

Challenges in Building Partner Capacities: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Security Assistance Programs in Kazakhstan

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Kazakhstan's President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, is equally welcome in Moscow, Beijing, and Washington, due in large part to Kazakhstan's vast quantities of hydrocarbons. Kazakhstan is located between major world and regional powers, and Nazarbayev seeks to become a regional leader. Kazakhstan's geopolitical importance has made it a priority for nations with security and economic interests in the region. One of the most effective ways of gaining influence within other states is by providing security assistance. The U.S. and Russia provide different competing Security Assistance programs to Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan's security needs in relation to Kazakhstan's military

COL Igor Mukhamedov, of the Kazakh Defense Ministry, gives a good outline of Kazakhstan's security concerns. These concerns are generally agreed upon by most security specialists in the region, and are as follows: ethnic tensions between native Kazakhs and ethnic Russians, Islamic extremism, drug trafficking, border security, and water management.¹ Kazakhstan's military posturing is geared towards these security concerns. The Kazakh Armed Forces focus on: border security, protecting natural resources, and counter insurgency/terrorism operations.² Notably, the Kazakh military is relatively unconcerned with external state-on-state warfare.³ In short, the Kazakh military is

¹ Igor Mukhamedov, "The Domestic Regional and Global Security Stakes in Kazakhstan," M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004.

² Janes, "Kazakhstan's Armed Forces"; available from www.janes.com; Internet; accessed 12 November 2008.

³ This is due to the good relations Kazakhstan maintains with its larger and more powerful neighbors Russia and China. Although the chances of Kazakhstan being involved in state-on-state

defensive in nature, with an emphasis in combating internal threats and securing borders and resources.

Kazakhstan's perceived security threats and military posturing are reflected in the Security Assistance it receives. Kazakhstan has acquired few heavy weapons systems (tanks, artillery, aircraft, etc.), with the exception of aircraft and (defensive) anti-aircraft weaponry. Instead the Kazakh Armed Forces and security services have generally acquired "light" weapons (helicopters, wheeled fighting vehicles, patrol craft) more suitable for quelling internal disturbances, counterterrorism/counterinsurgency operations, border security, and securing oil/gas resources in the Caspian, than engaging in state-on-state warfare.

violence are relatively slim, Kazakh security experts have still expressed concern about instability in neighboring countries that could spill into Kazakhstan.
"No Risk of Intense Armed Conflicts in Sight for Kazakhstan," *ITAR-TASS*, 4 May 2007, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=11947549>>, accessed 2 December 2008.

Kazakh Arms Acquisitions from 1991-2007

Recipient/ supplier (S) or licensor (L)	No. ordered	Weapon designation	Weapon description	Year of order/ licence	Year(s) of deliveries	No. delivered/ produced	Comments
Kazakhstan							
S: Russia	(13)	L-39C Albatros	Trainer aircraft	(1995)	1996-2000	(13)	Ex-Russian; payment for Russian debt to Kazakhstan
	(21)	MiG-29/Fulcrum-A	Fighter aircraft	1995	1995-1996	(21)	Ex-Russian; payment for Russian debt to Kazakhstan; incl 4 MiG-29UB trainer version
	(14)	Su-25/Frogfoot-A	Ground attack ac	1995	1997	(14)	Ex-Russian; payment for Russian debt to Kazakhstan
	(14)	Su-27S/Flanker-B	Fighter aircraft	(1995)	1999-2001	14	Ex-Russian; payment for debt
	(36)	SV55R/SA-10C Grumble	SAM	(1998)	2000	(36)	
	1	Il-76M/Candid-B	Transport aircraft	1998	2000	1	Ex-Russian
	1	S-300PMU/SA-10C	SAM system	1998	2000	1	Probably ex-Russian
	(3)	Mi-8/Mi-17/Hip-H	Helicopter	(2002)	2002	(3)	Mi-17V5 version
	(14)	Mi-8/Mi-17/Hip-H	Helicopter	2002	2004-2007	(14)	\$100 m deal; Mi-17 version; for anti-terrorist and anti-narcotics operations
	(80)	BTR-80	APC	(2003)	2004-2007	(17)	
	(12)	Mi-8/Mi-17/Hip-H	Helicopter	2007			
South Korea	3	Sea Dolphin	Patrol craft	2005	2006	3	Ex-South Korean; aid
Ukraine	(3)	Kh-29/AS-14 Kedge	ASM	(1999)	1999	(3)	Possibly ex-Ukrainian
	(4)	R-23RT/AA-7 Apex	BVRAAM	(1999)	1999	(4)	Probably ex-Ukrainian
	(4)	R-73/AA-11 Archer	SRAAM	(1999)	1999	(4)	Possibly ex-Ukrainian
	(2)	BTR-3U Guardian	IFV	(2005)	2005	2	BTR-3E version
	(24)	R-27/AA-10 Alamo	BVRAAM	(2005)	2005-2006	24	
USA	6	Bell-205/UH-1 Huey-2	Helicopter	(2003)	2004	(6)	Ex-US UH-1H rebuilt to Huey-2; aid against terrorists
	2	Bell-205/UH-1 Huey-2	Helicopter	2007	2007	(2)	Option on 6 more
	(40)	M-1114 ECV	APC/ISV	2007			M-1151 version; delivery 2008-2009

