

# Color Revolutions in the Central Asia and the US Position

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## Abstract

The term of “Color revolution” introduced into the politological lexica in the recent years is seems to be reached borders of Central Asia. Revolutions, que dittos (upset) and change of power as it is described by officials of political science and international relations is a result of internal peculiarities of a process of “pursuing the modernization” that reached Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991.

Kyrgyz republic became “weak chain” because it has gone so far in comparison with others in this pursuing. Will it remain as an example of democracy to other countries of the region or will the further situation change for the worse depend on new powers intentions toward establishment?

As the specialists consider the spring of the 2005 will become new turning point of modern political history of the Central Asia.

Political elite of the Central Asia cannot lose the opportunity to make some notes of Kyrgyz events. So, Kazakhstan, which has set to itself high standards in economy, now faces to objective necessity of increase of standards of political development. The American or European intervention can only accelerate this process, but the need for

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political updating is objective. Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the states where the Islamic factor plays huge role, in opinion of the central-Asian experts, should avoid the protest of Islamists against a secular mode. Therefore the governments of the Central Asia are obliged to emphasize not on strengthening of the police beginnings, but on giving to authoritarianism more modernized character. Besides it is necessary to win fight for youth, making it main conductor of secular modernization. Special case, Saparmurat Niyazov's Turkmen political regime which does not leave any chances for national revolution. The USA has economic and strategic interests in the region. That is why American analytics consider that Washington have to balance this factor and desire of people to achieve democracy. In August of 2002 the USA have declared qualitative change of the policy in relation to Uzbekistan and Kirgiziya. Both republics have appeared in the center of attention of "democratic policy" of the USA.

**Keywords:** Color Revolution, Central Asia, U.S.A..

## Color Revolutions in the Central Asia and the US Position

“Color revolution,” the term including in political science lexicon last years, has similar reached the Central Asia. Revolutions, state que dato or change of authority as they are characterized by political scientists and foreign affairs specialists, result of internal features of process of “catching up modernization,” overtaken Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan after disintegration of the USSR in 1991.

Kyrgyzstan became “a weak part” as has gone in this pursuit most further. Whether this country will determine a level of democratic character for the countries of region or there will be a further deterioration of a situation depends on aspiration of new power to creation. As experts consider, the spring of 2005 becomes a new boundary in the newest political history of the Central Asia.

It is necessary to notice that the Republic Kyrgyzstan under the direction of President A. Akaev had reputation of most democratic among the Central Asian republics. The recognition of Russian as an official language, the tolerant attitude to the Uzbek community, all this allowed the Kyrgyz elite to position itself as supporters of democracy. As against Tajikistan and Uzbekistan Kyrgyzstan has stood aside of process of “Islamic revival.” The post-soviet Kyrgyzstan has gone on a way of social and economic modernization, introduction of market institutes, creation of conditions for democratic society development, but such lacks as a nepotism, despotism, corruption were kept. It was an authoritative secular mode, a special variant of democracy at which the strong role of personal authority of the country, armies and special services are kept.

Central Asia political elites should make conclusions of the Kyrgyz events for themselves. So, Kazakhstan, which has set to itself high standards in economy, now faces objective necessity to increase standards of political development. The American or European influence can speed up only this process, but the requirement for political updating is objective.

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the states where the Islamic factor plays a huge role, by the opinion of Central Asian experts, should avoid the protest of Islamite's against a secular mode. Therefore the Central Asian governments are obliged to emphasize not strengthening of the police methods, but on giving to authoritarianism more modern character. Besides it is necessary to win fight for youth, having made it's the main conductor of secular modernization.

Special issue, Saparmurat Niyazov's Turkmen political regime, does not leave any chances for national revolution. Thus, "color revolutions" in the Central Asia result not of external combinations and geopolitical games. They are generated by internal features of "catching up modernization" process, overtaken Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan after disintegration of the USSR in 1991.

If to speak about the reasons "color revolutions," and especially about a situation in Republic Kyrgyzstan the analysis of internal and external factors leads to a conclusion that this revolutions have been predetermined. First, the internal factor - the reason of revolutionary explosions became the loss of trust fro the side of population to authorities in the countries, absence of a real democracy and a low living standards. However results of revolutionary explosions can appear inconsistent as it was in Georgia or in Ukraine.

