan has the advantages of a warm climate, a long growing season, and plentiful sources of water for irrigation. In the Soviet period, those conditions offered high and reliable yields of crops with specialized requirements. Soviet agricultural policy applied Uzbekistan's favorable conditions mainly to cotton cultivation. As Uzbekistan became a net exporter of cotton and a narrow range of other agricultural products, however, it required large-scale imports of grain and other foods that were not grown in sufficient quantities in domestic fields.

Organization of Agriculture

In the last decades of Soviet rule, the private agricultural sector produced about 25 percent of total farm output almost exclusively on the small private plots of collective and state farmers and nonagricultural households (the maximum pri-

vate landholding was one-half hectare). In the early 1990s, Uzbekistan's agriculture still was dominated by collective and state farms, of which 2,108 were in operation in 1991. Because of this domination, average farm size was more than 24,000 hectares, and the average number of workers per farm was more than 1,100 in 1990. More than 99 percent of the value of agricultural production comes from irrigated land (see table 21, Appendix).

Economic Structure of Agriculture

Uzbekistan's economy depends heavily on agricultural production. As late as 1992, roughly 40 percent of its net material product (NMP—see Glossary) was in agriculture, although only about 10 percent of the country's land area was cultivated. Cotton accounts for 40 percent of the gross value of agricultural production. But with such a small percentage of land available for farming, the single-minded development of irrigated agriculture, without regard to consumption of water or other natural resources, has had adverse effects such as heavy salinization, erosion, and waterlogging of agricultural soils, which inevitably have limited the land's productivity. According to the Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources, for example, after expansion of agricultural land under irrigation at a rate of more than 2 percent per year between 1965 and 1986, conditions attributed to poor water management had caused more than 3.4 million hectares to be taken out of production in the Aral Sea Basin alone. According to other reports, about 44 percent of the irrigated land in Uzbekistan today is strongly salinated. The regions of Uzbekistan most seriously affected by salinization are the provinces of Syrdariya, Bukhoro, Khorazm, and Jizzakh and the Karakalpakstan Republic (see fig. 13). Throughout the 1980s, agricultural investments rose steadily, but net losses rose at an even faster rate.

Cotton

Uzbekistan's main agricultural resource has long been its "white gold," the vast amounts of cotton growing on its territory. Uzbekistan always was the chief cotton-growing region of the Soviet Union, accounting for 61 percent of total Soviet production; in the mid-1990s it ranks as the fourth largest producer of cotton in the world and the world's third largest cotton exporter. In 1991 Uzbekistan's cotton yield was more

than 4.6 million tons, of which more than 80 percent was classified in the top two quality grades. In 1987 roughly 40 percent of the workforce and more than half of all irrigated land in Uzbekistan—more than 2 million hectares—were devoted to cotton.

Other Crops

In light of increasing water shortages in Central Asia and the end of the Soviet distribution system that guaranteed food imports, government leaders have proposed reducing cotton cultivation in favor of grain and other food plants to feed an increasingly impoverished population. In fact, between 1987 and 1991 land planted to cotton decreased by 16 percent, mainly in favor of grains and fruits and vegetables. But Uzbekistan's short-term needs for hard currency make dramatic declines in cotton cultivation unrealistic. Likewise, Uzbekistan's entire existing agricultural infrastructure—irrigation systems, configuration of fields, allocation and type of farm machinery, and other characteristics—is geared toward cotton production; shifting to other crops would require a massive overhaul of the agricultural system and a risk that policy makers have not wished to take in the early years of independence. Under these circumstances, continued commitment to cotton is seen as a good base for longer-term development and diversification.

In 1991 Uzbekistan's main agricultural products, aside from cotton, were grains (primarily wheat, oats, corn, barley, and rice), fodder crops, and fruits and vegetables (primarily potatoes, tomatoes, grapes, and apples). That year 41 percent of cultivated land was devoted to cotton, 32 percent to grains, 11 percent to fruits, 4 percent to vegetables, and 12 percent to other crops. In the early 1990s, Uzbekistan produced the largest volume of fruits and vegetables among the nations of the former Soviet Union. Because Uzbekistan's yield per hectare of noncotton crops is consistently below that for other countries with similar growing conditions, experts believe that productivity can be improved significantly.

Industry

Uzbekistan's industrial sector accounted for 33 percent of its NMP in 1991. Despite some efforts to diversify its industrial base, industry remains dominated by raw materials extraction and processing, most of which is connected with cotton pro-

Woman harvesting cotton, Zarafshon River Valley
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss

duction and minerals (see table 22, Appendix). As illustrated especially by the domestic oil industry, in the Soviet era industrial production generally lagged behind consumption, making Uzbekistan a net importer of many industrial products. Under the difficult economic conditions caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union's system of allocations and interdependence of republics, this situation has worsened. In 1993 total manufacturing had decreased by 1 percent from its 1990 level, and mining output had decreased by more than 8 percent (see table 6, Appendix).

Heavy Industry

The Tashkent region, in the northeastern "peninsula" adjacent to the Fergana Valley, accounts for about one-third of the industrial output of Uzbekistan, with agricultural machinery the most important product. The city is the nucleus of an industrial region that was established near mineral and hydroelectric resources stretching across northeastern Uzbekistan from the Syrdariya in the west to the easternmost point of the nation. Electricity for the industries of the region comes from small hydroelectric stations along the Chirchiq River and from a gas-fired local power station.

Uzbekistan's most productive heavy industries have been extraction of natural gas and oil; oil refining; mining and min-

eral processing; machine building, especially equipment for cotton cultivation and the textile industry; coal mining; and the ferrous metallurgy, chemical, and electrical power industries. The chemical manufacturing industry focuses primarily on the production of fertilizer.

Two oil refineries in Uzbekistan, located at Farghona and Amtiari, have a combined capacity of 173,000 barrels per day. Other centers of the processing industries include Angren (for coal), Bekobod (steel), Olmaliq (copper, zinc, and molybdenum), Zarafshon (gold), and Yangiobod (uranium). The Uzbek fertilizer industry was established at Chirchiq, northeast of Tashkent, near Samarqand, and at several sites in the Fergana Basin. Uzbekistan is the largest producer of machinery for all phases of cotton cultivation and processing, as well as for irrigation, in the former Soviet Union. The machine building industry is centered at Tashkent, Chirchiq, Samarqand, and Andijon in the east, and at Nukus in Karakalpakstan.

Light Industry

The predominant light industries are primary processing of cotton, wool, and silk into fabric for export, and food processing. In 1989 light industry accounted for 27.1 percent of industrial production; that category was completely dominated by two sectors, textiles (18.2 percent) and agricultural food processing (8.9 percent). The nature of the Uzbek textile industry in the mid-1990s reflects the Soviet allotment to Uzbekistan of primary textile processing rather than production of finished products. Food processing has diversified to some degree; the industry specializes in production of dried apricots, raisins, and peaches. Other products are cottonseed oil for cooking, wine, and tobacco.

Labor Force

The swelling of the working-age population has led to high rates of unemployment and underemployment (see Population, this ch.). At the same time, despite relatively high average levels of education in the population, the shortage of skilled personnel in Uzbekistan is also a major constraint to future development (see Education, this ch.). Russians and other nonindigenous workers traditionally were concentrated in the heavy industrial sectors, including mining and heavy manufacturing. With the independence of Uzbekistan and the outbreak of violence in several parts of Central Asia, many of these

skilled personnel left the country in the early 1990s. In 1990 as many as 90 percent of personnel in Uzbekistan's electric power stations were Russians. Because Russian emigration caused a shortage of skilled technicians, by 1994 half of the power generating units of the Syrdariya Hydroelectric Power Station had been shut down, and the newly constructed Novoangrenskiy Thermoelectric Power Station could not go on line because there was nobody to operate it. In the mid-1990s, training programs were preparing skilled indigenous cadres in these and other industrial sectors, but the shortfall has had a strong impact.

Postcommunist Economic Reform

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan faced serious economic challenges: the breakdown of central planning from Moscow and the end of a reliable, if limited, system of interrepublican trade and payments mechanisms; production inefficiencies; the prevalence of monopolies; declining productivity; and loss of the significant subsidies and payments that had come from Moscow. All these changes signaled that fundamental reform would be necessary if the economy of Uzbekistan were to continue to be viable.

Traditionally a raw materials supplier for the rest of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan saw its economy hard hit by the breakdown of the highly integrated Soviet economy. Factories in Uzbekistan could not get the raw materials they needed to diversify the national economy, and the end of subsidies from Moscow was exacerbated by concurrent declines in world prices for Uzbekistan's two major export commodities, gold and cotton.

Structural and Legal Reform

From the time of independence, Uzbekistan's political leaders have made verbal commitments to developing a market-based economy, but they have proceeded cautiously in that direction. The first few years were characterized mainly by false starts that left little fundamental change. The initial stages of reform, instituted in 1992, were partial price liberalization, unification of foreign-exchange markets, new taxes, removal of import tariffs, and privatization of small shops and residential housing. Laws passed in 1992 provided for property and land ownership, banking, and privatization. Modernization of the tax system began in 1992; the first steps were a value-added tax

(VAT—see Glossary) and a profits tax designed to replace income from the tax structure of the Soviet period.

In its first effort at price liberalization in 1992 and 1993, the government maintained some control on all prices and full control on the prices of basic consumer goods and energy. A wide range of legislation set new conditions for property and land ownership, banking, and privatization—fundamental conditions for establishing a market economy—but in general these provisions were limited, and they often were not enforced. International financial institutions initially were encouraged to believe that structural adjustments would be made in the national economy to accommodate international investment, but later such promises were rescinded. In 1994 the government maintained control of levels of production, investment, and trade, just as Moscow had done in the Soviet era. Several agencies, most notably the State Committee for Forecasting and Statistics, the State Association for Contracts and Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, and the Ministry of Finance, inherited responsibility for planning, finance, procurement, and distribution from the Soviet central state system. Economic policy making remains based on a national economic plan that sets production and consumption targets. State-owned enterprises remain in virtually all sectors of the economy. In 1994 no laws had established standards for bankruptcy, collateral, or contracts. But by 1995 Uzbekistan had made some significant movement toward reform, which experts interpreted as a possible harbinger of wider-ranging changes in the second half of the decade.

Privatization

Privatization of the large state industrial and agricultural enterprises, which dominated the economy in the Soviet era, proceeded very slowly in the early 1990s. The initial stage of privatization, which began in September 1992, targeted the housing, retail trade and services, and light industry sectors to promote the supply of consumer goods.

Beginning with the 1991 Law on Privatization, a number of laws and decrees have provided the policy framework for further privatization. A state privatization agency, established in 1992, set a goal of moving 10 to 15 percent of state economic assets into private hands by the end of 1993. Movement in that direction was slow in 1992, however, with only about 350 small shops being privatized. In the same period, housing was priva-

Central outdoor market, Samarqand
Courtesy Tom Skipper

tized at a somewhat faster pace by outright transfers or low-cost sales of state housing properties. By 1994 about 20,000 firms in small industry, trade, and services had been transferred from state ownership to the ownership of managers and employees of the firms. Nearly all such transfers were through the issuance of joint-stock shares or by direct sale.

Agricultural privatization, which began in 1990, has moved faster. Since the state began distributing free parcels of land that could be inherited but not sold, the number of peasant farms has risen dramatically (cotton-growing lands were excluded from this process). Between January 1991 and April 1993, the number of private farms rose from 1,358 to 5,800, promising a significant new contribution from private farms to Uzbekistan's overall agricultural output (see Agriculture, this ch.). Another government program, initiated in 1993, transfers unprofitable state farms to cooperative ownership. A law per-

mitting the transfer of privately owned land was planned for 1995.

In the mid-1990s, the role of the state was gradually reduced in the productive sectors, except for energy, public utilities, and gold. The government's privatization program for 1994–95 emphasized the sale of large and medium-sized state-owned construction, manufacturing, and transportation enterprises. A set of guidelines for large-scale privatization, which went into effect in March 1994, contained several contradictory provisions that required clarification, and privatization also was slowed by the need to change the monopoly structure of state-owned enterprises before sale.

In mid-1995, the government reported that 69 percent of enterprises (46,900 of 67,700) had been privatized. Most firms in that category are relatively small, however, and all heavy industry remained in state ownership at that stage. Although the government has promised accelerated privatization of larger firms, experts did not expect the slow pace to improve in the late 1990s.

