

Kyrgyzstan

Rice

Upon independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the presidency of Kyrgyzstan passed to Askar Akayev, who had been appointed by the Supreme Soviet to lead the country prior to independence. Akayev was confirmed as president with elections in October of 1990 (United States Department of State 2010). In 1991, as the USSR was dissolving, there was an attempted coup against Akayev, resulting in his resignation from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (hence why he is labeled as being nonpartisan) (United States Department of State 2010). Kyrgyzstan then declared its independence from the USSR, and Akayev was reconfirmed as President in elections (where he ran unopposed).

Akayev served as President until 2005. During his time in office, Geddes classifies Kyrgyzstan as being a personalist state. In 2005, accusations of widespread fraud during parliamentary elections led to demonstrations across Kyrgyzstan. By March 24, 15,000 protestors had gathered to call for the resignation of the president and the government (United States Department of State 2010). The demonstrators then seized the presidential administration building, and President Akayev fled the country for Kazakhstan, and later moved to Russia. For one day (between March 24-25), the presidency passed to the Speaker of Parliament, Ishenbay Kadyrbekov. (Archigos does not code Kadyrbekov so we don't either.) Opposition leaders then formed the "Committee for National Unity", and named Kurmanbek Bakiyev, one of the members of the opposition People's Movement of Kyrgyzstan (KEK), as both President and Prime Minister. This is a SOLS change. Bakiyev was a leading founder of the KEK (People's Movement of Kyrgyzstan) in 2004, which was an umbrella organization of opposition parties. In 2005, the Tulip revolution forced the Akayev out of office and Bakiyev initially became acting President (Hiro) and then was elected President. Bakiyev ran unopposed for president, without a specific party platform. Bakiyev remained in office until 2010, which is outside of the year range of this study. However, in 2007 he changed his party affiliation to a self-created party named the Ak Zhol or "Bright Path" (AZ).

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