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## **КЭРнын СИНЬЦЗЯН-УЙГУР АВТОНОМИЯСЫНДАГЫ АЙМАКТЫК ТЕРРОРИЗМ ЖАНА СЕПАРАТИЗМ МАСЕЛЕЛЕРИ**

### **ПРОБЛЕМЫ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОГО ТЕРРОРИЗМА И СЕПАРАТИЗМА В СИНЬЦЗЯН- УЙГУРСКОМ АВТОНОМНОМ ОКРУГЕ КНР**

### **PROBLEMS OF REGIONAL TERRORISM AND SEPARATISM IN THE XINJIANG UY- GUR AUTONOMOUS REGION OF CHINA**

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**Аннотациясы:** Изилдөөнүн предмети Кытайдын Синьцзян-Уйгур автономиялык районунда терроризмге каршы саясатты изилдөө болуп саналат. Макалада Синьцзян-Уйгур автономиялык районундагы терроризм маселесин, уйгур сепаратисттик кыймылынын кылмыш ишине каршы аракеттенүү боюнча КЭРнын көрүп жаткан чараларды изилдөөгө өзгөчө көңүл бурулат.

**Негизги сөздөр:** терроризм, диний экстремизм, сепаратизм.

**Аннотация:** Предметом исследования является изучение политики противодействия терроризму в Синьцзян-Уйгурском автономном районе КНР. Особое внимание в статье уделяется изучению проблемы терроризма в Синьцзян-Уйгурском автономном районе, мерах, принимаемых КНР, по противодействию преступной деятельности уйгурского сепаратистского движения.

**Ключевые слова:** терроризм, религиозный экстремизм, сепаратизм.

**Abstract:** The research subject is the counterterrorism policy in Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region of China. Special attention is given to the problem of terrorism in Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region and the counterterrorism measures of China against the Uyghur separatist movement.

**Keywords:** separatism, religious extremism, terrorism.

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Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been an acceleration of economic transformations in the PRC, which were mainly expressed in the implementation of large-scale reforms and a policy of external openness, followed by the promotion of a strategy of "going outside". In the 2000s, the implementation of the "great development of the West" program began with the aim of accelerating the socio-economic development of lagging regions, especially problematic national autonomies – Xinjiang and Tibet, and the realization of China's strategic interests in Central Asia. The implementation of this program is hindered by the terrorist and extremist activities taking place in Xinjiang, associated with the activation of the Uighur separatist movement in the early 1990s. In order to consider the problem of terrorism in Xinjiang and assess the policy pursued by the central authorities to combat terrorism, it is first necessary to clearly define the concept of "terrorism" and conduct a brief overview of this phenomena. "terrorism is a special, asymmetric tactic of armed struggle, available to the "weak" (non-state players) in opposition to the "strong" (states, groups of states, the international community), and not a tool, for example, in a symmetrical confrontation of the "weak" against the "weak" or "strong" against the "strong", that is, the same status and comparable potential of the parties. Moreover, it is precisely the asymmetric need of terrorists to use strikes against civilian targets as an accelerator, an amplifier of their limited conventional potential, the targeting of terrorists for a disproportionately broad political and media effect that explains why terrorism is not an instrument of "strong" (that is, states) against "weak", why politically motivated armed violence against civilians with on the part of the State itself, it is anything but terrorism." [1]. Today, terrorism is international, it cannot be associated with any particular identity. According to preliminary estimates of experts, terrorism in the form in which it exists today is one of the most serious threats to international security. Terrorism has become a problem that the world community has recognized as global. It is socially dangerous for society, multifaceted in terms of its goals and manifestations; today, terrorists have the opportunity to use the achievements of science and technology for their own purposes. Terrorism often spreads under the auspices of the most radical political and religious concepts and trends. Vivid examples of this are distorted interpretations of one of the world's religions – Islam. Modern terrorist organizations seek to use existing internal and international conflicts to achieve their own goals. The largest bases of international terrorist organizations were created in areas of major conflicts, as well as in territories where, for various reasons, state control has been weakened. Independent no State can repel international terrorism. The implementation of an effective fight against this dangerous phenomenon can occur only in conditions of consolidation of the efforts of the entire world community, coupled with international law, which is one of the fundamental components of this struggle, and the UN, which would act as a coordinator of the entire process [3]. It should be noted that in recent years, in general, the number of terrorist attacks has been increasing. This can be explained by the fact that the technical equipment of terrorists is getting better, and this allows them to operate effectively around the world. The situation becomes especially dangerous when the leaders of terrorist organizations carry out their activities under the auspices of the national liberation struggle, as well as the struggle for democracy. Radicalization of various political and ethnic groups, as well as the intensification of racial extremism are the reasons that often contribute to the intensification of terrorist activity. This problem – the problem of radicalization of various ethnic and religious groups is very relevant for Xinjiang. XUAR (Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region) is a place of compact residence of Uighurs, whose number reaches 9 million, and professing Sunni Islam.

