

TRANSCRIPT

Roundtable

"The process of foreign policy decision-making: Kyrgyzstan and the experiences of other countries."

On September 30, 2008, the Bishkek Press Club (BPC) held a round table on "The process of foreign policy decision-making: Kyrgyzstan and the experiences of other countries" with the participation of Muratbek Imanaliev, the President of the Institute for Public Policy (IPP); Erlan Abdyldaev, director of the IWPR office in Kyrgyzstan; and participants of the school of International Journalism.

Muratbek Imanaliev: The topic of today's meeting is "The process of foreign policy decision-making: Kyrgyzstan and the experiences of other countries." I would like to introduce my colleague, Erlan Bekeshevich Abdyldaev. He is the director of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting in Bishkek and a career diplomat.

A graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, he worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, in the Soviet Embassy to China. He then held different positions in the President's Administration in Kyrgyzstan, was the first Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan, and the finally, last diplomatic position he held, was the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kyrgyzstan to China. He holds an appropriate rank. Abdyldaev is a well-known Sinologist in Kyrgyzstan.

I will try to make a brief speech to attract your attention and engage in conversation. I will speak on Kyrgyzstan, and Erlan Bekeshevich will speak on China.

General moment: decisions, concerning not only foreign policy, are made in accordance with two important institutional constants. First of all, this is the legislation or the Constitution. Our Constitution states that the President makes decisions on major issues of foreign policy. The Government, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, implements these decisions. This is a general description of how decisions are transformed into implementation. But how are these decisions taken? This question, or this system, is not specified in the legislation with the exception of one law in Kyrgyzstan, which is called the "Law on the Diplomatic Service". But I would like to draw your attention to the fact that, despite the existence and functioning of this law, it is however, incomplete within the understanding of how these decisions are taken.

Besides the legislative system, or the constitutional design of decision-making, there are also the so-called rules, which go beyond laws and rights. They are various political traditions and customs. As for Kyrgyzstan, there is no tradition in this sense yet; but I hope it will exist. This is due to the fact that so far, Kyrgyzstan, like other Central Asian states, has not yet become a full-fledged state (this is just my opinion). There are still many lacunae in the building of the State, just as there are many lacunae in the practice of implementation of governmental decisions and in the development of the nation in general. Constitutional or ritual-traditionalist solution to this problem requires some institutions that are necessary to ensure development and implementation of those decisions.

The main institution in any country is the system of foreign policy. A general term - what is the system of foreign policy? It includes several categories. First of all, it is a set of governmental agencies that make recommendations, on the basis of which decisions are made. There is a superficial impression or understanding that only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deals with foreign policy. I want to immediately dispel this superficial impression. In any country, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the key institution in the foreign policy system. In this sense, governmental departments and ministries are included in this system. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is an

inseparable part of this system; as well as the intelligence community. The notion is that the intelligence community exists in major countries such as USA, Russia, Great Britain and China. Of course, in relation to the Kyrgyz reality, we are referring only to the National Security Service and the Ministry of Defense; and there are small structures that are involved in these activities. The Ministry of Defense is involved because the military component of diplomacy, or the military foreign policy, is extremely important for any country. Another reason is that the Ministry of defense has the task to deal with problem of national security, which is related to foreign policy. The problem of security, as you know, includes economic, humanitarian, military and demographic security. I want to remind you that no one canceled the force factor in international affairs. For the past few years, unfortunately, we have seen that the force component in dealing with foreign policy issues, on the contrary, is gaining strength. We can see it in the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus; today there is a process of destruction of international law and other standard institutional mechanisms; many States solve their problems in such a way.

