

International Peacemaking in Civil War

Negotiation and Mediation in Tajikistan, 1993–1997

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Abstract

Peacemaking in contemporary violent conflict tends to involve a myriad of third-party actors of various kinds, including states, international and regional intergovernmental organisations, and non-governmental organisations. The recent experiences of such "multiparty mediation" in many conflict situations have shown that interconnections between individual third-party initiatives significantly affect the overall effectiveness of the mediation process. Accordingly, much of scholarly attention has been devoted to the issue of how the involvement of multiple external actors can be managed and turned into assets, not liabilities, for international peacemaking.

Purporting to be part of this important debate, this study argues that the multiplication of mediators can be conducive to successful mediation with positive interconnections among individual efforts attained, when they cooperate with each other in mediating a conflict and some lead actor acts as coordinator of the mediation process. The study tries to substantiate these arguments through an examination of the international mediation of the Tajikistan conflict, which represents a relatively unknown but noteworthy case of successful multiparty mediation in the post-cold war era.

After examining the course of the prenegotiation and negotiations with emphasis on third-party roles, this book makes an analysis of how interested parties, including Russia and Iran, the UN, the OSCE, the CIS and the unofficial dialogue succeeded in developing cooperation among them, based on shared interests and commitments, and in generating various kinds of positive interconnections among their roles. The book also focuses on the role of the UN as a lead coordinator in forming a coordination mechanism, in which to reconcile divergent interests among the major external stakeholders and promote the properly interconnected fulfilment of their third-party roles. The last part of the book overviews the post-agreement period and considers the achievements and limits of the Tajik mediation.

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Uniting Opposition Movements into a Single Entity

Starting in 1993, there occurred a process of various opposition elements coalescing into one large entity. At the end of the year,¹⁴¹ the Movement for Islamic Revival in Tajikistan (MIRT) was set up by exiled opposition leaders under the chairmanship of Nuri (Turajonzoda became first deputy chairman and Muhammad Sharif Himmatzoda deputy chairman). Based in Taloqan, northern Afghanistan, the MIRT served virtually as a "government in exile" that was aimed at coordinating the opposition's political and diplomatic activities as well as uniting its armed units. The IRP formed the core of the MIRT.¹⁴²

In late 1993 the Coordination Centre of the Democratic Forces of Tajikistan in the CIS was established in Moscow. Russia apparently enacted the role of *unifier* by encouraging leaders of different opposition forces to form the Coordination Centre and come up with a common platform.¹⁴³ Indeed, at that time Russia had been urging the Tajik government to begin negotiation with the opposition, and indeed the Tajik authorities demonstrated the readiness to do so. However, the Dushanbe regime then adopted a selective approach in dealing with the opposition. In December Abdulmajid Dostiev, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, stated that the Tajik government was willing to talk to the "constructive opposition" who intended to recognise its legality and terminate armed insurgency. But Dushanbe was then adamant in refusing to negotiate with the more irreconcilable Islamic opposition led by

¹⁴¹ Some sources mention January 1993 as the timing of the formation of the MIRT. See, for example, Akiner, *Tajikistan*, p. 39; and Abdullaev and Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise*, p. 84.

¹⁴² For details on the MIRT, see Kamoludin Abdullaev and Shahram Akbarzadeh, *Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), p. 144; and Abdullaev and Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise*, pp. 90–91. Olivier Roy describes the MIRT as a "supposedly broader front" but in reality "little more than the IRP." See Olivier Roy, *The Foreign Policy of the Central Asian Islamic Renaissance Party* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), p. 19.

¹⁴³ Abdullaev and Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise*, p. 84.

Turajonzoda and others.¹⁴⁴ Thus at this juncture, Moscow may have tried to lay the foundation for negotiation by helping turn the moderate components of the Tajik opposition into a unified entity.

In the words of Harold H. Saunders and Randa M. Slim, the Inter-Tajik Dialogue might also have facilitated the establishment of the Coordination Centre, acting as a *unifier* to help mend intraparty divisions on the opposition side.¹⁴⁵ At the Dialogue's October 1993 meeting, participants discussed how to bring about the onset of official negotiations. They found that a major obstacle was the problem of determining who would represent the opposition, given its lack of ideological, geographic, and organisational coherence or unity. Later in December, when different opposition elements convened in Tehran to formulate a common platform and formally establish the Coordination Centre, dialogue participants were directly involved in these events: two actually signed the common platform and four joined the steering committee of the Coordination Centre. At the Dialogue's following meeting in January 1994, participants from the opposition side reported on the new platform, and pro-government members questioned them on it in detail. After that exchange, the pro-government participants expressed their view that there now existed a basis for negotiations, making a promise to report to the government.¹⁴⁶

Eventually in 1994, major opposition parties and movements, including the IRP, the MIRT, the DPT,¹⁴⁷ and the Coordination Centre of the Democratic Forces,¹⁴⁸ joined

¹⁴⁴ ITAR-TASS, 6 December 1993 (via Lexis-Nexis). See also *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 20 November 1993 (CDPSP, vol. 45, no. 47, 22 December 1993, p. 24).

