

The authors of the article "Depopulation and external migration as institutional risks of personnel safety" [2] S. Kalyugina, A. Pianov, M. Tvaronavičene, G. Sorokin refer to demographic and migration problems. In leading European powers there is a decline in the birth rate. This fate affected Russia. Due to the entry of the Republic of Crimea into Russia, the population of the country increased by 2.3 million people. World experience shows that raising the birth rate by means of financial incentives for the birth of children is unreal. The problems of population decline are relevant for almost all developed countries. According to the authors of the article, their solution is possible only due to migration. However, this idea, according to some demographers and sociologists, has significantly more negative than positive reasons. Without taking them into account, Russia may be in the same migration crisis as Western Europe. Moreover, some Russian regions, including Crimea, are already experiencing a significant migration burden on the labor market and social infrastructure, which leads to an increase in social tension in society. Therefore, researchers conclude, migration policies should be targeted and selective, include restrictive mechanisms.

ASLANBEK ADIYEV. SOCIAL-POLITICAL AND ETHNOCULTURAL SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF DAGHESTAN IN 2020 (EVENT ANALYSIS) // *The article was written for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

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Abstract. The most difficult ethno-political problem in the Republic of Daghestan (RD) is still the question of the restoration of the Aukh district. The lack of regulation of this problem negatively affects the socio-political situation in the Kazbekovsky, Novolak and Khasavyurt districts of the Republic of Daghestan and in the city of Khasavyurt, where periodically protest and commemorative actions of the Daghestani Chechens take place, and at times there are domestic clashes that threaten to escalate into pogroms and riots. In the first quarter of 2020, activists of the Chechen community of the Republic of Daghestan once again tried to actualize the issue of restoring the Aukh district by holding public events, including a protest (“nationwide”) rally of Chechens in the city of Khasavyurt. However, the introduction from March 18 of a ban on holding mass events on the territory of the Republic of Daghestan in order to avoid a worsening of the epidemiological situation in the region did not allow them to organize a protest rally. In early July, the leadership of the main public organization of the Chechens of Daghestan, advocating the restoration of the Aukh district, was replaced, which temporarily reduced their public activity. In October, the political leadership of the Republic of Daghestan changed. The new head of the region, S. Melikov, has not yet voiced his position on this ethno-political problem and has not yet met with activists of ethnic and territorial communities, whose interests are affected by the issue of restoring the Aukh district. In the current conditions, when the regional government habitually ignores the socio-political demands, protests and commemorative events of the Chechen public of the republic, the Chechens of Daghestan (especially the youth) are more and more oriented towards Grozny than towards Makhachkala. This leads to weakening of the already weak Daghestani identity of the Akkin Chechens. This trend is observed in the informational, cultural, religious and other social spheres. The new

leadership of the republic will have to develop its own approach to solving problems associated with the process of restoring the Aukh district.

Another regional problem that can affect the sphere of interethnic relations in the Republic of Daghestan is the process of degradation and desertification of republican lowland pastures (lands for distant pastures) in the north of the RD. The reason for this environmental problem, according to biologists, is the off-season, irregular and uncontrolled use of pastures by tenant farmers who are engaged in sheep breeding on the republican lands of distant pasture cattle breeding. A zone of interethnic tension here is the border pasture areas, where the economic interests of local rural communities in lowland areas collide with the interests of tenants of republican lands for distant pasture farming, resettlement farms from the mountainous regions of the Republic of Daghestan. The authorities of the Republic of Daghestan introduced on November 24, 2020 a state of emergency in the Tarumovsky and Nogai districts of the Republic of Daghestan, where the revealed destruction of the soil cover on the lands of distant pasture breeding no longer allowed economic (sheep breeding) activities there. This temporary measure does not remove from the agenda the problem of desertification of republican pastures in the north of the Republic of Daghestan, which, moreover, are perceived by the Nogai and Kumyk communities as ethnic lands of these peoples.

In the spring of 2020, during the period of active struggle against the spread of coronavirus infection in the territory of the Russian Federation and neighboring states, citizens of the Russian Federation and citizens of Azerbaijan had serious difficulties crossing the state border between the two countries through ground crossing points on the territory of the Republic of Daghestan. As a result of the restrictive measures introduced by the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, migrants – Azerbaijanis who were allowed to return to Azerbaijan only after a few days

and weeks of waiting in groups of 100–150 people at a time, began to accumulate in the regions of the Republic of Daghestan bordering with Azerbaijan,. The same procedure for crossing the border from Azerbaijan in the opposite direction was organized by the authorities of this state for Russians returning home. The RD authorities set up a tent camp to accommodate the Azerbaijanis congregating on the border, where a riot took place in early June. The migrants, dissatisfied with the long wait for departure, as well as non-compliance with the order of departure to Azerbaijan, tried to block the federal highway and attacked the police officers who were on duty near the tent camp. On the same day, public order in the camp was restored, and the perpetrators of the attack were arrested and taken to the police station. Shortly after this incident, border crossing traffic was significantly increased and the situation on the Russian-Azerbaijani border returned to normal.