The system of foreign policy is not only a set of institutions that I have mentioned. I must also include the Ministries that deal with foreign trade and some agencies that are engaged in humanitarian cooperation. In addition, it is important to bear in mind the formation of public opinion that is relevant to the issues of foreign policy. These may include various non-governmental organizations, protecting the interests of ethnic minorities and religious communities, and other organizations or groups of people who have some understanding of contexts or aspects of foreign policy. From my point of view, ignoring the Russian and the Uzbek population, as ethnic minorities, is an absolutely wrong approach to solving the problem. Therefore, those who work in the field of foreign policy decision-making should, obviously, understand the importance ethnic minorities bring to this issue. Of course, there are religious issues; for example, Islam. The Islam factor is rather serious in making foreign policy decisions; at least today. We clearly see the influence of Islamic values and Islamic understanding of some issues, including globalization, on the foreign policy decision-making. There is a term known as "Islamic terrorism." I personally do not welcome the use of this term. But all speak about it. This is the second component. And, there is also another factor which influences decision-making. I call it the "inner basic force." The "inner basic force," in a general sense, is the total capacity of our country: economy, defense capacity, consolidation of elites, welfare, etc. It should be remembered that, as the Germans say, the disadvantage of one is an advantage of another. If one country suffers from an internal conflict between different ethnic groups or the problems in its economy, other states always use it to achieve their own aspirations and cynical plans. These are the three factors that play a big role in a foreign policy system, and this leads us to what is called decision-making. We are talking now about formal factors in terms of constitutional law or some existing political traditions.

I would like to mention also the influence of external factor in the decision-making process. External factor may influence different aspects of the state's life: economic, cultural, etc. What does this mean? The military aspect is the army power, defensive or offensive capability. Today, it is clearly demonstrated by the United States, for example, in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Americans can afford to keep a strong army, thanks to the strong economy. Cultural aspect does not always have direct impacts. It sometimes has an indirect impact on the decision-making process in any country. For example, the Americans say: "We now have the comprehensive power, which has its dimension not only in military and economic aspects of the relations, but also in cultural and humanitarian." What is meant by cultural and humanitarian? They say so: "All people on the Earth, or at least the majority, wear American jeans, watch American movies, listen to American music, and want to study in America, not in Beijing or Moscow." That is, cultural, educational and humanitarian achievements of the United States, as they think, have significant influence on decision-making. But, as it appears today, this is not quite true. When

we talk about the growth of anti-Americanism in Central Asia, we must speak more specifically about anti-Bushism. If a more active and positive President comes to power, I think the attitude to the U.S. will change. The same attitude to America was after the war in Western Europe, East Asia, etc. The external factor is indeed very important. But the influence of the external factor is in inverse proportion to power of the country: the weaker is a country, the stronger is the external factor. You can see it in your relationships with friends, colleagues. The weaker your partner is, the stronger your influence is on him, and vice versa.

In addition, I would like to mention the influence of informal institutions on foreign policy decision-making. Public and non-governmental organizations are often understood as informal institutions. This is not quite true. Informal institutions are a form of human relations that exists in society – for example, traditionalism. This is a broad concept; it does not always include specific or general forms for all countries. In our case, in Kyrgyzstan, we have a set of informal institutions that was called “kyrgyzchylyk.” This is a set of informal institutions, regulating relations between groups of people. It does not matter if they are clans or tribes, or social strata. But they have very strong influence on decision-making. Kyrgyzstan is not the only country with this sense. For example, decisions on personnel matters in foreign policy represent the most colorful picture of all manifestations of informal institutions. We see that the government, or specifically the President, do not always act in accordance with the Constitution or law. For instance, the “Law on the Diplomatic Service” says: the people with specific skills and with appropriate education may be appointed envoys or employees of the Ministry or an embassy. But in reality it is not quite true. Here, we see the influence of the so-called informal institution.

Before speaking on some forms of decision-making, I must say that there are two channels, or spheres, where these decisions are taken. The first sphere is standard - it is the protection of the interests of a State based on its own initiatives or proposals. That is, a state, in this case Kyrgyzstan, proposes something or tries to promote its interests. An example of this situation occurred when Kyrgyzstan tried to initiate transport communications between the SCO countries. It is an extremely important and topical issue for Kyrgyzstan which not only solves the economic problems, but also affects the defense and creation of a market on the basis of which a community and people consolidate. Kyrgyzstan takes this decision, proposing it as its own initiative. Of course, it must have some potential for promotion. There are different ways, in which one may agree or disagree and solve the problem. That is a different matter. Another sphere is about protection of national interests as a response to the initiative of someone else. For example, the Uzbek government says: “Kyrgyzstan must recognize Naryn as a trans-border river.” It is an initiative, which must be answered. For Kyrgyzstan, as we know, it is very disadvantageous, because the recognition of this river as trans-border would require serious changes in the understanding of how to use this water. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan does not agree. But, by disagreeing, we should give our institutions, departments and Ministries an opportunity to develop our own position.

