

Why Wasn't There Any Post-Election Turmoil in Tajikistan?

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

Global Research, October 17, 2020

Region: [Asia](#)
Theme: [History](#)

Unlike fellow former Soviet Republics Belarus and even neighboring Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan's latest elections didn't result in any turmoil even though one might have expected it to have due to some similarly discernible risk factors, but that wasn't the case (at least not yet) for five primary reasons.

Tajikistan's [latest elections](#) came and went without any turmoil unlike the recent ones in fellow former Soviet Republics Belarus and even neighboring Kyrgyzstan, the first of which is now in the midst of an [ever-intensifying Color Revolution](#) while the latter just experienced a [successful regime change operation](#) which led to the [president's resignation](#). Some observers expected Tajikistan to follow in their footsteps, especially since it has some similarly discernible risk factors such as a long-serving ruler, an impoverished population (even before the onset of [World War C](#)), and a history of internationally criticized election results (to put it mildly). The very fact that this wasn't the case, however (at least not yet), can be attributed to five primary factors:

Lucid Memories Of The Former Civil War Deter Regime Change Scenarios

Tajikistan's former civil war from 1992-1997 was a complex conflict with regional, clan, and religious dimensions. It's [estimated](#) to have killed at least 65,000 people and internally displaced 20% of the population. President Rahmon, who first took office at the beginning of the conflict, still rules the country to this day. Although some members of the population might still be unhappy with him or eventually became fatigued after his nearly three-decade-long rule, [they all remember](#) what a tragedy the civil war was and few want to risk doing anything that could repeat it, such as unleashing a [Color Revolution](#) or returning to anti-state militancy.

Afghanistan's ISIS-K Threat Reminds Everyone Why Stability Is So Important

Even among those "well-intended" members of society who might silently wish for profound political change, they're keenly aware of the ISIS-K terrorist threat in neighboring Afghanistan. In the event that Tajikistan is destabilized because of post-electoral unrest, the world's most notorious terrorist group might be able to more easily exploit events in order to establish a territorial foothold in Central Asia. Lucid memories of the former civil war already act as a powerful regime change deterrent for many, but for the most "passionate" among them who might still clamor for change, then the threat of ISIS-K might deter all but the most radical "activists".

The “Islamic Renaissance Party” Is Banned & Foreign-Linked NGOs Are Regulated

The “Islamic Renaissance Party” (IRP) played a key role supporting the opposition during the civil war and resultantly earned the right to be legalized as the only such Islamist party in the region after the conflict ended. It was once again [banned](#) five years ago and subsequently linked to several [terrorist](#) attacks in the country. Some Westerners argue that banning it radicalizes its members, but one can also argue that the IRP was already becoming a front for radical goals. Tajikistan’s [regulation](#) of foreign-linked NGOs complemented its crackdown on the IRP by reducing external influence over its domestic political processes, thus stabilizing the state.

Tajikistan’s “Strongman” System Keeps Regional & Clan Conflicts Under Control

Objectively speaking, Tajikistan’s contemporary politics are a textbook example of a “strongman” system. President Rahmon has thus far succeeded in keeping regional and clan conflicts under control unlike neighboring Kyrgyzstan which jettisoned its “strongman” model after its Color Revolutions in 2005 and 2010. As can now be seen, so-called “democratic” Kyrgyzstan (as described by its many NGOs’ Western patrons) is much more unstable than “strongman” Tajikistan, which vindicates many of the controversial moves that President Rahmon made during his time in office. To his credit, he’s kept the peace for almost a quarter of a century.

Russian Intelligence Likely Has Greater Freedom To Thwart Hybrid War Threats

Tajikistan is Russia’s first line of defense from Afghan-emanating [Hybrid War](#) threats, both those related to ISIS terrorism and also the “[Weapons of Mass Migration](#)” which might be driven from the Central Asian region to the Eurasian Great Power due to the first-mentioned trigger factor. It’s likely a lot easier for Russian intelligence to thwart these threats by cooperating real closely with its political allies within a “strongman” system compared to a “democratic” one like in Kyrgyzstan. It therefore can’t be ruled out that Russia played a leading role behind the scenes in ensuring that there wasn’t any post-election turmoil in Tajikistan.

*

The five primary factors that were elaborated upon above help explain why Tajikistan didn’t become destabilized after its latest election unlike Belarus and Kyrgyzstan. That said, instability might eventually erupt in the country if the younger generation has little to no memory of the civil war and becomes politically and/or religiously radicalized through the internet. It’s difficult for a faraway observer such as the author to measure those variables, though they mustn’t be discounted in principle since they represent latent threats that could spiral out of control if left unchecked. One should assume that there are domestic and external forces interested in exploiting them, but the speculated role that Russian intelligence plays in securing the country’s political stability should hopefully suffice for ensuring that no such dark scenarios transpire anytime soon.

*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above or below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

This article was originally published on [OneWorld](#).

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Featured image is from OneWorld

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Andrew Korybko](#), Global Research, 2020

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Andrew Korybko](#)

About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca