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1. Overview

“Mit rund drei Millionen Einwohnern ist es die mit Abstand größte kaukasische Teilrepublik, und wegen seiner Lage am Kaspischen Meer bildet es für Russland einen strategisch wichtigen Teil dieser Region. Zugleich leben hier auf einem Territorium von der Größe Bayerns drei Dutzend autochthone Nationalitäten. Damit ist Dagestan das Gebiet mit der größten ethnischen Vielfalt nicht nur im Kaukasus, sondern im gesamten postsowjetischen Raum.“ (SWP, April 2015, p. 5-6 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/302752>))[i]

“Dagestan is now considered both Russia’s most ethnically diverse republic and the region where Islam is most deeply rooted. More than 90 percent of the population is Muslim – 97 percent are Sunni and 3 percent are Shia. Sufism, which emphasizes the mystical dimension of Islam has long been practiced in the North Caucasus and is deeply entwined with Dagestani identity.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 14 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))[ii]

1.1. Religious conflict

“Значительное влияние на разные стороны общественной жизни Дагестана оказывает ислам. [...] Традиционно население здесь исповедовало различные тарикаты (,пути‘) суфийского направления в исламе. До сих пор большинство верующих в республике придерживаются именно этого направления. [...] С 90-х годов прошлого века в республике начало активно распространяться новое для Кавказа религиозное течение – салафизм, или фундаменталистский ислам.” (Memorial, 4 September 2012, p. 8 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242284>))[iii]

“Islam is the majority’s religion, especially in Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia, where the internal factors of the umma (Islamic community) have an increasingly profound impact on society. Most of the region’s Muslims follow a form of Islam perceived as ‘traditional’ in the region because it is deeply interwoven with local customs, practices and beliefs. The east has a strong tradition of Sufism, whose brotherhoods (tariqas) have been in conflict with the Salafis for over a decade. [...] Traditional Muslims are more successfully integrated into the Russian secular system and recognise its institutions and law; their religious boards have become semi-government institutions.” (ICG, 19 October 2012, p. 2

(<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/229353>))[iv]

“Салафиты, которых часто неточно называют ваххабитами, не признают святых и учителей, считая их наличие нарушением принципа единобожия в исламе. Они не признают вкраплений в религиозную практику народных традиций, выступают за упрощение обрядности и буквальное толкование Корана. [...] В Дагестане, в отличие от Чечни, где конфликт начинался как сепаратистский, раскол был изначально как политическим, так и религиозным. [...] В 90-х годах XX века конфликт, тогда еще не вооруженный, происходил как внутри исламских общин в населенных пунктах, так и между представителями духовенства: Духовного управления мусульман Республики Дагестан с одной стороны и лидерами салафитов – с другой. Одновременно нарастало давление на салафитов со стороны государственных силовых структур.” (Memorial, 4 September 2012, p. 8-9 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242284>))

“Towards the end of the decade, the Salafi movement began to spread throughout Dagestan, bringing religious conflict between Sufis and Salafis. By late 1996, the official religious establishment, dominated by Sufi leaders, grew openly hostile to Salafi adherents. Said Muhammad Haji Abubakarov, then head of the pro-government, official Muslim Spiritual Board, made a speech in which he said that ‘any Muslim who kills a Wahhabi will enter Paradise.’” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 15 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“On August 7, 1999, fighters closely linked to Magomedov invaded Dagestan with a group of 1,500-2,000 armed Arab, Chechen, and Dagestani fighters [...] In September 1999, federal authorities began to pursue individuals suspected of involvement in or supporting the August 1999 incursion from Chechnya. This marked the beginning of a concerted, multi-year campaign in which the net was cast widely to include suspected Islamist extremists.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 16 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“После событий 1999 года государство стало привлекать к уголовной ответственности участников и пособников нападения на Дагестан. Тогда же Народное Собрание РД приняло закон ‘О запрете ваххабистской и иной экстремистской деятельности на территории Республики Дагестан’. Внятного определения ‘ваххабизма’, да и ‘экстремизма’, в этом законе нет. В правовом смысле его последствия ничтожны. Однако этот закон создал предпосылки для репрессий: фактически каждый, кто по субъективной оценке сотрудника правоохранительных органов мог быть причислен к приверженцам ‘ваххабизма’, становился жертвой милицейского произвола. Произошло смешение уголовно-правового и религиозного понятий: борьба с терроризмом фактически превратилась в борьбу с приверженцами ‘ваххабизма’ как религиозного течения.” (Memorial, 4 September 2012, p. 9-10 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242284>))

“For almost a decade after the second Chechen war began, Dagestan authorities made no distinction between moderate and radical, violence-oriented Salafis, which contributed to radicalisation of the entire community.” (ICG, 19 October 2012, p. 9 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/229353>))

“A survey in Dagestan has found that 20 percent of the republic’s youth consider themselves moderate Salafis. Only 10 percent of the respondents referred to themselves as Sufis – traditionally the main Muslim branch in Dagestan. The most educated among those who identified themselves as moderate Salafis said they were in favor of mimicking the experience of such countries as Brunei, Qatar, Bahrain

and Oman in bringing norms of sharia into governance in Dagestan. The survey also found that 12 percent of the respondents favor the radical methods of struggle adopted by the North Caucasus militants. It is especially striking that young people openly stated support for rebels in the republic. According to a Dagestani expert on Islam, Ruslan Gereyev, the survey was conducted only in cities, and support for the rebels would have been even higher had the interviews been conducted in rural areas of the republic (www.kavkaz-uzel.ru, December 9).” (Jamestown Foundation, 14 December 2011 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/216670>))[v]

“Весной и летом 2012 года начался диалог и между находившимися в конфликте суфиями и салафитами.” (Memorial, 4 September 2012, p. 5 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242284>))