Currency Reform

According to some experts, a turning point came in late 1993 after Uzbekistan and Kazakstan were expelled from the ruble zone (see Glossary), in which Uzbekistan had remained with vague plans to adopt an independent national currency at some time in the future. Following the example of Kyrgyzstan, which already had created its own currency the previous May, in November 1993 Uzbekistan issued an interim som coupon. The permanent currency unit, the som, went into effect in the summer of 1994 (for value of the som—see Glossary). The introduction of the som was followed by an improving domestic economic situation, including some progress toward economic stabilization and structural reform. Beginning in late 1994, the national economy achieved substantial price liberalization, a reduction in subsidies, elimination of state orders on most commodities, and some freeing of state controls in the agricultural sector. In 1994 the som was one of the weaker new currencies in Central Asia; it lost two-thirds of its value in the second half of 1994. By the end of the year, however, inflation had leveled off, and the free-market exchange rate of the som stabilized by January 1995. In July 1995, the government announced plans to make the som fully convertible by the end

of the year. At the beginning of 1996, the som's value was thirty-six to US$1.

Banking and Finance

Uzbekistan began a movement toward a two-tier banking system under the old Soviet regime. The new structure, which was ratified by the Banking Law of 1991, has a government-owned Central Bank wielding control over a range of joint-stock sectoral banks specializing in agricultural or industrial enterprise, the Savings Bank (Sberbank), and some twenty commercial banks. The Central Bank is charged with establishing national monetary policy, issuing currency, and operating the national payment system. In performing these operations, the Central Bank manipulates as much as 70 percent of deposits in the more than 1,800 branches of the Savings Bank (all of which are state owned) for its own reserve requirements. A National Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs, established in 1991 as a joint-stock commercial bank, conducts international financial exchanges on behalf of the government. The national bank holds Uzbekistan's foreign currency reserves; in 1993 it was converted from its initial status to a state bank.

In the mid-1990s, the banking structure in Uzbekistan was limited to only a handful of primarily state-owned banks, and, compared with Western banking systems, the commercial banking system was still in its infancy. But the establishment in the spring of 1995 of Uzbekistan's first Western-style banking operation—a joint venture between Mees Pierson of the Netherlands and other international and Uzbekistani partners—suggests that this sector, too, may have prospects for change. The Uzbekistan International Bank that would result from the new joint venture is intended primarily to finance trade and industrial projects. The bank is to be based in Tashkent, with 50 percent of ownership shares in Western hands. If successful, this and other similar ventures may reward policy makers' cautious approach to reform by establishing an infrastructure from which economic growth can begin.

International Financial Relations

Foreign trade traditionally has provided Uzbekistan with supplies of needed foodstuffs, including grain, and industrial raw materials, whereas Uzbekistan exported primarily nonferrous metals and cotton. On the eve of independence, Uzbekistan was a net importer, with roughly 22 percent of total

domestic consumption composed of imports, and with exports accounting for 18 percent of production.

Trade Reform in the 1990s

Before the breakup of the Soviet Union, foreign trade was heavily dependent on the Russian Republic. In the 1980s, more than 80 percent of Uzbekistan's foreign trade was within the Soviet Union, with Russia accounting for half of imports and almost 60 percent of exports. The other Central Asian republics accounted for another quarter of Uzbekistan's total foreign trade. Even interrepublican trade was directed through Moscow and organized in the interests of centralized planning goals.

In the early 1990s, the Soviet-era pattern of exported and imported products remained approximately the same: nearly all ferrous metals and machinery, except that relating to the cotton industry, plus about 40 percent of consumer goods and processed foods, were imported. A significant aspect of the trade balance was that a single item, grain, accounted for 45 percent of imports in the early 1990s, as the republic imported about 75 percent of the grain it consumed. Traditionally strong exports are basic metals, cotton-related machinery, textiles, agricultural and aviation equipment, fertilizers, and cotton.

In 1993 about 80 percent of foreign trade, with both former Soviet and other partners, was on the basis of bilateral agreements (see table 23, Appendix). In the early 1990s, such agreements were heavily regulated by quotas, licenses, and distribution controls. In 1993 and 1994, however, the list of commodities requiring export licenses was cut in half, import licensing virtually ended, and the use of fixed quotas was cut by two-thirds. Plans called for adoption of a unified system of licenses and quotas in 1995. Private barter agreements with partners in the former Soviet Union became illegal in 1993; they were replaced by agreements based on international prices. In 1994 the government eliminated its tax on foreign-currency earnings.

In 1993 Uzbekistan's current accounts foreign trade deficit rose to 9.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP—see Glossary), increasing from 3.1 percent in 1992; at that point, the deficit was financed mainly through transactions backed by the country's gold supply and by bilateral trade credits—measures not sustainable over the long term. Since independence, Uzbekistan has made aggressive efforts to expand foreign trade

and to diversify its trading partners (see Foreign Relations, this ch.). Expansion of trade relations beyond the contiguous states of the former Soviet Union has been hindered, however, by Uzbekistan's landlocked position and the complexity of moving goods overland through several countries to reach customers (see Transportation, this ch.).

Foreign Investment

Although limited, the foreign investment law adopted in mid-1991 was a first step in promoting foreign contacts. Foreign investment, which moved quite cautiously in the early 1990s, expanded significantly in 1994 and 1995. By 1995 a variety of United States and foreign companies were investing in Uzbekistan. The United States Stan Cornelius Enterprises, for example, helped cap an oil well blowout at the Mingbulak oil field in March 1992, and the company has subsequently established a joint venture with the Uzbekistan State Oil Company (Uzbekneft) to develop the oil field and explore and develop other oil reserves in the country. The directors of the joint venture expect the Mingbulak Field to remain productive for twelve to twenty years. Likewise, the Colorado-based Newmont Mining Company has established a joint venture valued at roughly US$75 million with the Nawoiy Mining and Metallurgical Combine and the State Committee for Geology and Mineral Resources of Uzbekistan to produce gold at the Muruntau mine. A production rate of eleven tons per year was envisioned at the time the project was financed by a consortium of fifteen British banks.

The United States firm Bateman Engineering also is working in the gold sector, and various South Korean, Japanese, Turkish, German, British, and other companies are investing in a wide range of industrial and extraction operations including oil, sugar, cotton and woolen cloth production, tourism, production of automobiles, trucks, and aircraft, and production of medical equipment and ballpoint pens.

There are some significant barriers to investment. Uzbekistan's landlocked location makes commerce more difficult for potential investors. And, despite new legislation concerning such areas as tax holidays, repatriation of profits, and tax incentives, the investment climate for foreign companies remains problematic. The Karimov regime is relatively stable, but highly bureaucratic and centralized control, lack of infrastructure, and corruption remain major structural impediments that

have prevented many joint ventures from getting off the ground. Small and medium-sized foreign firms are discouraged by persistent corruption among the lower-level officials with whom they must deal; larger companies such as Newmont Mining are able to deal directly with top-level politicians. Enterprise taxation rates vary widely, but the rate for joint ventures with more than 30 percent foreign backing is 10 percent. Five-year tax exemptions are granted to such firms in specific areas. All firms must pay a 40 percent social insurance tax to fund the state's welfare and unemployment programs.

Transportation and Telecommunications

Uzbekistan inherited Soviet-era methodology and systems in both its transportation and telecommunications networks. That legacy has meant a gradual process of reorientating lines whose configuration was determined by Uzbekistan's need for a primary connection with the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union.

Transportation

The Soviet legacy included a relatively solid transportation and communications infrastructure in Uzbekistan, at least relative to other less developed countries. The landlocked position of the country determines Uzbekistan's transportation needs, especially as commercial ties are sought with more distant partners in the post-Soviet era. On the eve of independence in 1991, Uzbekistan could boast an extensive railway and road network that connected all parts of the country. Rail transport is the major means of freight transport within Uzbekistan, but the country has an extensive road network as well. On the eve of independence, Uzbekistan had close to 3,500 kilometers of rail lines and nearly 80,000 kilometers of roads. Most cities and urban settlements in Uzbekistan also provided local transportation networks. In 1991, some seventy-three of 123 urban settlements offered their citizens internal bus transport, and more than 100 offered transport on trolley lines. Although the structure of national transportation is regarded as adequate, much transportation equipment and application technology is of 1950s and 1960s vintage (see fig. 14).

Railroads

In 1990 railroads carried about 75 percent of Uzbekistan's

Figure 14. Uzbekistan: Transportation System, 1996

freight, excluding materials carried by pipeline. In 1993 the rail system included about 3,500 kilometers of track, of which 270 kilometers were electrified. More than 600 mainline engines served the system. However, an estimated 1,000 kilometers of track require rehabilitation, and 40 percent of the locomotive fleet has exceeded its service life.

Because the main line connecting Uzbekistan with the Black Sea crosses the Turkmenistan border twice, the withdrawal of the latter country from the Central Asia rail system in 1992 cut that line (which also must pass through Kazakstan and Russia) into several parts. The segments now are alternately controlled by the Turkmenistani or the Uzbekistani national railroad authorities. The Transcaspian Railroad between the Amu Darya in the southwest and Tashkent in the northeast is the main transportation route within Uzbekistan, connecting Bukhoro and Samarqand in the south with the capital city in the northeast. The Transcaspian line also has two major spurs to other parts of the country. One spur runs southeast from Kagan, near Bukhoro, through Qarshi to Termiz, reaching the southeastern oases of the Qashqadaryo and Surkhondaryo valleys. The second spur branches from the main Samarqand-Tashkent line east of Jizzakh, passing northward to serve the Fergana Valley cities of Angren, Andijon, Farghona, and Namangan.

In the Fergana Valley, a number of short spurs reach the local mining centers of that region. The Kazalinsk line goes northwest from Tashkent, across Kazakstan and into Russia; its main role is moving cotton to the Russian mills. Especially for natural gas, a pipeline network also is well developed, linking Uzbekistan to the neighboring Central Asian countries and to the central regions of the former European Soviet Union and the Urals. The share of the railroads in passenger transportation is much more modest than that in freight transportation; in 1990 less than one-third of passenger kilometers was traveled on the rails.

Roads

The road network in Uzbekistan includes approximately 67,000 kilometers of surfaced roads and an additional 11,000 kilometers of unsurfaced roads. At a density of about six kilometers per 1,000 inhabitants, the network is about twice as dense as the average for the entire Soviet Union in 1991 and about the same density as the current average for East Euro-

pean countries. (Density by territory is about half that of Eastern Europe.)

The highway system carries about one-fourth of freight traffic and about two-thirds of all passenger traffic (of which the bulk is accounted for by bus lines.) The three major stretches of highway are the Great Uzbek Highway, which links Tashkent and Termiz in the far southeast; the Zarafshon Highway between Samarqand and Chärjew in northeastern Turkmenistan; and the connector road between Tashkent and Quqon. The Samarqand-Chärjew route connects with a road that roughly parallels the northwestward course of the Syrdariya along the Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan border, passing through Urganch and Nukus before ending at Muynoq, just south of the Aral Sea. The Fergana Ring connects industries and major settlements in the Fergana Valley.

Air Travel

In 1993 Uzbekistan had nine civilian airports, of which four were large enough to land international passenger jets. Tashkent's Yuzhnyy Airport, the largest in the country, now serves as a major air link for the other former republics of the Soviet Union with South Asia and Southeast Asia, as well as a major hub linking Central Asia with Western Europe and the United States. The addition of Tashkent to the flight routes of Germany's national airline, Lufthansa, greatly increased this role, and Uzbekistan's own airline, Uzbekistan Airways, flies from Tashkent and Samarqand to major cities in Western Europe and the Middle East. In 1994 its fleet included about 400 former Soviet aircraft, including the Yakovlev 40, Antonov 24, Tupolev 154, Ilyushin 62, 76, and 86, and two French Airbus A310–200s.

Transportation Policy

Because of the country's long political isolation from its historical trading partners to the south, Uzbekistan's transportation infrastructure, aside from air transport, is largely designed to tie the region to Russia. The only rail outlets are northward. Uzbekistan's nearest rail-connected ports are in St. Petersburg, 3,500 kilometers to the northwest; the Black Sea ports, 3,000 kilometers to the west; and Vladivostok and the main Chinese ports, 5,000 kilometers to the northeast and east, respectively. Moscow is 3,500 kilometers away. Such distances add significantly to export prices. For example, the transportation of one

ton of cotton sold in Western Europe adds as much as US$175 to the selling price. Land routes to potential customers rely on the stability and the transport system reliability of the several countries through which Uzbekistani goods must pass. Because of these conditions, transportation planners have emphasized the availability of alternative routes and modes, relying mainly on roads and railroads. To improve versatility, in 1993 the national airline signed intergovernmental treaties with China, the United Kingdom, Germany, India, Israel, Pakistan, and Turkey.