“Transfers of Major Conventional Weapons to Kazakhstan from 1991 to 2007,”
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,
http://armstrade.sipri.org/arms_trade/trade_register.php, accessed 13 November 2008.

The Soviet doctrine inherited by the Kazakh Army would prove to be problematic with Kazakhstan’s security concerns. Soviet doctrine was intended for large-scale, state-on-state warfare. The Soviet approach to accomplish this task was to quickly mobilize a massive amount of manpower to quickly overwhelm the enemy. The implication of this doctrine was that the quantity of troops was far more important than the quality.⁴

The Kazakh leadership realized that the security concerns the Kazakh Army would most likely face would require a smaller, more mobile, and higher quality army. Attaining this type of army would become a major goal requiring

⁴ Christopher Donnelly, *Red Banner: The Soviet Military System in Peace and War*, (Coulson, Great Britain: Sentinel House, 1988), pp. 153-157.

much in the way of reform through restructuring, overhauling the military education system, abolishing conscription, and improving small unit leadership. This type of reform would require outside skills and training provided through Security Assistance.⁵

Defining the Kazakh Military

In the West, the term “military” is typically associated with the Ministry of Defense. In the Soviet system, which Kazakhstan derived, the term “military” is also associated with other institutions: namely, the Committee for National Security and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Comparison of US Civilian Institutions and their Militarized Kazakh Equivalents

United States	Kazakhstan
State, Local, Federal Police	Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD)
Federal Bureau of Investigations (CI) Central Intelligence Agency	Committee for National Security (KNB)
US Border Patrol	Border Guard Service (division of KNB)

Uniformed officers and conscripts serve in these organizations just as they serve in the Ministry of Defense. Initial officer training (4-5 year bachelor degree granting institutions) academies are similar enough that graduates are allowed to transfer between ministries at the completion of their studies. This means that Kazakhstan has militarized intelligence and internal security structures in contrast to most Western states where these institutions are manned by civilians. The implication is that military reform, and Security Assistance programs, often have more impact.

⁵ Roman Streshnev and Sapargali Zhagiparov, "We rely on professionals," *Almaty Kazakstan Sarbasy*, 28 December 2004.

Approximate size of the Kazakh Military⁶

Organization	Approximate Number
Ministry of Defense (3 Branches)	68,800
Ministry of the Interior (MVD-VV)	20,000
Border Guards	15,000
Republican Guard	2,500
Committee for National Security (KNB)	UNK
Approximate Total	106,300

For the purposes of this analysis, the terms “military” and “Armed Forces” will refer to the armed uniformed services of the Kazakh Ministry of Defense (MoD), Ministry of the Interior (MVD-VV), Committee for National Security (KNB), and the Republican Guard and Border Guard Service. The term “Army” will be used explicitly in reference to the Ministry of Defense’s forces, namely the Air Mobile Forces, and the Air Force, Navy, and Ground Forces branches of the Kazakh MoD.