“The most thorough attempt, after years of violence, to bring Salafis into a dialogue with the state and Sufi leaders, is in Dagestan. The insurgency itself is not interested in dialogue and seeks to undermine it with new terrorist attacks, while the security services also disrupt the process by further heavy-handed measures. [...] The dialogue may have come close to its end with the killing of Sheikh Said Afandi, the most influential sheikh in the North Caucasus, by a newly converted Islamist in his home on 28 August 2012. [...] When the moderate Salafi organisation condemned the killing and called for continuation of dialogue, insurgents threatened its leaders. The leader of the Caucasus Emirate (Imarat Kavkaz), Doku Umarov, made a video asserting that Sufis who do not cooperate with the authorities are ‘brothers in Islam’ and invited them to join jihad.” (ICG, 19 October 2012, p. 3-12 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/229353>))

“Unter Abdulatipow ist der unter seinem Vorgänger Magomedsalam Magomedow erfolgreich installierte Dialog zwischen traditionellen Sunniten und einem gemäßigten Flügel der Salafisten zum Erliegen gekommen. Stattdessen nimmt die staatliche Repression zu.” (AI, October 2013 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/258841>))[vi]

“With the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games fast approaching, in late 2013 the authorities opted for more ‘heavy-handed security policies in the North Caucasus.’ Law enforcement agencies in Dagestan boosted their efforts to control Salafi communities. Police started rounding up, photographing, fingerprinting, and questioning Salafis, and placing them on ‘extremist’ watch lists, a process colloquially known as ‘Wahhabi registration [uchet vakhabitov or vakh-uchet].” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 42 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“Over the past few months most Salafi civic activity in Dagestan has been pushed underground. Moderate leaders have been harassed; some have fled the republic and their projects been closed. The Salafi human rights group ‘Pravozashchita’, which publicised abuses, was targeted, its leaders detained or placed under surveillance and an activist’s home searched. Its outspoken representative in Buynaksk was arrested and, human rights groups said, a criminal case fabricated against her. Since late 2013, the police have been detaining Salafis en masse from cafés, mosques, and homes. [...] Arrests of men with beards or women wearing a hijab have become routine. They are usually released after their documents have been checked and they have been interrogated and fingerprinted. Such practices have visibly radicalised previously moderate believers. [...] Abdulatipov has encouraged the creation of militias to combat extremism. In some cases these are made up of Sufis and have reportedly been involved in inter-confessional violence.” (ICG, 30 January 2014, p. 7-8 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/268585>))

“Mass arrests of Muslims in mosques have become a hallmark of the Dagestani head Ramazan Abdulatipov’s policies. [...] However, some experts say the mass arrests are part of a campaign of harassment against some categories of Muslims in Dagestan and a step backward in the dialogue between religious groups. [...] According to Akhmet Yarlykapov, a Moscow-based expert of Dagestani origin, up to 50 percent of the republic’s Muslims do not subordinate to the official Spiritual Board of Muslims of Dagestan, which is dominated by the Sufi branch of Islam. According to Yarlykapov, government policies against the Salafis could drive them to become an underground movement, which would not be a positive development even though the Salafis would not necessarily turn to violence.” (Jamestown Foundation, 19 May 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/303012>))

“Against the backdrop of multiple killings of young members of the jamaats, Salafi ideology will attract more young people who regard the teaching as the only way of resisting the local authorities who work under Moscow’s auspices. Salafism in contemporary Dagestan has become a serious counterweight to official Sufism, as the latter has undermined its authority by close cooperation with the government. Sufism’s loss of authority is directly linked to the young people’s drift toward joining the ranks of the jihadists.” (Jamestown Foundation, 10 January 2013 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/235015>))

“Mass arrests of parishioners of mosques associated with the Salafist movement have become routine in Dagestan. For example, on July 15, the police cracked down on the mosque on Vengerskikh Boitsov Street, in Makhachkala, when up to 50 parishioners were detained (Newsru.com, July 15). Exactly a month earlier, on June 17, the police detained up to 80 of the mosque’s parishioners (Newsru.com, June 17). The majority of the detainees showed documents issued by the police indicating they had previously been put on the Interior Ministry’s control and prophylactic list. However, the police nonetheless detained them ‘for identification purposes,’ and if they resisted, the police could put them under arrest for 15 days for disobedience. The authorities use various methods of harassment, including mass arrests of mosque parishioners as they exit mosques. Sometimes, the police enter mosques, install a video camera inside and then ask everyone to state their name, surname and address on camera (YouTube, May 9, 2015). According to Dagestan’s Interior Minister Abdurashid Magomedov, the police, using such methods, registered 20,000 adherents of Salafism. The figure may be even larger than the one Magomedov cited in his report for the Dagestani parliament (Regnum, June 2). That there are 20,000 active followers of Salafism in Dagestan is quite impressive. It explains why the republic remains one of the hotbeds of insurgency in southern Russia. [...] The police put not only adults on the ‘prophylactic list,’ but also children as young as two years old. The registration term extends to 2060 - that is, for 40-45 years (Memohrc.org, August 6, 2015). The strategy of the police is unlikely to lower interreligious tensions between Dagestan’s Sufis and Salafists. In 2014–2015, many prominent Salafist leaders fled Dagestan. They included Abu Umar Sasitlinsky, who is now in a Turkish prison, Nadir Abu Khalid, who joined the Islamic State, and others who felt that the government’s stance on Salafists was changing. As the authorities increase pressure on the Salafists, they will increasingly join the underground movements, which will escalate Dagestan’s civil conflict.” (Jamestown Foundation, 29 July 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/327912>))

