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Overview: Despite continued instability in several neighboring countries, and the continued involvement of ethnic Uzbeks and Uzbek nationals in terrorist incidents in other countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan, no terrorist incidents took place within Uzbekistan. The Government of Uzbekistan continued to exercise tight control over its security situation, convicting an unknown number of people with alleged terrorist ties. As in the past, a lack of reliable information made it difficult to analyze the extent of the terrorist threat in Uzbekistan. It was possible that Uzbekistan security forces neutralized terrorist threats without bringing them to the attention of the press or the international community. It was also well-documented that the government treated many non-violent minority religious groups, such as Nur, Akromiya, and Tablighi Jamaat, as extremist groups that were banned or treated as banned organizations.

Legislation and Law Enforcement: Law enforcement officials continued to arrest, prosecute, and convict an unknown number of people under charges of extremism. It was unclear how many of these defendants would be considered terrorists, as the Government of Uzbekistan has targeted several religious groups that international observers considered to be nonviolent.

On August 14, Uzbek police exchanged fire with four armed men, allegedly religious extremists, near a village in the Tashkent Region. Limited reports on the event stated that one of the armed men was wounded and arrested, while the others escaped.

According to independent media reports, up to 83 people were convicted of charges ranging from anti-constitutional activity to membership in extremist groups and "inciting ethnic and religious animosity" in closed trials during February and March 2010. The trials were allegedly related to several terrorist incidents that took place in 2009, including the assassinations of Khasan Asadov, head of the Uzbek Interior Ministry's directorate for counterterrorism; and Abror Abrorov, the Deputy Director of Kukeldash Madrassah; the attempted murder of Anvar-kori Tursunov, the principal Imam of Tashkent; and a shoot-out that took place in Tashkent in late August 2009. Uzbekistan sought the extradition of 30 Uzbek asylum seekers from detention in Kazakhstan, whose government stated that Uzbekistan provided strong evidence that the asylum seekers had links to terrorist organizations. By year's end, in full consultation with UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNHCR mandate refugee status was revoked from the detainees and one of the 30 had been extradited to Uzbekistan. A second was released. Uzbekistan continued to seek the extradition of the remaining 28. At year's end the extradition was pending.

Countering Terrorist Finance: Uzbekistan is a member of the Eurasian Group against

Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (EAG). After passing anti-money laundering legislation in 2009, the Government of Uzbekistan did not pass any new legislation or take any new measures against terrorist finance in 2010. The government did not report any efforts to seize terrorist assets. Although terrorist financing was not a significant problem in Uzbekistan, a large and robust black market functioned outside the confines of the official financial system. The unofficial, unmonitored cash-based market created an opportunity for small-scale terrorist money laundering.

Regional and International Cooperation: The Government of Uzbekistan continued to cooperate bilaterally with other foreign governments and multilaterally with several international organizations on general security issues, including border control. In December, the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the OSCE jointly sponsored a conference in Tashkent that focused on countering violent extremism in Central Asia.

Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism: The Government of Uzbekistan continued to label minority religious groups and Muslim groups operating outside the parameters of State control as extremists. State-controlled media frequently ran programs designed to denigrate terrorist and extremist propaganda, including "documentaries" about extremist groups aired on state-run television, news stories, and opinion columns about the dangers of extremism in state-run newspapers, and public confessions and apologies by alleged extremists who claimed to have seen the error of their ways. However, non-violent religious minorities, including Nur, the Bahais and evangelical Protestants, have been branded as extremists and as threats to society in these "documentaries" and articles.