Second, the post-soviet elites in the majority have been poorly prepared for transformation. Therefore steps to modernization and democratization, in the majority of these countries have turned back weakness of power and social

excitements.

Thirdly, becoming of the independent Central Asian states and their entrance in to the world community occurs in conditions of globalization, which is associated with the democratization concept. The impossibility to build the country in to the global political system, if their elite have no other strategy, except the preservation of its power, forms the order for “color revolutions” both from the outside and inside. So, the aspiration of the states to move on a way of openness to world community creates the new elites who are the competitors to the ruling administration.

Fourthly, geopolitical features of region generate a lot of problems: the closed transport space with the limited exits to the world markets and rather underdeveloped network of communications, especially external (numerous alternative oil-and-gas pipelines exist while only in a stage of projects); the states of region aspire to economic independence, but also economically and in the transport sphere they are adhered to Russia: non-uniform distribution of natural and water resources, the population, numerous zones of ecological disaster; an overpopulation and deficiency vital spaces (Uzbekistan) at enormous empty territories, not suitable for residing (Kazakhstan, Туркмения).

These contradictions substantially amplify the complex social and economic conditions, an aggravation of various political, ethnic, religious groupings and clans struggle for authority and repartition of the property, increase of extremist and terrorist organizations, Islamic fundamentalists, the gangs trading in smuggling by the weapon, drugs and slave trade activity. On recognition of the as a president of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbaeva recognized: “the Central Asia, one of potentially conflict regions... Conflicts in the long term can be shown both inside region, and around of it, because of territories, water and

richest natural resources.”<sup>1</sup>

And, at least, it is a role of not regional actors. So, it is considered, that the United States of America are interested in democratization of the region states. Having mentioned about “Revolution of roses,” “Orange revolution,” “Violet revolution,” “Revolution of tulips,” and “Cedar revolution” which have taken place for last 18 months in former Soviet republics and in the Near East, President Bush in the statement in International republican institute (IRI) on May, 18, 2005 has declared: “We could observe the rise of new generation which hearts burn with the desire of freedom - and they will have this freedom.” Also the American President has emphasized: “the realistic policy is necessary for us to help the countries with protection of their freedom, and practical strategy to help young democracies to fix the achievements.”

Assistance to “open regimes” development is the USA policy in Caspian-central-Asian region, directed “staking out” behind themselves the given geopolitical zone for maintenance economic, power, and other US interests. This policy also is called not to allow: strengthening of Russia in region, expansions of China in the Central Asia and to keep isolation of Iran.

It is necessary to notice, that for the period past after 1991 US foreign policy in Central Asia some times changed the doctrine bases. During B. Clinton administration it has been proclaimed so-called “Talbot’s doctrine” which essence was, that America will not be fixed in Central Asian region, but also will not allow making it another states. The region should use the natural resources and reach stability by means of economic and democratic development. Incorporation the elements of democracy and market economy during a political life and structure of a states national economy was one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Н.Назарбаев. На пороге XXI века. Алматы, 1996, с.78-79.

main task, which called to achieve this purpose.<sup>2</sup> USA has managed rather quickly the salvation of the majority set tasks that substantially became possible due to set of objective and subjective factors.

However development of the situation in the region by the end of 1990th has demanded revision of such installation. Events on September 11, 2001 have sped up registration of the new Bush doctrine. Its basis was the thesis that the Central Asia should serve for diversification world power streams and US lower and the global markets dependence from Persian Gulf. During Bush administration two basic documents have been accepted in 2002: Act in support of freedom in Afghanistan in which the USA intended to promote development of democratic and civil society in the region and to eradicate terrorism.<sup>3</sup> Other document, “National security strategy,” once again confirmed the US geopolitical purposes in Caspian-central-Asian region and determination of them to assert.<sup>4</sup> In this connection promotion of democracy in Central Asian countries is considered as the factor of geopolitics.

The USA has economic and strategic interests in region. Therefore American analytics consider Washington should balance this factor and people’s desire to receive democracy. In August 2002, the USA has declared qualitative change of the policy toward Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Both republics were in the center of the USA democratic policy attention (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Problems of the USA State Department). In these republics it was necessary to organize work on achievement of the following purposes:

- to promote the establishment of political parties in Uzbekistan and

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<sup>2</sup> Политика и интересы мировых держав в Казахстане. С. 84-85.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.state.gov>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.state.gov>.