Connections with the Iranian rail system and with the Pakistani highway system are in the long-term planning stage. Under discussion is a series of rail links that would connect Central Asia's rail network with those of the region's southern neighbors. Rail and road links planned with China through Kyrgyzstan and Kazakstan also will expand Uzbekistan's reach and help to gradually reverse the influence of Soviet-era commercial patterns on the configuration of Uzbekistan's transportation network.

Telecommunications

The Soviet-era telecommunications system was centralized, with Moscow acting as the hub for routing international communications. Investment in this system was generally low throughout the Soviet era, leaving the republics with low-quality equipment and service that have deteriorated further in the first years of independence. In the early 1990s, the installation of new lines dropped significantly in Uzbekistan. Recognizing the vital role of telecommunications in any modernization process, the government has sought international investment in updating its systems.

Structure

Beginning in 1992, the Ministry of Communications has had responsibility for all modes of telecommunications, plus postal service and all print and broadcast media. Its purview also extends to construction and some manufacturing operations. Its Uzbekistan Telecommunications Administration (Uzbektelecom) includes fourteen enterprises, one in each of the country's thirteen regions plus one in Tashkent. Some twenty-six other communications enterprises are controlled directly. A planning enterprise is in charge of reconfiguring the transmission facilities designed by Soviet authorities for broadcast

across the entire Soviet Union. Many of the Soviet system's technical operations, such as frequency control and international connections, were centered in Moscow, meaning that Uzbekistani broadcast personnel have had to absorb all those functions without the expertise to manage all the technical aspects of an independent national broadcast system. Long-term plans call for decreased involvement by the ministry and decentralization, with the operation gradually turned over to private enterprises.

Service System

In 1994 Uzbekistan's telephone system served about 1.46 million customers, or about 7 percent of the population. Of that number, 1.12 million were in urban areas and 340,000 were rural customers; 1.08 million were residential customers and 380,000 were businesses. The official waiting list for telephone installation included 360,000 individuals, not counting an estimated 1 million who had not registered but required service. Average waiting time was three to five years. Of the 1.86 million lines existing in 1994, nearly all were manufactured in the former Soviet Union or in Eastern Europe. An estimated 20 percent of urban lines used switching equipment that no longer was in production, and about half of those lines were at least twenty years old. Because of these conditions, lack of spare parts is an increasing source of customer dissatisfaction and faulty service. Installation efficiency dropped significantly in the early 1990s. For example, in Tashkent in 1987 some 42,500 new telephones were installed; in 1992 only 9,000 new telephones were installed, although requests increased to 50,000 that year. In the mid-1990s, the Ministry of Communications lacked the technology to install digital telephone technology. Tashkent is the hub for international telephone connections. In 1993 nearly 90 percent of international calls passed through that city (only about 0.03 percent of total calls made in Uzbekistan were international).

In 1993 the Ministry of Communications purchased an Intelsat A satellite earth station and made agreements with several Western firms to establish thirty stations of international television broadcast programming from Japan, Southeast Asia, the United States (in cooperation with American Telephone and Telegraph), Western Europe (through Germany), and Pakistan. The satellite broadcasts were available, however, only in targeted locations such as large hotels and government offices.

Central post office, telephone, and telegraph office, Tashkent

In 1995 a Turkish satellite began relaying communications to Azerbaijan and all the Central Asian states. In 1994 negotiations among ten regional countries discussed installation of an 11,000-kilometer fiber-optic link between Europe and Asia, which would terminate in Tashkent and provide access to all the Central Asian states.

Government and Politics

The movement toward economic reform in Uzbekistan has not been matched by movement toward democratic reform. The government of Uzbekistan has instead tightened its grip since independence, cracking down increasingly on opposition groups, curbing basic human rights, and making little attempt to develop democratic political norms and practices. Although the names have changed, the institutions of government remain similar to those that existed before the breakup of the

Soviet Union. The government has justified its restraint of personal liberty and freedom of speech by emphasizing the need for stability and a gradual approach to change during the transitional period, citing the conflict and chaos in the other former republics (most convincingly, neighboring Tajikistan). This approach has found credence among a large share of Uzbekistan's population, although such a position may not be sustainable in the long run.

Postindependence Changes

Despite the trappings of institutional change, the first years of independence saw more resistance than acceptance of the institutional changes required for democratic reform to take hold. Whatever initial movement toward democracy existed in Uzbekistan in the early days of independence seems to have been overcome by the inertia of the remaining Soviet-style strong centralized leadership.

In the Soviet era, Uzbekistan organized its government and its local communist party in conformity with the structure prescribed for all the republics. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) occupied the central position in ruling the country. The party provided both the guidance and the personnel for the government structure. The system was strictly bureaucratic: every level of government and every governmental body found its mirror image in the party. The tool used by the CPSU to control the bureaucracy was the system of *nomenklatura,* a list of sensitive jobs in the government and other important organizations that could be filled only with party approval. The *nomenklatura* defined the Soviet elite, and the people on the list invariably were members of the CPSU.

Following the failure of the coup against the Gorbachev government in Moscow in August 1991, Uzbekistan's Supreme Soviet declared the independence of the republic, henceforth to be known as the Republic of Uzbekistan. At the same time, the Communist Party of Uzbekistan voted to cut its ties with the CPSU; three months later, it changed its name to the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU), but the party leadership, under President Islam Karimov, remained in place. Independence brought a series of institutional changes, but the substance of governance in Uzbekistan changed much less dramatically.

On December 21, 1991, together with the leaders of ten other Soviet republics, Karimov agreed to dissolve the Soviet

Union and form the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS—see Glossary), of which Uzbekistan became a charter member according to the Alma-Ata Declaration. Shortly thereafter, Karimov was elected president of independent Uzbekistan in the new country's first contested election. Karimov drew 86 percent of the vote against opposition candidate Mohammed Salikh, whose showing experts praised in view of charges that the election had been rigged. The major opposition party, Birlik, had been refused registration as an official party in time for the election.

In 1992 the PDPU retained the dominant position in the executive and legislative branches of government that the Communist Party of Uzbekistan had enjoyed. All true opposition groups were repressed and physically discouraged. Birlik, the original opposition party formed by intellectuals in 1989, was banned for allegedly subversive activities, establishing the Karimov regime's dominant rationalization for increased authoritarianism: Islamic fundamentalism threatened to overthrow the secular state and establish an Islamic regime similar to that in Iran. The constitution ratified in December 1992 reaffirmed that Uzbekistan is a secular state. Although the constitution prescribed a new form of legislature, the PDPU-dominated Supreme Soviet remained in office for nearly two years until the first parliamentary election, which took place in December 1994 and January 1995.

In 1993 Karimov's concern about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism spurred Uzbekistan's participation in the multinational CIS peacekeeping force sent to quell the civil war in nearby Tajikistan—a force that remained in place three years later because of continuing hostilities. Meanwhile, in 1993 and 1994 continued repression by the Karimov regime brought strong criticism from international human rights organizations. In March 1995, Karimov took another step in the same direction by securing a 99 percent majority in a referendum on extending his term as president from the prescribed next election in 1997 to 2000. In early 1995, Karimov announced a new policy of toleration for opposition parties and coalitions, apparently in response to the need to improve Uzbekistan's international commercial position. A few new parties were registered in 1995, although the degree of their opposition to the government was doubtful, and some imprisonments of opposition political figures continued.

The parliamentary election, the first held under the new constitution's guarantee of universal suffrage to all citizens eighteen years of age or older, excluded all parties except the PDPU and the progovernment Progress of the Fatherland Party, despite earlier promises that all parties would be free to participate. The new, 250-seat parliament, called the Oly Majlis or Supreme Soviet, included only sixty-nine candidates running for the PDPU, but an estimated 120 more deputies were PDPU members technically nominated to represent local councils rather than the PDPU. The result was that Karimov's solid majority continued after the new parliament went into office.

The Constitution

From the beginning of his presidency, Karimov remained committed in words to instituting democratic reforms. A new constitution was adopted by the legislature in December 1992. Officially it creates a separation of powers among a strong presidency, the Oly Majlis, and a judiciary. In practice, however, these changes have been largely cosmetic. Uzbekistan remains among the most authoritarian states in Central Asia. Although the language of the new constitution includes many democratic features, it can be superseded by executive decrees and legislation, and often constitutional law simply is ignored.

The president, who is directly elected to a five-year term that can be repeated once, is the head of state and is granted supreme executive power by the constitution. As commander in chief of the armed forces, the president also may declare a state of emergency or of war. The president is empowered to appoint the prime minister and full cabinet of ministers and the judges of the three national courts, subject to the approval of the Oly Majlis, and to appoint all members of lower courts. The president also has the power to dissolve the parliament, in effect negating the Oly Majlis's veto power over presidential nominations in a power struggle situation.

Deputies to the unicameral Oly Majlis, the highest legislative body, are elected to five-year terms. The body may be dismissed by the president with the concurrence of the Constitutional Court; because that court is subject to presidential appointment, the dismissal clause weights the balance of power heavily toward the executive branch. The Oly Majlis enacts legislation, which may be initiated by the president, within the parliament, by the high courts, by the procurator general (highest law enforcement official in the country), or by the government of

the Autonomous Province of Karakalpakstan. Besides legislation, international treaties, presidential decrees, and states of emergency also must be ratified by the Oly Majlis.

The national judiciary includes the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, and the High Economic Court. Lower court systems exist at the regional, district, and town levels. Judges at all levels are appointed by the president and approved by the Oly Majlis. Nominally independent of the other branches of government, the courts remain under complete control of the executive branch. As in the system of the Soviet era, the procurator general and his regional and local equivalents are both the state's chief prosecuting officials and the chief investigators of criminal cases, a configuration that limits the pretrial rights of defendants.

Local Government

The country is divided into twelve provinces (*wiloyatlar*; sing., *wiloyat*), one autonomous republic (the Karakalpakstan Republic), 156 regions, and 123 cities. In Uzbekistan's system of strong central government, local government has little independence. The chief executive of each province and of Tashkent is the *hakim*, who is appointed by the president. Although these appointments must be confirmed by local legislative bodies that are elected by popular vote, the power of the president is dominant. The Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan also officially elects its own legislature; the chairman of the legislature serves as the republic's head of state and as a deputy chairman of the national parliament. But in the autonomous republic, too, government officials are generally powerless against Tashkent. Indeed, Karakalpak officials often are not included even in meetings of heads of state to discuss the fate of the Aral Sea, which is located within Karakalpakstan.

Opposition Parties

Through the early 1990s, the government's stated goal of creating a multiparty democracy in Uzbekistan went unrealized. When independence was gained, the Communist Party of Uzbekistan was officially banned, but its successor, the PDPU, assumed the personnel, structure, and political domination of its predecessor. Since forcing out a small number of deputies from opposition parties, PDP members have complete control of the Supreme Soviet, and most members of other government bodies also are PDP members. The only other legal party

in Uzbekistan, the Progress of the Fatherland Party, was created by a key adviser to President Karimov, ostensibly to give the country a semblance of a multiparty system; but it differs little in substance from the PDP.

Of the several legitimate opposition parties that emerged in Uzbekistan before the collapse of the Soviet Union, none has been able to meet the official registration requirements that the government created to maintain control and exclude them from the public arena. The first opposition party, Birlik, was created in 1989, primarily by intellectuals and writers under the leadership of the writer Abdurakhim Pulatov (see The 1980s, this ch.). The movement attempted to draw attention to problems ranging from environmental and social concerns to economic challenges, and to participate in their solution. The main weakness of Birlik was that it never was able to present a united front to the government. Soon after the party's establishment, a group of Birlik leaders left to set up a political party, Erk (Freedom), under the leadership of Mohammed Salikh. The Uzbek government was able to exploit the disunity of the opposition and eventually to undermine their position. Following the establishment of independent Uzbekistan, the Karimov regime was able to suppress both Birlik and Erk. Both parties were banned officially; Erk was reinstated in 1994.

Other parties include the Movement for Democratic Reforms, the Islamic Rebirth Party (banned by the government in 1992), the Humaneness and Charity group, and the Uzbekistan Movement. A former prime minister (1990–91) and vice president (1991) of Uzbekistan, Shukrullo Mirsaidov, created a new party, Adolat (Justice) in December 1994. Like Birlik and Erk, the new party calls for liberal economic reforms, political pluralism, and a secular society, but experts describe its opposition to the government as quite moderate. Nevertheless, Adolat has not been able to operate freely.