Background of The Kazakh Army

The Kazakh military was formed soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, from units of the 40th Army in the Soviet Turkestan Military District. The transition from communism to capitalism was not a smooth process for the fledgling Kazakh military. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the Kazakh Armed Forces, little actually changed in the character and nature of the Kazakh military. The Kazakh Army used the same doctrine as had been used by the Soviets, despite facing a much different set of security

⁶ Janes, “Kazakhstan’s Armed Forces”; available from www.janes.com; Internet; accessed 12 November 2008.

challenges. Further complicating the matter, military spending remained a low priority throughout the 1990s.

During the 1990s, defense spending was a low priority, and this was only addressed last year, as a result of improved economic performance. The 2001 military budget was 25 billion Tenge (\$172 million), representing an increase of around 8 billion Tenge on the previous year. This may be viewed in perspective when read alongside the National Budget plans for 2002, affording 42 billion Tenge on building and reconstructing roads. The Armed Forces of Kazakhstan remain markedly under-financed.⁷

After September 11th, 2001, the Kazakh attitude toward reform of the Armed Forces changed greatly. General Mukhtar Altynbaev was reappointed to the post of Defense Minister. Altynbaev was a staunch promoter of Armed Forces reform. Under Altynbaev, the Kazakh Armed Forces began to experience rapid transformation at the upper levels. This transformation was heavily influenced by the Kazakh Armed Forces exposure to NATO. This transformation included transitioning to a three branch military with a Ground Forces (branch), Air Force, and newly established Navy. A new entity was formed in the Kazakh Armed Forces, known as the “Airmobile Forces,” a structure with no basis on Soviet/Russian doctrine that was intended to be more interoperable with NATO.⁸

Other major reforms included converting from the Soviet/Russian command structure of military districts into a joint regional command structure. In the Soviet/Russian military district system all units of the Ministry of Defense would be placed under one commander, but the military and paramilitary units of other Ministries in the area would fall under different chains of Command. Under

⁷ Roger McDermott, “The Crisis in the Kazakh Armed Forces,” The Conflict Studies Research Center, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Camberley, June 2002.

⁸ Igor Mukhamedov, “The Domestic Regional and Global Security Stakes in Kazakhstan,” M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004.

the new system all military and paramilitary units (with some exceptions) would be placed under one commander, the intent being for better command and control. This system is very similar to the US Major Command (MACOM) model for controlling the US military, which was likely a model for development of the Kazakh system.⁹

Russian Security Assistance in Kazakhstan

Russia has a 300-year relationship with Kazakhstan- Russia's longest in Central Asia and it was the first Central Asian country to sign a Security Assistance agreement with Russia on May, 25 1992. The close relationship between the nations regarding Security Assistance is not surprising. They enjoy warm relations, as Russia is Kazakhstan's largest trading partner. Kazakhstan's inheritance of Soviet equipment, personnel and doctrine ensured that Kazakhstan would rely on Russia for needed spare parts and training to maintain the Army.¹⁰

The Soviet military equipment inherited by all of the Central Asian states continues to form the vast majority of each nation's arsenal. Russian deliveries of spare parts and end items decreased in the early and mid-1990s as the defense industry underwent a dramatic reduction and reorganization, but transfers started to increase in the late 1990s. Kazakhstan currently receives military equipment from Russia at no charge as part of the leasing agreement, including up to \$20 million worth of weapons and supplies in 2001.¹¹

The nations have signed over 60 bilateral agreements regarding Security Assistance since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Former Russian Defense

⁹ Boris Kuzmenko, "Kazakhstan Reforming its Army in the Likeness of the U.S. Army," *Parlamentskaya Gazeta*, 21 June 2003, p. 7, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=5048143>>, accessed 6 December 2008.

Igor Mukhamedov, "The Domestic Regional and Global Security Stakes in Kazakhstan," M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004.

¹⁰ Oleg Gorupay, "Strategy of Cooperation," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 20 April 2007.

¹¹ Michael J. McCarthy, *The Limits of Friendship: US Security Cooperation in Central Asia*, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 2007), pp. 117.