Kyrgyzstan by grants to formation and development of democratic orientated political parties;

- to make assistance to the creation of typographical opportunities which would provide access to free and independent information sources;

- to support the program of strengthening “responsible journalism.”<sup>5</sup>

In 2002 US Institute of the Foreign Policy Analysis (IFPA) has prepared the report “The Central Asia in strategy the USA and operational planning.” In the report it is marked, that since autumn of 2001 the US policy toward Central Asia was determined by operation in Afghanistan, but it did not take into account a consequence for strategic interests of the US.

Decrease of vital standards is underlined as one of the destabilization factors in the region that, in opinion of the American analysts, provides ground for a radical Islam and other extremist ideologies. The further radicalization and miniaturizations of Islamic movements in the Central-Asian region not only complicate relations of Washington with the states of the region, but also damages the US image as a liberal and benevolent force.

Growing anti-American moods also are one of the reasons for revision of the current American public diplomacy concerning Central Asia. According to analysis of the institute, it is recommended to include the Central Asia in public statements for democracy observance in the Muslim world and to strengthen the support promotion in the regional countries of real political and economic changes. In particular, the question is Uzbekistan in which from the moment of the American soldiers' accommodation the USA has enclosed almost half-billion dollars. So, in the agreement on the strategic partnership signed with the USA in March 2002, consisting of 5 points, the Uzbek administration has undertaken to carry out serious economic and democratic reforms. Actually

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<sup>5</sup> ИТАР-ТАСС. 2002. 23 августа.



Uzbekistan was limited to symbolical gestures.

As to practical realization of the new US course the American embassies began to realize it actively. Official Washington considered ant presidential performances of opposition in March-May 2002 resignation of the Kyrgyz government as display of democracy. On Uzbekistan, the USA has emphasized a situation with human rights infringements, which were closed with the middle of 1990's.<sup>6</sup>

Kazakhstan represents a special example of the relations with the US development. Within 2001 the US actively accused corruption and infringement of human rights management in Kazakhstan. But the situation has changed after President N. Nazarbaev during his visit to the US in December 2001 has made the decision to refuse from plans of pipelines construction for pooling the Kazakh oil to Iran and to close its streams on an oil pipeline to the Baku–Jaikhan.<sup>7</sup> Since 2002 the US became less critical to Kazakhstan. By 2002 the geopolitical picture in region began to appear precisely - the US became the dominating factor.

The importance of region for the US was showed that Bush administration requested in 2002 for the Central-Asian and Caucasus countries from the Congress additional volume of the military help \$20 one million on emergency assistance to armed forces of Georgia to already planned \$11 one million. He also requested \$one million to Uzbekistan in addition to \$25.2 million, and \$9 million to Kyrgyzstan in addition to \$2 million.

The following stage in realization of the long-term US plans can become the American presence expansion in Kazakhstan, which has not only the

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.state.gov>.

<sup>7</sup> Васютович В. Политические отношения между Казахстаном и США // Казахстан: реалии и перспективы независимого развития. М.: РИСИ. 1995. С. 18-320.

important geopolitical value in the Central Asia, but also has significant power resources. Most likely, Kazakhstan, after Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, should become the next “basic” point of America in the Central Asian region.

So, in June 2002 Astana and Washington have signed the agreement on which the international airport in Alma-Ata is given as spare for emergency landings and refueling of the American Air Forces planes. Well understanding, it can cause what reaction in Moscow, the Kazakh prime-minister (and also the Minister for Foreign Affairs) K. Tokaev has hastened to note, that it does not provide occurrence of the American bases in the of the Republic and the question is only “extreme situations.”<sup>8</sup>

The decision to allocate \$2,75 million on purchase of military technical equipment for Kazakhstan mobile forces, accepted in August 2003, demonstrated the USA interest to Kazakhstan. About \$1,8 million was allocated on training of 200 military men from the Kazakh army in the US within the framework of programs “Military education and training” and “Foreign military financing.” Since 2002 the Kazakhstan officers are trained in the higher military educational institutions the US: National defense university, Air Forces Academy, Academy the West-Point. Thus, with the US assistance there is an active formation of Central-Asian countries national armies. The consecutive increase in financing volumes from the US side testifies Washington aspiration to be fixed in Kazakhstan and, using diplomatic, military, economic and political levers to reorient its foreign policy, and in the future and oil streams.<sup>9</sup>