¹⁴⁵ Saunders and Slim themselves refer to Christopher Mitchell's typology of intermediary roles and functions, which is employed throughout this thesis, and also classify the role of the Dialogue as a *unifier*. See Randa M. Slim and Harold H. Saunders, "Managing Conflict in Divided Societies: Lessons from Tajikistan," *Negotiation Journal*, vol. 12, no. 1(1996), p. 42.

¹⁴⁶ Saunders, "The Multilevel Peace Process," p. 167; Saunders, *A Public Peace Process*, p. 154; Slim and Saunders, "Managing Conflict," p. 37; and Slim and Saunders, "The Inter-Tajik Dialogue," p. 46.

¹⁴⁷ The question of participation in the UTO was primarily responsible for the split of the DPT into two parties, the DPT Almaty platform (DPTA) and the DPT Tehran platform (DPTT). The DPTA remained as part of the UTO and continued to participate in the inter-Tajik negotiations, while the DPTT withdrew from the UTO and turned to a pro-government position. Author interview, negotiation participant B, Dushanbe, 30 March 2001.

together to form the UTO, which was to act as a negotiating partner with the Tajik government. Nuri became a head of the UTO.¹⁴⁹ This met an important precondition for the onset of negotiations in situations of internal conflict—the presence of “a valid spokesperson” for the opposition side.¹⁵⁰ And the fairly stable leadership provided by Nuri (as well as that exercised by Rakhmonov for the government side) helped to sustain momentum during the course of the difficult negotiations and contributed to their success.¹⁵¹

Section 3 Review of Third-Party Roles

The material from this chapter has clearly confirmed the major claim advanced in the preceding chapter; a peace process comprises a wide variety of intermediary roles fulfilled by many third-party actors and this multiparty aspect of external involvement has a great impact on its course and outcome. Russia, Iran, and other regional powers, the UN, the OSCE, the CIS and the unofficial dialogue enacted different roles as identified by Mitchell at different junctures in the prenegotiation stage stretching from January 1993 to March 1994, as shown in Table 2 at the end of this section.

A close look at Table 2 would help us to ascertain a set of broad patterns regarding the involvement of different third parties in the Tajik mediation process and to elucidate possible lines of inquiry about cooperation among them and their interconnected third-party roles.

In early 1993 the international community began to turn serious attention to Tajikistan and the two major international organisations—the UN and the OSCE—became

¹⁴⁸ Ambassador Harold Saunders stated that the Coordination Centre came to function as the UTO's “embassy in Russia.” Harold Saunders, author interview, Washington DC, 25 October 2000.

¹⁴⁹ For details on the UTO, see Abdullaev and Akbarzadeh, *Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan*, p. 218; and Abdullaev and Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise*, pp. 91–92.

¹⁵⁰ See I. William Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in Zartman, ed., *Elusive Peace*, p. 10.

¹⁵¹ Akiner, *Tajikistan*, pp. 51–53.

involved in the country. How did they establish the modality of cooperation between them and what was it like? Clearly, both the UN and the OSCE were possible candidates for the position of lead international mediator in the Tajik peace process, so the question arises as to how this leadership issue was settled. More specifically, the two organisations moved into the same role of fact finder at this initial stage of intervention in order to collect first-hand information on the Tajik situation in search of a possible way of fuller engagement. Was there any interconnection between their roles?

The Inter-Tajik Dialogue began in March 1993, immediately following the peak of violent conflict and prior to the initiation of full-scale diplomatic efforts at bringing about the official negotiations. It seems natural to expect that some kind of support or acquiescence at minimum from the official quarters was necessary for the launch of the unofficial third-party effort in such a delicate situation and also for the establishment of a good working relationship with the official process. How was it achieved? And what were the contributions that the Dialogue made to the initiation of the ensuing official negotiation process?

Clearly, one important prenegotiation role was that of an explorer and reassurer, a role continuously enacted by multiple mediators—Russia in the person of Primakov and Adamishin, Kittani and Piriz-Ballon sent by the UN, and the Inter-Tajik Dialogue. Although they appear to have been intervening rather independently of each other at this point, their roles may well have been interconnected among them, producing a joint impact on the policies of the conflicting parties.