In 1995 opposition parties continued to be divided among themselves, further diluting their potential effectiveness, and many of the leaders have been either imprisoned or exiled. In mid-1995, Mohammed Salikh was in Germany; Abdurakhim Pulatov was in exile in Turkey; and his brother Abdumannob Pulatov, also active in the opposition and a victim of brutal government oppression, took refuge in the United States.

The Media

Despite the fact that the constitution explicitly bans censor-

Library and reception rooms of Uzbekistan Supreme Soviet, Tashkent

ship, press censorship is routine. In 1992 twelve daily newspapers, with a total circulation of 452,000, were published. In 1993 the government required all periodicals to register, and the applications of all independent titles were denied. In early 1996, no independent press had emerged, and all forms of information dissemination were monitored closely. The largest daily newspapers were *Khalk Suzi* (People's World), the organ of the Oly Majlis; *Narodnoye Slovo*, a Russian-language government daily; *Pravda Vostoka*, an organ of the Oly Majlis and the cabinet, in Russian; and *Uzbekiston Adabiyoti va San'ati* (Uzbekistan Literature and Art), the organ of the Union of Writers of Uzbekistan. The only news agency was the government-controlled Uzbekistan Telegraph Agency (UzTAG).

Human Rights

Despite extensive constitutional protections, the Karimov

government has actively suppressed the rights of political movements, continues to ban unsanctioned public meetings and demonstrations, and continues to arrest opposition figures on fabricated charges. The atmosphere of repression reduces constructive opposition and freedom of expression, and continues to distort the political process, even when institutional changes have been made. In the mid-1990s, legislation established significant rights for independent trade unions, separate from the government, and enhanced individual rights; but enforcement is uneven, and the role of the state security services remains central (see Internal Security, this ch.).

Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch, and the United States Department of State consistently have identified the human rights record of Uzbekistan as among the worst in the former Soviet Union. With the exception of sporadic liberalization, all opposition movements and independent media are essentially banned in Uzbekistan. The early 1990s were characterized by arrests and beatings of opposition figures on fabricated charges. For example, one prominent Uzbek, Ibrahim Bureyev, was arrested in 1994 after announcing plans to form a new opposition party. After reportedly being freed just before the March referendum, Bureyev shortly thereafter was arrested again on a charge of possessing illegal firearms and drugs. In April 1995, fewer than two weeks after the referendum extending President Karimov's term, six dissidents were sentenced to prison for distributing the party newspaper of Erk and inciting the overthrow of Karimov. Members of opposition groups have been harassed by Uzbekistan's secret police as far away as Moscow.

Foreign Relations

Uzbekistan's location, bordering the volatile Middle East, as well as its rich natural resources and commercial potential, thrust it into the international arena almost immediately upon gaining independence. During the early 1990s, wariness of renewed Russian control led Uzbekistan increasingly to seek ties with other countries. Indeed, little over a year after independence, Uzbekistan had been recognized by 120 countries and had opened or planned to open thirty-nine foreign embassies. Experts believed that in this situation Uzbekistan would turn first to neighboring countries such as Iran and Turkey. Although the cultural kinship and proximity of those countries has encouraged closer relations, Uzbekistan also has shown

eagerness to work with a range of partners to create a complex web of interrelationships that includes its immediate Central Asian neighbors, Russia and other nations of the CIS, and the immediate Middle Eastern world, with the goal of becoming an integral part of the international community on its own terms.

Central Asian States

Chief among Uzbekistan's foreign policy challenges is establishing relations with the other Central Asian states, which at the beginning of the 1990s still were simply neighboring administrative units in the same country. The ties that emerged between Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian states in the first years of independence are a combination of competition and cooperation.

Because they have similar economic structures defined by a focus on raw material extraction and cotton and by the need to divide scarce resources such as water among them, the inherent competition among them contains the potential for enormous strife. This condition was emphasized, for example, in May 1993, when Uzbekistan halted the flow of natural gas to Kyrgyzstan in response to that country's introduction of a new currency.

The potential for strife is exacerbated by the perception of the other Central Asian states that Uzbekistan seeks to play a dominant role in the region. As the only Central Asian state bordering on all the others, Uzbekistan is well placed geographically to become the dominant power in the region. And Uzbekistan has done little to contradict the notion that it has historically based claims on the other Central Asian states: as the historical center of the Quqon and Bukhoro khanates, for example, Uzbekistan believes that it can claim parts of Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakstan. Uzbekistan's large and relatively homogeneous population provides it a distinct advantage in exerting control over other republics. Uzbeks also constitute a significant percentage of the populations of the other Central Asian states. For example, roughly one-fourth of Tajikistan's population is Uzbek, and large numbers of Uzbeks populate southern Kyrgyzstan and southern Kazakstan. And Uzbekistan's active role in aiding the communist government of Imomali Rahmonov to defeat its opposition in the long-standing civil war in Tajikistan has demonstrated that it is well prepared to use its own armed forces—which are the best armed in Central Asia—to promote its own strategic interests

(see The Armed Forces, this ch.). The government of Uzbekistan already has declared its right to intervene to protect Uzbeks living outside its borders.

At the same time, however, economic and political exigencies have also required close cooperation between Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian states. The near collapse of their respective economies and the need to reduce their economic dependence on Russia have also encouraged ties among the Central Asian republics, including Uzbekistan. Isolated from Moscow in some ways and manipulated by Moscow in others, Uzbekistan has found it especially advantageous to enhance relations with Kazakstan and Kyrgyzstan. In January 1994, following their formal departure from the ruble zone in November 1993, Kazakstan and Uzbekistan agreed to create their own economic zone to allow for free circulation of goods, services, and capital within the two republics and to coordinate policies on credit and finance, budgets, taxes, customs duties, and currency until the year 2000. Although many other former republics had made similar statements of intent, this marked the first firm economic agreement between two former republics within the CIS.

Since its signing, this agreement has expanded its coverage for the two charter nations and by the addition of a third signatory, Kyrgyzstan. In April 1994, the agreement was extended among all three former republics to abolish all customs controls; and in July 1994, the leaders of the three states met in Almaty to agree to a program of greater economic integration in what they have identified as their "Unified Economic Space." This agreement produced the first steps toward a modicum of institutional change, such as the creation of a Central Asian Bank and an interstate council to formalize bilateral ties. It also marked a commitment for further expansion of direct ties.

Renewed cooperation between Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian states also has been evidenced in areas such as joint efforts to address the Aral Sea problem. For some time even before the breakup of the Soviet Union, conferences and declarations by leaders in Central Asia had called for more cooperation among the five Central Asian republics to resolve the problem of the Aral Sea and regional use of water resources. In December 1992, with World Bank (see Glossary) support, President Karimov took the lead in proposing the creation of a strong, unified interstate organization to resolve the problems of the Aral Sea. The heads of state of all of the Cen-

tral Asian republics have met several times to coordinate activities, and all members pledged roughly 1 percent of their respective GDPs toward an Aral Sea fund. Although compliance has varied, this type of constructive and unified approach to a mutual problem remained theoretical in the early 1990s.

Russia and the CIS

Equally unclear is the long-term direction of Uzbekistan's relations with Russia. Having had independence thrust upon them by events in Moscow in 1991, the new Central Asian states, Uzbekistan among them, pressed to become "founding members" of the CIS on December 21, 1991. It was clear that none of the countries in that group could soon disentangle the complex of economic and military links that connected them with the Slavic members of the new CIS, and especially with Russia. In Uzbekistan's case, this limitation was characterized mainly by the significant Russian population in Uzbekistan (at that time, nearly 2 million people in a population of 22 million), by certain common interests in the region, and by the close entanglement of the Uzbek economy with the Russian, with the former more dependent on the latter.

Since achieving independence, Uzbekistan's foreign policy toward Russia has fluctuated widely between cooperation and public condemnation of Russia for exacerbating Uzbekistan's internal problems. Serious irritants in the relationship have been Russia's demand that Uzbekistan deposit a large portion of its gold reserves in the Russian Central Bank in order to remain in the ruble zone (which became a primary rationale for Uzbekistan's introduction of its own national currency in 1993) and Russia's strong pressure to provide Russians in Uzbekistan with dual citizenship. In 1994 and 1995, a trend within Russia toward reasserting more control over the regions that Russian foreign policy makers characterize as the "near abroad," boosted by the seeming dominance of conservative forces in this area in Moscow, has only compounded Uzbekistan's wariness of relations with Russia.

In its period of post-Soviet transformation, Uzbekistan also has found it advantageous to preserve existing links with Russia and the other former Soviet republics. For that pragmatic reason, since the beginning of 1994 Uzbekistan has made particular efforts to improve relations with the other CIS countries. Between 1993 and early 1996, regional cooperation was most visible in Tajikistan, where Uzbekistani troops fought alongside

Russian troops, largely because of the two countries' shared emphasis on Islamic fundamentalism as an ostensible threat to Central Asia and to Russia's southern border. And 1994 and 1995 saw increased efforts to widen economic ties with Russia and the other CIS states. Economic and trade treaties have been signed with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakstan, and collective security and/or military agreements have been signed with Russia, Armenia, and other Central Asian states. Largely because of its important role in Uzbekistan's national security, Russia has retained the role of preferred partner in nonmilitary treaties as well (see External Security Conditions, this ch.).

The Middle East and Pakistan

Because of Uzbekistan's long historical and cultural ties to the Persian, Turkish, and Arab worlds, its immediate neighbors to the south—Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey—were the natural direction for expanded foreign relations. Although cultural relations with formerly dominant Iran and Turkey ended with the Soviet Revolution in 1917, Uzbekistan's relations with its southern neighbors increased dramatically after independence. Iran and Turkey have been especially active in pursuing economic projects and social, cultural, and diplomatic initiatives in Uzbekistan. Turkey was the first country to recognize Uzbekistan and among the first to open an embassy in Tashkent. The Turks made early commitments for expansion of trade and cooperation, including the promise to fund 2,000 scholarships for Uzbek students to study in Turkey. Uzbekistan also has been the recipient of most of the US$700 million in credits that Turkey has given the new Central Asian states.

Although initially apprehensive about the spread of an Iranian-style Islamic fundamentalist movement in Central Asia, Uzbekistan also has found mutual economic interests with Iran, and the two have pursued overland links and other joint ventures. Relations with Pakistan have followed suit, with particular commercial interest in hydroelectric power, gas pipelines, and other projects. And a meeting of the heads of state of Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey in Turkmenistan in early 1995 underscored the continuing interest of those countries in the Central Asian region as a whole.

One forum that has emerged as a potentially important structure for cooperation among these countries has been the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO—see Glossary), a

loose regional economic organization to foster trade and cooperation among its members in the Middle East and South Asia. Although during its almost two decades of existence ECO has achieved little concrete economic cooperation, in November 1992 the inclusion of the five new Central Asian states, Afghanistan, and Azerbaijan brought significant efforts to reinvigorate the organization. At a meeting in Quetta, Pakistan, in February 1993, an ambitious plan was announced to create a new regional economic bloc among ECO's members by the year 2000. The plan calls for expanding ties in all economic sectors, in training, and in tourism; setting up an effective transportation infrastructure; and ultimately abolishing restrictions limiting the free flow of people and commodities. Energy trade also is to be expanded through the laying of oil and gas pipelines and power transmission lines throughout the region. Given ECO's past performance, however, in 1996 the potential for fulfillment of such plans was quite unclear.

Trade and cooperation agreements have also been signed with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other Middle Eastern states. The pragmatic rather than religious background of such endeavors is underscored by Uzbekistan's rapidly expanding ties with Israel, a nation that shares none of the history and culture of Uzbekistan. Following a visit of Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to Uzbekistan in July 1994, Israel and Uzbekistan signed agreements expanding commercial relations, protecting foreign investments and the development of business ties, aviation links, and tourism. In the early 1990s, Israel's long participation in Uzbekistani irrigation projects has been supplemented by aid projects in health care, industry, and the two countries' common battle against radical Islamic groups.

China

China also has sought to develop relations with Central Asia. This was highlighted in May 1994, by the visit of the Chinese premier, Li Peng, to Tashkent. Since 1991 China has become the second largest trading partner in Central Asia after Russia. During Li Peng's visit, Uzbekistan and China signed four agreements designed to increase trade, including the granting of a Chinese loan to Uzbekistan, the establishment of air freight transport between the two countries, and the Chinese purchase of Uzbekistani cotton and metals. The two countries also agreed to settle all territorial disputes through negotiation, and they found common territory in their desire to reform their

economies without relinquishing strict political control. At the same time, however, policy makers in Uzbekistan also view China as one of Uzbekistan's chief potential threats, requiring the same kind of balanced approach as that adopted toward Russia. Indeed, despite the large volume of trade between China and Central Asia, China is lowest on the list of desired trading partners and international donors among Uzbekistan's population. In a 1993 survey, only about 3 percent of respondents believed that China is a desirable source of foreign financial assistance.

