

ACT Situation Report

Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan – No. 07/2010

II. ACT Assessment in Osh and Jalalabad: Lack of Trust in Kyrgyz Authorities Calls for Stronger Involvement of International Community

Bishkek, July 16 2010

Current Overview

Security

- On July 14, Michael Makfoll, Special Assistant to the President of the USA, informed that the question of deploying an OSCE police mission of 50 people to Kyrgyzstan will be discussed at the OSCE meeting in Kazakhstan on 17-18 July. Makfoll also underlined the need for an international investigation into the recent events in southern Kyrgyzstan.
- On July 14, Human Rights Watch called for International police force and international inquiry in Kyrgyzstan urgently. ACT Alliance is supporting this request with its statement from July 1: “ACT Alliance calls on the international community to lead impartial, independent investigations into the civil conflict in Kyrgyzstan”:
http://www.actalliance.org/resources/alerts_and_situation_reports/ACT%20Alliance%20statement_call%20for%20independent%20conflict%20Investigation_01July2010.doc/view
- On July 6, the acting Kyrgyz Defense Minister Ismail Isakov said, the deployment of an OSCE police mission in the southern part of the country would be ineffective, RFE/RL’s Kyrgyz Service reports. General Isakov told RFF/RL that he cannot imagine how a foreign police force would serve its peacekeeping mission and train Kyrgyz police without knowing the local languages and traditions. He added that “it would be much better instead if Kyrgyzstan received assistance with technical equipment and infrastructure reconstruction”. A number of international human rights organizations have called for the urgent deployment of an OSCE police mission to Osh and Jalalabad.
- Already in June, Roza Otunbaeva, interim President of Kyrgyzstan, had requested international police forces from the OSCE, but deployment has been delayed because of disagreements about the mission’s mandate.

Investigation

- On July 15, according to the news service kg.24, Roza Otunbaeva signed a decree to establish a National Commission to investigate the events in June. The Investigation Commission will be led by Abdygany Erkebaev, academic of the National Academy of Science. Other members include the Deputy Director of the Agency for Self-Governance, the Deputy Secretary of the Security

Council of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of the Interim Government as well as officials from the official security structures and 24 others, including former deputies, rights defenders and journalists. The Commission has the task to submit its findings to Roza Otunbaeva for consideration and to present the results to the public by September 10 2010.

- On July 13, according to the newsservice AKIpress, around 40 relatives of those who died in protest actions on April 6-7 in Bishkek have picketed the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan in Bishkek. The demonstrators demanded from the Interim Government to remove officials who used to hold key posts during Akaev and Bakiev, to resolve their housing problems, to include them into election commissions of various levels. They also demanded from law enforcement agencies to report on those who shot the people on April 7, on snipers and those guilty of casualties.

ACT Alliance Latest Assessment

Refugees and IDPs: Needs and Damages

- Protection: Given the special vulnerability of women and children, they have been sent to a safer place, and the men and elderly women are staying back in the burnt houses or nearby places. This separation is adding more to their trauma and feeling of insecurity.
- Water: Water sources, inside the houses have been completely damaged in the fully or partially burnt houses. Therefore, the families still living in the burnt houses have no private source and rely on the public posts for fetching water.
- In IDP camps, visited by the ACT Alliance assessment team, water is supplied through tanker everyday. UNICEF has provided a water storage facility, which is being used to store the supplied water to be used during the next 24 hours. This camp is accommodating 160 families (at least 800 people), which gets 3,000 litres of water everyday. This quantity is far below the Sphere standard and certainly not sufficient to meet the needs of the people. Consequently, people are following poor hygienic practices. The families have been provided with chlorine tablets to purify the water.
- Sanitation and Hygiene: The IDP camps have no sanitary facilities and that is posing a serious problem for them. IDPs in urban areas do not find proper open space to relieve themselves. This is particularly embarrassing for women. Furthermore, they do not have enough soap for proper hand wash etc.
- Food: People in the IDP camps have largely received food support from their neighbours and relatives. Some food has come as part of humanitarian aid also. Since they lack cooking utensils, therefore cooking is done in large vessels for the entire people. This is not appreciated by the people. They would prefer to cook for their families according to their taste. Since the cooking pots have limited capacity, therefore food is cooked twice, first for men and then for women. Women also find it culturally inappropriate to sit with all the men and eat. Usually they find the food quantity sufficient, but not the quality. They are compelled to eat the same food in breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Nutrition: The lactating mothers and mothers of infants are finding the situation difficult. They are not able to properly breastfeed the children as their own diet has gone down. They have not received baby food from anywhere, and therefore infants have no choice but to be insufficiently breastfed. This is likely to impact their nutritional status in the coming months.
- Non food items: The affected families have lost everything. They escaped only with the cloths they were wearing. The NFI items of humanitarian agencies hardly contained clothing and either they are surviving on the same cloths or wearing the old cloths given to them by their neighbours. The winter will approach soon, and they are worried about it in absence of warm cloths, enough blankets and mattresses etc.
- Shelter: On July 14, UNHCR presented a Shelter Strategy, which also draws on consultations with the Government of Kyrgyzstan State Directorate of Reconstruction (SDRR). No compensation has been declared so far and the affected families hardly have their own means to reconstruct. Due to the lack of information they live in great fear of the approaching winter.
- Psychological support: Psycho-social support has emerged as a key area needing interventions. Almost all those who witnessed the carnage, including small children, are traumatised. Many have