Attaché, Sergey Medvedev, outlines the goals of Russian-Kazakh Security Assistance. These goals include: supplying parts, equipment, and major end items (tanks, planes, etc.), training servicemen, unifying the Russian and Kazakh defense industries, and participation in joint security institutions.¹²

The value of equipment and spare parts to the Kazakh Armed Forces is obvious, but the importance of Russian training for the Army needs some explanation. Training is an important part of any modern military, it is necessary to acquire and maintain necessary technical and leadership skills. Unfortunately, training requires much from the state in terms of resources. The Kazakh military is relatively small, making little sense to dedicate resources to sole purpose schools that train “low-density” skill sets.¹³ Kazakhstan has tackled this problem by sending to Russia those officers that need to learn low density skills. All air defense artillery, some aircraft, and most naval training is conducted in Russia. This training, through Security Assistance programs, is essential for Kazakhstan to maintain a modern military. In all, 700-800 Kazakh officers are enrolled in Russian Federation institutions at any given time.¹⁴

Russia engages in Security Assistance activities with Kazakhstan under the auspices of several Eurasian security organizations.

¹² “Russian Embassy Official Outlines Military Cooperation with Kazakhstan,” *Almaty Panorama*, 18 November 2003.

¹³ Viktor Litovkin, “Officers Should Speak the Same Command Language: Russia Spends R450 Million Annually on the Schooling of Students and Officer Cadets from CSTO Countries,” *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kuryer*, 22 February 2006.

¹⁴ Roman Streshnev and Sapargali Zhagiparov, “We Rely on Professionals,” *Almaty Kazakstan Sarbasy*, 28 December 2004.

Viktor Pryanikov, “Kazakhstani Defense Minister Meetings with CIS Counterparts,” *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 10 June 2003.

Collective Security Treaty Organization- Security Assistance Activities

Until the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was signed on October 7, 2002, by the Presidents of Russia, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, Russian Security Assistance agreements were negotiated on a bilateral basis. The CSTO would become the primary method of Russian Security Assistance to Central Asia. The CSTO's other military activities include the establishment of a joint military unit known as the "Collective Rapid Response Force" and the development of a joint air defense force.¹⁵ The organization has begun to cover far more than traditional "military" activities. The CSTO is now involved with joint counter-terrorism, counternarcotics, law-enforcement, illegal immigration, and intelligence programs.¹⁶ Kazakhstan benefits from CSTO Security Assistance through agreements that provide Russian military and law enforcement equipment to the Kazakh government at Russian internal prices.¹⁷

Shanghai Cooperation Organization- Security Assistance Activities

Despite much media hype, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has done little in the way of Security Assistance for Kazakhstan, or any of the Central Asian states. Under the organization's auspices there have been no arms sales or training exchanges. It seems unlikely this situation will soon change.

¹⁵ "Russian Federation Armed Forces International Ties Get Stronger," *Military Diplomat*, No. 2, 2004, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=7790099>> accessed 24 October 2008.

¹⁶ "CSTO summit expected to be constructive, give impetus to cooperation," *ITAR-TASS*, 6 October 2006.

¹⁷ "CIS Security Body Plans New Rules for Purchase of Special Equipment," *Agentstvo Voyennykh Novostey*, 10 January 2007.

Kazakhstan already interacts with Russia through the CSTO and bilateral agreements. Interaction with China is limited with the exception of some equipment purchases and senior level staff exchanges. A major factor hampering the training aspect of Kazakh-Chinese Security Assistance activities is the language barrier; few Kazakhs speak Chinese.¹⁸

Commonwealth of Independent States- Security Assistance Activities

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed as a successor organization to the Soviet Union. The CIS has had difficulty forming productive agreements, especially in the field of military cooperation. In 2000, the CIS launched a new military cooperation effort, the Counter Terrorism Center. The center has been largely ineffectual by most accounts.¹⁹ The General Secretary of the CSTO explains the comparison between the CIS and CSTO regarding Security Assistance as follows:

The main difference is the level of interaction and integration. In the CSTO it is much higher. For example we can make such decisions that will never do within the framework of the CIS. We can realize military technical cooperation in the beneficial condition, including such a sensitive sphere as supplies of special hardware, weaponry etc. We have the opportunity to train staff on the problem of counteraction terrorism and drug trafficking on free or beneficial basis. It is impossible within the framework of the CIS.²⁰

¹⁸ Sebastien Peyrouse, "Sino-Kazakh Relations: A Nascent Strategic Partnership," *The Jamestown Foundation*, 7 November 2008, Volume 8, Issue 21, <http://www.jamestown.org/china_brief/article.php?articleid=2374523>, accessed 12 November 2008.

