

SCO Leaders Address Tajikistan's Instability and Radicalization Risks

Leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) met in Astana, Kazakhstan, on July 3, with Security Concerns heightened by the growing threats from Taliban-led Afghanistan. The issue gained attention after Tajik citizens linked to the Afghanistan-based Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) attacked Moscow's Crocus City Hall on March 22.

President XiJinping's visit to Tajikistan on July 5, following the summit, underscored China's concerns. China and Tajikistan elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership, introducing economic measures to stabilize Tajikistan and mitigate Threats from Afghanistan.

Despite Russia and China's support, including efforts to Modernize Tajikistan's Authoritarian Governance, these measures are unlikely to address the deeper Structural Issues fueling Radicalization. Russia's resources are stretched due to the war in Ukraine, and China's Economic Investments may not significantly improve living standards in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan's instability and Vulnerability to radicalization are expected to persist, potentially worsened by a looming Power Succession. This situation poses ongoing security risks for Central Asia, Russia, Iran, Europe, and potentially China, as the country's weak economy, geographic isolation, and repressive government continue to drive instability.