

Chechen Rebels Carry Out a Series of Attacks

Chechen rebels burned a Russian armored vehicle in the town of Bamut on June 16, the Associated Press reported on June 17. The news agency quoted the Chechen Interior Ministry as saying that a group of rebel fighters fired rocket-propelled grenades at the armored vehicle and that its crew managed to get out unhurt, but that a resident was wounded in the crossfire. RIA Novosti on June 17 quoted a Chechen law-enforcement officer as saying that three unidentified assailants had fired grenade launchers and automatic rifles at two Russian military vehicles in Bamut and that one vehicle had been burned out and a local resident injured in the attack.



Meanwhile, Itar-Tass reported on June 17 that a rebel base had been discovered not far from the village of Agish-Batoi in Chechnya's Vedeno district on June 15. The news agency quoted a Chechen Interior Ministry source as saying that police had found 8-10 rebel gunmen in Agish-Batoi who "put up armed resistance." A policeman was wounded in the shootout and the rebels managed to escape. "Later during the mopping-up operation their base consisting of six self-made tents was spotted," the source told Itar-Tass. "The tents contained clothes, sleeping bags, medicines and foodstuffs. Meanwhile, a grenade launcher, a grenade for it and a machinegun belt were found in a tent." During an operation launched on June 16 to track down the escaped militants, a policeman stepped on a mine a kilometer away from the Vedeno district village of Pervomaiskoye and his left foot had to be amputated.

On June 16, three border guards with the Chechen branch of the Federal Security Service were killed and five wounded when rebel fighters ambushed an FSB automobile column in the village of Chishki in Chechnya's Groznensky district. Aleksandr Solod, head of the press service of the FSB border guard directorate for North Ossetia, told RIA Novosti that the FSB automobile column was traveling from the village of Borzoi to Vladikavkaz. Solod said that the border guards repelled the attackers but still sustained losses. He identified the three slain border guards as Captain Vladimir Karasev of Ryazan Oblast, Senior Lieutenant Yevgeny Klyukin of Saransk in the Republic of Mordovia and Junior Sergeant Pyotr Bravok of Bryansk Oblast. On June 17, the rebel Kavkaz-Center website claimed responsibility for the attack in Chishki, calling it a "final examination" for "young mujahideen."

On June 15, unidentified attackers fired a grenade launcher at a member of a regiment from Chechnya's anti-organized crime directorate (UBOP) in Grozny's Zavodsky district. The policeman was wounded in the attack while a passer-by, a resident of Chechnya's Achkhoy-Martan district, was killed. RIA Novosti reported that two policemen were wounded in the attack.

On June 13, a group of rebel gunmen burned three houses and shot three people dead in the village of Benoi-Vedeno in Chechnya's Nozhai-Yurt district, Itar-Taass reported. A Chechen police source told the news agency that the gunmen set fire to three houses, including the house of the village administration head, and shot people, killing three and wounding one. The gunmen also abducted several people from the village, including a 47-year-old former deputy administration head. Kavkazky Uzel on June 13 quoted law-enforcement sources as identifying the three people killed in Benoi-Vedeno as members of the Yesaev family (the father and two of his sons) and saying that five houses and two automobiles belonging to policemen were burned during the raid. According to the website, the gunmen took an undetermined number of villagers as hostages. Among them was a former village administration head, who was subsequently freed.

Citing "preliminary information," Itar-Tass reported that the gunmen who raided Benoi-Vedeno were members of a group headed by Usman Muntsigov, aka Shatral, who is on a federal wanted list, and that the gunmen escaped in the direction of the Vedeno district village of Dargo. Kavkazky Uzel reported that Muntsigov's group consists of 25-60 people. Russian news agencies reported that at least 25 armed rebels were involved in the raid on Benoi-Vedeno.

The rebel Kavkaz-Center website on June 13 quoted a source "in the command of the Eastern Front of the armed forces of the Caucasus Emirate (commander – Amir Aslanbek)" as saying that a large force of mujahideen had killed 11 "Kadyrovites" and wounded at least 17 in the raid on Benoi-Vedeno. The website claimed that 13 "murtads" (apostates), including "both armed puppets and functionaries of the occupation administration," were seized in the raid, and that the rebel raiders attacked as many as 20 "objects" in the village, burning at least 10 homes of "murtads and accomplices of the Russian kaffirs [infidels]." The Kavkaz-Center report claimed the raiders also seized a large

quantity of weapons and ammunition.