Aukh question

The most difficult and potentially explosive ethno-political problem on the territory of the Republic of Daghestan is the question of restoring the Aukh district, which was abolished in 1944 shortly after the deportation of the Chechen population from the republic. The activists of public organizations of Daghestani Chechens annually hold public events designed to speed up the process of restoration of the Aukh district.

On February 15, the 11th congress of Daghestani Chechens was held in Khasavyurt, at which the prospects for the restoration of the Aukh district were discussed. There were no representatives of the Daghestani media at the event, but there were journalists from the Chechen Republic. Therefore, a report on the congress was shown in the evening news bulletin of the Grozny State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company.¹ According to the statements of the organizers of the congress, the Daghestani authorities ignored the proposals and projects

prepared by public activists of the Akkin Chechens for the restoration of the Aukh district. S. Shavkhalov, chairman of the Daghestan regional public organization "Public Council 'Aukh' ", told the reporters: *"We have prepared proposals, including a roadmap, on how to solve this issue by 60-70% without spending budget funds. However, none of the points of our project was implemented, not even accepted for consideration"*.² Indeed, for 30 years (since 1991) the decisions taken by the regional authorities on the restoration of the Aukh district have not been implemented. We assume that the main reason why the situation remains "frozen" is the impossibility of meeting the interests of all parties to the conflict. To date, the Lak population of the Novolak district, which agreed in 1991 to resettlement on the terms of re-creating the municipal district of the same name in a new place, in fact, lives on the territory of two districts: the "old" Novolak district and on the territory of the so-called "Novostroy" near Makhachkala, where the Novolak district was supposed to "move" completely.

It is important to take into account that since 1991 the socio-political context and the approach to the solution of this ethnopolitical problem caused by this context have radically changed. In the early 90s the Daghestani public as a whole was sympathetic to the need for re-resettlement of the Lak population of the Novolak district, but today this voluntary-forced migration on an ethnic basis is very difficult to explain or justify by the current Russian legislation. Meanwhile, the resettlement of the Lak part of the population of the Novolak district, where, in addition to the Laks and Chechens, there are also Avars, is only one of the preconditions for the restoration of the Aukh district. After all, the Daghestani Chechens insist on the restoration of the Aukh district not within the boundaries of the Novolak district, but within the boundaries of the beginning of 1944, i.e. with the territory and settlements transferred after the abolition of the Aukh district to the neighboring Kazbek district. This requirement of the Akkin Chechens categorically does not suit the Avars living in the villages of Leninaul and Kalinaul of the

Kazbek district. Therefore, it seems to us that while the Avar population of Kalininaul and Leninaul does not agree to become part of the future Aukhdistrict, and the Akkin Chechens do not agree to the restoration of this area within the borders of the Novolak district, Novostroy, where the Laks are going to resettle, will not receive the status of a municipal district and Novolak district will function in the same place. This vicious circle cannot be broken without mutual concessions and compromises.

Another reason for holding a protest congress of Chechens in Daghestan on February 15 was information about the intention of the RD authorities and the leadership of the Novolak district to transfer to an entrepreneur 150 hectares of agricultural land for the construction of a market, which land, according to the Chechen public, is reserved for the restoration of the Aukh district. As follows from the video material published by the Grozny Chechen State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, the participants of the congress of Daghestani Chechens are concerned about this information and are outraged by the plans of the RD authorities to transfer to a private person the lands falling under the program for the restoration of the Aukh district. The chairman of the Council of Elders of Chechens of Daghestan Kh. Abrekov, commenting on the problem of restoring the Aukh district to journalists, said that according to the Koran, living on a foreign land, appropriating someone else's property is a sin. Moslem rhetoric, to which representatives of the Chechen community turn to in the controversial issue of restoring the Aukh district, is rather addressed not to representatives of the federal and Daghestan authorities, but to the residents of the Novolak and Kazbek district, to their Moslem (common for Avars, Laks and Chechens) identity ... This rhetoric is used by participants in many land disputes on the territory of the republic. In local land disputes (between two rural communities), recourse to Sharia norms can still lead to a peaceful and informal settlement of the conflict situation, but in an overly politicized and bureaucratized dispute over the restoration of the Aukh

district the norms of Islam, to which one of the parties appeals, do not work as conflict resolution mechanism. As a result of the congress, the delegates decided to hold an annual mourning and religious event on February 23 in memory of the victims of political repressions of the Stalinist period, and also planned a general national rally of Chechens in Daghestan for March 22, in order to update and keep on the agenda the issue of restoring the Aukh district.