witnessed killing and arson. Some of them saw killing of their own family members with their own eyes. They were relatively better off prior to the conflict. They can now witness their houses, burnt to ashes along with everything they had possessed and then they see them living on the street, and depending upon the humanitarian aid for survival. The high insecure environment and extremely limited mobility has not been helping them to overcome their trauma.

- Children and even adults have been reported having sleepless nights and feeling of unrest all the time. They articulate the need of psychosocial support and counselling. The ACT Alliance team is currently trying to identify competent agencies, which can provide adequate counselling and psychosocial care.

General needs and damages

- By July 15, the number of officially registered dead reached 313. The real number is estimated higher by far.
- Harvest: The farmers, who have cultivated cotton crop, were supposed to harvest during autumn. However, given the complete capital loss and insecure environment, they are not able to visit the fields and apply fertilizers etc. Therefore, even if the situation improved enough for them to go for harvesting, they would not have more than 50% output.
- Similarly those farmers, who cultivated potatoes, are not able to harvest their field. Even if they harvest, they do not have courage to visit the buyers in Osh to sell their output. They have adopted two ways to cope with the situation; Firstly, those farmers who have harvested the crop are waiting for the buyers to visit them at their places and buy potatoes on throwaway price. They are usually selling potatoes for Som 3.5 per kilo and the same potato is being sold by the buyers for Som 10-11 in other cities. Secondly, the farmers decided against harvesting the potatoes. They would wait for the situation to improve, so that they could sell it with better profitability. There is a danger associated with this option. The potatoes start rotting in the field and may seriously harm the fields for a longer term.
- In both the cases, farmers have missed the opportunity to go for the second crop of rice. This is likely to have serious implication on food availability. It is expected that the food would be in short-supply during the coming months, causing escalation of essential food commodities.

Rights violations

- By July 13, according to the commandant's office in Osh city, 92 people were reported missing since the conflict erupted in southern Kyrgyzstan. Of these 92, 44 people were located, including 19 who survived and 25 were dead. The commandant's office will report on progress of search for missing people every Friday.
- Uzbek people report continued harassments not only on the streets in every day life, but also when approaching local authorities, which are predominantly Kyrgyz. They are asked to pay high sums for new documents, which they are not able to pay. Without documents, there is less or no governmental assistance. Many Uzbeks choose not to approach local authorities at all. According to Uzbeks, criminal cases, even murder, which is still happening, are not followed up by Kyrgyz authorities.
- Both sides continue accusing each other for abetting the conflict. The Kyrgyz are equally afraid to enter Uzbek dominated areas. This has been causing serious polarization of the society.
- The trust among the Uzbek population in the Kyrgyz Government deteriorated completely. Uzbeks hope for international intervention which could maintain peace, help establishing impartial governmental structures and lead an impartial investigation into the recent conflict.
- On July 12, between Jalalabad and Suzak, about 400 Uzbek women protested on the street against the so called "cleanings" ("zatschistki"). The demonstration was triggered, when a young man died after being detained and tortured (pulled out finger nails, beaten up etc.). The women complained about the detention and torture of their sons and husbands, which are only released against paying USD 1,000 – 5,000. According to these women, men are hiding at home. They are afraid to go to work. The demonstration, controlled by police and soldiers with a tank, was resolved by Special Security forces, which arrived highly armed and wearing black masks.
- The feeling of being left alone by any authorities is wide spread among Uzbeks. By them, local broadcasting is perceived as biased and unfair. Many do not want to be shown or named by

international media because of rumours that people were called in and beaten up afterwards by Kyrgyz authorities.