Western Europe and Japan

In the first four years of independence, the West occupied an increasing place in Uzbekistan's foreign policy. As relations with its immediate neighbors have been expanding, pragmatic geopolitical and economic considerations have come to dominate ethnic and religious identities as motivations for policy decisions. This approach has increased the interest of the Uzbekistani government in expanding ties with the West and with Japan.

In the early 1990s, Uzbekistan became a member of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF—see Glossary), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, formerly the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE—see Glossary), the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and a number of other international organizations. In that context, Uzbekistan is the beneficiary of several aid projects of varying magnitudes. The World Bank has designed missions and projects totaling hundreds of millions of dollars for such programs as the Cotton Sub-Sector Development Program to improve farm productivity, income, and international cotton marketing conditions and a program to address the problems of the Aral Sea. In April 1995, the World Bank allocated US$160 million in credit to Uzbekistan. In February 1995, the IMF approved a loan to support the Uzbekistani government's macroeconomic stabilization and systemic reform program. The first installment of the loan, roughly US$75 million, will be funded over a ten-year period; the second installment is to follow six months later, provided the government's macroeconomic stabilization program is being implemented. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) likewise approved several million dollars for projects in Uzbekistan. These signs of

World Bank offices, Tashkent
Courtesy K.S. Sangam Iyer

greater involvement by the international community in Uzbekistan are largely stimulated by the political stability that the government has been able to maintain and in disregard of the human rights record, but many investors still are cautious.

The United States

The United States recognized Uzbekistan as an independent state in December 1991; diplomatic relations were established in February 1992, following a visit by Secretary of State James Baker to the republic, and the United States opened an embassy in Tashkent the following month. During 1992, a variety of United States aid programs were launched. Operation Provide Hope delivered an estimated US$6 million of food and medical supplies for emergency relief of civilians affected by the Tajik civil war; the Peace Corps sent its first group of about

fifty volunteers to Uzbekistan; an agreement with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) began encouraging United States private investment in Uzbekistan by providing direct loans and loan guarantees and helping to match projects with potential investors; and humanitarian and technical assistance began to move to a wide range of recipients. In 1993 the United States granted Uzbekistan most-favored-nation trade status, which went into force in January 1994. In March 1994, a bilateral assistance agreement and an open lands agreement were signed. In 1995 a variety of investment and other treaties were under discussion, and several United States non-governmental organizations were initiating joint projects throughout Uzbekistan.

In the first two years of Uzbekistan's independence, the United States provided roughly US$17 million in humanitarian assistance andUS$13 million in technical assistance. For a time, continued human rights violations in Uzbekistan led to significant restrictions in the bilateral relationship, and Uzbekistan received significantly less United States assistance than many of the other former Soviet republics. Because Uzbekistan was slow to adopt fundamental economic reforms, nonhumanitarian United States assistance was largely restricted to programs that support the building of democratic institutions and market reform. By the end of 1995, however, United States-Uzbekistan relations were improving, and significantly more bilateral economic activity was expected in 1996.

National Security

As it declared independence, Uzbekistan found itself in a much better national security position than did many other Soviet republics. In 1992 Uzbekistan took over much of the command structure and armaments of the Turkestan Military District, which was headquartered in Tashkent as the defense organization of the region of Central Asia under the Soviet system. With the abolition of that district the same year and a subsequent reduction and localization of military forces, Uzbekistan quickly built its own military establishment, which featured a gradually decreasing Slavic contingent in its officer corps. That inheritance from the Soviet era has enabled post-Soviet Uzbekistan to assume a role as an important military player in Central Asia and as the successor to Russia as the chief security force in the region. Following independence, Uzbekistan accepted all of the relevant arms control obligations that

had been assumed by the former Soviet Union, and it has acceded to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty as a nonnuclear state.

External Security Conditions

Although its forces are small by international standards, Uzbekistan is rated as the strongest military power among the five Central Asian nations. In 1992 the Karimov regime sent military forces to Tajikistan to support forces of the old-guard communist Tajik government struggling to regain political power and oust the coalition government that had replaced them. Karimov's policy toward Tajikistan was to use military force in maintaining a similarly authoritarian regime to the immediate east. Although Tajikistan's civil war has had occasional destabilizing effects in parts of Uzbekistan, paramilitary Tajikistani oppositionist forces have not been strong enough to confront Uzbekistan's regular army. In the early 1990s, small-scale fighting occurred periodically between Tajikistani and Uzbekistani forces in the Fergana Valley.

In the mid-1990s, no military threat to Uzbekistan existed. An area of territorial contention is the Osh region at the far eastern end of the Fergana Valley where Kyrgyz and Uzbeks clashed violently in 1990 (see Recent History, ch. 2). The Uzbeks have used the minority Uzbek population in Osh as a reason to demand autonomous status for the Osh region; the Kyrgyz fear that such a change would lead to incorporating the region into Uzbekistan. The primary role of the Uzbekistan Armed Forces is believed to be maintaining internal security. This is possible because Uzbekistan remains protected by Russia under most conditions of external threat.

As defined in the 1992 Law on Defense, Uzbekistan's military doctrine is strictly defensive, with no territorial ambitions against any other state. Although its policy on the presence of CIS or Russian weapons has not been stated clearly, Uzbekistan's overall military doctrine does not permit strategic weapons in the inventory of the Uzbekistani armed forces. Battlefield chemical weapons, believed to have been in the republic during the Soviet period, allegedly have been returned to the Russian Federation. In 1994 Uzbekistan, like most of the other former Soviet republics, became a member of the Partnership for Peace program of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO—see Glossary), providing the basis for some joint military exercises with Western forces.

Background of Military Development

One week after independence was declared in August 1991, Uzbekistan established a Ministry for Defense Affairs. The first minister of defense was charged with negotiating with the Soviet Union the future disposition of Soviet military units in Uzbekistan. In enforcing its independent status in military matters, a primary consideration was abolishing the Soviet Union's recruitment of Uzbekistani citizens for service in other parts of the union and abroad. For this purpose, a Department of Military Mobilization was established. In early 1992, when international interest in a joint CIS force waned, the Ministry for Defense Affairs of Uzbekistan took over the Tashkent headquarters of the former Soviet Turkestan Military District. The ministry also assumed jurisdiction over the approximately 60,000 Soviet military troops in Uzbekistan, with the exception of those remaining under the designation "strategic forces of the Joint CIS Command." In the same period, the Supreme Soviet approved laws establishing national defense procedures, conditions for military service, social and legal welfare of service personnel, and the legal status of CIS strategic forces.

A presidential decree in March 1992 declared the number of former Soviet troops in Uzbekistan to exceed strategic requirements and the financial resources of Uzbekistan. With the subsequent abolition of the Turkestan Military District, Uzbekistan established a Ministry of Defense, replacing the Ministry for Defense Affairs. The CIS Tashkent Agreement of May 15, 1992, distributed former Soviet troops and equipment among the former republics in which they were stationed. Among the units that Uzbekistan inherited by that agreement were a fighter-bomber regiment at Chirchiq, an engineer brigade, and an airborne brigade at Farghona.

For the first two years, the command structure of the new force was dominated by the Russians and other Slav officers who had been in command in 1992. In 1992 some 85 percent of officers and ten of fifteen generals were Slavs. In the first year, Karimov appointed Uzbeks to the positions of assistant minister of defense and chief of staff, and a Russian veteran of the Afghan War to the position of commander of the Rapid Reaction Forces. Lieutenant General Rustam Akhmedov, an Uzbek, has been minister of defense since the establishment of the ministry. In 1993 Uzbekistan nationalized the three former Soviet military schools in Tashkent.

The Armed Forces

The president of Uzbekistan is the commander in chief of the armed forces, and he has authority to appoint and dismiss all senior commanders. The minister of defense and the chief of staff have operational and administrative control. Since early 1992, President Karimov has exercised his supreme authority in making appointments and in the application of military power. The staff structure of the armed forces retains the configuration of the Turkestan Military District. The structure includes an Operational and Mobilization Organization Directorate and departments of intelligence, signals, transport, CIS affairs, aviation, air defense, and missile troops and artillery. In 1996 total military strength was estimated at about 25,000. The armed forces are divided into four main components: ground defense forces, air force, air defense, and national guard.

Army

The ground defense forces, largest of the four branches, numbered 20,400 troops in 1996, of which about 30 percent were professional soldiers serving by contract and the remainder were conscripts. The forces are divided into an army corps of three motorized rifle brigades, one tank regiment, one engineer brigade, one artillery brigade, two artillery regiments, one airborne brigade, and aviation, logistics, and communications support units. The ground forces' primary mission is to conduct rapid-reaction operations in cooperation with other branches. Combined headquarters are at Tashkent; the headquarters of the 360th Motor Rifle Division is at Termiz, and that of the Airmobile Division is at Farghona. (Although the force structure provides for no division-level units, they are designated as such for the purpose of assigning headquarters.)

In 1996 Uzbekistan's active arsenal of conventional military equipment included 179 main battle tanks; 383 armored personnel carriers and infantry vehicles; 323 artillery pieces; forty-five surface-to-air missiles; and fifteen antitank guns.

Air Force and Air Defense

A treaty signed in March 1994 by Russia and Uzbekistan defines the terms of Russian assistance in training, allocation of air fields, communications, and information on air space and air defense installations. In 1995 almost all personnel in Uzbekistan's air force were ethnic Russians. The Chirchiq

Fighter Bomber Regiment, taken over in the initial phase of nationalization of former Soviet installations, has since been scaled down by eliminating older aircraft, with the goal of reaching a force of 100 fixed-wing aircraft and thirty-two armed helicopters. According to the Soviet structure still in place, separate air and air defense forces operate in support of ground forces; air force doctrine conforms with Soviet doctrine. Some thirteen air bases are active.

In 1994 Uzbekistan's inventory of aircraft was still in the process of reduction to meet treaty requirements. At that stage, the air force was reported to have two types of interceptor jet, twenty of the outmoded MiG–21 and thirty of the more sophisticated MiG–29. For close air support, forty MiG–27s (foundation of the Chirchiq regiment) and ten Su–17Ms were operational. Twenty An–2 light transport planes, six An–12BP transports, and ten An–26 transports made up the air force's transport fleet. Training aircraft included twenty L–39C advanced trainers and an unknown number of Yak–52 basic trainers. Six Mi–8P/T transport helicopters were available. The air defense system consisted of twenty operational Nudelman 9K31 low-altitude surface-to-air missiles, which in 1994 were controlled by two Russian air defense regiments deployed along the Afghan border.

National Guard

The National Guard was created immediately after independence (August 1991) as an internal security force under the direct command of the president, to replace the Soviet Internal Troops that had provided internal security until that time. Although plans called for a force of 1,000 troops including a ceremonial guard company, a special purpose detachment, and a motorized rifle regiment, reports indicate that only one battalion of the motorized rifle regiment had been formed in 1994. The National Guard forces in Tashkent, thought to number about 700, moved under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Security in 1994.

Border Guards

The Uzbekistan Border Troop Command was established in March 1992, on the basis of the former Soviet Central Asian Border Troops District. In 1994 the Frontier Guard, as it is also called, came under the control of the Ministry of Internal Security. The force, comprising about 1,000 troops in 1996, is

under the command of a deputy chairman of the National Security Committee, which formerly was the Uzbekistan Committee for State Security (KGB). The Frontier Guard works closely with the Russian Border Troops Command under the terms of a 1992 agreement that provides for Russian training of all Uzbekistani border troops and joint control of the Afghan border.

Military Training

Three major Soviet-built training facilities are the foundation of the military training program. The General Weapons Command Academy in Tashkent trains noncommissioned officers (NCOs); the Military Driving Academy in Samarqand is a transport school; and the Chirchiq Tank School trains armor units. In 1993 all three schools were stripped of the Soviet-style honorific names they bore during the Soviet period. Plans call for expansion of the three schools. Bilateral agreements with Russia and Turkey also provide for training of Uzbekistani troops in those countries. For aircraft training, Uzbekistan retains some Aero L–39C Albatross turbofan trainers and piston-engine Yak–52 basic trainers that had been used by the Soviet-era air force reserves.

Internal Security

Uzbekistan defines its most important security concerns not only in terms of the potential for military conflict, but also in terms of domestic threats. Primary among those threats are the destabilizing effects of trafficking in narcotics and weapons into and across Uzbekistani territory. Although the government has recognized the dangers of such activities to society, enforcement often is stymied by corruption in law enforcement agencies.