What appears to have been one final push to bring the Tajik parties to the negotiating table was cooperation between Russia and Iran in March 1994 on the occasion of Adamishin's visit to Dushanbe and Tehran. Both countries apparently perceived the need to search for a political solution to the Tajik conflict, although they must have had different policy interests and calculations. And the inducer roles enacted by Russia and Iran vis-à-vis their respective Tajik clients, which occurred almost simultaneously, seem

to have exhibited explicit elements of interconnectedness and thus a joint effect on the attitudes of the parties to the conflict.

Specifically in the process of some opposition elements creating the Coordination Centre of the Democratic Forces, which formed part of the UTO, Russia and the Inter-Tajik Dialogue fulfilled the role of unifier. They seem to have done so rather independently, but their roles might have been interrelated to each other.

The above initial observations and puzzles offer clues to in-depth investigation in Chapter 4. Before proceeding to that analysis, Chapter 3 will examine the inter-Tajik negotiation process in the same way as this chapter—that is, using Mitchell's framework of intermediary roles.

Table 2.	Intermediary Roles in Tajikistan (From January 1993 to March 1994)						
	01-5/93	07-8/93	09/93	10/93	11-12/93	01-2/94	03/94
Explorer (reassurer)	Inter-Tajik Dialogue	Primakov, Adamishin; Kittani (UN); Inter-Tajik Dialogue		Inter-Tajik Dialogue	Primakov	Piriz-Ballon (UN); Inter-Tajik Dialogue	Inter-Tajik Dialogue
Convener							
Decoupler							
Unifier				Inter-Tajik Dialogue	Russia	Inter-Tajik Dialogue	
Enskiller							
Facilitator							
Envisioner (fact finder)	UNMOT; CSCE						Inter-Tajik Dialogue re agenda setting
Enhancer			Talbott (US)				
Legitimiser							
Monitor			CIS/PKF				
Guarantor			CIS/PKF				
Enforcer							
Reconciler							
Inducer			Kozyrev				Adamishin; Velayati, Vaezi re start of negotiation
Neutral messenger							
Unofficial convener /facilitator	Inter-Tajik Dialogue (1st and 2nd meetings) ✓	Inter-Tajik Dialogue (3rd meeting) ✓		Inter-Tajik Dialogue (4th meeting) ✓		Inter-Tajik Dialogue (5th meeting) ✓	Inter-Tajik Dialogue (6th meeting) ✓

Chapter 3

The Inter-Tajik Negotiations and Multiparty Mediation

This chapter provides an analysis of the inter-Tajik negotiation process, which will be divided into two parts.¹⁵² The first section covers the period from the launch of the negotiations in April 1994 to December 1995. The second section covers the period from January 1996 to the completion of the negotiations in June 1997. The break between the two sections is based on a turning point in the negotiation process, which was caused primarily by a major shift in Russian policy toward the conflict in Tajikistan (to be analysed in depth in the next chapter). Both sections scrutinise various roles played by multiple mediators drawing on Mitchell's framework, as in the examination of prenegotiation in the preceding chapter. Based on the result of such analysis provided as Table 3 at the end of the chapter, the third section attempts to present some initial observations on patterns of third-party involvement and suggest possible research questions and propositions to be addressed in the following analytical chapters on cooperation, interconnectedness, and coordination.

Section 1 From April 1994 to December 1995

The negotiations between the government and the opposition finally began in Moscow on 5 April 1994. From this very first round, the main structural feature of inter-Tajik talks, which would be enduring throughout the entire negotiation process, was put in place—the involvement of multiple mediators. The United Nations sponsored the negotiations, and the organisation's representative, Piriz-Ballon, was to act as a chief *convener* and *facilitator*. Russia also fulfilled this set of third-party roles as a first host country. The role of *facilitator* was also played by the group of other observers at the

¹⁵² For a concise summary of the inter-Tajik negotiations, see Iji, "Multiparty Mediation," pp. 360–364.

talks, which included such interested states as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan as well as the CSCE/OSCE and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).¹⁵³ The United States also participated in the first round of negotiations "on an unofficial basis" and demonstrated interest in attending all the subsequent talks other than those to take place in Iran. To all appearances, the US involvement was not hailed by Russia and Iran.¹⁵⁴

The presence of this whole group of external third-party actors at each round of talks was expected to make an additional important contribution to the peace process. As Irina Zviagelskaya has aptly noted, placing internal negotiations between the Tajik parties within a "broad international context" would give them a "higher status."¹⁵⁵ Viewed in this light, these outside actors jointly enacted the role of *legitimiser*, adding prestige and weight to the process and outcome of the negotiations and making them acceptable to the parties to the conflict. In this regard, the sponsorship of the UN as a global organisation representing the international community was of particular significance.

