

Energy Security and Democratic Development: the case of Central Asia

Filmsaal, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Dahlmannstraße 4, 53113 Bonn, Germany

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An international seminar organised by FRIDE and the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) in co-operation with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in the framework of the European Development Co-operation to 2020 (EDC 2020) project

AGENDA

09.00 – 09.30 Registration

09.30 – 09.45 **Introduction**

- **Marion Urban**, East Asia, Central Asia Division, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Bonn
- **Thomas Lawo**, Executive Secretary, The European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), Bonn
- **Jos Boonstra**, Senior Researcher, FRIDE, Madrid

An outline of the project: The aim is to examine the links within EU policies between development cooperation, energy security and the promotion of good governance

09.45 – 11.00 **Assessing three years of implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia**

Chair:

- **Jos Boonstra**, Senior Researcher, FRIDE, Madrid

Speakers:

- **Jenniver Sehring**, Political Adviser to the EUSR for Central Asia, Council of the European Union, Brussels
- **Jörn Grävingholt**, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute, Bonn



In this opening session the EU Strategy for Central Asia is reviewed with a focus on linking energy security to democratic development. Has the EU been able to foster an energy security policy towards Central Asia and if so, is there a link to the democratic values the EU claims to promote? This session is meant to set the scene for the more in-depth case study sessions focusing on Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan.

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 – 13.00 **Energy Security and Democratic Development: the case of Turkmenistan**

Chair and introduction:

- **Neil Melvin**, Director, Armed Conflict Programme, SIPRI, Stockholm

Speakers:

- **Michael Denison**, Research Director, Control Risks, London
- **Jacqueline Hale**, Senior Policy Analyst, Open Society Institute, Brussels
- **Michael Laubsch**, President, Eurasian Transition Group, Bonn

In the European Union's energy policy diversification of supply has become a key element, with the construction of the Southern Energy Corridor a priority. Providing energy resources from Central Asia that are necessary if the energy corridor is to function will be complicated. There will be a host of geo-political issues including the relationship with Russia, the status of the Caspian Sea, and relations between Central Asian countries and between Central Asian countries and those of the South Caucasus that will need to be resolved before energy can pass along the corridor.

Forging a closer energy linkage with the countries of Central Asia will bring the EU into a substantially different relationship with the states and societies of the region, including Turkmenistan that boasts a huge potential in gas reserves. Turkmenistan is also amongst the most authoritarian states in the world and is regularly accused of the systematic and widespread violation of human rights. The wider region faces significant security challenges and the prospect of an unstable future. With the EU committed to the promotion of its 'values abroad', will an engagement in Central Asia in general and with Turkmenistan specifically focused on energy issues be sustainable for the EU? Does this entail political costs internally and/or abroad? Moreover, will there be implications for Turkmenistan as a society if the EU engages more strongly on energy as well in trying to help open up Turkmenistan to other forms of cooperation?



13.00 – 14.15 Lunch

14.15 – 15.45 **Energy Security and Democratic Development: the case of Kyrgyzstan**

Chair and introduction:

- **Klaas van der Tempel**, senior researcher fellow, Clingendael and former Dutch Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, The Hague

Speakers:

- **Tulkinzhon Umaraliyev**, Kyrgyzstan coordinator of the blogging project neweurasia.net, Bishkek
- **Andrea Schmitz**, Researcher, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin
- **Neil Melvin**, Director, Armed Conflict Programme, SIPRI, Stockholm

Kyrgyzstan has been badly governed, suffered energy shortages and is among the poorest countries of the region. The mass ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan's southern city of Osh last June and the flows of refugees to Uzbekistan show that the country is highly unstable and spill-over to neighbouring countries is a serious threat. Nonetheless, the April revolution in Kyrgyzstan brought the stability and democratisation question back to the table of international donors, including the EU. This question is clearly linked to energy issues, as demonstrated by the role of staggering energy prices and shortages partly caused by endemic corruption as one of the key reasons for the Kyrgyz revolt. However, Kyrgyzstan has the potential to increasingly develop hydro-power which might promote a greater energy balance across the region and could also serve as the basis for cooperation between the countries of Central Asia in the development of a regional electricity market.

Challenges for the EU in giving the right support and shaping a thorough policy are tricky. Should the EU step up assistance (and financial loans) for hydro-electric infrastructure development? How can the EU meanwhile stay a neutral actor between rivalries in Central Asia? And most urgently, how can the EU support stability and promote democracy and good governance with a view to development and regional stability?

15.45 – 16.00 **Conclusions**

- **Jos Boonstra**, Senior Researcher, FRIDE, Madrid
- **Thomas Lawo**, Executive Secretary, The European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), Bonn



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