The Uighurs are one of the 55 small nationalities living in the PRC, and at the same time, the most numerous. Interethnic relations and the effectiveness of the policy of the central authorities carried out in the region, therefore, are the main factors that determine the situation in Xinjiang. This territory has been called Xinjiang since 1884. This name, meaning simply "new territory", was given to him by the Chinese, who finally established their control over the territory of Xinjiang in the XVIII century. In turn, opponents of Chinese domination in these places prefer to use the term "East Turkestan". In the mid-30s of the twentieth century, a broad separatist movement emerged in the region for the first time in recent history, a movement that tried to create an ethnically pure republic "under the

banner of Islam." In 1949, after the creation of the People's Republic of China, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was created on the territory of Xinjiang, in which, as researchers now believe, the outline of the internal borders was such that the decisive superiority of the Uighurs over other minorities – "Shaoshuminzu" was hidden. The problem that the central authorities of the People's Republic of China face in the XUAR is one of the most acute for multinational states – the problem of ethnic conflicts, manifested in the fact that groups differing on ethnic (national) grounds have opposing interests. In order to reconcile the various interests and best meet the needs of ethnic groups, the State pursues a national policy aimed at these goals [5]. There are three problematic territories in China that are unstable from the point of view of the territorial integrity of the country: The Tibet Autonomous Region and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. In recent years, the role of the XUAR in China and Central Asia has increased markedly, so ensuring relative socio-political stability in this region has become particularly important. This is due to the following factors: 1) China is interested in the stability of the western borders and full control over them, and the XUAR is a border territory. In addition, the XUAR occupies the first place in the PRC in terms of the length of the border, the length of which is 5,600 km; 2) There are a lot of natural resources located on the territory of the XUAR, such as oil, gas, coal, and other minerals are extracted. We can safely say that almost all types of polymetallic ores are found on the territory of Xinjiang, almost the entire periodic Table [6]. 3) Extremist and ethnoseparatist tendencies are strongly expressed in the XUAR. This is due to the fact that the Uighurs inhabiting Xinjiang are close to neighboring "hot Islamic spots", primarily Afghanistan and Kashmir, both geographically and confessionally (the Uighurs profess Sunni Islam). 47 nationalities live in the XUAR, the most numerous of which are Uighurs, Han Chinese, Kazakhs, Dungans, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Manchus, Daurians, Tatars, etc. [7]. According to official data, Uighurs make up slightly less than half of the population of Xinjiang – 47%, the Han Chinese are next after the Uighurs – 45%, the Kazakhs are in third place – 7%; only 1% account for the remaining nationalities. From these figures it can be seen that the most significant in the region are the relations between the Uighur and Han communities [8]. In addition, the massive Han migration to XUAR aggravates the situation by limiting the rapidly growing indigenous population in economic terms, which contributes to the development of nationalist sentiments among the Uighurs, which creates the ground for tension and even clashes between local Uighurs and emigrant Han. The policy of the Chinese authorities towards the Uighurs has contributed to the growth of tension. Initially, after the Chinese Communists came to power, the situation in Xinjiang developed according to the Soviet patterns of building "national-cultural autonomy". Even the Uighur alphabet was for a short time officially translated from the Arabic alphabet into Cyrillic by the developments of scientists of the USSR. The Chinese authorities, fearing the ethnic and cultural proximity of the Uighurs with the Turkic peoples of the USSR, not only tightly closed the previously transparent border, but also translated the Uighur alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin (all Central Asian republics of the USSR then used exclusively Cyrillic), and then, in the early 80s, they officially returned the Arabic alphabet. This was the third change in the alphabet of the Uighur language in the XUAR in 30 years [12]. All these decades of Chinese development of the XUAR, accompanied by the active resettlement of ethnic Han Chinese there (as a result of which more than 40% of the region's population reached them by the end of the XX century [13]), were not without clashes between Uighurs and Han Chinese, but most of these facts remain almost unknown due to the total closeness of Maoist China. It is known about the 1962 unrest in the Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Region of Xinjiang on the border with Soviet Kazakhstan [14]. During the suppression of the rebellion, over 5,000 people were shot and put in camps, from 60 to 100 thousand Uighurs and Kazakhs fled across the border to the USSR. In fact, it turns out that the powers of national autonomies, including in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, do not provide a sufficient level of the political status of Uighurs, the declared dominance of representatives of national minorities in the governments of national autonomies does not correspond to reality. The ethnic structure of the personnel corps since the second half of the 70s has been represented mainly by the dom-