Next, I turn to the specific realities of our lives. The problem must be solved. It may be different: initiative may come from above or from the bottom. But the problem may arise from social activists, opposition, the Parliament, etc. An opportunity to develop this decision is provided. What is decision-making? This is, first of all, a collection of information. The first stage - you collect the information and analyze it. Then, based on the analysis, you model a certain situation with all the consequences. Based on the model, you develop recommendations to your own superiors. If you have learned to do steps four or five well, you are a good specialist. In any normal system, one person cannot analyze, collect, model and make recommendations alone. That is why there is a hierarchy from simple to complex. The people of lower rank are given the task to collect information. They collect it in different ways. Therefore, there are formal diplomacy, intelligence

structures, counter-intelligence structures, and public affairs. There are analytical groups. In any normal Ministry, there are people who are engaged in the analysis. They sort out the information and try to link different kinds of information. Then, on the basis of this, there is a higher hierarchical group at the level of advisers and ambassadors-at-Large, who begin to model a situation; several models of the situation with certain consequences are created. Based on this, recommendations are developed. When you collect information, you have, say, two boxes of information. After the analysis, you will have a half-box remaining, and after modeling the situation, only six pages remain and the guide takes half a page. The President views that half-page and he has the right to choose before he makes a decision.

However, on the horizontal level there are always problems. In Kyrgyzstan, in this regard, there are fewer problems than in other countries. For example, in the United States, the Ministry of Defense, the State Department and the CIA have their own opinions on the same issue; which are often quite different. And when they cannot come to one conclusion, the President is offered several options. Therefore, the President considers which of the options is better. Let's take the example of the expulsion of American diplomats. Suppose our intelligence agencies found out something and told the President: "These people do bad things, they must leave the country." But the Foreign Ministry, on the basis of their consideration of political affairs and the need to have good relations with the U.S., says: "We understand that they did bad things, but we believe that we must not drive them out but we should simply warn them." The President is offered several variants, and he decides whether to or not to drive them out. Only the President makes all final decisions on certain issues of foreign policy. The bottom up mechanism of moving recommendations is simple; but in terms of interaction and external influence, it is complex. When the Foreign Ministry employees are preparing a project that is proposed to the President, their own personal attitudes play a certain role. Sometimes people make decisions under the influence of their personal emotions. These are thoughtless decisions. It is very bad, when a person has not formed an internal mechanism of decision-making for the state, for the society and for himself. In addition, there are colleagues who also play their role in preparation of these recommendations. There are bosses, these are your friends-diplomats from other countries who know about the forthcoming decision, and meet with you to say that they want us to take into account certain things. Sometimes they explicitly say this decision would be undesirable for them. When the project reaches the President, he also has his friends who take formal and informal actions of influence - they begin to whisper in his ear, in particular, about the "Gansi" air base: we should not do it in the form, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of Defense have proposed. Finally, the President makes a decision, which is not always correct. And this happens not only in our country. The same happens in China, USA etc.

That is how decisions are made. The stronger the system of state development, the more precise, accurate and correct decisions are made. There are no ideal decisions. Ideal decision is a declaration of war in order to defend ourselves. In other cases, decisions always have their drawbacks. Then, during implementation, it turns out that many points were missed, misinterpreted... Therefore we often have to change something during implementation. To do this, there must be a flexible system. The system of foreign policy, which consists of a combination of organizations and design mechanisms, must be very flexible to respond to changes. But the ultimate goal of the decision should be implemented fully. This does not always happen; but we must strive for this.

The weaker the state, the more problems it has, and the more thoughtless decisions are made. These are spontaneous decisions. Here I would like to conclude my speech. I give the floor to Erlan Bekeshevich.

Erlan Abdyldaev: The stronger the state, the more established system of decision-making it has, both on domestic and foreign policy. The lack of this system, or if it does not work, often leads to wrong decisions. Taking wrong decisions in foreign policy may be more destructive for a nation than taking wrong decisions in domestic policy. Please, understand that the establishment of relations with any state requires a lot of time. But a wrong statement can quickly destroy good relations. Unfortunately, Kyrgyzstan has not established relations with the Arab world. We have much potential to have better relations with it. However, one statement, made by the Kyrgyz side in 1993 on the status of Jerusalem, led to the fact that those relations cannot be re-established for more than ten years. This is a striking example. And there are many examples in history. We must always be very careful in the matters of foreign policy.