Results of the USA successes in region were brought by A. Utkin: Due to skilful geopolitical maneuver, Washington has had an opportunity to solve some problems at once: to influence oil-and-gas deposits of the Big Caspian sea; to

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.state.gov>.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.state.gov>.

isolate objectionable to America Iran; to put pressure upon a weak spot of China (Tsinzhyan-Uigur independent area) from rear; to supervise Afghanistan not only from within, but also from the outside; to support the ally, Pakistan, from ground bases; to react to nowadays nuclear opposition on Hindustan from the north.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the United States more than ten years adhered to a firm policy in relation with the former Soviet republics of the Central Asia, namely support economic, political and institutional reforms. After a wave of “color revolutions” and anti-governmental performances in the CIS territory the US position has not changed. So, President Bush in the statements after “orange revolution” many times resulted Ukraine as an example of struggle for freedom. The President has not excluded an opportunity of creation new ones if it is possible so to say, “velvet-revolutionary” situations in the countries CIS in the future.

Estimating the American policy, director of the USA and Canada institute P. Zolotaryov marks: the USA have openly proclaimed, that they aspire to preservation of the individual leadership, and have supported it with corresponding programs which for a long time at them are accepted. Therefore, when speak, that the USA somehow incorrectly conduct themselves in the world, including on the post-soviet space, it not so. They behave how have declared. As to programs they are directed on formation of policies of other countries so that those did not contradict national the USA interests. Quite explainable policy of a super state which has aimed to keep the leadership.

Washington decided to make foreign policy of the countries such that it did not contradict the USA national interests, and with the help of “color revolutions.” The success of the Georgian and Ukrainian opposition has

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<sup>10</sup> Уткин А. Единственная супердержава. М.: Международные отношения. 2002, с. 24-26.

strengthened the official Washington decision to promote democratization of all other post-soviet space. For realization of this idea the American National democratic institute of international relations (NDI) in the middle of February 2004 held in Moscow a two-day international seminar on problems of democratization in the CIS in which representatives of some CIS leading opposition parties took part. The basic attention has been given “to strategy and tactics of Kazakhstan opposition.”

The opposition as well as other internal forces is ready to promote the USA efforts to distribute democracy in the countries of the region. These are average layers (intelligencer, average and small business, students, local NGO), supporting the countries westernization. They not only aspire to live in Europe, but also have the bases to believe, that in case of political changes, in their country after 10-15 years this dream can be true.

Certainly, it is potential force, basing on which the American administration is going to expand borders of democracy. As the Russian experts mark: “After Bush’s statement in Tbilisi about the future revolutions in Caucasus and the Central Asia tendencies to revolution became more appreciable in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan.”

What steps the Bush administration undertaken to help for the development of the democracy in the states of region. Firstly, President Bush from the name of the US promises support to young democracies. He declares about prepared budget project for 2006 according which the administration has requested 1.3 billion dollars on these purposes, including 100 million dollars on the creation of new Fund on reaction to the conflicts, called to help to the new democracies to overcome the periods of calls and disorders which sometimes follow their first free elections. President also has mentioned about requested from the budget 24 million dollars for the Bureau of the State department on

reconstruction and stabilization on the purpose of creation cases of active reaction in structure of the American diplomats and civil servants. The case should react operatively to crisis situations in quality of “civil forces of fast reaction.” “This new case will be in a condition of constant readiness for realization of programs on places for the read out days and weeks instead of months and years,” so G. Bush remarked.

Secondly, basing on the thesis that “today America is threatened not by the strong states, but by the insolvent states,” the US Agency on International Development (AID) offers the assistance to countries in expansion of political freedoms and competition, in supporting of justice and human rights by means of strengthening authority of the law and increase of the accountability in management, that, in turn, is carried out within the framework of assistance in the development of statutory acts and creation of judicial systems. AID is the largest agency in the world, supporting efforts on democratization. Its activity budget on assistance for democracy in 2004 has made 685 million dollars, and on efforts on democratization in Afghanistan and Iraq has been in addition allocated 500 million dollars, he told.