inant Han group, which, if we agree with official statistics, occupies secondary positions in the leadership, but in fact completely controls the authorities and management. Over time, the ethnonym "Uygur" began to denote not only a certain ethnic group, but also a social affiliation. Most Uighurs are employed in low-paid, low-skilled jobs in industry or agriculture, and most of them are denied access to white-collar positions only because of their ethnicity [15]. The official language in state and educational institutions of China is Chinese (Han), and in order to get a good job, Uighurs must have an education level not lower than that of Han migrants. In addition, many Uighurs did not send their children to school because they were afraid of ethnic discrimination and wanted to preserve their cultural traditions. All this increases the unemployment rate among Uighurs. Many Chinese-speaking Uighurs never use this language in communication with each other. In addition, the dominance of the Chinese language leads to an even faster adaptation of new migrants to the social hierarchy in cities where there is no longer room for indigenous ethnic groups. A gradual increase in interethnic tension has occurred since the mid-1980s, when large-scale demonstrations of local residents took place on various occasions, both political, economic, and religious. Uighur students advocated for equality and defended the rights of Uighurs. In 1985-1989 there were several student protests, which later escalated into mass riots. Then the flag of the struggle for national liberation passed to extremist groups. In the 2000s, there were sporadic outbreaks of protests, limited in scale: in 2002-2003, a series of attacks on officials and administrative facilities occurred, and in 2008 in Khotan, about 500 people marched through the city to the venue of the weekly bazaar and bus station, which ended with a police operation, during which several people were exposed in the manufacture of bombs, three ready-made explosive devices were seized. There were also reports of demonstrations in Khotan, Urumqi and two other counties, Hizb-ut-Tahrir-Islami, associated with the organization of the same name in Central Asia, was accused of incitement [9]. In July 2009, the largest of the mass clashes took place. There are different opinions about their causes: the Chinese authorities believe that the unrest was provoked from the outside, but the representatives of the "World Congress of Uighurs" themselves claim that the clashes were caused by the following factors [10]: – discrimination of the indigenous population due to the fact that the vast majority of the XUAR authorities are ethnic Han; – mass resettlement ethnic Han Chinese from the interior of the PRC to the territory of the XUAR; – advantages in hiring for the Han population, limiting the employment opportunities of the indigenous population of the XUAR; – limiting the scope of the Uighur language;- oppression of Uighurs in the XUAR on religious grounds. Recently, representatives of other nationalities, for example, Kazakhs, have also been resisting the Chinese government in the XUAR. The Chinese government is mainly taking repressive measures to resolve interethnic problems, which only heats up the situation. Numerous unrest in the XUAR indicates that not only China's security is under threat, but also the security of neighboring states with the XUAR. Underestimating the problem can lead to disastrous consequences, given that the Uighur movement has taken on a religious extremist character. In recent years, the Chinese authorities have been betting on the accelerated development of western and southwestern provinces, the creation of new urban settlements and farms. This time, the reasons for the discontent of radical elements among the Uighur population were the flow of immigrants from the central provinces of China and the development of mineral deposits. In particular, Uighur activists pay attention to preferences for Han migrants, including subsidies for seeds and fertilizers, the provision of agricultural machinery for free use and other opportunities inaccessible to Uighurs [11]. One of the aspects of the problem of the relationship between Uighurs and Han Chinese today is the issue of exploiting the rich natural resources of the region. The management of the extraction and use of natural resources is carried out by the Chinese, which also causes sharp dissatisfaction with the Uighurs, many of whom consider the management of natural resources and the political independence of Xinjiang from the PRC interrelated problems [16]. But now, as in the early years of its existence, SUAR actually lives in debt [17]. Researchers of the problem of ethnopolitical conflict in the region put forward a version about the desire of the already denationalized local bureaucracy to preserve the subsidies of the center, while ensuring the uncontrolled use of natural resources [18]. At the same