On February 23, 2020, at the memorial to the victims of Stalinism near the old cemetery of the village of Yaryksu-Aukh, Novolak district, Daghestani Chechens held an event dedicated to the 76th anniversary of the deportation of Chechens and Ingush to Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The Chechens of Daghestan annually hold this commemorative event, which contributes to the strengthening of their ethnic solidarity and identity. On this day, elderly people share from the rostrum their memories of the tragedy of the deportation of 1944, and the leaders of Chechen public organizations report on their activities aimed at accelerating the process of restoration of the Aukh district. *"It would seem that all the regulations and decisions have been adopted, huge funds have been allocated from the state budget for resettlement of the Laks to a new place of residence, and the issue of rehabilitation of the Chechens of Daghestan has not been completed yet. And therefore, every year, with every regular anniversary of our national tragedy, the traditional place of mourning events for the repressed Chechens of Aukh, a monument to Chechens, victims of Stalinist repressions in the village Yaryksu-Aukh of the present Novolak district attracts more and more disgruntled Aukhites, and that is why the tone of the speeches is more and more angry,"* – said A. Machaev³, one of the public activists of Chechens in Daghestan. Deputy Chairman of the "Public Council 'Aukh' " Kh. Sultanbiev, in his speech at this event, criticized the leadership of the Republic of Daghestan, stating that the Daghestani authorities ignored the issue of restoring the Aukh district.

"Since returning to Daghestan after 13 years of exile, our people have been striving for the restoration of historical justice for 63 years now. In 1991, the RSFSR Law "Rehabilitation of repressed peoples" was adopted. In the same year, a resolution of the III Congress of People's Deputies of the DASSR "Restoration of the Aukh district" was adopted. Soon it will be 30 years since the people of Daghestan, represented by the III Congress of People's Deputies, made this decision. During this time, 5 leaders of Daghestan and 6 members of the People's Assembly were replaced, from all of them we have heard and are hearing promises that the Aukh district will be restored. Since the new leadership came to power, the issues of rehabilitation of the Chechens of Daghestan, the resettlement of the Lak part of the population of the Novolak district to a new place of residence, not only did not move ahead, but even stalled at all. They are stubbornly hushed up by the leadership of the republic, which pretends that such a problem does not exist in the republic at all," ⁴ Kh. Sultanbiev said. According to the public figure, over the past two years, the organization "Public Council 'Aukh' " has submitted proposals for the restoration of the Aukh district to the head of the republic 10 times, and to the chairman of the regional government - 11 times, but received only one written reply that the meeting with the Head of the RD is appointed for September 2018. But this meeting, according to the public figure, never took place.

The RD authorities rejected the application of Chechen public activists to hold a general national rally of Daghestani Chechens on March 22, pointing to the threat of terrorist attacks and the risks of blocking the highway near the town of Khasavyurt. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Daghestan did not agree with either the time or the venue of the rally announced by the Chechen public. The department suggested that Chechen public figures submit a notice of holding a public event from 10 to 25 April 2020 in the Novolak district. In turn, activists of the "Public Council 'Aukh' " tried to challenge the refusal of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Daghestan to hold the event, but less than a week later, the Decree of the Head

of the Daghestan Republic No.17 of March 18, 2020 "Introduction of a high alert regime ..." banning mass events throughout the republic due to the risks of worsening the epidemiological situation in the region.

On March 26, representatives of the Daghestani Chechens appealed to the chairman of the Council of Alims of the North Caucasus H.-A. Kadyrov with a request to discuss the problem of restoring the Aukh district at a meeting of this religious organization and with the leaders of the Muftiate of the Republic of Daghestan. Chechen public activists told reporters that they had to turn to Kadyrov, because, despite the discussion of this problem with the Daghestani clergy, the conflict has not yet been resolved. Daghestani Chechens are asking Kadyrov to "facilitate its final and just decision." Commenting on this appeal, A. Machaev, an activist of the Daghestani Chechens, said: *"This was done in order to reach out to the religious feelings of those who oppose the solution of this problem. We all call ourselves believers, practicing Moslems. In the situation when the government does not solve this problem, but postpones it for later, it would be a blessing for people and for the Almighty if religious authorities tried to resolve this situation. How possible is this in today's reality? This, of course, is an open question."*⁵ This meeting, judging by the lack of reaction to it on the part of the republican and federal authorities, did not in any way affect the sluggish state of the process of restoration of the Aukh district.