According to Kavkaz-Center, units from the Darginisky sector (headed by Amir Osman), the Tsentaroevsky sector (headed by Amir Savab) and “several mobile units belonging to other sectors of the Eastern Front of the armed forces in Caucasus Emirate” took part in the raid on Benoi-Vedeno. Amir Aslanbek was in charge of overall coordination of the “special operation,” the rebel website reported.

Last week’s attacks were the latest evidence that rebels in Chechnya are stepping up their activities. On June 8, three unidentified gunmen fired on servicemen on the outskirts of the town of Vedeno. No one was hurt in the attack. On June 6, a car carrying the head of the Sunzha district police department was blown up, wounding him and two of his bodyguards. On June 5, a group of people dressed in camouflage fired on an automobile in which four local inhabitants were traveling on the outskirts of the Urus-Martin district village of Goi-Chu, killing one and seriously wounding two others. On June 2, a Mi-8 helicopter ferrying a reconnaissance group was fired on by unknown attackers using automatic weapons as it was landing several kilometers from the Vedeno district village of Oktyabrskoye. One of the 12 contract soldiers on board the helicopter was seriously wounded and the attackers escaped.

Commenting on the upswing in rebel activity, the journalist Vladimir Rechkalov wrote in *Moskovsky Komsomolets* on June 16: “Firing on a helicopter, a raid on a mountain village, two attacks on federal armored columns. Seven killed, eleven wounded, three people taken hostage; five homes, one infantry fighting vehicle, dozens of military and civilian automobiles burned—these are the results of the activity of the gang underground in Chechnya for the first half of June 2008. According to preliminary information, around 100 people acted on the side of the adversary. All of them withdrew without losses. It is a sweet business to fight against a regular army and local government. Especially when the trees are covered with thick foliage, the local ruler is fighting for influence with the federal center and the war has officially ended—and anyone who dares to doubt that finds himself an enemy of stability in the Caucasus.”

Rechkalov continued: “In theory, the militants were supposed to die a natural death this year, going down in history as a morally obsolete political model. Instead, the leader of the underground Dokka Umarov corrected his criminal image, took on a new name—Abu Usman—and carried out, the scoundrel, a series of successful diversionary operations, inflicting not so much material as moral losses on the federal authorities. In less than three weeks, Umarov’s fighters offered their foreign sponsors a whole assortment of their bandit services, from a large-scale attack on a mountain village to an ambush of an FSB column. The geography is practically all of southwestern Chechnya: from Bamut in Achkhoy-Martan district through Chishki in Groznensky district to Benoi-Vedeno in Nozhai-Yurt [district]. The militants demonstrated their stability, and it is premature and criminal to speak of their ideological collapse.” (See Andrei Smirnov’s article in this issue.)

Find this article at:

<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2374253>

Kadyrov Hosts Film Festival, Activists Detained for Photographing Suspect Facility

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov said on June 13 that his “favorite film” is the restoration of Chechnya’s economy, social sphere and culture now taking place. “I can state with certainty that I love to observe, day and night, the grandiose processes connected to the rebirth that is taking place in Chechnya,” Kadyrov told journalists after the opening of the Noev Kovcheg (Noah’s Ark) film festival in Gudermes, Newsru.com reported. “I saw yesterday’s terrible, tragic day in the history of the republic. Today a new day has dawned. That’s my main film. Naturally, I don’t have time to watch films, but I responsibly state that the rebirth of culture [and] the spirituality of the people is for me the most important and main task, and I am sparing neither energy nor resources to realize it. I would like it if Chechnya became an ark for the whole world, if it served as a model for high spirituality, learning and culture of a people. I would also like it if the festival became a yearly thing, with well-known figures in culture, cinema and art coming to Chechnya.”