About the system. If the system is stable, it will not fail by itself. There is an erroneous understanding that one person, even if he is the President, can make decisions. Yes, the President is offered several variants. But he can only choose from the variants offered to him. If he does not accept them and acts in his own way, it means that there is no system of foreign policy decision-making in this country. The purpose of the system is that any decision should pass both vertically and horizontally. It must be approved at different levels so that the President could choose from two or three options. This is if there is a corridor. That is, the President cannot make a completely different decision. So, I want to say that the countries with a strong economy have a stable internal system and a stable system of foreign policy decisions. Such countries, as Russia, Turkey and China, are the inheritors of major empires, which have decision-making mechanisms. Any representative of one of the three countries will never speak on foreign policy issues until the decisions on those issues are approved at all levels of the entire system.

Earlier, I worked in China and in Russia. I would like to speak on the foreign policy decision-making process in China; or at least, on what the Chinese think about when making foreign policy decisions. You may have noticed that, when some international event takes place, the Chinese never react to it first. This probably indicates that they have a system that tries to analyze, model and propose a decision on that issue.

Foreign policy system in Kyrgyzstan has just begun to develop. Sometimes our top leadership makes decisions that have not passed all the stages. It is almost impossible for China. In China this system was developed long ago. Chinese civilization is several thousand years old. There were small kingdoms, which interacted with each other. And the system had been developing for many years. Improvement took a long time. It was changed in the late 19th century and then after the People's Republic of China was created.

How do the Chinese see themselves, and what influences their decision-making with respect to the outside world? Initially, the Chinese believed that China was at the center of the universe, and it lies in their hieroglyphs. All the countries around were considered barbaric, whose level was much lower. China was developing very quickly, especially in the beginning of the millennium. By many indicators, China was ahead of all the neighboring countries. Therefore, the Chinese believed that they were responsible for everything, happening in the world. And the main idea was to accustom all the peoples to the great Chinese culture. In this understanding, there was no Ministry or department in China, which would be responsible for external relations, because everything that was happening in the world was considered an internal affair. Because of this China-centrism concept, China did not find it necessary to draw up its borders in those days. They started thinking about state borders much later. The All-China system of the world order was established.

We say that today all countries are struggling to create a new political and economic world order. We all speak the same words, but the content is different. What do we

consider fair, and what do we think the world order is? Everybody has his own understanding. I suspect that China understands it, according to its old China-centrist system, where China should be the center of the universe. The military superiority of Europeans, as a result of the opium wars, was a big shock for the Chinese. Before the opium wars, Chinese foreign policy worked well when even Mongolian and Manchurian dynasties got assimilated. They were forced to copy the system. But after the discovery of China by the West in 1840, that system did not work, and China was forced to join the system, which then existed in the West. The new system in China has existed since 1949; the year the PRC was created. The system, established since 1949, is as follows: Chairman instead of the President, Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its subordinate agencies, embassies, internal structure, scientific institutions, intelligence services, territorial agencies. Besides all this, there is another factor in China that is very important in the system of decision-making. It is the party system - the Communist Party of China, under which decisions on not only foreign but also internal policies are made. First, they pass through discussion and approval of the Party congress, and then they are transformed into the decisions of the Government, Parliament and into legislative acts. To date, the international department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China is a kind of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which makes major decisions, and all other decisions should virtually be consistent with them. In addition to purely official decisions on certain issues, the Communist Party, of course, develops its own inter-party contacts. Today, the principal Party of China, despite its "Communist" title, maintains relations with many major political parties around the world. First - the Party leadership influences the decision-making within governmental structures. And second - the Party promotes various tasks through its own party channels, through cooperation with other parties.