2. Insurgency in Dagestan

2.1. Development of the insurgency

“Islamist militancy in Dagestan rose in the mid-1990’s, when links developed between Chechen separatist warlords and Dagestan’s Salafi religious community. Ideas of jihad, or holy war, in Dagestan can be traced to 1992, when Bagautdin Magomedov (Kebedov), who came to be known as ‘the father of the Dagestani jihad,’ established a Quranic school in Kizilyurt, a town in Dagestan. By 1996, he explicitly called for holy war against the ‘infidels.’ [...] In the period between the two Chechen wars, from 1997 to 1999, Islamists shuttled between the two republics. On August 7, 1999, fighters closely linked to Magomedov invaded Dagestan with a group of 1,500-2,000 armed Arab, Chechen, and Dagestani fighters, supposedly to support Karamakhi and Chabanmakhi, two self-declared ‘Sharia [Islamic law] mini-states’ influenced by Magomedov’s teachings. Russian troops eventually drove out the militant forces and a month later launched large-scale military operations in Chechnya, which became the second Chechen war. The Republic of Dagestan remained a volatile site of insurgency thereafter. [...] In September 1999, federal authorities began to pursue individuals suspected of involvement in or supporting the August 1999 incursion from Chechnya. This marked the beginning of a concerted, multi-year campaign in which the net was cast widely to include suspected Islamist extremists. Hundreds were arrested. According to the Russian human rights organization Memorial Human Rights Center, the authorities tortured numerous detainees held in this campaign. Abduction-style detentions also became widespread. The majority of those abducted were Salafis.” (HRW, 18. Juni 2015, p. 15-16 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“The Republic of Dagestan has become the principal scene of all the North Caucasian resistance movement in the past two years. Not only does the republic have the largest number of jamaats operating on its territory in the North Caucasus, but it also boasts of having the largest group of people there who are literate in Islamic theology and adhere to the ideas of an all-out jihadism in the region.” (Jamestown Foundation, 17 May 2012 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/221940>))

“With the Kremlin’s appointment of Magomedsalam Magomedov as president of Dagestan in February 2010, the republic’s leadership launched a new, diversified effort to stabilize the republic. Magomedov spoke of the need for political change and pledged to modernize Dagestan’s economy, fight corruption, and encourage outside investment. He also promised a fresh approach toward tackling the insurgency, by stressing the importance of dialogue and guaranteeing the safety of militants who wished to return to ‘normal human life.’” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 19 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“In mid-March, a massive redeployment of military personnel from Chechnya to Dagestan took place. According to unofficial sources from Dagestan, up to 20,000-25,000 troops were moved to the neighboring republic. A military column including large amounts of armored fighting vehicles set out from Khankala, a military base to the east of Grozny, to the Karabudakhkent district of Dagestan on the outskirts of the capital city of Makhachkala.” (CACI, 4 April 2012 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20131230144615/http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5749>))[vii]

“Starting in early October, troops of the Russian Ministry of Defense are again participating in the counterinsurgency campaign in the North Caucasus. [...] In fact, Moscow is actively strengthening its

military presence in the region, with a particular focus on Dagestan. In the spring months of 2012, it deployed up to 25,000 MVD police units to Dagestan, the majority of which had previously been stationed in Chechnya. The recent decision to deploy army units to Dagestan seems to have been made in August or September and confirms that the success of the MVD troops has been limited. Indeed, the police units recruited from all over the Russian Federation and deployed to Dagestan for only a few months have proven incapable of grasping the peculiarities of local counterinsurgency warfare. In addition, the death toll on MVD troops deployed in the Dagestan campaign has increased steadily in recent months.” (CACI, 14 November 2012, p. 3 (<https://www.cacianalyst.org/resources/pdf/issues/20121114analyst.pdf>))

“In January 2013, Putin replaced Magomedov by appointing Ramazan Abdulatipov as Dagestan’s leader. A clear toughening of counterinsurgency strategy largely coincided with the June 2013 call by Caucasus Emirate leader Doku Umarov for ‘maximum force’ to attempt to prevent the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi did from taking place. The Dagestani presidential administration ceased efforts to foster ties with and integrate non-militant Salafis and instead presided over a crackdown on Salafi communities.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 21 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“Hopes for improvement of the security situation in Dagestan gradually dissipate as attacks intensify in the republic. In spite of an anti-corruption campaign introduced by Dagestan’s new acting president, harsher government tactics appear to be matched by more exasperated attacks by the militants, while new anti-insurgency jamaats are formed to avenge the casualties of terrorist attacks.” (CACI, 12 June 2013 (<http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/12756-attacks-in-dagestan-suggest-inefficiency-of-administrative-changes.html>))

“On October 22, government forces deployed in Dagestan’s mountains were significantly reinforced when at least 500 servicemen arrived in the district of Untsukul. Government forces will reportedly also be sent to other districts in Dagestan’s mountainous region to improve the deteriorating security situation in the area.” (Jamestown Foundation, 28 October 2013 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/261412>))

“Dagestan remained the epicentre of insurgent violence in 2013, with a long list of violent confrontations, improvised explosive device (IED) incidents, killings of officials and attacks on shops selling alcohol. It also was subject to a significant number of alleged abuses by security officials. These included illegal detentions, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, falsified criminal cases and torture.” (ICG, 30 January 2014, p. 21 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/268585>))

“In 2013, the total number of victims of the armed conflict in Northern Caucasus decreased as compared to 2012 by 239 people, or by 19.5%. The death toll went down from 700 in 2012 to 529 in 2013, i.e., by 24.4%; the number of wounded persons – from 525 to 457 (by 13%). However losses among civilians went up. [...] In 2013, the highest count of victims was recorded in Dagestan – 641 persons, including 341 people killed and 300 others wounded.” (Caucasian Knot, 31 January 2014 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/269342>))[viii]

“Nearly 70 percent of all militant attacks and victims of such attacks in the North Caucasus take place in the Republic of Dagestan. The center of the region’s political struggle also moved to Dagestan last year, which was connected to the fact that a Dagestani emir, Abu Muhammad (Aliaskhab Kebekov), replaced

the deceased Doku Umarov as leader of the Caucasus Emirate. The new Caucasus Emirate emir endorsed the head of al-Qaeda, Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri (Hunafa.com, June 23, 2014). By supporting al-Zawahiri, Abu Muhammad collided with the leadership of the IS and those North Caucasians fighting under the flag of its leader, Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.” (Jamestown Foundation, 9 January 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/294158>))