On July 7, the leadership of the main public organization, which speaks on behalf of the Chechens of Daghestan with a demand for the restoration of the Aukh district was replaced. The former chairman (Shavkhalov S.) and his deputy (Sultanbiev Kh.) who had disagreements with the youth wing of the organization left the organization "Public Council 'Aukh' ", Kh. Musalimov became the new chairman of the "Public Council 'Aukh' ", and S. Vagabov became his deputy. They presented their program of action, outlined the expediency of closer and constructive interaction with relevant departments within the Daghestan

government, and also stated the need for more active involvement of Chechen youth in nationwide cultural, sports and other social events. The priority areas of activity of public activists of the Chechens of Daghestan, in addition to helping to accelerate the process of restoration of the Aukh district, are: public oversight of the distribution of land plots in Novolak and Kazbek districts; information and explanatory work with the Chechen population of the republic in preparation for the upcoming All-Russian population census in order to fully reflect the number of Chechens in Daghestan in the census; collection of information about Chechens - participants of the Great Patriotic War, sent to the front from Daghestan.

On November 7, in the village of Yaryksu, Novolak district, on the initiative of the Daghestani Chechens, the opening ceremony of the Memorial to the memory of the Chechens - participants of the World War II, took place. For the Chechen population of Daghestan, this was certainly a significant event, which, for some reason, remained without due attention from the Daghestani government and the official media of the Republic of Daghestan. As the activists of the public organization "Public Council 'Aukh' " stated: *"the opening ceremony of the Memorial, which took place on such a large scale, left more questions than answers. We are already used to the fact that the republican authorities, or rather, the top leadership of our republic, ignore the events organized by the Public Council of Chechens of Aukh (February 23), while we often see how the first persons of the republic attend various events in other cities and districts of Daghestan. But this time we were sure that such an important and significant event dedicated to the memory of those who defended our Motherland, and even more so dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory, would not be ignored by both the leadership of the republic and the leading media, who were also notified of the upcoming event and sent out appropriate invitations. Unfortunately, we were disappointed in our expectations. And now we are rightly faced with the question – are we considered citizens of the republic at all, and do we still have any hope that we will ever be recognized as such in this*

*republic?!"*⁶ The Government of the Republic of Daghestan repeatedly ignores mass events of the Chechen public in the republic, which leads to the weakening of the already weak Daghestan identity of the Akkin Chechens. In the current situation, the Chechens of Daghestan (especially young people) more and more focus rather on Grozny than on Makhachkala. This trend is observed in the information, cultural, religious and other social spheres. The new leadership of the republic, perhaps, will have to develop its own approach to solving the problems associated with the process of restoring the Aukh district.

Deterioration of the epidemiological situation in April-May

In terms of the number of people infected with coronavirus, Daghestan entered the top ten regions of Russia in April, and in May Daghestan recorded an explosive increase in the incidence of COVID-19. Due to the fact that the residents of the republic for the most part did not observe the self-isolation regime (introduced by the decree of the head of the republic on March 31), since mid-April, the police have set up roadblocks at the entrances to the cities and districts of the RD. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation on the RD called on citizens to treat with understanding the restrictive measures and recalled that for violating the self-isolation regime under Article 20.6.1 of the Administrative Code of the Russian Federation (Failure to comply with the rules of conduct in an emergency or threat of its occurrence) they can be fined from 1 to 30 thousand rubles.⁷

On April 16, the chief sanitary doctor for the RD N. Pavlov issued a decree aimed at preventing visits to cemeteries, churches and mosques. The Muftiate of the republic supported this decision and appealed to Moslems not to visit mosques until the authorities lifted the restrictive measures imposed. As the epidemiological situation worsened in some cities and districts of

the RD, the regime of high alert and self-isolation of citizens was also tightened. So, in connection with the spread of coronavirus infection, on May 3, the entrance to the territory of the city of Khasavyurt and exit from it were completely closed. It was also forbidden to move vehicles inside the city. At the same time, the operational headquarters of Khasavyurt to prevent the spread of the coronavirus infection completely canceled the special passes issued earlier to citizens.

On May 7, the head of the Tsuntinsky district of the RD Sh. Magomedov recorded a video message to the leadership of the republic, the Ministry of Health of the Republic, people from the district and public organizations, reporting on the shortage of doctors, medicines and personal protective equipment in the municipality.⁸ In a number of high-mountain villages of the republic, local residents themselves blocked the road by the decision of the village assembly and made appeals on social networks so that students and labor migrants would not return to their village during the pandemic, as well as guests would not come. So, on May 7, residents of the village Kunki of the Dakhadayevsky district of the RD (mostly women and elderly people), arbitrarily closed the village (barricaded the road) to protect themselves from coronavirus infection. At the same time, the villagers recorded a video message in the Darginian language, which is literally translated: *"Let no one, neither our kinship nor our neighbors, come to us! We have something to eat. There are no medicines, no doctors, no ambulance, if we get sick – we have no one to help us, we want to live!"*