¹⁹ "Formation of CIS Anti-Terrorism Center Discussed in Minsk," *RIA-Vesti*, 5 December 2008. Vladimir Socor, "CIS Antiterrorism Center: Marking Time in Moscow, Refocusing on Bishkek," *Institute for Advanced Strategic & Political Studies*, 3 November 2002, available from <<http://www.iasps.org/strategic/socor10.htm>>, accessed 6 December 2008.

²⁰ Vladimir Semiryaga, "The CSTO Will be Capable of Much," *Rossiia*, No. 36, September 22-26, 2005, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=8295929>>, accessed 24 October 2008.

The inability of the CIS to develop military technical cooperation agreements was a major cause of the establishment of the CSTO. The CIS Counter Terrorism Center is unlikely to develop into a more productive organization while the CSTO remains the predominant tool of military cooperation in the region.

Russian Security Assistance to Kazakhstan impacts almost every facet of the Kazakh military. But some aspects of the Kazakh military are not supported. Russia and Kazakhstan do have a few diverging interests that are reflected in Security Assistance. Russia has not been an enthusiastic supporter of the creation of the Kazakh Navy or Airmobile Forces. The formation of the Kazakh Navy was not originally supported (Russia has since begun to warm to the idea) due to the Caspian states arguing over the status of the Caspian; Russia has no desire to support a militarization of the Caspian. Russia has not supported the Airmobile Forces as they are perceived to be an entity designed to work with NATO. Russia has no desire to support NATO interoperability with forces in its periphery.²¹

US Security Assistance in Kazakhstan

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan found itself as the fourth largest nuclear power in the world. The denuclearization of Kazakhstan would become the first Security Assistance program between Kazakhstan and the United States. Security Assistance would come in the form of the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program, often referred to as the “Nunn-Lugar Program.” This Security Assistance program was created to remove or safeguard

²¹ Igor Mukhamedov, “The Domestic Regional and Global Security Stakes in Kazakhstan,” M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004.

WMD from the former Soviet Union. The CTR program provided the necessary funding to transfer Kazakhstan's nuclear arsenal to Russia. The program was later amended to purchase highly enriched uranium that was later down blended into a form appropriate for use as fuel in nuclear reactors. The CTR program was considered a success, and has been restructured into the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). DTRA is still very active in Kazakhstan, and is currently working on the following programs.

Biological Threat Reduction Program, working with the Kazakh Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health to dismantle the biological weapon facility in Stepnogorsk, and to remove dangerous pathogens from storage facilities.

Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation Prevention Initiative, working to repair ecological damage at the former Nuclear Test site in Semipalatinsk, and with the Maritime branch of the border guards to prevent possible WMD smuggling.

International Counterproliferation Program, working with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Committee of National Security, and Border Guard Service to prevent WMD proliferation.

See Diagram "US Security Assistance Structure in Kazakhstan"

See Diagram "US Security Assistance in Relationship to the Kazakh Government"

The US had little interest in providing Security Assistance to Central Asia, aside from the above mentioned WMD issues, until 1995, and by that time the nuclear weapons inherited by the Soviet successor states had been transferred to Russian control. The US became concerned about access to oil and natural gas resources in the Caspian. US national security policy promoted diversification of the US's energy dependency, as the Middle East (the US's primary supplier) was (is) seen as too unstable.

“In 1995 the United States still had hopes that the Central Asian states would continue the modest steps taken toward political and economic reforms, although in reality very little had been accomplished. But a new concern arose: potential Russian monopolization of the energy infrastructure in Central Asia. By this time, it was clear that the oil and natural gas deposits in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan could form a significant percentage of the world's energy resources, and Washington wanted to ensure Moscow did not control their exploitation and shipment to the West. At the time, all of the existing oil and gas pipelines from Central Asia transited Russia, giving Moscow a monopoly in the export and distribution process. Promoting new pipelines that did not transit Russia had both a practical and a political aspect: while it would help guarantee free access to these resources, Washington also saw the development of the oil and gas deposits as the platform for economic prosperity and political development in Central Asia.”²²

The US pursued a two-prong-strategy to secure access to Caspian oil, promoting the construction of pipelines in the region that circumvent Russia and Iran, and increasing stability in the states of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The US began efforts to increase stability and security in Central Asia under the auspices of NATO. Kazakhstan began participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and developed an individual partnership plan (IPP). The IPP is a custom tailored agreement between NATO and the partner nation about which areas the partner country would like assistance in developing.