The Noev Kovcheg film festival opened with “12,” the film by Russian director Nikita Mikhalkov about a young Chechen boy framed for the murder of his stepfather, a Russian military officer. Kadyrov closed the festival, which featured 44 films from 21 countries, on June 19.

Meanwhile, four activists with the Memorial human rights group were detained for several hours in the village of Goiti in Chechnya’s Urus-Martan district after photographing a building in which people have reportedly been illegally detained, Gazeta.ru reported on June 18. The website quoted local law-enforcement officials as saying the Memorial activists did not have permission to take pictures of the building and that local residents had become concerned about the photographing. “People dressed in plain clothes who did not present documents detained our four employees,” Interfax quoted Memorial council member Aleksandr Cherkasov as saying. According to Cherkasov, the people who detained the Memorial activists said the building was a “secret object.” Cherkasov complained that the police were interested not in the crimes that have allegedly taken place inside the building, but in the fact that they might be made public. “We are greatly troubled by this incident,” Cherkasov said.

Gazeta.ru noted the fact that an illegal prison is located in Goiti became known during the investigation of the case involving two residents of Ingushetia, Magomed Osmanovich Aushev and Magomed Maksharipovich Aushev, who were abducted in the Chechen capital Grozny last September and held in Goiti. The brothers were freed following mass protests in Ingushetia (Chechnya Weekly, December 13 and September 13, 20 and 27, 2007). Memorial stated in a report on the North Caucasus issued earlier this year that its investigation had found that people were held, interrogated and tortured in a building in Goiti which formally belongs to the Urus-Martan district internal affairs department (ROVD). Memorial reported that Hussein Mutsolgov, a 21-year-old resident of the village of Surkhakhi in Ingushetia’s Nazran district, who was kidnapped in May 2007 and remains missing, was also held in Goiti (Chechnya Weekly, December 13, 2007). After Kadyrov and other Chechen officials met with Memorial representatives earlier this year, Memorial human rights center board chairman Oleg Orlov said the Chechen officials with whom he met denied the existence of an illegal prison in Goiti (Chechnya Weekly, February 29).

Meanwhile, Gazeta.ru quoted Chechen Interior Ministry officials as saying that the Memorial activists had not been detained but were simply urged to go to the ROVD and explain why they had not informed local officials why they were taking photographs in Goiti. The officials insisted that after Memorial staffers identified themselves and explained their actions, they were allowed to leave. Chechen human rights ombudsman Nurdi Nukhazhiev also insisted that the Memorial activists had not been detained and had in fact violated the established “norms and rules” of an area in which a counter-terrorist operation is being conducted. “We have repeatedly asked Memorial employees to cooperate with local administrations [and] law-enforcement organs, but this is not being done by them,” Gazeta.ru quoted Nukhazhiev as saying.

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Attacks Reported in Ingushetia and Dagestan

A police officer was shot and seriously wounded on June 17 in the Ingushetian city of Karabulak. Itar-Tass, citing Ingushetia's Interior Ministry, reported that Abuyazid Shovkhalov, a 29-year-old officer with the patrol-sentry service (PPS) of the republic's Interior Ministry, was attacked while standing at a bus stop not far from his home and received multiple gunshot wounds. The shooter escaped.

On June 16, the rebel Kavkaz-Center website reported that a "mobile unit of mujahideen" in several cars had attacked a city police (GOVD) building in Nazran with grenade launchers and automatic weapons the previous evening. The website said no one was reportedly hurt or killed in the attack but that Ingushetia's Interior Minister, Musa Medov, had ordered news about the attack to be withheld.

On June 15, unidentified gunmen fired on police personnel who were traveling by car in the city of Malgobek. None of the policemen was seriously hurt, but a local resident who happened to be at the scene was reportedly killed, Interfax reported. Several hours later, unidentified gunmen with automatic weapons fired at servicemen driving in an automobile along the Kavkaz highway in Ingushetia's Sunzha district, the Regnum news agency reported. One of the servicemen reportedly died in the attack while another was wounded.