Narcotics

With an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 hectares of domestic opium poppy grown annually, Uzbekistan's society long has been exposed to the availability of domestic narcotics as well as to the influx of drugs across the border from Afghanistan (often by way of Tajikistan). Since independence, border security with Afghanistan and among the former Soviet Central Asian republics has become more lax, intensifying the external source problem. Uzbekistan is centrally located in its region, and the transportation systems through Tashkent make that

city an attractive hub for narcotics movement from the Central Asian fields to destinations in Western Europe and elsewhere in the CIS.

In 1992 and 1993, shipments of thirteen and fourteen tons of hashish were intercepted in Uzbekistan on their way to the Netherlands. Increasingly in the 1990s, drug sales have been linked to arms sales and the funding of armed groups in neighboring Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Drug-related crime has risen significantly in Uzbekistan during this period. Uzbekistani authorities have identified syndicates from Georgia, Azerbaijan, and other countries active in the Tashkent drug trade.

Domestic drug use has risen sharply in the 1990s as well. In 1994 the Ministry of Health listed 12,000 registered addicts, estimating that the actual number of addicts was likely about 44,000. Opium poppy cultivation is concentrated in Samarqand and along the border with Tajikistan, mainly confined to small plots and raised for domestic consumption. Cannabis, which grows wild, is also increasingly in use. In 1995 government authorities recognized domestic narcotics processing as a problem for the first time when they seized several kilograms of locally made heroin.

To deal with this threat, three agencies—the National Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Customs Committee—share jurisdiction, although in practice their respective roles often are ill-defined. The international community has sought to provide technical and other assistance to Uzbekistan in this matter. In 1995 Uzbekistan established a National Commission on Drug Control to improve coordination and public awareness. A new criminal code includes tougher penalties for drug-related crimes, including a possible death penalty for drug dealers. The government's eradication program, which targeted only small areas of cultivation in the early 1990s, expanded significantly in 1995, and drug-related arrests more than doubled over 1994. In 1992 the United States government, recognizing Central Asia as a potential route for large-scale narcotics transport, began urging all five Central Asian nations to make drug control a priority of national policy. The United States has channeled most of its narcotics aid to Central Asia through the UN Drug Control Program, whose programs for drug-control intelligence centers and canine narcotics detection squads were being adopted in Uzbekistan in 1996. In 1995 Uzbekistan signed a bilateral counternarcotics cooperation agreement with Turkey and acceded

to the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Law Enforcement and Crime

The Uzbekistani police force is estimated to number about 25,000 individuals trained according to Soviet standards. The United States Department of Justice has begun a program to train the force in Western techniques. Interaction also has been expanded with the National Security Service, the chief intelligence agency, which still is mainly staffed by former KGB personnel. About 8,000 paramilitary troops are believed available to the National Security Service.

But these efforts are expected to have little impact on the widespread and deeply entrenched organized crime and corruption throughout Uzbekistan, especially in the law enforcement community itself. According to experts, the government corruption scandals that attracted international attention in the 1980s were symptomatic of a high degree of corruption endemic in the system. In a society of tremendous economic shortage and tight political control from the top down, the government and criminal world become intertwined. Citizens routinely have been required to pay bribes for all common services. More than two-thirds of respondents in a recent survey of Uzbekistan's citizens stated that bribes are absolutely necessary to receive services that nominally are available to all. These bribes often involve enormous sums of money: in 1993 admission to a prestigious institution of higher learning, while technically free, commonly cost nearly 1 million Russian rubles, or more than twice the average annual salary in Uzbekistan in 1993.

Narcotics and weapons trafficking are only an extension of this system, widely viewed as sustained and supported by law enforcement and government officials themselves. In the same survey, a majority of Uzbekistanis stated that bribery occurs routinely in the police department, in the courts, and in the office of the state procurator, the chief prosecutor in the national judicial system. About 25 percent of police surveyed agreed that other officers were involved in the sale of drugs or taking bribes.

The condition of the internal security system is an indicator that progress remains to be made in Uzbekistan's journey out of Soviet-style governance. In the first five years of independence, efforts to establish profitable relations with the rest of

the world (and especially the West) have been hindered by a preoccupation with maintaining the political status quo. However, by the mid-1990s Uzbekistan began to take advantage of its considerable assets. Uzbekistan does not suffer from poor natural resources or hostile neighboring countries; its mineral resources are bountiful, and Russia continues to watch over its former provinces in Central Asia. According to government rhetoric, market reforms and expanding international trade will make the nation prosperous—beginning in 1995, an improved human rights record and more favorable investment conditions supplemented the country's political stability in attracting foreign trade and fostering at least the beginning of democratic institutions.

* * *

For historical background on Uzbekistan, three books are especially useful: Elizabeth E. Bacon's *Central Asians under Russian Rule,* Edward Allworth's *Central Asia: 120 Years of Russian Rule,* and Vasilii V. Bartol'd's *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion.* James Critchlow's *Nationalism in Uzbekistan* provides useful background on the development of nationalism among the elites of Uzbekistan during the Soviet period, and William Fierman's *Soviet Central Asia: The Failed Transformation* covers social issues and the development of Islam. For information on environmental issues in Uzbekistan, Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly, Jr.'s *Ecocide in the USSR* and Philip R. Pryde's *Environmental Resources and Constraints in the Former Soviet Republics* are useful sources.

For a discussion of economic issues, the World Bank country studies and the weekly *Business Eastern Europe,* published by the Economist Intelligence Unit, provide the most current information. Nancy Lubin's *Labour and Nationality in Soviet Central Asia* provides a detailed description of the background to the development of corruption and organized crime. The quarterly journal *Central Asian Monitor* and the daily reports of the Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) provide the most current information regarding events in Central Asia. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204.0	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	1.8 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Central Asia: Demographic Indicators, 1989–93

Indicator	Kazakstan[1]	Kyrgyzstan[2]	Tajikistan[3]	Turkmenistan[4]	Uzbekistan[5]
Live births	316,369	128,352	186,504	124,992	711,000
Birth rate[6]	18.7	28.6	32.5	34.9	33.3
Deaths	156,253	32,163	49,326	27,609	139,900
Death rate[6]	9.2	7.2	8.6	7.7	6.5
Life expectancy, male	63.8	64.6	66.8	61.8	66.0
Life expectancy, female	73.0	72.7	71.7	68.4	72.1
Marriages	146,161	40,818	53,946	34,890	235,900
Marriage rate[6]	8.6	9.1	0.9	9.8	11.0
Divorces	45,516	8,043	5,293	4,940	29,953
Divorce rate[6]	2.7	1.8	0.9	1.4	1.5

[1] All figures 1993 except life expectancy (1990).
[2] All figures 1992 except life expectancy (1991).
[3] All figures 1993 except life expectancy (1989).
[4] All figures 1989.
[5] All figures 1992 except life expectancy (1989).
[6] Per 1,000 population.

Source: Based on information from United Nations, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, *Demographic Yearbook 1994*, New York, 1996, 140–43.

Table 3. Central Asia: Population Distribution, 1989–92[1] (in thousands)

Population Group	Kazakstan[2]	Kyrgyzstan[3]	Tajikistan[4]	Turkmenistan[4]	Uzbekistan[4]
Urban male	4,577	800	813	783	3,937
Urban female	5,029	881	842	808	4,104
Urban total	9,606	1,681	1,655	1,591	8,041
Urban percentage	57.6	37.9	32.5	43.9	40.6
Rural male	3,539	1,383	1,717	952	5,847
Rural female	3,576	1,388	1,720	980	5,922
Rural total	7,115	2,771	3,437	1,932	11,769
Total male	8,116	2,183	2,530	1,735	9,784
Total female	8,605	2,269	2,562	1,788	10,026
14 and younger	5,248	1,673	2,187	n.a.[5]	8,083
15 to 39	6,851	1,794	1,996	1,453	8,029
50 to 64	3,623	756	717	510	2,894
65 and older	999	228	192	132	804

[1] Figures do not add to totals because of rounding and because of small numbers of unidentified age in census.
[2] 1991 figures.
[3] 1992 figures.
[4] 1989 figures.
[5] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from United Nations, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, *Demographic Yearbook 1994*, New York, 1996, 240–45.

Table 4. Central Asia: Ethnic Composition, Selected Years, 1989–94
(in percentages)

Country and Ethnic Group	1989	1991	1993	1994
Kazakstan				
Kazak	39.7	41.9	43.2	44.3
Russian	37.8	37.0	36.5	35.8
Ukrainian	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.1
German	5.8	4.7	4.1	3.6
Uzbek	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.2
Tatar	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Kyrgyzstan				
Kyrgyz	52.4	n.a.[1]	56.5	n.a.
Russian	21.5	n.a.	18.8	n.a.
Uzbek	12.9	n.a.	12.9	n.a.
Ukrainian	2.5	n.a.	2.1	n.a.
German	2.4	n.a.	1.0	n.a.
Tajikistan				
Tajik	62.3	63.8	n.a.	n.a.
Uzbek	23.5	24.0	n.a.	n.a.
Russian	7.6	6.5	n.a.	n.a.
Tatar	1.4	1.4	n.a.	n.a.
Turkmenistan				
Turkmen	72.0	n.a.	73.3	n.a.
Russian	9.8	n.a.	9.5	n.a.
Uzbek	9.0	n.a.	9.0	n.a.
Kazak	2.0	n.a.	2.5	n.a.
Uzbekistan				
Uzbek	71.4	73.0	n.a.	n.a.
Russian	8.3	7.7	n.a.	n.a.
Tajik	4.7	4.8	n.a.	n.a.
Kazak	4.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Tatar	2.4	2.3	n.a.	n.a.

[1] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1994*, 2, London, 1994, 1679; *The Europa World Year Book 1995*, 2, London, 1995, 1679, 1735, 1823, 2950, 3070, 3363; United States, Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook 1994*, Washington, 1994, 210, 222, 385, 403, 420; and *1995 Britannica Book of the Year*, Chicago, 1995, 726, 746.

Table 5. Central Asia: Incidence of Selected Diseases and Mortality, 1989–91

	Kazakstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Viral hepatitis[1]	465.6	710.8	918.3	735.1	1,074.5
Cancer[2]	289.9	219.0	163.1	203.0	169.2
Tuberculosis[2]	65.8	53.3	44.4	63.6	46.1
Maternal mortality[3]	53.1	42.7	38.9	55.2	42.8
Infant mortality[4]	27.1	29.6	40.0	46.6	35.8

[1] Per 100,000 population in 1989.
[2] Per 100,000 population in 1990.
[3] Deaths per 100,000 live births in 1991.
[4] Deaths per 1,000 live births in 1989.

Source: Based on information from Christopher M. Davis, "Health Care Crisis: The Former Soviet Union," *RFE/RL Research Report* [Munich], 2, No. 40, October 8, 1993, 36.

Table 6. Central Asia: Percentage Change in Major Economic Indicators, 1992–93 and 1993–94

	GDP[1]		Industrial Output		Agricultural Output	
Country	1992–93	1993–94	1992–93	1993–94	1992–93	1993–94
Kazakstan	–12	–26	–17	–28	–3	–23
Kyrgyzstan	–13	–25	–24	–25	–8	–17
Tajikistan	–21	–12	–20	–31	–4	–26
Turkmenistan	8	–24	6	–24	9	–2
Uzbekistan	–3	–4	–4	1	0	13

[1] GDP—gross domestic product.

Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, *Handbook of International Economic Statistics 1995*, Washington, 1995, 52.

Table 7. Kazakstan: Production of Principal Agricultural Crops, 1992–94
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1992	1993	1994
Wheat	18,285	11,585	9,052
Barley	8,511	7,149	5,497
Potatoes	2,570	2,295	1,950
Oats	727	802	822
Tomatoes	380	320	300
Rice	467	403	283
Rye	524	835	264
Watermelons	250	202	250
Corn	370	355	233
Sugar beets	1,276	925	169
Millet	447	233	130

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 1811.

Table 8. Kazakstan: Production of Principal Industrial Products, 1991–93
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

Product	1991	1992	1993
Coke	3,711	3,404	3,300
Cotton yarn	40	37	39
Crude steel	6,754	6,337	n.a.[1]
Electric power (in millions of kilowatt-hours)	87,379	86,128	79,174
Fabric (in thousands of square meters)	325,461	248,708	n.a.
Footwear (in thousands of pairs)	36,464	35,410	n.a.
Margarine	71	48	n.a.
Pig iron	5,226	4,952	4,666
Rubber tires (in thousands)	2,633	3,029	2,899
Sulfuric acid	3,151	2,815	2,349

[1] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 1811.