On May 12, on the eve of the end of the month of Moslem fasting, the Muftiate of the Republic of Daghestan made an appeal to Daghestanis not to celebrate Eid al-Adha in the traditional format (arranging lavish celebrations including invitation of guests, visiting cemeteries, going to other villages for this purpose) and to perform a festive prayer at home. Despite the appeals of the Muftiate of the republic, collective prayers were still performed in some mosques of Daghestan. According to the

representative of the Muftiate of the RD, these are mosques in the village of Novosasitli in the Khasavyurt district, in the villages of Gagatli and Miarso in the Botlikh district, in the village of Tisiahitli in the Tsumadi district. as well as a number of mosques in Khasavyurt (Andiysky settlement, 30 Sulakskaya street; 1 Lazo street; 127 40th anniversary of VLKSM street).⁹ *“It is unfortunate that neither the insistent decrees of the leadership of the country and the region, nor the repeated appeals of the clergy of Daghestan could lead the representatives of these mosques to prudence. Apparently, the opinion and words of other leaders unknown to us are more important for them,”*¹⁰ said the representative of the Muftiate of the RD Sh. Alikhanov, making it clear that the imams of these mosques do not interact with the centralized Islamic religious organization of Daghestan.

By mid-May, the situation with the spread of coronavirus in the RD had become so critical that it required the direct intervention of the President: on May 18, Vladimir Putin held a meeting with the leadership and public representatives of the republic, where it was recognized that the epidemiological situation in the region is critical and assistance from the federal center is needed.¹¹

The main reason for the sharp increase in the incidence of COVID-19 in the Republic of Daghestan, in addition to the medical aspects of the problem, is the specifics of the way of life of today's Daghestani society. First of all, this is a high mobility and contact of the population. A significant part of the residents of the republic leave for work, both from villages to the cities of Daghestan and in other regions of the Russian Federation, and then return. The deterioration of the economic situation in the country has increased the return movement of labor migrants from other regions of the Russian Federation. Daghestani students of central universities also returned to the republic after the introduction of the remote learning format. As noted by specialists in Caucasian studies K. Kazenin and I. Starodubrovskaya, according to tradition, after returning, you need to meet with

relatives, neighbors, friends, and this is always dozens of handshakes.¹²

In late May – early June, local residents were outraged by the excessive, according to their estimates, police activity in drawing up reports for violating the self-isolation regime under Article 20.6.1 of the Administrative Code of the Russian Federation. The episode with the detention of two residents of the Karabudakhkent district by police officers on June 9 for violating the self-isolation regime provoked a protest gathering of local residents on the federal highway near the village of Manas.¹³ According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, one of the detainees, an elderly man, while driving a car, responded rudely to a police officer's request to show documents, which provoked a conflict. The detainees were released after a court fined them for violating the self-isolation regime, and police officers apologized after popular outrage for the rough treatment of the detainees. The conflict was settled.

Starting from June 15, the leadership of Daghestan began to lift restrictions connected with the anti-coronavirus regime. In the republic, service enterprises, non-food stores resumed their work, citizens were allowed to walk and play sports in the open air, while observing the mask regime and social distance. According to the regional operational headquarters, as of June 13, 6,463 cases of infection were registered in the RD, 4,710 people recovered, and 313 died.¹⁴

Unrest on the border with Azerbaijan

On April 9, about 100 Azerbaijani citizens went on a hunger strike in the Magaramkent district of the RD near the Russian border checkpoint “Yarag-Kazmalyar”. The reason for this protest action was that they could not leave for their homeland, because the Russian-Azerbaijani border was closed from April 5 to 20. Azerbaijan has closed its air and land borders for this period due to the spread of coronavirus infection in the country.¹⁵

But the epidemiological situation in Azerbaijan did not improve after April 20. In this regard, ground checkpoints across the state border between Russia (on the territory of the RD) and Azerbaijan began to operate at intervals of 14–20 days to implement quarantine security measures. People who crossed the border were placed for this period in border temporary accommodation points (TAP). In Daghestan, by the decision of the operational headquarters in the territory of the border region of Derbent near the village of Kullar, for Azerbaijani citizens returning home, a TAP was set up. Field kitchens, supply of drinking and industrial water, a fire station and a medical center were organized for the residents of the tent camp. Azerbaijanis came to the RD from different regions of Russia to use ground cross border checkpoints. By the beginning of May, about 600 Azerbaijani citizens were already on the territory of the tent camp in the Derbent district of the RD, waiting for the opportunity to return home. The official authorities in Baku said that the return of Azerbaijani citizens is carried out in stages as fast as the infrastructure is ready to accommodate new arrivals and under mandatory quarantine. The first group of Azerbaijanis left for their homeland on May 18; the second – on May 26. By May 29, it became known that 11 guests of the tent camp were hospitalized in the Derbent City Hospital,¹⁶ and one of them was found to have COVID-19. The third batch of Azerbaijani citizens numbered 130 people crossed the border on June 9, and on June 16, another 240 people were planned to be sent home, but the night before, mass unrest occurred in the tent camp where the migrants were housed, and turned into a clash between migrants and security forces.