On June 13, two explosions took place in the center of Nazran, Ingushetia's largest city. Three people were killed and six wounded in the blasts, which destroyed two stores sharing the same roof – a wholesale food store and a wine-vodka store. Among those killed were the owner of the food store and a saleswoman in the liquor store. Newsru.com quoted sources in Ingushetia's Interior Ministry as saying the main theory was that the blasts were caused by a gas explosion, noting that explosives experts had not found evidence of an explosive device at the site of the explosions. Initially, however, a source in the Nazran police department had said the main theory was that the blasts were caused by explosive devices. The source said that one of the stores – presumably the liquor store – had earlier been targeted with leaflets demanding that it close or face "physical punishment."

A blast in Dagestan's capital Makhachkala on June 13 killed one person. Reuters reported that a bomb estimated at 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of TNT equivalent went off near administrative buildings in the city. A jogger, believed to have inadvertently triggered the bomb, died, the news agency reported.

Itar-Tass reported on June 13 quoted a source in the Dagestani department of the Federal Security Service (FSB) as saying that Saipudin Ibragimov, an accomplice of "illegal armed group" leader Askkhab Bidaev, and Bidaev's 18-year-old wife Dzhamilya Ibragimova were killed in a police operation in the village of Bairamaul in Dagestan's Khasavyurt district. The bodies were found under the debris of a private house "flattened" in the police operation, the news agency reported. The FSB source said Bidaev was wanted for a series of grave crimes, including "attacks on police officers and preparations for terrorist acts in the town of Khasavyurt and suburbs."

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Briefs

Four Charged in Connection with Politkovskaya Murder

Four men – three of them Chechens – have been charged in connection with the murder of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya. “Three suspects have been charged with the murder of the journalist: Sergei Khadzhikurbanov, Dzhabrail and Ibragim Makhmudov,” Agence France-Press on June 18 quoted the Investigative Committee as saying in a statement announcing the end of the murder inquiry. The committee said that a fourth man, Federal Security Service (FSB) officer Pavel Ryaguzov, had been charged with abuse of power and extortion in connection with the inquiry. AFP quoted a committee spokeswoman as saying that the suspected trigger man, Rustam Makhmudov, remains at large and that the case is now expected to go to trial but giving no further details about motives or circumstances of the murder. Dmitry Muratov, the editor of Novaya Gazeta, the newspaper where Politkovskaya worked, said the investigation was far from complete considering that neither the person who ordered the contract murder nor the killer had been found. “The case has not been solved,” Gazeta.ru quoted Muratov as saying “This announcement does not satisfy the newsroom or members of Anna Politkovskaya’s family. We insist that this case is followed through.” According to AFP, the Investigative Committee spokeswoman said that all charges have been dropped against Shamil Buraev, a former head of Chechnya’s Achkhoy-Martan district, who was arrested earlier in the investigation (Chechnya Weekly, June 5).

Kadyrov Orders Chechen Siloviki to Dress Properly

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov has ordered the republic’s Interior Ministry to fire employees who do not follow service regulations concerning attire. “There are people strutting around with weapons on the streets of the city [Grozny] and it is difficult to tell from their outward appearance which power structures they belong to,” Gzt.ru on June 17 quoted Kadyrov as saying. “I regard this as negligence with respect to their official duties.”

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Kadyrov's Challenges: Rebels, Russian Generals, and the Yamadaev Brothers

By Andrei Smirnov

"Ramzan Kadyrov, 31, has been Chechnya's leader for a year. During that time, he has managed to silence dissent, pacify the Russian republic and embark on a massive reconstruction campaign. His critics are hard to find, because they have a habit of disappearing." So wrote an American journalist recently in a leading U.S. newspaper (Los Angeles Times, June 18). However, the journalist's description of Kadyrov seems to be already out of date. Kadyrov could be called "a brutal dictator" several months ago, but not now, given that his image as the all-powerful Chechen leader is falling to pieces.



Kadyrov had never had so many serious challenges to his power as he has now. Everything is going against him, with the local insurgency and the Yamadaev brothers, his rivals in the pro-Russian Chechen camp, presenting ever greater challenges. More importantly, Kadyrov seems to have lost trust in the eyes of top Russian military leaders and perhaps Russian political leaders as well.