²² Michael J. McCarthy, *The Limits of Friendship: US Security Cooperation in Central Asia*, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 2007), pp. 26.

The purpose is for greater interoperability between NATO and the partner nation. The result of these agreements was a major increase in Security Assistance to Kazakhstan. Most of this Security Assistance would come in the form of education and training.²³

Estimate of Kazakh Students Trained by the US (in KAZ and the US)²⁴

Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Students Trained	10	4	40	182	30	34	30	44	39	120	67	127	86

After September 11th 2001, the U.S. increased Security Assistance to Kazakhstan. One program that benefitted was the Kazakh Airmobile Force’s newly developed “KAZBAT” unit, created in 2000 for the conduct of peacekeeping operations. The US has heavily supported this unit through training and equipment support, and it was eventually deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002.²⁵ In general, US DoD Security Assistance to Kazakhstan has mostly come in the form of nonproliferation programs and training, instead of arms transfers.

The US State Department’s managed Security Assistance organizations (the Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance and Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) are also active in Kazakhstan, but they have a much smaller presence and budget than their DoD

²³ Michael J. McCarthy, *The Limits of Friendship: US Security Cooperation in Central Asia*, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 2007), pp. 26.

²⁴ Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, 1995 through 2007, Department of State, Washington, DC.

Michael J. McCarthy, *The Limits of Friendship: US Security Cooperation in Central Asia*, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 2007), pp. 207-218.

²⁵ Roger N. McDermott and Igor Mukhamedov, “Kazakhstan’s Peacekeeping Support to Iraq,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst*, 28 January 2004; available from <<http://www.cacianalyst.org/>>;Internet; accessed 15 November 2008.

counterparts. These organizations deal primarily with the Kazakh Ministry of the Interior, Border Guard Service, and Customs. Their major concerns are nonproliferation, human trafficking, and counternarcotics.

Evaluating the effectiveness of US and Russian Security Assistance programs

Attempting a quantitative analysis of US/Russian Security Assistance programs is difficult. Neither the US nor Russia keeps a comprehensive database of their Security Assistance data.²⁶ Comparisons of dollars/rubles spent on Security Assistance is difficult do to differing accounting systems. The US equates all equipment and training to specific dollar amounts, while Russia does not equate training or services with a specific dollar/ruble amounts. These different accounting systems exclude an accurate dollar-to-dollar comparison. But even if such data was available, it would likely appear skewed in the US's favor as the costs of US training and equipment is often many times greater than the Russian equivalent.

Another difficulty with assessing the “value” of Security Assistance is the difficulty in gauging the net positive or negative effects of any one given Security Assistance program. The effect (if any) of a given piece of equipment or skill on the capabilities of a complex system, like a military, is difficult to measure. The effectiveness of a given skill or weapons system is usually evaluated in the

²⁶ Michael J. McCarthy, *The Limits of Friendship: US Security Cooperation in Central Asia*, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 2007), pp. 155. “Military and Technical Cooperation as a Factor in the Growth of Russian Influence,” *Russian Military Review*, No. 6, June 2004, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=6514773>>, accessed 24 October 2008.

context of how it affects the unit that it supports. Most modern armies do evaluate unit effectiveness, and the value of a given weapon system or skill set can be measured in context of the unit's mission accomplishment. Unfortunately, governments are inherently secretive about any type of information regarding unit effectiveness or readiness. The best way of evaluating the effectiveness Security Assistance is to look at the capabilities granted.

Russian Security Assistance: The value of Russian spare parts for Kazakhstan' Soviet era equipment cannot be underestimated. All but a minute fraction of Kazakhstan's weapon systems, support vehicles, and aircraft are of Soviet/Russian manufacture. Russia is the lone provider for these spare parts since Kazakhstan does not have a sufficient industrial base to develop the industries to manufacture these parts, nor would this be economically feasible. Replacing these systems is also not possible; not only is the cost of the systems prohibitive, but an entirely new logistic structure (parts ordering system) would be needed to support and maintain new types of equipment.