Table 9. Kazakstan: Structure of Employment, 1990–92 (in thousands of workers)

Sector	1990	1991	1992
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	1,686	1,715	1,762
Mining and quarrying	235	251	257
Manufacturing	1,247	1,218	1,160
Construction	833	690	681
Trade, restaurants, and hotels	470	461	437
Transport and communications	704	700	665
Community, social, and personal services	1,867	1,901	1,906
Utilities	66	73	83
Other activities	690	736	662
TOTAL	7,798	7,745	7,613

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book, 1995*, 2, London, 1995, 1736.

Table 10. Central Asia: Cost of Living, 1990–93

Country and Category	1990	1991	1992	1993
Kazakstan[1]				
Food	n.a.[2]	4.7	100	2,297
Clothing	n.a.	4.7	100	1,606
Rent	n.a.	n.a.	100	16,258
Average for all items	n.a.	3.3	100	2,265
Kyrgyzstan (all items)[3]	100	185.0	954.0	n.a.
Tajikistan[4]				
Food	101.8	194.4	1,450.5	n.a.
Alcoholic beverages	100.6	163.4	1,152.1	n.a.
Average for all items	104.0	193.0	1,153.9	n.a.
Turkmenistan (all items)[4]	104.2	202.5	592.9	n.a.
Uzbekistan (all items)[3]	100	205.0	627.7	951.1

[1] Base year 1992=100.
[2] n.a.—not available.
[3] Base year 1990=100.
[4] Base year 1989=100.

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1995*, 2, London, 1995, 1737, 1825, 2952, 3071, 3364.

Table 11. Kazakstan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Imports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.1	0.1	0.0
Azerbaijan	1.1	0.6	0.8
Belarus	4.6	3.0	1.9
Estonia	0.1	0.3	0.0
Georgia	0.3	0.4	0.1
Kyrgyzstan	3.2	1.3	0.9
Latvia	0.1	0.5	0.2
Lithuania	0.3	0.7	0.1
Moldova	0.2	0.8	0.1
Russia	72.4	70.9	89.3
Tajikistan	0.9	0.5	0.2
Turkmenistan	2.5	4.7	0.1
Ukraine	10.5	7.3	3.6
Uzbekistan	3.7	9.0	2.6
Exports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.1	0.0	0.0
Azerbaijan	1.7	3.2	2.0
Belarus	2.7	5.0	2.6
Estonia	0.1	0.0	0.1
Georgia	0.1	0.2	0.0
Kyrgyzstan	2.5	2.3	2.2
Latvia	0.3	0.2	1.2
Lithuania	0.6	0.5	1.3
Moldova	0.3	0.4	0.1
Russia	71.0	69.7	78.7
Tajikistan	1.2	1.4	0.6
Turkmenistan	3.3	2.1	0.7
Ukraine	9.7	8.1	5.2
Uzbekistan	6.5	6.9	5.3
Imports			
Other countries[2]			
Austria	30	21	16
China	213	80	46
Czech Republic[3]	4	48	n.a.[4]
Finland	25	5	4
France	7	9	21
Germany	19	76	125
Hungary	27	23	14

Table 11. (Continued) Kazakstan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Italy	30	21	37
Switzerland	15	18	40
Turkey	5	15	17
United Kingdom	23	19	17
United States	6	38	42
Exports			
Other Countries[2]			
Australia	835	940	809
Austria	1	21	30
Belgium	11	13	16
Bulgaria	18	22	9
China	237	172	85
Czech Republic[3]	80	19	14
Finland	43	9	1
France	19	7	5
Germany	123	131	65
Hungary	21	37	12
Italy	40	84	24
Japan	49	37	31
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	18	22	3
Korea, Republic of	12	46	22
Netherlands	52	49	42
Poland	49	37	13
Slovakia[3]	80	30	11
Sweden	150	91	5
Switzerland	104	175	345
Turkey	16	56	40
United Kingdom	26	97	87
United States	101	145	121

[1] Percentage of total trade with former Soviet republics.
[2] In millions of United States dollars.
[3] 1992 amounts for Czechoslovakia; 1993 and 1994 amounts divided between Czech Republic and Slovakia.
[4] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from World Bank, *Statistical Handbook 1995: States of the Former USSR*, Washington, 1995, 152–54.

Table 12. Central Asia: Military Budgets and Personnel, 1992–95
(budgets in millions of United States dollars)

Country	1992	1993	1994	1995
Kazakstan				
Budget	1,600	707	450	297
Personnel	63,000[1]	44,000	40,000	40,000
Kyrgyzstan				
Budget	47	51	57	13
Personnel	8,000[1]	12,000	12,000	12,000
Tajikistan				
Budget	107	110	115	67
Personnel	6,000[1]	3,000	3,000	3,000
Turkmenistan				
Budget	114	143	153	61
Personnel	34,000[1]	28,000[1]	28,000[1]	11,000[1]
Uzbekistan				
Budget	420	390	375	315
Personnel	15,000[1]	40,000	39,000	25,000

[1] Under joint control with Russian Federation.

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance, 1993–1994*, London, 1993, 140, 144–45; *The Military Balance, 1994–1995*, London, 1994, 156–57, 162–63; *The Military Balance, 1995–1996*, London, 1995, 160–61, 165–67; and *The Worldwide Directory of Defense Authorities 1996*, 2, Bethesda, 1996.

Table 13. Kyrgyzstan: Production of Principal Agricultural Crops, 1992–94
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1992	1993	1994
Wheat	634	863	611
Barley	582	539	300
Potatoes	362	291	288
Tomatoes	201	150	160
Corn	281	184	120
Sugar beets	135	207	110
Apples	75	69	65
Tobacco, leaf	56	60	58
Cotton seed	34	38	40
Cabbage	61	32	35
Grapes	31	30	28

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 1900.

Table 14. Kyrgyzstan: Production of Principal Industrial Products, 1991–94

Product	1991	1992	1993	1994
Carpets (in thousands of square meters)	1,661	1,701	1,609	1,083
Cement (in thousands of tons)	1,320	1,095	672	426
Electric power (in millions of kilowatt-hours)	14,170	11,890	11,200	12,900
Fabric (in thousands of square meters)	142,778	123,781	89,138	62,144
Footwear (in thousands of pairs)	9,504	5,343	3,528	1,631
Trucks	23,600	14,800	5,000	200
Washing machines	209,400	94,000	76,800	17,100

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1995*, 2, London, 1995, 1824; and *The Europa World Yearbook 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 1900.

Table 15. Kyrgyzstan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Imports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.1	0.1	0.0
Azerbaijan	0.5	0.6	0.3
Belarus	1.5	0.9	1.2
Estonia	0.0	n.a.[2]	n.a.
Georgia	0.4	0.2	0.1
Kazakstan	23.3	28.9	28.0
Latvia	0.2	n.a.	n.a.
Lithuania	0.3	n.a.	n.a.
Moldova	0.5	0.1	0.0
Russia	49.0	47.1	33.4
Tajikistan	0.7	0.4	0.5
Turkmenistan	6.1	2.1	4.8
Ukraine	8.1	2.0	1.4
Uzbekistan	9.1	17.3	30.2
Exports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.2	0.0	0.0
Azerbaijan	0.9	1.4	0.7
Belarus	3.0	2.0	1.7
Estonia	0.2	n.a.	n.a.
Georgia	0.4	0.1	0.1
Kazakstan	22.4	29.0	42.9
Latvia	0.3	n.a.	n.a.
Lithuania	1.5	n.a.	n.a.
Moldova	0.6	0.4	0.2
Russia	39.1	45.8	26.0
Tajikistan	1.4	2.5	1.4
Turkmenistan	2.4	3.5	3.4
Ukraine	17.3	5.7	4.0
Uzbekistan	10.4	9.6	19.6
Imports			
Other countries[3]			
Belgium	n.a.	4.8	n.a.
China	16.3	18.6	11.0
Czech Republic[4]	3.3	5.4	0.0
France	6.3	3.0	1.8
Germany	n.a.	3.0	6.8
Hungary	3.7	n.a.	n.a.
Italy	1.8	0.7	0.9

Table 15. (Continued) Kyrgyzstan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Japan	0.2	0.1	2.7
Korea, Republic of	0.7	0.2	4.0
Netherlands	n.a.	0.1	1.8
Poland	0.2	8.8	15.0
Slovakia[4]	3.3	2.7	1.0
Sweden	0.0	0.1	2.6
Switzerland	n.a.	0.3	2.5
Turkey	3.4	4.5	2.0
Exports			
Other countries[3]			
Austria	1.0	3.1	0.2
China	28.0	59.1	56.1
France	6.8	0.0	2.2
Italy	0.5	0.4	1.8
Japan	2.7	0.0	0.0
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	3.4	0.2	0.6
Poland	0.3	2.6	3.9
Sweden	1.5	1.1	n.a.
Turkey	1.8	1.1	2.4
United Kingdom	11.6	30.0	29.5

[1] Percentage of total trade with former Soviet republics.
[2] n.a.—not available.
[3] In millions of United States dollars.
[4] 1992 amounts for Czechoslovakia; 1993 and 1994 amounts divided between Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Source: Based on information from World Bank, *Statistical Handbook 1995: States of the Former USSR*, Washington, 1995, 288-90.

Table 16. Tajikistan: Production of Principal Agricultural Crops, 1992–94
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1992	1993	1994
Vegetables	679	552	490
Cottonseed	415	382	401
Wheat	170	175	165
Fruits and berries	181	135	140
Cotton lint	126	150	135
Watermelons	136	107	105
Grapes	100	88	85
Barley	42	32	34
Corn	32	34	23

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 3077.

Table 17. Tajikistan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Imports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.2	0.0	0.1
Azerbaijan	1.1	0.5	0.1
Belarus	2.8	3.4	0.5
Estonia	0.3	0.1	0.3
Georgia	0.2	0.2	0.2
Kazakstan	12.2	32.9	13.2
Kyrgyzstan	2.0	1.1	0.4
Latvia	0.6	0.5	0.4
Lithuania	0.7	2.2	5.5
Moldova	0.3	0.2	0.0
Russia	46.7	42.1	24.4
Turkmenistan	14.5	13.1	15.9
Ukraine	7.3	2.2	5.5
Uzbekistan	11.0	32.9	33.5
Exports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.4	0.0	0.0

Table 17. (Continued) Tajikistan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Azerbaijan	3.9	0.9	0.1
Belarus	4.1	5.6	2.8
Estonia	0.5	0.1	0.5
Georgia	0.1	0.0	0.0
Kazakstan	14.7	13.7	9.2
Kyrgyzstan	2.3	3.5	1.8
Latvia	0.8	6.1	3.1
Lithuania	0.2	3.8	12.4
Moldova	0.4	2.8	1.3
Russia	47.5	52.6	42.0
Turkmenistan	4.3	2.9	1.6
Ukraine	11.7	4.2	4.6
Uzbekistan	8.9	17.0	20.6
Imports			
Other countries[2]			
Austria	n.a.[3]	13	10
Belgium	n.a.	28	23
France	n.a.	43	2
Italy	n.a.	11	1
Netherlands	n.a.	165	16
Sweden	n.a.	34	2
Switzerland	n.a.	4	98
Turkey	n.a.	5	17
United Kingdom	n.a.	6	68
United States	n.a.	33	32
Exports			
Other countries[2]			
Austria	n.a.	12	17
Belgium	n.a.	19	30
Finland	n.a.	10	18
Germany	n.a.	1	13
Japan	n.a.	22	11
Netherlands	n.a.	143	148
Sweden	n.a.	19	1
Switzerland	n.a.	1	45
United Kingdom	n.a.	2	30
United States	n.a.	24	27

[1] Percentage of total trade with former Soviet republics.
[2] In millions of United States dollars.
[3] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from World Bank, *Statistical Handbook 1995: States of the Former USSR*, Washington, 1995, 471–73.

Table 18. Turkmenistan: Production of Principal Agricultural Crops, 1992–94
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1992	1993	1994
Wheat	368	502	1,063
Cottonseed	822	721	830
Cotton lint	390	402	403
Corn	147	202	252
Melons and squash	180	248	250
Tomatoes	133	150	200
Rice	64	88	149
Grapes	91	79	147
Barley	124	197	108
Onions	71	98	100

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 3201.