The statement made by General Vladimir Shamanov—who heads the Russian Armed Forces' Main Directorate for Combat Training and Service—that the Vostok and Zapad battalions will be left intact (see Chechnya Weekly, June 12) can be seen as a setback for Ramzan Kadyrov. Moreover, the influential Russian general went on to say that Sulim Yamadaev, Kadyrov's number one rival, would remain the commander of the Vostok battalion. "Nobody plans to disband the Vostok and Zapad battalions," Vladimir Shamanov told the newspaper *Gazeta*. "I have an order to train its personnel and I have no information that anybody plans to suspend Yamadaev" [as Vostok commander] (*Gazeta*, June 16). The general also promised to strengthen the Vostok battalion by adding experienced Russian officers. One of the Vostok fighters told the newspaper that a month ago a group of Russian officers came to Chechnya to train the battalion. "Russian officers teach us to fight in the mountains," the fighter added.

The aim of the Russian generals simply to improve the fighting capabilities of the Vostok battalion would not be a threat to Kadyrov's absolute power if the Yamadaev brothers were not at the same time manifesting their political ambitions. According to *Gazeta*, Sulim Yamadaev wants to establish a website for the Vostok battalion "to break through the information blockade around the unit." The website will be a part of a TV and radio company that was set up by Isa Yamadaev, one of the Yamadaev brothers (*Gazeta*, June 16).

The website could be just the beginning: the Yamadaevs may try to set up a real TV or radio station that will broadcast in Chechnya from the battalion's base. If that happens, it will mean the appearance of another political center in the Chechen Republic—one which will be independent of Ramzan Kadyrov but at the same time have support from Moscow. It will mean the end of Kadyrov's political monopoly in Chechnya.

Kadyrov is trying his best to persuade the Russian authorities to stop supporting the Yamadaev brothers. In late May, Vladimir Ustinov, the newly appointed Russian presidential envoy to the Southern Federal District, visited Chechnya, where he discussed with Kadyrov ways to improve the regional economy and to make the local population support the Russian authorities rather than the insurgents. Ramzan Kadyrov arranged several meetings between Ustinov and delegations of Chechen civilians living in the republic's lowlands and mountainous areas. Just a week before Ustinov's visit to the republic, relations between the Chechen president and the Russian military command seriously deteriorated following an interview in which Major General Nikolai Sivak, the commander of the Combined Group of Forces in the North Caucasus, said that the Chechen population still supported

the rebels, claims that were fiercely denied by members of Kadyrov's staff (see Chechnya Weekly, May 22 and 29). Kadyrov's main aim was to demonstrate to Ustinov that the Russian generals, not the Chechen Republic administration, should be blamed for failures of the Kremlin's policy towards Chechnya. During Ustinov's meeting with the Chechen civilians, the latter complained that Russian military units interfere in the civilian life of the locals. The civilians complained that the military set up mines on their fields and grasslands, occupy conservation areas, destroy Chechnya's wildlife and so on (Regions.ru, May 29).

Prior to Ustinov's departure from Chechnya, he and Kadyrov visited the base of the 46th Special Brigade of the Interior Forces, which has two Chechen battalions, Sever (North) and Yug (South), whose commanders are loyal to Kadyrov. In doing so, the Chechen president wanted to show off what he considers the real force capable of fighting the insurgency. After Shamanov made his statement on the fate of the Vostok battalion, Kadyrov's client, Chechen parliamentary speaker Dukvakha Abdurakhmanov, said that he would like to invite Shamanov and Sergei Makarov, the newly appointed commander of the North Caucasian Military District, to visit Chechnya to see for themselves the difference between, as Abdurakhmanov put it, "the model 46th Motor Rifle Brigade and the 42nd division of the Russian army that incorporates the notorious Vostok battalion" (Regnum, June 11).

