

## Tajikistan

Rice

Like the other former members of the USSR, Tajikistan gained independence in 1991. It immediately fell into a civil war, which lasted from 1992 until 1997. The conflict was between the so-called “old guard”, democratic liberal reformists, and Islamists (United States Department of State 2009). Initially, before independence in 1991, the Acting President was Kadreddin Aslonov, a member of the KPT (Communist Party of Tajikistan), who was in office from August 31 to September 23, 1991. Aslonov was ousted by the “old guard”, and Rakhmon Nabiyev was installed as President. With Nabiyev having previously served as the First Secretary of the KPT, we have chosen not to code this transition as a SOLS change. Nabiyev was only in office until October 6, when he resigned to participate in the campaigns for presidential elections. The presidency then went to Akbarsho Iskandarov, who did not have a party affiliation, but served as the Speaker of the Supreme Soviet and was apparently an associate of Nabiyev (Library of Congress 1996). Iskandarov is also listed as “acting”, and was in office until presidential elections were held in December 1991. For that reason, we have also not coded his time in office as a SOLS change. In the elections of December, Nabiyev was elected as President. During this time, Geddes codes Tajikistan as being a single-party state, and as Nabiyev was still a member of the KPT (which at this point had changed its name to be the Socialist Party of Tajikistan), his return to office is also not coded as a SOLS change. Tajikistan became independent on December 26, 1991, when Nabiyev was already in power and the country was a single-party state.

In 1992, at the height of the civil war, Nabiyev assembled a national guard force, but the opposition also armed itself and staged demonstrations, which eventually led to violent confrontations. In August 1992, Nabiyev was seized at gunpoint and forced to resign (Library of Congress 1996).. He was again replaced by Iskanderov. This is not a SOLS change. However, Iskanderov was unable to broker an agreement between the warring factions, and in November, his government stepped down. The Supreme Soviet met, and abolished the office of President. At that point, the Speaker of Parliament, Imomali Rakhmonov became the head of state. From that point to the present day, Geddes classifies Tajikistan as a personalist state, and since this is technically a regime change (from single party), we have coded Rakhmonov’s assumption of office as a SOLS change. Rakhmonov initially did not have an official party affiliation, but did get his start in politics through the Communist party. Rakhmanov was elected Communist Party chairman in 1992 and president in 1994. Apart from the Communist Party, Rakhmanov has no clear party affiliation. He was a member of the Kolyab clan (also known as Kulobi), however, and had risen through the Kolyab regional executive Soviet (Brown 1996). Like other leader of central Asian states, he relied on his clan for support and provided his fellow clan with important positions in government. Seddon (2004), for example, argues that Rakhmanov’s support originated from the People’s Front forces, which originated from the Southern Kolyab and Kurgan-Tube regions as well as from members of the northern economic elite of Leninabad. The other source of leadership support was provided by Russia, as Tajikistan experienced constant internal conflict during the 1990’s (Seddon 2004, Anonymous 1994). Collins (2006) suggests that because Rakhmonov did not have the broad legitimacy that would be provided by pact between the most influential clans - as occurred in some of

the neighboring countries - he established the Hizbi Demokrati-Khalkii Tojikston (People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan - HDKT) in 1998. Until 1998, some of his source of support came from the Kolyab Clan and the People's Front forces (Seddon 2004, Anonymous 1994). To gain broader legitimacy, in 1998 became a member of the pro-presidential HDKT (People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan). He remains in power in the present day (Collins 2006).

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