The unrest in the camp began on the evening of June 15 after Azerbaijanis waiting for permission to cross the border were outraged by the list of persons for whom a special corridor was to be organized at the Yarag-Kazmalyar checkpoint. According to the migrants themselves, this list did not follow the order of sending for the people waiting in the camp for their return home.

The new list of names for departure to Azerbaijan also included those who arrived at the camp just a few days ago, and many of those who had been waiting for their departure home for almost a month, living in a tent camp, had to wait for the formation of new lists. Outraged migrants came to the federal highway "Caucasus" and tried to block the movement of vehicles. Police officers on duty at the Kullar checkpoint were pelted with stones and heavy objects, and several security officers were beaten. Additional units of the security forces were quickly pulled to the scene of the events. As a result, according to official data of the Investigative Committee of Russia, seven law enforcement officers were injured, five cars were damaged, including two cars of the Border Department of the FSB. The police were forced to open fire in the air to subdue the discontented crowd. 93 people from the TAP were taken to the police department in the Magaramkent district of the RD.¹⁷

Immediately after the incident, the press secretary of the Russian President Dmitry Peskov said that Russia and Azerbaijan continue contacts to resolve the situation in the RD with the citizens of Azerbaijan. He recalled that the problem arose from the very beginning of the self-isolation regime, and the authorities of the RD quickly set up a tent camp for Azerbaijani citizens who at that time wanted to return to their country, but the borders were closed. According to the Kremlin representative, *"the leadership of Daghestan has done a lot to somehow resolve this situation"* Peskov stressed that *"the situation is not man-made, it is connected with the conditions in which everyone found themselves because of the coronavirus."*¹⁸ It is important to emphasize that the lists for the return of Azerbaijanis home were prepared by the Azerbaijani authorities. For this purpose, employees of the Azerbaijani Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as a representative of the President of Azerbaijan, came to the RD. Therefore, the migrants' discontent should have been addressed to their own authorities, and not to the Russian ones. As a result of the incident, criminal

cases were initiated against 10 Azerbaijani citizens on their use of violence against government officials and intentional damage to property. Subsequently, the Azerbaijani authorities increased the traffic across the border up to 400 people at a time with an interval of a week. At the same time, by the autumn, due to the completion of seasonal work, the number of citizens of this state who wanted to return home through Daghestan increased.

Representatives of the NCA of Azerbaijanis in the RD and other subjects of the Russian Federation also joined the process of resolving the situation on the border, they kept records of their fellow countrymen arriving in the RD, and helped those of them who needed urgent material, medical or other assistance. *"Everyone wants to go home, people are outraged that they can't go back. But we can't help them all. But we try to make sure that the list includes at least those who have health problems. So, we managed to insist that a man who had an allergic reaction – what exactly was unknown, but his body was covered with blisters – was included in the group that went that very day. We managed to put him on a bus to the border"*, A. Allahverdiyev, the representative of the Azerbaijani National Assembly in the Moscow region, said on August 25.¹⁹

Until the end of September, Azerbaijanis in groups of 400-500 people regularly left the territory of the Russian Federation through ground checkpoints on the territory of the RD, until on September 28, Azerbaijan imposed martial law due to a new escalation of the armed conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The departure of Azerbaijanis to their homeland from the territory of the RD was suspended for almost a month. Only on October 20, the ground crossing of the border across the RD was resumed. With the onset of cold weather in early November, it was decided to dismantle the shelter for migrants near the village of Kullar, since the tents were not heated. The Azerbaijanis who were waiting to be sent home were placed in the Ogonyok children's camp in the Kaitag district of the RD. By the end of November, there were about 250 Azerbaijani citizens there. As of December 6, about 500 people were expected to be sent home in the RD. On

December 18, the Azerbaijani Embassy in Russia announced the closure of the land border until March 1, 2021 due to the increase in coronavirus infections in both countries, and called on its fellow citizens to refrain from traveling to the RD to cross the border.²⁰ After the closure of the land border, the citizens of Azerbaijan who remained in the territory of the RD could only enter Azerbaijan by air.