In addition to demarcating the main structure of inter-Tajik talks, namely, that of multiparty mediation, the Moscow round produced modest but important results. The two sides managed to set the agenda for the following rounds of the negotiations. They identified three clusters of issues to be discussed: political settlement, refugees and internally displaced persons, and the institutional and constitutional structure of government in Tajikistan.¹⁵⁶ Generally speaking, there existed substantial differences between the sides over prioritisation of the issues. The government side wanted the negotiations to focus on the first and second items on the agenda, demanding the end of insurgency and the repatriation of refugees. The opposition side, on the other hand,

¹⁵³ Precisely speaking, some of them joined the observer group in the middle of the negotiation process. Turkmenistan served as an observer from the Ashgabat round in November 1995, the CSCE/OSCE from the Tehran round in June 1994, and the OIC from the Islamabad round in October 1994. See Goryayev, "Architecture of International Involvement," pp. 34–35.

¹⁵⁴ Akiner, *Tajikistan*, p. 54. See also Editorial Report (BBC SWB, 7 April 1994).

¹⁵⁵ Irina Zviagelskaya, "The Tajik Conflict: Problems of Regulation," in Djalili et al., eds., *Tajikistan*, p. 165.

¹⁵⁶ UNSG Report, S/1994/542, 5 May 1994.

wanted a wider discussion covering the third item, calling for the creation of a new power-sharing body and the legalisation of opposition parties and movements.¹⁵⁷

More specifically, with regard to the first issue, the sides expressed their commitment to refraining from military action and pursuing political solution through the adoption of a joint statement. But they were unable to agree on how to bring about a ceasefire, disarm irregular forces, and build mutual trust.¹⁵⁸ In reality, military pressure continued to be seen by the adversaries as an effective means to achieve their respective goals.¹⁵⁹ The government demanded as a precondition for serious negotiation that the opposition should lay down their arms and surrender, while the opposition regarded the rebellion as the only way to have its grievances heard, doubting the seriousness in seeking a negotiated solution on the part of the regime. Their half-hearted and tentative attitudes toward the negotiations were apparently reflected in the relatively low level of representation, with the government delegation led by Shukur Zukhurov, Minister of Labour and Employment, and the opposition by Otakhon Latifi, Chairman of the Coordinating Centre of the Democratic Forces of Tajikistan.

Discussion on the second issue led to the most tangible result, although major differences existed between the sides in their basic stances toward it. The government side called for the early repatriation of refugees, while the opposition side claimed that it should take place only after adequate conditions have been established within the country. But still, the graveness of the situation led the parties to agree to sign a protocol providing for the creation of a joint commission to deal with the issue.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, the achievement of this concrete result on the refugee problem and the lack of real progress in other issue areas bore out the judgement made by the Inter-Tajik Dialogue. According to the account of Saunders, at its meeting held one month before

¹⁵⁷ Abdullaev and Barnes, eds., *Politics of Compromise*, p. 85; and Editorial Report (BBC SWB, 7 April 1994).

¹⁵⁸ UNSG Report, S/1994/542, 5 May 1994 (see Annex I).

¹⁵⁹ E. Rakhmatullaev, *Mirotvorchestvo OON v Tadzhikistane i perspektivy preventivnoi diplomatii v Tsentral'noi Azii* (Moskva: Tsentr strategicheskikh i politicheskikh issledovaniy, 2001), p. 74.

¹⁶⁰ UNSG Report, S/1994/542, 5 May 1994 (see Annex II).

the initiation of the official negotiations, the Dialogue had realised "the importance of structuring the agenda for a negotiation in such a way as not to block negotiation at the outset."¹⁶¹ Pro-opposition dialogue members initially suggested that official negotiators should give top priority to the problem of power-sharing between the sides through the formation of a coalition government (that is, the third issue on the agenda). Yet the understanding ultimately emerged within the Dialogue that, as the government would likely feel threatened and make no compromise in that regard, the dealing of such issues as the return of refugees "where more common purpose existed" would help negotiations to move forward.¹⁶² Although the direct impact of the Dialogue on the official negotiations in this instance cannot be exactly measured, it had clearly foreseen the outcome of the talks in Moscow. Thus the unofficial dialogue, albeit indirectly, assumed the role of *envisioner* by suggesting options and their possible outcomes on agenda setting at the official negotiations.