Ustinov and the Kremlin may be happy to let Kadyrov do what he wants as long as Chechnya remains quiet—to help the Chechen president get rid of all his political rivals and withdraw the bulk of Russia's troops from Chechnya—but there is no guarantee that Ramzan Kadyrov can really stop the insurgency in the republic. The Russian generals support the Yamadaev brothers and the Vostok battalion not because they like them, but because they are desperately looking for ways of stopping the new rise of the Chechen insurgency. How can Kadyrov promise to control Chechnya if he cannot even defend Benoi, the village that is the center of his clan, the Benoi teip? Last week a group of rebels entered Benoi and burned the houses of policemen and officers loyal to Kadyrov. The Chechen president failed to respond and only promised monetary compensation to the victims of the rebel raid. At a meeting of Chechen officials that took place in the local capital Grozny on June 18, Ramzan Kadyrov promised that if necessary, he would put on camouflage, take an assault rifle and go to the mountains to fight the rebels by himself (Interfax, June 18). This sounds like hysteria and suggests that Ramzan is losing his confidence, and in Chechnya, the loss of confidence means the loss of power.

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Zakaev's Attempts to Persuade Dokka Umarov are in Vain

By Mairbek Vatchagaev

The developments surrounding the announcement of the Caucasus Emirate by the current leader of the Chechen resistance movement, Dokka Umarov, on November 7, 2007, forced all resistance members as well as those whose sympathies were with the rebels to face the fact that power has been seized by supporters of the radical Islamist movement of Salafism. The decrees announcing the establishment of the Islamic state of the Caucasus Emirate were not actually released until December 2007 (<http://kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2007/12/09/54888.shtml>), which seemed to indicate that Umarov's closest associates abroad were not prepared for this turn of events and had been trying to talk him out of the Emirate idea for two months. Notably, all those who dared to oppose the idea initially—such as Amir Mansur; Zaurbek Avdorkhanov, commander of the Nozhai-Yurt military sector of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (ChRI) armed forces; Ayub Khaladov, commander of the Kurchaloi sector of the ChRI armed forces; Amir Surkho, commander of the Staraya Sunzha diversionary group “SSDG” of the ChRI armed forces; Amir Usman, commander of the Vedeno sector of the ChRI armed forces; Amir Rashid, commander of the Shali sector of the ChRI armed forces—have ultimately conceded that establishing a mythical Islamic state in all of the Caucasus is both necessary and timely (www.chechenews.com, May 3).



The author has already commented on the matter (Chechnya Weekly, January 18), and would now like to focus on a few recently emerged nuances in the internal political squabbles between the radical and the democratic camps. As of right now, everyone except Amir Mansur (who has not been heard from in Chechnya for a long time) has sided with Dokka Umarov and the radicals, although they may not actually subscribe to their ideas. This was the most serious loss for Akhmed Zakaev, who was left leader in name only, without the army or any support of the military resistance movement.

Zakaev's miscalculation was that he tried to jump the gun by taking advantage of his inside knowledge of the correspondence between the resistance leader and his overseas representatives, and by declaring that preparations for a coup d'état were underway before Umarov had a chance to speak. He also insinuated that Umarov's move was made with the full knowledge and financial support of Russia's FSB (<http://chechenpress.org/events/2007/10/23/05.shtml>), which transformed Umarov and Zakaev into instant enemies.

This loss is particularly hurtful to Zakaev, because his close friendship with Dokka Umarov dating back to the first Chechen war made him believe that Umarov would be instrumental in turning his future goals into reality. It is therefore unsurprising that while Zakaev accused Umarov of criminally undermining the constitutional foundations of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, he kept hoping, and probably still does, that Umarov would come to see the light. This was the real motivation behind Zakaev's actions and his continued informal contacts with Umarov—that is, his attempted contacts, given that all communications with the new Amir have to be cleared by Umarov's new team. The latter includes the “founding fathers” of the Islamic revival party in Chechnya (Supian Abdullaev, Issa Umarov, Movladi Udugov, Abdul-Malik Mezhidov), who control the tactics and strategies of the resistance struggle in Chechnya and the entire North Caucasus.