“In 2014, Northern Caucasus saw a dramatic reduction of the number of victims of the armed conflict. [...] The statistics for Dagestan, which remained the leader in the number of victims among the regions of Northern Caucasus, shows that the republic preserved its leadership in 2014, except for Quarter 4, when Chechnya had more victims than Dagestan. However, in Dagestan, in 2014, the number of killed and wounded persons went down by 54.3%. The total number of victims of the conflict decreased from 641 people (of which 341 people were killed and at least 300 wounded) in 2013 down to 293 people, including 208 killed and 85 wounded. The number of victims of terror acts dropped 9.9-fold as compared with 2013.” (Caucasian Knot, 31 January 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/298693>))

“Judging by the actions of the militants in Dagestan in February and the beginning of March 2015, a major regrouping in the ranks of the Dagestani jamaat has been completed. After the rebels in Dagestan resolved the issues of command and subordination, they have resumed attacking government forces as in the past.” (Jamestown Foundation, 13 March 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/298712>))

“On April 19, 2015, the Caucasus Emirate’s leader Aliaskhab Kebekov, nom de guerre Ali Abu Mukhammad, was killed in a special operation carried out by Russian elite forces in Dagestan’s Buynaksk district. His death came at a time of profound decline of the North Caucasian jihadists, coupled with the ongoing split in their ranks as an increasing number of fighters and insurgent leaders turn to the Islamic State (IS). (CACI, 29 April 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/302498>))

“Magomed Suleimanov (Abu Usman of Gimry), a Sharia militants' judge and the leader of the armed underground in Dagestan, has been appointed the new leader of the ‘Imarat Kavkaz’ recognized in Russia as a terrorist organization.” (Caucasian Knot, 28 May 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/306080>))

“The leader of the North-Caucasian branch of the ‘Islamic State’ (IS), which has been recognized as a terrorist organization, is the Dagestani commander Abu Mukhammad (Rustam Asildarov). [...] The ‘Caucasian Knot’ has reported that on June 21 a message was posted on the YouTube that militants of four vilayets of the so-called ‘Imarat Kavkaz’, which is regarded in Russia as a terrorist organization, swore their allegiance to Abu-Bakr al Baghdadi, the leader of the above IS (earlier named as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – ISIL). The IS has taken the oath of North-Caucasian militants and announced the establishment of its branch in the region.” (Caucasian Knot, 25 June 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/307080>))

“While observers focused on the shift from the Caucasus Emirate to the Islamic State in the North Caucasus, the news that a single amir from the team of the slain CE leader took an oath of allegiance to the CE went almost unnoticed. The rebel leader who remained loyal to the CE is Said Abu Muhammad Arakinsky, the group’s amir of Dagestan (Kavkazsky Uzel, December 29, 2014).” (Jamestown Foundation, 9 July 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/307313>))

“Despite these setbacks, the CE tried to survive and started to form new military structures in Dagestan (see EDM, August 6). An impression emerged that the two rebel organizations, the CE and the IS, would compete with each other for the right to represent the armed Islamic resistance movement in the region. However, what happened in recent days may change everything: the CE did not simply suffer another round of losses, but lost three of its top commanders, including the leader of the organization. [...] Among the rebels killed was new CE leader Abu Usman Gimrinsky (Magomed Suleimanov), an Untsukul district native. Two other well-known commanders were reportedly also killed—Said Arakansky (Kamil Saidov), amir of the Dagestani Velayat, and Abu Dujan (Abdulla Abdullaev), amir of the Mountainous Sector of the Dagestani Velayat, (Kavpolit.com, August 11). Thus, practically all the top leaders of the Caucasus Emirate were wiped out. Within hours of the incident, the websites that represent the CE confirmed the death of the group’s leadership (Kavkazcenter.com, August 11).” (Jamestown Foundation, 14 August 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/310753>))

“While the governor of Dagestan, Ramazan Abdulatipov, has boasted of a drastic reduction in the number of attacks by insurgents in the republic, the Russian authorities’ statistics indicate that attacks in Dagestan are, in fact, increasing. At a recent meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, in Moscow, Abdulatipov claimed that ‘2014 was the first year that we lived through without terrorist attacks.’ He said Dagestan today is 3.2 times safer than the national average in the country: [...] Dagestani experts point to a number of irregularities in Abdulatipov’s blissful reports. First, they say that the general level of crime in Dagestan has always been quite low. At the same time, the statistics provided by the Russian prosecutor general’s office indicate that the number of terrorism-related crimes have steadily grown in Dagestan over the past several years, and the republic has been at the top of the list in this regard in Russia at least since 2011. In 2011, prosecutors recorded 220 such crimes in the republic; in 2012, the number grew to 295; in 2013, the number of terrorism-related crimes reached 365; in 2014, that number hit 472. In the first six months of 2015, 352 terrorism-related crimes were already recorded (Kavkazskaya Politika, September 4).” (Jamestown Foundation, 16 September 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/311790>))

“Abdurashid Magomedov, Minister of Internal Affairs of Dagestan, has reported that a lot of natives of Dagestan left for Syria with their family members and children. According to the Minister, all of the men who left for Syria are put on the federal wanted list. [...]The Minister has also noted that there are serious hotbeds of tension in the territory of the republic. ‘At present, the main hotbeds of tension are located in the mountainous districts of southern Dagestan, including the Shamil, Khunzakh, Gunib, Tsumada, and Tsuntin Districts,’ the Minister has emphasized.” (Caucasian Knot, 10 December 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/316792>))