Thirdly, the outstanding American experts joined to the process of the strategy development directed to the support of democracy in the Central Asia. So, Frederic Starr, the director of Institute of Central Asia and Caucasus at the Higher school of the international researches Hopkins’s University, offers the extensive and in details worked plan of the US further policy in the Central Asia, based on completely new representation about division into regions. So, Starr considers Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as the region demanding active US intervention for the further establishing in it the basic principles of democracy and economic growth. To promote transformation of region into a safe zone of the sovereign states which

have made a choice for the benefit of effective market economy, distinguished by secular and open governmental systems and supporting positive relations with Washington, the author puts forward idea about creation of a regional forum Partnership on cooperation and development of the Big Central Asia which tasks are to enter in the planning, coordination and realization of a lot of the programs developed in the USA.

That Bush's administration can make to balance economic and strategic interests with aspiration of the states of region to democratization of a political life. In our opinion, first of all, it is necessary to develop a strategy that considers the Central Asia as the one region united by the common interests and needs. Except for the Frame agreement about trade and investments, signed with the five former Soviet republics of the Central Asia, practically everything that has been made by the United States in this region carried out on a bilateral basis. It is no clear, whether Washington current interest to this region will develop in steady obligations on safety maintenance, economic and democratic transformations.

The US efforts of maintaining democratic institutes and practice should be planned and presented on the way to achieve wide understanding that democracy strengthens stability and safety, instead of undermines them. Recent events in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan have caused quite clear alarm among Central Asian leaders who have provided their authority, having concentrated more likely on the sovereignty and safety of their countries, rather than on legitimacy of their governments. It is possible in the case of that it concern only democratization as to complex process with a lot of preliminary conditions.

Democratic political systems support of Central Asian states, capable to serve as a sample for other countries with the numerous Muslim population will

help the United States to solve strategic purposes in the Central Asia: conducting offensive war against terrorism; struggle with radical Islam and drug traffic; efforts on strengthening regional economy and the most significant state institutes; consolidation of regional trading communications and an adequate transport infrastructure.

Support of development of national focused civil societies by Washington in Central Asia; observance of democracy and human rights and other aspects, capable to resound with public opinion should not be end in itself and the tool of pressure upon those or other modes, and to begin the factor of stability and cooperation the USA and the states of region.

## 美國在中亞顏色革命中的角色地位

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### 摘 要

最近幾年加入政治邏輯詞典的名詞“顏色革命”似乎已經到達中亞的邊界。革命、推翻及政權更換如標準政治科學及國際關係所述是追求現代化過程的內部特性的結果，而於 1991 蘇聯解體後到達吉爾吉斯、烏茲別克、哈薩克、塔吉克與土庫曼。因為與其他比較在追趕現代化途上已走太遠，吉爾吉斯共和國變成疲弱鏈結。它會成為區域內其他國家追求民主的例子，或是情勢進一步的惡化，將取決於新當權者對國家的意向？

因為專家認為 2005 年春天會變成中亞新政治史的新轉捩點。中亞的政治精英不可能失去製造吉爾吉斯事件的令人注意的機會。所以，哈薩克本身設定的經濟高標準現在面對增加政治發展標準的客觀需要。美國或歐洲干預只會加速過程，但政治改革是客觀的需要。烏茲別克及塔吉克是回教因素主宰的國家，根據中亞專家的意見，必須避免回教對世俗模式的反抗。所以中亞的政府都強調開始不會加強管制，而付予獨裁體制更多的現代化特質。除了需要贏得年輕人，其主要領導人也要世俗現代化。特別的情況，Saparmurat Niyazov 的土庫曼政權並未留下任何國家革命機會。美國在本區域內具有經濟及戰略利益。這是為什麼美國分析家認為華府必須平衡這種因素及人民對達成民主的要求。2002 年八月美國聲明實質改變與烏茲別克及吉爾吉斯的政治關係。兩個國家都出現在美國民主政策(美國國務院的民主問題、人權及勞工署)注意的中心。

**關鍵字：**顏色革命、中亞、美國

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