Finally, there is a factor of personality. We have a mistaken opinion in relation to China that it is possible simply to go to China, organize a meeting with the Chairman Hu Jintao, and to solve all our foreign policy problems with them. As the Chinese law states, the Chairman determines the main direction of domestic and foreign policy. But he may make a decision only after it has passed through all stages of preparation. Among two or three proposed decisions he may choose one. You have heard about the Chinese-Kyrgyz-Uzbek road. There have been so many meetings. But the Chairman cannot make a decision yet. The point of the system in place is to show him the existing problems. During all recent negotiations, we heard the response that the Chinese side welcomes this project and is interested in it, but it believes that the project should be analyzed more thoroughly. They have made this analysis for more than ten years.

So, it is impossible to resolve an issue in China simply by pressing from the top. This system is very firm: a decision may be made only after it has passed through all these levels. Nevertheless, in certain situations that affect the security of the country, decisions are made instantly. Of course, there are certain relations that China has had with other countries. In this situation such unofficial position has a greater effect. Of course, China has been informally engaged in consultations with the Americans, Russians and with all other countries on this issue. Therefore, I would like to say once again that the system of foreign policy, or the system of foreign policy decision-making, in strong states with clear internal policies, minimizes the possibility of making wrong decisions. It even minimizes the human factor. In the U.S., there is a two-party system. The two parties have different views on domestic and foreign policy. But with regard to strategic issues, both the Democrats and the Republicans would share the same position. This is established by the system of decision-making in the United States. Their position on weapons of mass destruction and proliferation of missiles is the same. On the issue of Iraq, there will be some nuances, but the general position will still be the same. Therefore, the more stable the state, economic and military system; the more stable the system of foreign policy decision-making. We, in Kyrgyzstan, are at the

initial stage of developing all this; we need to create a system that we would enable us to make decisions that bring us political dividends.

Muratbek Imanaliev: Thank you. Now, please, your questions or comments.

A discussion participant: Muratbek Sansyzbaevich, you mentioned that the internal potential of the state also affects the process of foreign policy decision-making. How do you assess the internal potential of Kyrgyzstan?

Muratbek Imanaliev: I think we should provide an objective picture. What you described as internal potential and internal power has the economy in its foundation. But, unfortunately, our economic situation is not very good. It is a big problem. There is a hope that we will manage to improve it. The defense capacity of a country depends on many components, including the economic power of the country. Here, we must acknowledge that our country has the weakest defense capacity system in the region. Perhaps Tajikistan yields to us in its material, human and intellectual capacities. But they have a huge advantage - the civil war experience. The political system of Kyrgyzstan, as well as of our neighbors, although to a different extent, has not developed. As for what we call the consolidation of society on the basis of ideology, we have to admit that our society is disunited. And the further we move on, the more visible and obvious this disunity becomes. We can see this in all fields. Regionalism, as a political reality, exists in any country. But the problem is that the top leadership, or the people from the provinces who have reached supreme power, protect only the interests of their provinces rather than the interests of the whole country. In China, this problem also exists. As for religious and inter-ethnic problems, I can say that this confrontation is getting more and more obvious as well. So, the internal basis, to my greatest regret, has not yet been established. In conclusion, I would say that Kyrgyzstan has a very big problem - the comprehensive vulnerability of the country, which is demonstrated in big politics and in regional politics. This is a regional vulnerability in terms of security. I am talking about economic, financial and demographic security. We are subject to population pressures on the part of all our neighbors, except for Kazakhstan. In principle, if we develop reasonable constructive projects to address this problem, there is nothing terrible there. When there is no clear well-thought approach, a lot of problems occur. This is so far the situation with our internal potential. Therefore, we must work. We must be diligent and drink less vodka; we must be more reasonable to make more thoughtful decisions, be more honest, etc.

A discussion participant: You said that there are many gaps in making foreign policy decisions. Maybe, the problem is that we do not have sufficient qualified personnel in this field. How can we solve this problem?