“Events in the North Caucasus in 2015 showed that the insurgency in the region continued to decline -a trend first noted in 2011. No official figures on insurgent violence are yet available, but they are likely to be about 50 percent lower than in 2014. [...] The first thing worth noting is that in 2014 the ratio of the killed to the wounded was about 2 to 1. In 2015, the ratio of killed to wounded is likely to be about 4 to 1. Thus, government forces were more likely to kill militants instead of arresting them in 2015 than during the previous year. According to the Federal Security Service (FSB), government forces killed 156 militants across Russia, including 36 leaders of the criminal groups, in 2015. Among them were leaders of the so-called Caucasus Emirate. Russian government forces killed 20 out of the 26 insurgent leaders who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) (Kavtoday.ru, December 20, 2015). The distribution of the casualties across the North Caucasus was about the same in 2015 as in previous years. Dagestan had the

greatest number of insurgency-related deaths, followed by Kabardino-Balkaria, Chechnya and Ingushetia.” (Jamestown Foundation, 7 January 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/317550>))

“Auch in Dagestan, der Hauptkrisenregion des Nordkaukasus, sanken die Zahlen: 2014 mindestens 208 Getötete, 2013 noch 271 und im Jahr zuvor 410. Dieser Trend hielt im Jahr 2015 an: Laut der russischen Internetzeitung Caucasian Knot wurden im Nordkaukasus mindestens 209 Menschen – davon rund 135 in Dagestan – getötet. Ursache für den erheblichen Rückgang dürfte sein, dass sich seit 2015 vermehrt Kämpfer aus dem Nordkaukasus dem IS in Syrien und im Irak angeschlossen haben.” (BAMF, 25 January 2016, p.4 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/318288>))[ix]

“In 2015, Russia changed its assessment of threats, shifting its focus from the Caucasus Emirate to members of the so-called Islamic State (IS). The Russian government’s concern is not so much about the numbers of people who went to Syria and may return, but rather the possible influence the ideas of the IS might have among Russia’s 20 million Muslims. The activities of the IS in the North Caucasus also should be evaluated in the context of the armed Islamic underground movement and those Salafists who sympathize with it. According to Dagestan’s governor, Ramazan Abdulatipov, only 643 residents of the republic are fighting in the ranks of the IS. Dagestani Interior Minister Abdurashid Magomedov estimated the number of Dagestani IS recruits at 900 as of December 2015 (Kavkazsky Uzel, December 10, 2015). Abdulatipov must have meant only those individuals who went to Syria and whose involvement in insurgent activities has been confirmed. The Russian Ministry of Interior claims that jointly with the Federal Security Service (FSB), it is monitoring over 2,800 Russian citizens who went to fight in Syria and Iraq. In addition, the interior ministry launched criminal investigations into 889 militants who returned from the Middle East.” (Jamestown Foundation, 8 January 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/317552>))

“In an attempt to decrease tensions in the North Caucasus, the Russian authorities set out to register all potential extremists who might carry out a terrorist attack, in the opinion of the police and the Federal Security Service (FSB). Since the start of 2016, reports started to emerge detailing the number of extremists and their locations. In Dagestan alone, the authorities reportedly registered 14,000 people as potential extremists (Riadagestan.ru, March 3). According to the Prosecutor General’s Office of Dagestan, the authorities registered at least 15,000 potential extremists (Chernovik.net, March 1). A member of the Council for Human Rights under the President of Russia, Maksim Shevchenko, says the Dagestani authorities registered about 100,000 people as potentially unreliable (Echo.msk.ru, February 25). The estimates of extremists in Dagestan are quite high, especially given that there are about 21,000 police officers in the republic.” (Jamestown Foundation, 24 March 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/321651>))

“In den vergangenen Jahren hat sich im Nordkaukasus die Hauptkonfliktzone von Tschetschenien weg in die Nachbarrepublik Dagestan verlagert, zum Teil auch nach Inguschetien und Kabardino-Balkarien [...] Seit 2012 hält der Rückgang von Getöteten im Nordkaukasus an. 2015 starben bei Anschlägen und Kämpfen zwischen Sicherheitskräften und separatistischen bzw. islamistischen Aufständischen 209 Personen (2014: 341; 2013: 529; 2012: 700). Auch wenn in Dagestan ebenfalls ein deutlicher Rückgang der Opferzahlen zu verzeichnen ist, bleibt diese Nordkaukasus-Republik der Schwerpunkt von Gewalt und Todesopfern. 2015 wurden mindestens 126 Menschen (2014: 208; 2013: 271; 2012: 410) getötet. Nach Erkenntnissen der russischen Internetzeitung Caucasian Knot wurden im Nordkaukasus im 1. Hj.

2016 rund 70 Menschen getötet, davon 53 in Dagestan und vier in Tschetschenien.” (BAMF, 12 September 2016, pp. 3-4 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/329747>))

“Armed confrontations between Islamist insurgents and law enforcement agencies continued in the North Caucasus, particularly in Dagestan. Russia media continued to report on North Caucasus residents leaving Russia and joining the Islamic State (also known as ISIS) as well as on cases of detentions of North Caucasus residents allegedly affiliated with ISIS. Salafi Muslim communities in Dagestan were subject to intense scrutiny and harassment as law enforcement largely equated them with insurgents or their collaborators. Authorities placed Salafis on watch lists, repeatedly detained and questioned many of them without specific grounds; raided Salafi mosques; and carried out mass detentions of believers. They closed several Salafi mosques, including in Makhachkala, Dagestan’s capital.” (HRW, 12 January 2017 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/334746>))

“Violence continued in the North Caucasus republics, driven by separatism, interethnic conflict, jihadist movements, vendettas, criminality, excesses by security forces, and the activity of terrorists. Media reported that in 2015 the total number of deaths and injuries due to the conflicts in the North Caucasus decreased significantly compared with 2014 in all republics of the North Caucasus. According to human rights activists in the region, violence in Dagestan continued at a high level. Dagestan remained the most violent area in the North Caucasus, with approximately 60 percent of all casualties in the region in 2015. Local media described the level of violence in Dagestan as the result of Islamic militant insurgency tactics continuing from the Chechen conflict as well as of the high level of organized crime in the region.” (USDOS, 3 March 2017 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/337201>))[x]