time, the ethnic aspect of the problem is used as a "kind of "detonator"", an object for manipulation. Directly related to the issue of natural resources is the problem of the availability of qualified scientific and technical personnel and workers for their development, who are sent to XUAR from Central and Eastern China and are mainly Han Chinese, which also becomes the ground for ethnic separatism in the region.

**Conclusion** The key link in solving the problem of terrorism in Xinjiang is the solution of the national issue. However, the solution of this issue is very difficult, since it is very closely intertwined with many economic, political and religious issues. In Xinjiang, there are many ethnic minorities with different faiths, lifestyles and traditions, as well as, no less importantly, different levels of socio-economic development. The solution to the national question could be a policy aimed at preserving and developing the identity of different nationalities. This policy could become the tool that would push the nationalities living in the XUAR to integrate, as well as strengthen and support socio-economic development. Strengthening integration and interethnic understanding has already become a key mechanism in solving the national issue in China. Thus, the Chinese government, along with the fight against national separatism, the preservation of public order and stability, should work to resolve the national issue in the XUAR, especially taking into account the closely related Islamic factor. The solution of the national issue in the XUAR is closely connected with overcoming sharp differences in the socio-economic development of the region and the rest of China and with improving the standard of living of the indigenous peoples of the region, on which ensuring its stability and development largely depends. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the origins of terrorism lie, among other things, in its relative poverty and backwardness. In order to create effective mechanisms for deterring and countering terrorism in the XUAR, it is necessary to ensure accelerated economic development of the region. Economic development, in turn, will make it possible to achieve progress in other spheres of life, primarily in improving the standard of living of indigenous peoples, in maintaining stability and order in the long term. Speaking about the level of socio-economic development of the XUAR, it is worth noting the striking gap in the level of development between the XUAR and the rest of China, the general weakness of the region's economy, its imbalance by sectors, as well as the fact that the resource and geographical potentials of the region have not been fully disclosed. The creation of a mechanism to protect and combat terrorism in Xinjiang is a key component of the policy of the central authorities in the region. The decision to conduct such a course was made after the Chinese authorities realized the danger of terrorism for the country. The essence of creating a system of countering terrorism in Xinjiang is as follows: based on the experience of combating terrorism in Central Asian countries, strengthen interregional and interstate cooperation in the fight against terrorism, as well as work to identify and eliminate the social causes of terrorism in the region. As mentioned earlier, terrorism is a multifaceted problem, which means that the measures taken to solve this problem must be comprehensive. That there are several main directions in the complex of measures that the central government of the People's Republic of China needs to implement to solve the problem of terrorism:

- stimulating the employment of the Uighur population, for example, encouraging local entrepreneurs, encouraging local authorities to effectively relocate the local workforce;
- increasing investments in the education of the local population in order to improve the skills of local workers;
- promotion of the concept of "bilingual education".

There are several possible solutions to this issue: investments in the education of future teachers who will promote "bilingual education"; investments in the necessary logistical support for the implementation of this project; removing more attention to the issue of promoting the culture and language of local nationalities so that there would not be a situation like now when the Chinese language and culture "stifle" the languages and cultures of small nationalities);

- solving the religious issue. I see several ways to solve this issue: easing excessive regulation of the religious sphere, which turns out to be counterproductive and only causes discontent among believers where it could be avoided; creating a system of religious education with the possibility of certification in order to create an institute of professional Islamic scholars-imams; solving the problem of inter-ethnic disunity. Thus, the effectiveness of the counter-terrorism policy in Xinjiang largely depends

on the solution of the above-mentioned general problems, as well as many other issues. As already mentioned, this cannot be done simultaneously, which means that it will take quite a long time.

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