Muratbek Imanaliev: I totally agree. Any problem has its story. Our story is that we are different from a number of Asian countries that gained independence in the recent past. We were expelled from the Soviet Union. And during the first few years, the Presidents of all Central Asian states did not understand what to do with independence. There were right and wrong decisions; someone was guided by intuition, while the others tried to use expertise of other countries. In Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan there were a lot of foreign advisors who whispered in our ears what to do. At this stage, the issue of any social system is the availability of elites. Elites decide everything. When people say: "The people are wise," please, take this phrase with caution or a certain criticism. Remember: it was the people who elected Hitler, the Chancellor of Germany. Elites are the most important. Elites are a complicated thing. They are not simply well educated people. They bear certain national ideas – for example, the political elite. It is hard to say that we have a political elite; there are those who pretend that be engaged in politics. But we have not yet had any real elite. Our economic elite, or business elite, unfortunately, was destroyed. And the intellectual elite is the most important. We do not have that either. What we call the intelligentsia is difficult to characterize as the intellectual

elite. Military elite does not exist either. And the military elite plays a tremendous role in shaping the state. For example, Ata Turk assigned an important part to the military elite. And the military elite today plays an enormous role in the promotion of Turkey on the way to progress.

This is only a part of the problem that you have mentioned. For instance, I believe that the work on the formation of the elite and political system should continue and should follow the way of enthusiasm. When people who want to be engaged in politics ask me for advice, I always say: "It depends on what you want to become. If you want to become the President, it is one thing. If you want to become a hero, it is a completely different thing. It is more difficult to become a hero. If you want to become a hero, like Mahatma Gandhi, you have to follow a more difficult way. If you want to get to the President's chair, it is another job." Patriotism is not when somebody rends his clothes on the main city square. Patriotism has a concrete expression. In this sense, I want to bring you to an understanding of what is called spiritual strength. If a nation does not have it, it will be very difficult to build its future. We must be able to recognize our own weaknesses and the achievements of the others. If you can do this, you will be a strong man.

A discussion participant: I would like to ask, what is the role of journalists in making foreign policy decisions? Which qualities should an international journalist have?

Erlan Abdylidaev: I think that the media today play an important role, not only in foreign policy decisions, but also in internal decision-making. Information today defines much in our lives. Anyone, who has information, controls the situation. Of course, journalists cannot directly influence decision-making. But in your articles, you form public opinion on an issue. Public opinion can be shaped in such a way that it will be "against" the most correct decision. That is the role of journalism. What qualities should an international journalist have? I will refer to an experience that I have. There were four faculties in the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, where I studied: international relations, international economic relations, international law and international journalism. Almost all the students studied the same curriculum. Training of a specialist in the Arab countries was not worse than the training of an international specialist in the East. A journalist, specialized in the East, China or America, wrote with good knowledge of the field. He knew what wrote. Today we are witnessing a different situation with our journalism; perhaps, it is also true for many post-Soviet states. Unfortunately, today our journalists write on the topic of agriculture, tomorrow the same journalists write on the new tax code, and the day after tomorrow - on foreign policy. What can such a journalist write? Therefore, I would like to say: if you are a journalist, specialized in international relations, you must know everything about it, so that you could cover the material competently. Journalists have a great influence through their work, through their articles.

A discussion participant: You said that there are problems in all fields of State activities, and the system of foreign policy decision-making is undeveloped. Who specifically helps the President make decisions on foreign policy?

Muratbek Imanaliev: I think the situation is standard here. Specific issues require the work of specific Ministries and agencies - this is what belongs to the formal side of the question. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepares memoranda; the President's Administration also has a department that deals with foreign policy issues. I, myself, was once the head of this department; we worked there together with Erlan Bekeshevich. But I do not understand why it exists and what it does. There is also the National Security Service. However, the NSS, unlike similar structures in other countries, does not prepare any materials on all foreign policy issues; it prepares materials only on those issues that relate to security. There is also the Ministry of Defense, which has its own specific tasks related to the defense capacity of the

country and relations with other states in the military field, etc. They prepare their notes and documents. There are a number of others. Our President also has a small group of people in his team who hold different positions: advisers, experts, Vice-Prime Minister. They also often write and say something. They have the right to do so, as anyone else who wants to influence, or vice versa. They are formal organizations and people. But there are informal organizations, which have greater influence on the President than formal ones. It is a pattern of relationships between different people. For example, family has a great influence on decision-making. There is a group of people who are not relatives but are friends, supporters, and colleagues. There is also another informal group of people who are not relatives, but they constitute a bunch of major public activists who can influence through the media or directly. In rare cases (this was particularly noticeable during Akaev's time), it might be the opposition. Now I do not see that the opposition influences something. But I must say that many states have passed through it, and it does not mean that all decisions were wrong. Sometimes spontaneous decisions may be correct. Thank you for your attention.