- Uzbeks are afraid to walk on the streets after 6 pm. According to them, the curfew is imposed heavily on Uzbeks, not so, however, on Kyrgyz.
- On July 14, Human Rights Watch issued a statement calling the Kyrgyz authorities to take urgent steps to stop the widespread torture and arbitrary detentions of Uzbeks suspected of participation in the violence that erupted in June in southern Kyrgyzstan. These violations undermine the investigation into the events and increase tensions, threatening to further destabilize the situation, Human Rights Watch said.

Government and International Response

- Whereas local press quotes Jantoro Stybaldiev, Director General of the Directorate for Reconstruction of Osh and Jalal-Abad, saying: "Residents of Jalalabad town fully support the construction of multi-storied buildings", the ACT Alliance assessments in the Jalalabad region show a different picture, according to which local people prefer to rebuild their own houses on their own property.
- UNICEF has opened an operating base in Osh. One of the first projects is to facilitate psycho-social support for children and help them to learn to play, draw and read again, without fear. The Ministry of Education and Science has agreed to base 20 such centres at schools. Twenty more locations are being identified in communities and in camps for displaced people in Osh province. UNICEF is playing a major part in equipping these safe spaces by training teachers and psychologists, and helping to set up the rooms, and has already delivered special toys that help a child's development.
- The Interim Government of Kyrgyzstan expressed concerns that closure of the border with Kazakhstan will result in economic recession and eventually economic collapse of the country, which would impact all countries of the region. Restrictions were imposed by Kazakhstan for border crossing of goods since early June. Only fuel, medicines, agricultural and food products were allowed to cross the border in both directions. "The tightened security measures will be lifted and we switch to usual security measures on the border over stabilization of the situation in the neighbouring country," Kazakh Border Service Deputy Director Amangheldy Abylkanov said. According to him, the normal border regime will come into force at all crossing points until July 20.
- President Roza Otunbaeva signed the decree on a National Commission for State Language at the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, reported the press service of the Interim Government on 13 July. The given decree is aimed to improve organisation of functioning of the government body responsible for development and strengthening of the Kyrgyz language.

ACT Alliance Response

Coordination

The ACT Alliance is participating in coordination meetings with UN agencies and INGOs in Osh and Bishkek.

While the meetings in Osh are focusing on the technical side of aid coordination, the meetings in Bishkek are concentrating on policy coordination, in particular in Humanitarian Country Team meetings. ACT Alliance early advocacy efforts for the procurement of local agricultural products was successful. The WFP is discussing practicalities with ACT Alliance Local Market Development partners in Osh.

In general, participation of local NGOs in coordination meetings remains very low. UNHCR has noticed absence of local organisations in cluster meetings and therefore requested all the international organisations to encourage local participation.

Second Needs Assessment Mission

A second ACT Alliance assessment team arrived in Osh on July 11. The Assessment report will be published soon. Based on the findings of this second assessment, the Preliminary ACT Appeal will be revised considerably by July 23.

ACT Appeal

On June 25, the USD 1,001,134 ACT Preliminary Appeal for Kyrgyzstan was issued. The appeal is being requested by DCA on behalf of the ACT Central Asia Forum (DCA, Christian Aid, and ICCO – Kerk in Actie). Four local partners are also implementing. Pledges to the ACT Appeal amount to about **USD 812,271** to date:

ACT Preliminary Appeal: <http://www.actalliance.org/resources/appeals/KGZ101Prel.pdf>

ACT Alliance is also working to approach UNICEF for funding. New ECHO funding might be accessible for the ACT Alliance following an ad-hoc decision by ECHO within the next two weeks.

ACT Emergency Personnel Deployment

International humanitarian staff members deployed to support the ACT Central Asia Forum team in Bishkek/Osh are:

- Sudhanshu S. Singh, arrived on July 1, and will stay for approximately for 6 months.
- Martin Schuster (seconded by APRODEV) until July 17.

ACT Advocacy Statement and News Releases

Recent article on ACT Alliance work in Kyrgyzstan by ACT member DanChurchAid:
http://www.noedhjaelp.dk/her_arbejder_vi/centralasien/kirgistan/laes_mere/dybe_saar_i_jalalabad

For further information see the ACT website homepage, www.actalliance.org; and
<http://www.actalliance.org/stories/kyrgyzstan-half-million-people-needing-assistance>.

Next ACT Situation Report

The next report will be issued on or around July 20 2010 from Bishkek/Osh.

For further information

ACT members and other international supporters are encouraged to contact the ACT Secretariat for information in the first instance to minimize overloading of staff in-region focused on emergency response:

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Otherwise, key contacts for the ACT Central Asia Forum based in the joint DCA/ICCO and Kerk in Actie office in Bishkek and in Osh are:

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Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jessie Kgoroadira, ACT Finance Officer (jkg@actalliance.org).

Thank you for your attention.