Kazakhstan is also heavily dependent on the training aspect of Russian Security Assistance. As mentioned earlier, Russia provides training in technically demanding fields (anti-aircraft artillery, aviation, and naval science) and advanced leadership (senior staff academies) to Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan does not have the capability to conduct this type of training. A significant percentage of the Kazakh officer corps has received training in Russia. According to former Defense

Minister Altynbaev, 2,475 Kazakh officers from the Ministry of Defense received training in Russia from 1993-2006.²⁷

Estimate of percentage of Kazakh Army officers with Russian training

Soldiers in Kazakh Army- 68,800
Estimate of officer vs. enlisted- 30%
Officers in the Kazakh Army $68,800/.30 = 20,640$
Number of officers trained in Russia between 1993-2006- 2,475
Estimate of number of officers leaving service after receiving training, and multiple course attendance by any given officer- 50%
Russian trained officers remaining in service- $2475/.50 = 1238$
Rough percentage of Russian trained officers serving in Kazakh Army- $1238/20,640 = 6\%$

If one believes the above estimate, approximately 5-6% of the current Kazakh officer corps has received Russian training. This may seem a relatively small percentage, but this 5-6% represents individuals with high level technical and leadership skills. The Kazakh Army has no other access.

In sum, Russian Security Assistance is necessary for the maintenance and training of the Kazakh Army. Any long-term suspension of Russian Security Assistance would likely seriously degrade the Kazakh Army's performance. In other areas of Security Assistance, Russia appears to be supporting Kazakh efforts in law-enforcement and border security, but there is still little information about these programs.

US Security Assistance: US Security Assistance to Kazakhstan is rather paltry in comparison. During a similar period the Russians trained 2,475 personnel, the US trained 220.²⁸ The US has transferred no heavy weapon

²⁷ Zhanna Oyshybayeva, "Kazakhstani Defense Minister Eyes Cooperation with Russia," *Almaty Liter*, 17 October 2006.

²⁸ "Kazakh Defense Minister Praises Army Reforms, Cooperation with World Powers," *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 6 May 2006.

systems to Kazakhstan, and only two helicopters and 40 light wheeled vehicles (Humvees).²⁹ If US Security Assistance to Kazakhstan stopped there would likely be little or no degradation in Kazakhstan's military capabilities. But Kazakhstan does gain some other, less tangible benefits from US Security Assistance.

While US Security Assistance does not include the maintenance of Kazakhstan's current military capabilities, as Russian Security Assistance provides, it helps the country's military develop new capabilities. Kazakhstan's security requires a smaller, more mobile, and higher quality army capable of conducting low-intensity counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations. It also requires strong, tactical leadership and individual initiative focusing on the junior officer and enlisted soldier level. These needs are not well met by current Russian/Soviet doctrine; as, Russia is trying to reconcile these problems within its own military. Additionally, the Kazakhs are very interested in modernizing their personnel system and establishing an exclusively contract system of manning their military institutions instead of relying on conscription.³⁰ In conjunction, they are trying to establish institutions such as Noncommissioned Officer Corps

Even these numbers can be misleading. For most Russian courses, Kazakh entry level officers attend 4-5 year academies, while senior level officers attend or 1-2 year advanced courses. In the American system only three Kazakh officers attended a 4 year service academy (West Point), and only a few Kazakh senior officers have attended 1 year courses. The vast majority of US training can be measured in terms of weeks or months, not in years as in the Russian System. The implication is that Kazakhs receive far more training hours from Russian Security Assistance programs than would be apparent by simply comparing the number of personnel that attended training.

²⁹ "Transfers of Major Conventional Weapons to Kazakhstan from 1991 to 2007," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,

<http://armstrade.sipri.org/arms_trade/trade_register.php>, accessed 13 November 2008

³⁰ Roman Streshnev and Sapargali Zhagiparov, "We Rely on Professionals," *Almaty Kazakhstan Sarbasy*, 28 December 2004.

to train and professionalize their enlisted ranks, in order to raise the overall quality of the army in general, and small unit leadership in particular.³¹ This type of training is coming exclusively from US Security Assistance programs.