„In den vergangenen Jahren hat sich im Nordkaukasus die Hauptkonfliktzone von Tschetschenien weg in die Nachbarrepublik Dagestan verlagert.“ (BAMF, 13 February 2017, p. 6 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/337697>))

“The discovery of what appears to be a sizeable Islamic State (IS) cell in the Russian city of Khasavyurt, located in the North Caucasian republic of Dagestan, has sparked numerous violent confrontations as long-simmering tensions between Russian authorities and adherents of Salafism in the region erupt once again into open hostilities. [...] Insurgent activity in Dagestan is once again on the rise. Officials in Makhachkala, Dagestan’s capital, recently estimated there are 1,200 Dagestanis fighting for IS in Syria, while deaths from the conflict in Dagestan rose 33 percent in 2016 (Caucasian Knot, January 31). January alone has seen Dagestan mount five counterterrorism operations, several of them aimed at countering the Khasavyurt Group.” (Jamestown Foundation, 10 February 2017 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/336900>))

“Madina works in a children's center in Makhachkala, the capital of Russia's North Caucasus Republic of Daghestan. In January, she was stopped at a routine traffic roadblock. That's when she learned that she is on the extremism-prevention watch list of the local Interior Ministry branch. [...] Daghestan President Ramazan Abdulatipov has said he estimates there are about 10,000 ‘Wahhabis’ in his republic. The head of the regional Interior Ministry branch, Abdurashid Magomedov, has mentioned a figure of 16,000 ‘extremists.’ Activists suspect as many as 20,000 people may be on the list. [...] The report says that many of the people on the list are not radical Wahhabis or Salafis but rather are ‘representatives of traditional Islam (Sufis).’” (RFE/RL, 5 June 2017 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/341319>))

“In June, authorities stated that the Interior Ministry for Dagestan, in the south of Russia, was no longer placing ‘adherents of non-traditional Islam’ on police watchlists. However, persecution of Salafi Muslims, including arbitrary detentions and harassment, continued.” (HRW, 18 January 2018 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/1422501.html>))

“Official assertions that the conflict was over were contradicted not only by experts but by the actions of both the militants and the Russian forces. Indeed, the former have been attacking in places where they had not been active before, such as Stavropol and Karachaevo-Cherkessia, as well as in Dagestan, where the militancy has continued throughout the year. Meanwhile the latter imposed ‘counter-terrorism regimes’ in more places in 2017 than they had earlier, albeit in many cases for shorter periods of time. Nonetheless, there is no reason to think that the militants have been defeated or that peace has come to the region (Kavkazsky Uzel, accessed January 9, 2018).” (Jamestown Foundation, 9 January 2018 (/en/document/1421338.html))

“In 2017, an overall decrease in the number of victims to the armed conflict in the regions of Northern Caucasian occurred against the backdrop of an increase in the number of civilian casualties. This is evidenced by the calculations run by the ‘Caucasian Knot’. [...] The decrease in the number of victims to the armed conflict in Northern Caucasus may be associated with an improvement in the situation in Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria. In 2017, the above republics maintained the tendency to a decrease in the number of victims and armed incidents. So, in 2017, in Dagestan, the number of victims to the armed conflict decreased by 149 people (from 204 down to 55) in comparison with 2016. The decrease in the number of armed incidents can be explained by the fact that in 2017, according to reports of the law enforcement bodies, leaders of several militant groups were killed. Meanwhile, it cannot be argued that all of them really stayed at high positions in the hierarchy of militants.” (Caucasian Knot, 14 March 2018 (/en/document/1427130.html))

“Violence continued in some North Caucasus republics, driven by jihadist movements, interethnic conflict, personal and clan-based vendettas, and excesses by security forces. According to statistics compiled by the Caucasian Knot, the total number of deaths and injuries during the year resulting from armed the conflict decreased to 173 (125 deaths, 48 injured) from 280 (198 deaths, 82 injured) in 2016 across the North Caucasus. Dagestan remained the most violent area in the North Caucasus, accounting for approximately 32 percent of all casualties in the region during the year, although according to the Caucasian Knot, the overall number of casualties in Dagestan decreased by 73 percent. Local media described the level of violence in Dagestan as the result of Islamic militant insurgency tactics dating back to the Chechen conflict as well as of the high level of organized crime in the region. Chechnya was a close second, accounting for 25 percent of all casualties in the region.” (USDOS, 20 April 2018, Section 1g (/en/document/1430116.html))

“The Dagestan government places the exact number of Dagestani returnees from jihad in Syria or Iraq at 108 since 2014, with 86 under criminal investigation. [...] Kadyrov’s government, meanwhile, in contrast to neighbouring Dagestan, has proclaimed a ‘safe corridor’ for women returning from Syria.” (ICG, 26 March 2018 (/en/document/1427995.html))

“The past few years have seen violence increase again, however, as the insurgency in Dagestan has evolved – although levels of bloodshed remain considerably lower than during the peak years (47 people were killed in armed conflict in 2017, compared to 413 in 2011). [...] The nature of the insurgency also appears to have changed. The network of often sizeable and seasoned insurgent groups of several years ago has been replaced by small, diffuse and concealed bands or ‘sleeper cells’, often comprising only a handful of recruits. According to a defence lawyer in Khasavyurt: ‘Full-scale recruitment is going on [in detention centres]. Some of my clients, who didn’t even pray, have visibly radicalised. They told me about the peer pressure there, how they were brainwashed’.” (ICG, 5 July 2018 (/en/document/1438813.html))

“Law enforcers have achieved a ‘significant breakthrough’ in combating the armed underground in Dagestan, but eight militants are still wanted, Abdurashid Magomedov, the head of the Dagestani Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), has announced. On January 14, the head of Dagestan, Vladimir Vasiliev, was present at the extended MIA Collegium, where police bosses have summed up their work in 2018. Abdurashid Magomedov, the Minister, has emphasized the results of the MIA's counterterrorist activities. ‘To date, the activities of the bandit groupings that were active in the republic are virtually completely suppressed. Eight members of the [armed] underground, who are reportedly hiding abroad, remain on the wanted list,’ the website of the Dagestani MIA quotes the Minister as saying.” (Caucasian Knot, 15 January 2019 (/en/dokument/1456360.html))

“The news website Caucasian Knot reported that at least 50 deaths in the North Caucasus resulted from clashes with security forces in the region during the first half of the year. Dagestan was the most affected region in the first half of the year with 25 deaths, followed by Chechnya, where 15 persons were killed, and Ingushetia, where eight persons were killed.” (USDOS, 13 March 2019, Section 1a (/en/dokument/2004290.html))

“Despite the decrease of the terrorist threat, the likelihood of new attacks undertaken by single terrorists persists in Dagestan, journalists and political analysts have stated.