Prevention of the ideology of extremism and terrorism

The problem of terrorism, the presence of illegal armed groups (IAF) in the region, their “sleeping cells”, whose terrorist activities are covered up and “justified” by pseudo-religious slogans, is still the most resonant problem in the RD. This problem for many years to come attracted the attention of federal and local authorities, the public, the clergy, journalists, human rights activists and researchers-specialist on Caucasian studies. Currently in Russia, as noted by prof. Dobaev, *“there is a coherent system of countering radical Islamism, aimed primarily at combating its most extreme manifestations, the epicenter of which is modern terrorism.”*²¹ This centralized system is headed by the National Anti-Terrorist Committee (NAC), which directly coordinates the activities of Anti-Terrorist Commissions (ATC) and operational headquarters in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. At the regional level, the ATC apparatuses formed by the heads of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation coordinate the work on countering the ideology of extremism and terrorism on the territory of the entire subject, within which municipal ATCs operate at the municipal level. Thus, the work on countering terrorism in Russia covers all levels of government, and in the RD – all administrative and territorial units of the region. The Republic of Dagestan is implementing the “Comprehensive Program for Countering the Ideology of Terrorism in the Republic of Dagestan” (CP). The responsible executor of the CP, designed for 2018–2020, was the Ministry of

Informatization, Relations and Mass Communications of the RD (Minkomsvyaz of the RD). The co-executors were: Ministry of Education and Science of the RD, Minnat of the RD, Ministry of Culture of the RD, Minmol of the RD, Minsport of the RD; local self-government bodies. The participants of the CP were also the Muftiate of the RD, the Diocese of Makhachkala and Grozny of the ROC, the Council of Jewish Communities of the RD, the DFC RAS, the Public Chamber of the RD. The goal of the program is to reduce the level of radicalization of various groups of the population, to create an atmosphere of rejection of the ideology of extremism and terrorism in the RD. As part of the implementation of the CP, the following events were held: research and analytical activities (opinion polls); activities for the creation and dissemination of anti-terrorist content (outdoor advertising, videos, etc.); professional development of specialists in the field of countering the ideology of extremism and terrorism (courses and seminars); conferences, forums, festivals; individual preventive work with the population; support for the activities of citizens and public organizations in the field of countering the ideology of terrorism and extremism (grants, subsidies, competitions).

Every year, the RD, through the efforts of the republican authorities and religious public organizations, hosts the international interreligious youth forum (the VII-th forum was held in September 2020), aimed at the spiritual and moral education of young people, information counteraction to the ideology of extremism, as well as the development of inter-confessional and inter-ethnic relations of young people from various regions of the Russian Federation. Other events were also held within the framework of the forum (on September 22 – a scientific and practical conference “Interethnic and interfaith dialogue as a consolidating basis of society in the fight against global threats of terrorism and extremism”; on September 24 – a round table in Derbent with the participation of youth activists of the city, dedicated to strengthening inter-confessional relations and preventing the ideology of extremism and terrorism). On

September 23, the Republican House of Friendship hosted the 8th Congress of Moslem Communities of the North Caucasus,²² dedicated to the problems of preserving peace and stability in society, countering the ideology of terrorism, including among migrants. Every year, the congress is attended by the heads of the RD, representatives of the state and municipal authorities of the RD, representatives of the ATK in the RD, clergy of the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District, public and religious figures.

Many measures to counteract the ideology of extremism and terrorism are implemented in Daghestan with the active participation of the Muftiate of the Republic of Daghestan. These are, first of all, events of an ideological and spiritual-educational nature, as well as activities for the dissemination of anti-terrorist content in the republic. In addition, the Muftiate of the Republic of Daghestan carries out important work on the certification and professional development of imams of mosques in Daghestan cities and villages. The role of the imam of the mosque in the information and ideological counteraction to pseudo-religious extremism is difficult to overestimate, since the imam of the mosque constantly contacts the parishioners of the mosque and regularly reads religious sermons to them. In some Daghestani villages, until recently, mosques were openly functioning, which were perceived by the local population as hotbeds of non-traditional trends in Islam in Daghestan. In the common people, these mosques were called "Wahhabi", because the preachers in these mosques opposed some religious practices that are considered traditional in modern Daghestan. An indirect sign that some provocative sermons were being preached in these mosques was the fact that young people who attended these mosques went abroad to participate in the activities of international terrorist organizations. These so-called "Wahhabi" mosques did not interact in any way with the Muftiate of the RD, and most often, the imams of these mosques were ideological opponents of the official clergy of the republic. The logic of the