President Nazarbayev has consistently looked to increase Kazakhstan's presence on the international stage, Nazarbaev's desire to increase Kazakhstan's image abroad cannot be underestimated. One way this could be accomplished is through Kazakhstan's participation in peacekeeping missions. Kazakhstan has been keen to trumpet its participation in Iraq and development of the Kazakh Peace Keeping Brigade (KAZBRIG), although it will require further development to be capable deploying to conduct peacekeeping operations. This is perhaps one of the greatest benefit of US/NATO Security Assistance programs to Kazakhstan, the ability to develop a Kazakh peace keepings unit capable of deploying to support peacekeeping operations around the world.

Security Assistance Programs Impact on Border Security

Kazakhstan has been particularly sensitive about border security issues along its borders with Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and China. According to Kazakh estimates, 70% of Afghan heroin that is smuggled into Kazakhstan is smuggled on the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border. The Kazakhs are concerned about the Uzbek and Chinese borders due to fears of potentially hostile insurgent groups entering the

³¹ "Patriotism Intellectual Progress and a Healthy Lifestyle Must Become Distinguishing Features of the Kazakh Trooper," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 19 February 2004, p. 3, available from Eastview [database on-line], <<http://dlib.eastview.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/sources/article.jsp?id=5931850>>, accessed 2 December 2008.

country.³² A rough comparison of illegal border crossing detentions (according to official Kazakh reports and press releases) in a similar ten-month time frame in 2006, 2007, and 2008 shows a marked improvement in border security.

Rough Comparison of Kazakh Illegal Border Crossing Detentions³³

Year	2006	2007	2008
Border Detentions	8,000	11,440	<15,000

Possibly the best indicators of success of Kazakh border security initiatives, are the changes in tactics that smugglers have made. Smugglers have traditionally used heavy trucks to evade import duties and smuggle contraband into Kazakhstan. The increase in effectiveness of Kazakh border security measures have forced smugglers to utilize different means of transportation including small boats, horses, and bicycles.³⁴

Although impossible to attribute these results solely, or in part, to Security Assistance programs, such programs are likely to have been a factor; many of the technological improvements for border security that the Kazakhs have acquired are from US and Russian Security Assistance. Security Assistance for border protection has come to Kazakhstan in the form of: light helicopters, night vision optics, cameras, ground surveillance radars, and light tactical vehicles.

³² “Over 15,000 Trespassers Detained by Kazakh Border Guards so far in 2008,” *Almaty Interfax*, 5 December 2008.

³³ “Over 15,000 Trespassers Detained by Kazakh Border Guards so far in 2008,” *Almaty Interfax*, 5 December 2008.

“Kazakhstan Beefs up Southern Border Security,” *Almaty Liter*, 22 November 2007.

³⁴ “Kazakhs Installs Cameras along Uzbek Border to Prevent Flour Smuggling,” Astana Kazakh TV1, 9 October 2008.

The Future of Security Assistance in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan's long ties to Russia, legacy of Soviet era equipment, and majority of senior officers that were trained in the Soviet system will insure continued dependence on Russian Security Assistance for equipment and critical training. Kazakhstan will likely continue purchase large end items from Russia and other post Soviet states due to the significantly lower costs associated with purchasing Soviet/Russian equipment in comparison to equivalent Western systems.

Kazakhstan, as other Central Asian states, has occasionally retrofitted Soviet era equipment with Western (especially Israeli) electronic/avionic and optical technologies. This trend will likely increase as Kazakhstan attempts to make the most of its defense budget by increasing the service lives and capabilities of existing weapons platforms. Kazakhstan's participation in US Security Assistance programs will likely continue at the same level, continuing to focus on small scale training and doctrine development. The US's assistance with doctrine development may very well be the most important long term aspect of this relationship as the Kazakh military develops along a different path than its northern neighbor.

Conclusion

The paper explains the value of US and Russian Security Assistance are very different, but each is useful to Kazakhstan in different ways. Security

Assistance from Russia is necessary to maintain the Soviet legacy of equipment and a personnel system inherited by Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. US Security Assistance is a small fraction of Russian support in terms of quantity of materials supplied and training days for Kazakh personnel. However, US Security Assistance does provide certain skills that are not available, or are lacking, from Russia mainly in the areas of counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and small unit leadership, as well as less tangible benefits including the capability to interact with Western/NATO nations in joint and peacekeeping operations -- a goal President Nazarbayev has set in order to increase Kazakhstan's prestige on the international scene.