A few days ago Internet web sites controlled by Emirate supporters released an audio recording of Zakaev's appeal to Dokka Umarov (http://www.chechentimes.net/media/zakaev_2.mp3, May 27). Analysis of the recording shows that this was Zakaev's second appeal directed at Dokka Umarov, and that Umarov's response to Zakaev's first audio appeal was already published online but was not addressed to Zakaev directly and either ignored or skirted his questions. Zakaev criticized the manner in which the response was released and made available online, and stated that there should not be that kind of communication between himself and Umarov. Time and again, Zakaev reiterated that he had no quarrel with Dokka Umarov personally and still considered him a very good acquaintance. Zakaev said he believed that their relationship should not be sorted out via the Internet and called for closer contacts.

In his second appeal, which was 47 minutes 32 seconds in length, Zakaev explained his opposition to the Emirate once again and provided a detailed account of the role of Movladi Udugov and his brother Issa Umarov in the announcement of the Islamic state. He also noted that both Aslan Maskhadov and Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev had

emphatically opposed that plan and kept the radical members of the Chechen resistance movement at arm's length. Zakaev asked his audience to examine the past events and their reasons again carefully, and claimed that Dokka Umarov had made the longtime plans of Russia's FSB a reality. Zakaev added that he had unshakeable proof that members of the Islamic revival party controlled by Russia's FSB were behind these events.

The intriguing part of Zakaev's audio address is that he remains convinced that the establishment of the Emirate was an FSB tactic and that the appearance of his first appeal to Umarov online was also an FSB tactic. Notably, Dokka Umarov (perhaps prompted by Issa Umarov and Movladi Udugov) ignored Zakaev's appeal, and by announcing the creation of the Emirate online sent Zakaev a message that he has no intention of listening to him in the future. In all likelihood, the Emirate's leaders wanted to expose the discrepancies of Zakaev's public policies—that is, his official statements and his appeals to Dokka Umarov directly.

In the meantime, video footage of Umarov meeting with a unit of the Achkhoy-Martan sector of the Southwestern Front of the Caucasus Emirate Armed Forces that is being used as a propaganda tool to promote the idea of the Islamic state (<http://www.chechentimes.net/ru/content/blogsection/2/31>) is interesting in several ways. The footage shows that this military unit is composed of approximately 80 men. Shown next to Dokka Umarov are his now-permanent assistants Supian Abdullaev and Issa Umarov, who became obsessed with the idea of forming the Islamic state in the mid-1980s. Notably, many of the fighters are young men aged 18 years or older. The resistance leaders state that “we are alone, no one will help us, we must take our lives into our own hands.” Umarov also claims that Akhmed Zakaev's case will be decided by qadi Anzor Astemirov (chairman of the Sharia Court, one of the top four people in the hierarchy of the entire resistance moment). Coincidentally, Astemirov was the first to provide an explication of the announcement of the Emirate (<http://kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2007/11/20/54479.shtml>).

Against the backdrop of his falling out with Umarov, Zakaev is trying to gain an edge in the political arena. In this department, he has no rivals, given that no one in Europe will want to talk to Umarov's representatives, and appointing such representatives brings nothing useful to Umarov other than moral satisfaction. Astonishingly, the European representative appointed by the Emirate camp is none other than Bukhari Baraev (the father of Movsar Baraev, see <http://generalvekalat.org/content/view/28/30>), who could hardly be popular in Europe given the general sentiment toward his son and the operation he staged at Moscow's Dubrovka theater five and a half years ago. (On October 23, 2002, Movsar Baraev's group took hostage an audience of the Russian musical theater production Nord-Ost performance; 125 people were killed in the security forces' raid to release hostages, during which chemical gas was used.) In time, Dokka Umarov will have to look for allies among those he contemptuously describes as “Euro-Chechens” today.

At the same time, when Akhmed Zakaev makes odd statements referring to the “positive” role of Ramzan Kadyrov (http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2008/05/18/n_1220263.shtml; Chechnya Weekly, May 22 and 29), he runs the risk of losing the allegiance of his few remaining supporters, who continue to see him as the defender of an independent Ichkeria. Zakaev's attempts to provoke a conflict between Ramzan Kadyrov and the Russian government may have been misinterpreted by the public: indeed, Zakaev's statements about Kadyrov triggered a flood of accusations and may push the sympathies of the Chechen populace away from him and toward the Emirate's camp.

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