Table 19. Turkmenistan: Production of Principal Industrial Products, 1990–92
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

Product	1990	1991	1992
Carpets and rugs (in thousands of square meters)	1,288	1,384	1,070
Cement	1,085	904	1,051
Cotton yarn	416	420	437
Diesel oil	1,573	2,236	1,942
Electric power (in millions of kilowatt-hours)	16,637	14,915	13,136
Gasoline	773	814	1,031
Heavy fuel oil	1,218	1,991	1,667
Kerosene	110	98	327
Vegetable oil	105	104	85

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1995*, 2, London, 1995, 3071.

Table 20. Turkmenistan: Trade with Republics of the Former Soviet Union, 1990–92
(in percentages of total trade with former Soviet republics)

	1990	1991	1992
Imports			
Armenia	n.a.[1]	n.a.	0.4
Azerbaijan	n.a.	n.a.	8.5
Belarus	3.6	3.6	4.1
Estonia	2.9	2.9	n.a.
Georgia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Kazakstan	4.0	4.0	11.8
Kyrgyzstan	n.a.	n.a.	1.4
Latvia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lithuania	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Moldova	n.a.	n.a.	0.0
Russia	41.8	41.8	35.1
Tajikistan	n.a.	n.a.	4.3
Ukraine	15.6	15.6	4.6
Uzbekistan	5.7	5.7	8.1
Exports			
Armenia	n.a.	2.3	1.6
Azerbaijan	n.a.	3.9	4.3
Belarus	2.1	1.9	0.6
Estonia	2.3	2.4	0.5
Georgia	n.a.	6.7	7.5
Kazakstan	2.6	8.1	12.8
Kyrgyzstan	n.a.	3.1	0.5
Latvia	n.a.	n.a.	0.7
Lithuania	n.a.	n.a.	0.2
Moldova	n.a.	5.8	1.0
Russia	49.8	21.0	10.0
Tajikistan	n.a.	6.5	1.2
Ukraine	7.4	17.5	49.4
Uzbekistan	27.8	17.0	9.7

[1] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from World Bank, *Statistical Handbook 1995: States of the Former USSR*, Washington, 1995, 503.

Table 21. Uzbekistan: Production of Principal Agricultural Crops, 1992–94
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1992	1993	1994
Vegetables[1]	4,244	3,500	3,737
Cottonseed	2,452	2,537	2,380
Wheat	964	876	1,200
Potatoes	365	463	562
Fruit	701	520	555
Rice	539	545	544
Grapes	439	480	450
Barley	361	292	340
Corn	367	404	200

[1] Includes melons and squash.

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 3501.

Table 22. Uzbekistan: Production of Principal Industrial Products, 1991–93
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

Product	1991	1992	1993
Cement	6,191	5,935	5,277
Cotton fabric	392	482	370
Electric power (in millions of kilowatt-hours)	54,164	50,911	49,272
Footwear (in thousands of pairs)	45,400	39,200	39,500
Insecticides	35	28	32
Mineral fertilizers	1,660	1,361	1,273
Paper	20	16	13
Plastics	142	115	53
Refrigerators and freezers (in thousands of units)	212	84	77
Tractors (in thousands of units)	21	17	8

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book 1996*, 2, London, 1996, 3501.

Table 23. Uzbekistan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Imports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.1	0.2	0.1
Azerbaijan	0.4	0.0	0.0
Belarus	5.8	2.1	0.7
Estonia	0.1	0.1	0.0
Georgia	0.3	0.1	0.0
Kazakstan	12.2	17.2	11.0
Kyrgyzstan	3.4	1.5	1.6
Latvia	0.2	0.5	0.4
Lithuania	0.5	0.3	1.1
Moldova	0.3	0.1	0.1
Russia	52.9	58.9	55.0
Tajikistan	33.2	1.3	18.9
Turkmenistan	7.0	11.3	6.0
Ukraine	13.6	6.5	5.1
Exports			
Former Soviet Union[1]			
Armenia	0.2	0.2	0.1
Azerbaijan	0.9	0.0	0.0
Belarus	3.5	3.1	1.9
Estonia	0.9	0.1	0.0
Georgia	0.3	0.1	0.0
Kazakstan	11.2	16.9	17.3
Kyrgyzstan	3.7	2.8	3.7
Latvia	0.6	0.1	0.4
Lithuania	1.4	0.8	0.7
Moldova	2.0	0.2	0.1
Russia	53.1	55.5	42.8
Tajikistan	3.0	6.0	19.0
Turkmenistan	5.3	6.6	5.0
Imports			
Other countries[2]			
Australia	5	19	24
Austria	15	11	27
Belgium	31	13	15
China	67	35	88
Former Czechoslovakia[3]	17	5	16
France	5	14	11
Germany	28	56	164
Hungary	12	21	61

Table 23. (Continued) Uzbekistan: Foreign Trade with Selected Countries, 1992–94

	1992	1993	1994
Italy	8	27	24
Korea, Republic of	1	9	26
Netherlands	2	102	52
Poland	15	44	17
Sweden	7	20	12
Switzerland	196	226	321
Turkey	35	229	68
United Kingdom	14	10	18
United States	21	32	95
Exports			
Other countries[2]			
Australia	4	16	n.a.[4]
Austria	29	12	42
Belgium	112	46	8
China	40	137	77
France	39	12	1
Germany	94	20	32
Hungary	52	30	2
Italy	11	17	26
Korea, Republic of	3	55	41
Netherlands	20	38	153
Switzerland	16	72	224
Turkey	77	41	42
United Kingdom	117	134	175
United States	38	44	21

[1] Percentage of total trade with former Soviet republics.
[2] In millions of United States dollars.
[3] For 1993 and 1994, figures of Czech Republic and Slovakia are combined.
[4] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from World Bank, *Statistical Handbook 1995: States of the Former USSR, Washington*, 1995, 578–80.

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Glossary

Bolshevik Revolution—Coup organized by Vladimir I. Lenin and carried out by the Bolshevik radical group of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party to overthrow the Provisional Government of Russia in November 1917. Also known as the October Revolution.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)—Official designation of the former republics of the Soviet Union that remained loosely federated in economic and security matters after the Soviet Union disbanded as a unified state in 1991. Members in 1996 were Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty—An agreement signed in 1990 by members of the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO—*q.v.*) to establish parity in conventional weapons between the two organizations from the Atlantic to the Urals. Included a strict system of inspections and information exchange. In 1995 Russia requested exemptions for forces stationed in the Caucasus region, and substantial changes were negotiated by the thirty signatory nations in 1997.

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)—Established in 1985, an economic union of Islamic countries to promote regional cooperation in trade, transportation, communications, culture, and overall economic development. Members in 1996 were Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

glasnost—Russian term, literally meaning "public voicing." Applied in the Soviet Union beginning in 1987 to official permission for public discussion of issues and public access to information, initially intended as a means for the regime of Mikhail S. Gorbachev to publicize the need for political and economic reform.

gross domestic product (GDP)—The total value of goods and services produced exclusively within a nation's domestic economy, in contrast to the gross national product (GNP—*q.v.*). Normally computed over one-year periods.

gross national product (GNP)—The total value of goods and services produced within a country's borders and the income received from abroad by residents, minus payments remitted abroad by nonresidents. Normally computed over one-year periods.

hard currency—National currencies that are freely convertible and traded on international currency markets.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established with the World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations and responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. Its main function is to provide loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently have conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

Iranian—Linguistically, a subgroup of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European languages, which in modern times includes Persian (*q.v.*)—the most widely used—Pushtu, Kurdish (*q.v.*) dialects, and Ossetic. In the Middle Iranian stage of the group's development (third century B.C. to tenth century A.D.), the chief languages were Parthian, Pahlavi (middle Persian), and Soghdian.

Kurdish—Term referring to a mainly Muslim people speaking an Indo-European language similar to Persian. Kurds constitute significant minorities in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, with smaller groups in Armenia and Syria. Despite international proposals in response to minority persecution, never united in a single state.

manat—Beginning in 1993, national currency of Turkmenistan. Inflation rapid in 1994 and 1995. In January 1996, official rate 200 per US$1.

Manichaeism—A dualistic religious movement founded in Persia, third century A.D., incorporating elements of Christianity and Iranian and Indian religions.

net material product (NMP)—In countries having centrally planned economies, the official measure of the value of goods and services produced within the country. Roughly equivalent to the gross national product (*q.v.*), NMP is based on constant prices and does not account for depreciation.

New Economic Policy (Novaya ekonomicheskaya politika—

NEP)—Instituted in 1921 by Vladimir I. Lenin, program allowing peasants in the Soviet Union to sell produce on an open market and small enterprises to be privately owned and operated. Officially ended in 1929 with enforcement of national central planning of all economic activities.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—During the post-war period until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the primary collective defense agreement of the Western powers against the military presence of the Warsaw Pact nations in Europe. Founded in 1949. Its military and administrative structure remained intact after 1991, but early in 1994 the Partnership for Peace offered partial membership to all former Warsaw Pact nations and former republics of the Soviet Union.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)—Beginning in 1995, the name of the former Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Established in 1972 as an international forum for negotiation, the organization consisted of fifty-three member nations in 1996, including all European countries. The Charter of Paris (1990) changed the CSCE from an ad hoc forum to an organization with permanent institutions. In 1992 the CSCE took on new roles in conflict mediation, including crises in the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus region, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Beginning in 1994, Russia advocated CSCE/OSCE as the chief European peacekeeping agency in preference to possible NATO expansion.

perestroika—Russian term meaning "restructuring." Applied in the late 1980s to an official Soviet program of revitalization of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the economy, and the society by adjusting economic, social, and political mechanisms in the central planning system. Identified with the tenure of Mikhail S. Gorbachev as leader of the Soviet Union.

Persian—As a language, a member of the Iranian subgroup in the Indo-European language family. The official language of modern Iran and spoken widely in Afghanistan. Middle Persian (Pahlavi) was used between the third century B.C. and the ninth century A.D. and was the official language of the Sassanid Empire that ruled parts of Central Asia from the third century to the sixth century A.D. Modern Persian is called Farsi by native speakers.

ruble—Currency of the Soviet Union; then, beginning in 1992, of Russia. In February 1997, the exchange rate was 5,670 rubles to US$1.

ruble zone—Currency exchange arrangement by which former republics of the Soviet Union continued using the ruble as their national currency, forcing dependence on Russian currency valuations and economic developments elsewhere in the Commonwealth of Independent States (*q.v.*). In 1993 all Central Asian republics except Tajikistan established national currencies independent of the ruble.

Shia—The smaller of the two great divisions of Islam, supporting the claims of Ali to leadership of the Muslim community, in opposition to the Sunni (*q.v.*) view of succession to Muslim leadership—the issue causing the central schism within Islam.

som—Beginning in 1993, currency of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. In 1996 average exchange rate of Uzbekistani som was thirty-five to US$1; of Kyrgyzstani som, eleven to US$1.

Sunni—The larger of the two fundamental divisions of Islam, opposed to the Shia (*q.v.*) on the issue of succession to Muslim leadership.

Tajikistani ruble—Beginning in 1995, currency of Tajikistan. In January 1996, exchange rate 284 rubles per US$1.

tenge—Beginning in 1993, currency of Kazakstan. In January 1996, exchange rate sixty-four tenge to US$1.

value-added tax (VAT)—A tax applied to the additional value created at a given stage of production and calculated as a percentage of the difference between the product value at that stage and the cost of all materials and services purchased or introduced as inputs.

World Bank—Informal name for a group of four affiliated international institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); the International Development Association (IDA); the International Finance Corporation (IFC); and the Multilateral Investment Guaranty Agency (MIGA). The four institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital for credit and investment in developing countries; each institution has a specialized agenda for aiding economic growth in target countries. To participate in the World Bank group, member states first must belong to the International Monetary Fund (IMF—*q.v.*).

World Trade Organization (WTO)—Established 1995 as suc-

cessor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), aimed at liberalizing and securing international trade. Formed in the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations, the WTO had 115 member nations in 1996, and fifteen others applied WTO rules to their trade policies. Administered by a general council, trade dispute negotiation panel, and secretariat.

Zoroastrianism—Religion founded in the sixth century B.C. by the Iranian prophet Zoroaster. With monotheistic and dualistic aspects, it influenced subsequently founded religions, including Christianity and Islam. Now practiced most widely by Persian immigrants in India.

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Contributors

Muriel Atkin is professor of history at George Washington University.

Larry V. Clark is professor of Central Eurasian studies at Indiana University.

Glenn E. Curtis is senior research analyst for Central Eurasia and Central Europe in the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress.

Nancy Lubin is president of JNA Associates, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in Central Asian studies.

Martha Brill Olcott is professor of political science at Colgate University and senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Michael Thurman is a Ph.D. candidate in Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University.

David Tyson is a Ph.D. candidate in Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University.

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