emergence and strengthening of the positions of non-traditional movements in Islam in some Daghestani cities and villages is primarily connected with the religious activities of persons who have received religious education abroad. These Daghestanis, returning to the republic, gradually began to gain the trust of the parishioners in the mosques. They were distinguished by high oratorical abilities, the ability to capture the attention of the audience, against the background of the former poorly educated imams. If the local imams gave a worthy rebuff at the level of theological disputes to these graduates of foreign Islamic universities, they initiated the construction of another mosque, usually in the opposite or remote part of the village, and thus the village community split into traditionalists and adherents of a new, non-traditional version of Islam for Daghestan. Thus, gradually, radical religious and political views and worldview were introduced into the Daghestani Moslem communities. To improve the situation in this area, it was necessary not only the activities of the responsible state authorities, their interdepartmental coordination, but also active participation of the Muftiate of the RD, which, together with the Ministry of Education and Science of the RD, assumed the functions of improving the skills and civic consciousness of rural imams. An important event in the work in this direction was the conclusion on October 26, 2020 of a cooperation agreement between the Daghestan Humanitarian Institute (an autonomous non-profit organization of higher education affiliated with the Muftiate of the RD) and the Bulgarian Islamic Academy (Republic of Tatarstan). Within the framework of the signed agreement, the institutes will maintain cooperation in the following areas: exchange of visits of the teaching staff, students and young scientists; exchange of information about the educational process and scientific activities; joint organization of conferences, scientific schools, round tables, seminars; conducting joint scientific research. DHI and BIA are active participants in the federal project to train specialists with an in-depth knowledge of the history and culture

of Islam, so the interaction of these two educational institutions can benefit from strengthening the position of traditional Islam among Russian Moslems.

To date, the efforts of the federal law enforcement and republican state civil authorities, with the active participation of the Muftiate of the RD, have managed to stop the growth of the number of so-called "Wahhabi" mosques and significantly reduce their number through the registration of mosques by the Ministry of Justice of the RD. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation for the RD conducts preventive work with persons exposed to the ideology of terrorism, as well as those who have already fallen under its influence. First of all, they are graduates of foreign Islamic universities who worked as imams in "problematic" mosques. They are suspended from working with parishioners, and the Muftiate of the RD sends new preachers – graduates of their educational institutions – to these mosques, which have remained without imams. In general, the Muftiate of the Republic of Daghestan carries out a great work in the field of spiritual and moral prevention of the ideology of extremism and terrorism, performs routine and everyday work in this direction, which cannot be performed by state authorities.

The success of the state in countering the ideology of extremism and terrorism in the Republic of Daghestan is associated with the implementation of a comprehensive approach that combines military operations to neutralize members of the underground with information and ideological prevention. The NAC of the Russian Federation is constantly improving its work, increasing the coordination of the activities of regional ATCs, which analyze the experience of countering terrorism at the municipal level and work on mistakes. In the Republic of Daghestan, public organizations are actively involved in this work, primarily the Muftiate of the RD, as well as public organizations of the national-cultural sense, the community and the diaspora of migrant workers.

Conclusions

In general, the socio-political and ethno-cultural situation in the Republic of Daghestan remained manageable and stable in 2020. The activities carried out by state authorities together with educational institutions, ethno-cultural and religious organizations cover all areas of the modern state national policy of the Russian Federation. A large number of events are being held in the republic aimed at harmonizing interethnic and confessional relations, countering the ideology of extremism and terrorism, and strengthening the Russian civil identity. In October 2020, the leadership of the region was changed without conflict, S. Melikov became the new head of the RD and by the end of the year formed the Cabinet of Ministers. The municipal elections in September 2020 were also held without serious complications and contradictions, which indicates the manageability of the socio-political situation in the region. The activities of public organizations of an ethno-cultural nature and individuals acting on behalf of their ethnic communities in the RD are carried out within the boundaries of the Russian legal framework. Religious life in the republic is also gradually normalizing and was characterized in 2020 by the absence of any open clashes and conflicts on confessional grounds. V. Vasiliev, who served as the head of the RD from October 3, 2017 to October 5, 2020, has greatly contributed to the stabilization of the socio-political situation in the RD. Vasiliev systematically worked to convey to the Daghestani public the idea of the need to work within the boundaries of a single legal framework. He managed to neutralize the ethnic factor in the practice of state administration of the republic. Daghestani society, as noted by local political observers, has for the first time in its new history seen the honest and selfless public service of the head of the republic, who worked not in the interests of his family, tukhum, ethnic group, but in the name of the national interests of society and the state.

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2021.02.002. ELENA DMITRIEVA. AZERBAIJAN-TURKEY RELATIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS // *Condensed abstract*.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, Turkey, foreign policy, Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, Russia, Armenia, South Caucasus, conflict settlement, military-political escalation, international recognition, geopolitical analysis.

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The authors of the article, Yumatov K.V. and Sivina K.N. (1), analyze Azerbaijani-Turkish relations since the collapse of the USSR and investigate their impact on the geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus. The authors refer to the importance of studying this issue, since this is Turkey, relying on the ideology of "one people, two countries," did a lot, to help Azerbaijan overcome the political and economic crisis of the 1990s, lobbied for its interests in the international arena in organizations such as

* Translation of the title is presented in author's version.