The ‘Caucasian Knot’ has reported that on March 20, Magomed Baachilov, the head of the Dagestani branch of the ‘Rosgvardia’ (Russian National Guard), announced the absence of active members of the armed underground in the republic.” (Caucasian Knot, 24 March 2019 (/en/dokument/2005467.html))

2.2. Attacks and violations of human rights

“Across town in an outlying, concrete-block neighborhood, Svetlana Isayeva runs the group Mothers of Dagestan for Human Rights from a tiny ground-floor office. She started the organization after her 25-year-old son disappeared from the street outside her home three years ago. A stoic, dark-haired woman, Isayeva says many young men like him are detained by security forces, especially those who attend mosques and show other signs of religious piousness. She says they're forced to confess to terrorism and often killed. ‘Lately it's become common among law enforcers to burn people alive in their cars,’ she says. ‘Then they're accused of blowing themselves up by accident.’” (RFE/RL, 4 November 2011 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/205155>))[xi]

“Похищения и насильственные исчезновения людей по-прежнему остаются одной из

распространенных форм грубейших нарушений прав человека в Дагестане. За годы сложилась целая система незаконного насилия, включающая в себя неотъемлемые элементы – похищение людей, применение к ним пыток и осуществление внесудебных казней части похищенных. В Дагестане объектом похищений обычно становятся люди, исповедующие фундаменталистское направление ислама (салафизм), именно их силовики подозревают в пособничестве или причастности к вооруженному подполью. В Дагестане, как и в других республиках Северного Кавказа, нередко похищают и впоследствии убивают идеологов этого течения, тех, кому сложно предъявить официальные обвинения, но кого силовики считают ‘опасными’. Впрочем, среди похищенных есть люди, не принадлежащие к салафитскому течению.” (Memorial, 4 September 2012, p. 48-49 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242284>))

“Die Dagestan-Spezialistin Ekaterina Sokiryanskaya berichtet von illegalen Verhaftungen und Misshandlungen von Personen, denen religiöser Extremismus vorgeworfen wird. Häuser von Angehörigen der Aufständischen seien in Brand gesetzt worden, so Sokiryanskaya. Staatlich geduldete Bürgerwehren würden die Bewohner einschüchtern. Tatsächlich treibe man mit diesen Methoden einen Teil der Opposition in die Hände der Aufständischen.” (AI, October 2013 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/258841>))

“In March, the security services in Dagestan revived an environmentally dangerous tactical tool for fighting the regional insurgency—arson attacks on forests. Multiple media outlets and Internet social media confirmed reports of forest fires in several districts in the republic.” (Jamestown Foundation, 1 April 2014 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/272924>))

“Few Russians, however, are interested in the rising number of kidnappings by government forces in Dagestan. Kidnappings are a way of putting pressure on the relatives of the militants or on their sympathizers—or, more generally, on Salafis.” (Jamestown Foundation, 15 May 2014 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/276494>))

“Media and local human rights groups have also reported on more than a dozen cases in 2013 and 2014 in which law enforcement and security forces blew up homes belonging to people whose relatives are suspected insurgents.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 28 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“Young men who are abducted by government forces in Dagestan are frequently found dead at the scene of a special operation (Chernovik.net, May 29). The government then declares them to have been rebels.” (Jamestown Foundation, 5 June 2015 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/304481>))

“The manner in which law enforcement and security personnel commonly detain suspects is one of the most distinctive abuses in the counterinsurgency campaign in Dagestan. Often these personnel do not identify themselves, show warrants, inform the detainee or their relatives where they are taking them, or the grounds for the detention, or provide timely access to a lawyer of one’s own choosing. In some cases, detentions are part of a highly visible operation in which security officers, backed by police, take suspects into custody without explanation or showing warrants. In other cases, the person is ambushed by men who sometimes wear masks and bundle detainees into a car and drive them to unknown destinations. These circumstances have led families and Russian human rights groups to refer to this pattern as abductions. Those targeted are typically young men who are suspected of having some link to the insurgency through

family or other ties, are Salafis, or went to mosques frequented by Salafis. In some cases, the detainees may never be seen or heard from again: they are victims of enforced disappearances. In others, they may be initially forcibly disappeared but do show up within a few days in a detention facility, tortured, or threatened into signing confessions without the presence and advice of a lawyer.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 48 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“Attacks on police in the streets or on their offices are among the most frequent tactics used by insurgents in their assault on the authorities. Non-police victims are common and in some cases, the assailants attempted to magnify the killings by detonating a small bomb first and then a larger one when police rescue workers and sometimes civilians have gathered.” (HRW, 18 June 2015, p. 84 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/305566>))

“As part of their counterinsurgency efforts, law enforcement and security in Dagestan largely equated Salafi Muslims with insurgents or their collaborators. Police put Salafis on special watch lists, repeatedly detaining, questioning, photographing, and fingerprinting them -often without grounds - and in some cases carried out forced DNA sampling. Police also raided Salafi mosques across Dagestan and conducted numerous, abusive special operations using excessive force in detaining suspects and holding them incommunicado in undisclosed locations.” (HRW, 27 January 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/318397>))

“Seven residents of Khasavyurt, four residents of Kaspiysk, and a native of Dagestan, who came from abroad to visit his relatives in Makhachkala, were kidnapped in the period from September 19 to October 4. These are the results of the calculations run by the Human Rights Centre (HRC) ‘Memorial’. [...] The kidnapped men were not on the police prevention registration lists, reports the website of the HRC ‘Memorial’ with reference to relatives of the disappeared people.” (Caucasian Knot, 6 October 2016 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/331020>))

“While legal repression may be the norm in much of Russia, the situation within Russia’s North Caucasus area, particularly in Dagestan and Chechnya, has been described by Memorial as ‘legalized terror.’ There, anyone suspected of practicing ‘nontraditional’ Islam or of having any link to the ongoing Islamic insurgency is at risk of being disappeared by the security services; in Dagestan, Memorial recorded 13 disappearances linked to the security services between September and November 2016 alone. Peaceful Muslims, human rights lawyers, independent journalists, and religious freedom activists have been threatened, assaulted, and killed.” (USCIRF, 26 April 2017 (<http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/340185>)) [xii]

3. Timeline of attacks in Dagestan

Please note: Although a lot of information on the Russian Federation is available in Russian language only, currently only selected Russian documents are available on ecoi.net. No Russian language publisher is currently among the sources regularly covered by ecoi.net. The following timeline therefore does not purport to be an exhaustive list of attacks in Dagestan, but shall serve as an overview and introduction to the subject.

Please also see the archived versions of this featured topic for a timeline for previous years:

For 2011, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/220655> (/en/document/220655)

For 2012, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/242518> (/en/document/242518)

For 2013, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/270091> (/en/document/270091)

For 2014, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/293185> (/en/document/293185)

For 2015, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/323719> (/en/document/323719)

For 2016, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/339024> (/en/document/339024)

For 2017, see <http://www.ecoi.net/en/document/358745> (/en/document/358745)

For 2018, see <https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/2001764> (/en/document/2001764)

“In total, according to the "Caucasian Knot", in 2018, 49 people fell victim to the armed conflict in Dagestan, of which 36 people were killed and 13 were wounded. [...] Statistics shows that the majority, 75%, of all those killed in the conflict in Dagestan were counted as militants (27 deaths out of 36 in total).” (Caucasian Knot, 2 February 2019 (/en/document/1457453.html))

2019

May

“On May 24, in the course of a counterterrorist operation (CTO) conducted in the Kizilyurt District of Dagestan, when inspecting a private house in the village of Sultan-Yangi-Yurt, a group of armed persons shelled law enforcers. Three militants were killed by return fire. Automatic firearms and ammunition were found in the venue. The casualties were not local residents, the head of the village has stated.” (Caucasian Knot, 27 May 2019 (/en/document/2009805.html))

February

“A militant who was plotting a terror act was killed during a shootout with law enforcers in the Derbent District of Dagestan, the National Antiterrorist Committee (NAC) announced and reported on the completion of the counterterrorist operation (CTO). The ‘Caucasian Knot’ has reported that the CTO legal regime has been introduced today in the Derbent District of Dagestan. Sources from the law enforcement bodies reported a shootout with militants cordoned off in a house in the village of Belidji.” (Caucasian Knot, 19 February 2019 (/en/document/1458276.html))

January

“In the Karabudakhkent District of Dagestan, law enforcers have killed three persons, who attacked a post of the road-and-patrol service (known as DPS), the Russian National Antiterrorist Committee (NAC) has reported. On Friday, January 11, three men, who arrived in a car, attacked a DPS post in the Kizilyurt-Makhachkala section of the ‘Kavkaz’ Highway. Policemen began pursuing the car and caught up with it near the village of Agachaul. In response to the demand to lay down arms, the criminals opened fire on the policemen; as a result of a shootout, the three attackers were shot dead, the ‘Interfax’ reports with reference to the NAC.” (Caucasian Knot, 12 January 2019 (/en/document/1456353.html))

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[i] The German Institute for International and Security Affairs of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) is an independent scientific establishment that conducts practically oriented research on the basis of which it then advises the Bundestag (the German parliament) and the federal government on foreign and security policy issues.

[ii] Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights.

[iii] Memorial is an independent non-governmental group encompassing more than 80 national and regional organisations in 7 countries and, since its formation in 1988, has the objective of accounting for political prisoners and victims of the Stalin era. Over recent years Memorial has developed a network for reporting ongoing human rights violations in the Russian Federation and other countries of the former Soviet Union.

[iv] The International Crisis Group (ICG) is a transnational non-profit, non-governmental organisation that carries out field research on violent conflict and advances policies to prevent, mitigate or resolve conflict.

[v] The Jamestown Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organisation that provides information on terrorism, the former Soviet republics, Chechnya, China, and North Korea.

[vi] Amnesty International (AI) is a non-governmental organisation focused on human rights.

[vii] The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute (CACI) constitutes together with the Silk Road Studies Program an independent and privately funded Transatlantic Research and Policy Center.

[viii] Caucasian Knot is an internet mass medium with a human rights orientation that provides information on the Caucasus. It was founded in 2001 by the human rights organisation Memorial.

[ix] The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is a centre of excellence for migration, integration and asylum. It is responsible for conducting asylum procedures, granting refugee protection and supporting integration nationwide. Its duties also include migration and integration research –it has a legally grounded research mandate to collect analytical information on steering immigration.

[x] The US Department of State (USDOS) is the US federal executive department responsible for the international relations of the United States, equivalent to the foreign ministry of other countries.

[xi] Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a broadcaster funded by the U.S. Congress that provides news, information, and analysis to countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

[xii] The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is an independent governmental body for monitoring freedom of religion or belief abroad.

This featured topic was prepared after researching within time constraints. It is meant to offer an overview on an issue and is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status, asylum or other form of international protection. Chronologies are not intended to be exhaustive. Every quotation comes from a document available on ecoi.net and is referred to with a hyperlink to the respective document on ecoi.net.

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