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This functionalist approach proved to be effective in another respect. During the first round, the parties issued a joint declaration on the question of the Tiger Gorge Wildlife Preserve, which in itself fell outside the purview of the agenda of the negotiations. The signing of the declaration served as an important confidence-building measure. In fact, it was the group of some non-governmental organisations that took the initiative in bringing the Tajik parties into such a joint action.¹⁶³ The enactment of the *convener* and *facilitator* roles by those NGOs in this specific issue area had important implications for the inter-Tajik negotiations as a whole.

In the discussion on the third issue, the "widest gap" was in evidence between the positions of the two sides.¹⁶⁴ (which had been *envisioned* by the unofficial dialogue as discussed above.) The opposition presented a proposal to set up a State Soviet or Council of National Agreement, a transitional body that would consist of the representatives of the conflicting parties on a fifty-fifty basis. The government flatly

¹⁶¹ Saunders, "The Multilevel Peace Process," p. 167.

¹⁶² Saunders, "The Multilevel Peace Process," p. 168.

¹⁶³ UNSG Report, S/1994/542, 5 May 1994 (see Annex IV).

¹⁶⁴ UNSG Report, S/1994/542, 5 May 1994.

rejected such an idea because it was not interested in any sort of power-sharing at this stage. Indeed, the opposition's proposal meant "the dismissal of the existing government from the political arena and its replacement with a very amorphous structure," which the government considered would only result in the deepening of the crisis in the country.¹⁶⁵

Among the observer states present at the talks, Russia, the host for the round, was diplomatically most active. Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, together with the UN envoy, played the major *convener* and *facilitator* roles.¹⁶⁶ During the course of the negotiations, Russia also enacted the *enhancer* role in an attempt to reward the Tajik parties for having come to a negotiating table in its capital and to encourage them to continue negotiation. On 13 April Russia promised Tajikistan an economic aid of 80 billion roubles and a technological assistance in the construction of a hydropower plant.¹⁶⁷ (The *enhancing* role was also carried out by the UN, which then pledged an aid of \$37.8 million.¹⁶⁸) After the first round ended on 19 April, Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, an opposition leader, expressed the view that the Tajik government had agreed to negotiation only under pressure from Russia and that Dushanbe could be immediately brought into accommodation with the opposition if Moscow was seriously interested in a settlement and exercised its influence to that end.¹⁶⁹ But actually Russia could not go any further beyond making the parties begin talks. This was partly because, as Turajonzoda pointed out, there was an internal split within the Russian leadership; while the Foreign Ministry led by Kozyrev was keen to pursue a political solution through the UN-mediated negotiations, the military saw the efforts with suspicion and favoured a military solution.¹⁷⁰ At that point, for all its activeness, Russian peacemaking diplomacy had not yet been set in full motion.

¹⁶⁵ Zviagelskaya, "The Tajik Conflict: Problems," pp. 172–173.

¹⁶⁶ Editorial Report (BBC SWB, 7 April 1994); and *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 9 April 1994 (BBC SWB, 14 April 1994).

¹⁶⁷ ITAR-TASS, 13 April 1994 (via Lexis-Nexis).

¹⁶⁸ *Segodnya*, 14 April 1994 (CDPSP, vol. 46, no. 15, 11 May 1994, p. 26).

¹⁶⁹ *Kommersant-Daily*, 23 April 1994 (BBC SWB, 26 April 1994).

¹⁷⁰ *Kommersant-Daily*, 23 April 1994. See also Zviagelskaya, "The Tajik Conflict: Problems," pp. 163–164.

After the first round of the talks, political and military tensions continued. Indeed, the tensions were deepened by the publication of a draft of a new constitution by the government since it had been agreed during the round that the work on the new constitution should be conducted with the participation of all parties after the achievement of a political settlement.¹⁷¹ Then the UN tried to sustain the momentum gained in the first round and bring about the second round. On 12–15 May Piriz-Ballon met in Tehran with major Tajik opposition elements as well as Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati. Another UN emissary, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Marrack Goulding, travelled to Dushanbe at the end of the month for talks with Rakhmonov and other senior government officials. Goulding also approached Uzbek President Karimov in Tashkent.¹⁷² The two UN mediators jointly performed the role of *neutral messenger*, persuading both Tajik sides and their respective outside supporters to continue the negotiation.

In the meantime, the Inter-Tajik Dialogue enacted the role of *enskiller* at the May 1994 meeting. In response to the request made by dialogue participants from the opposition side, the moderating team held a seminar in negotiation skills in order to help them pursue more effective and productive negotiations.¹⁷³

On 18 June the Tajik parties met for the second round of negotiations in Tehran.¹⁷⁴ During the course of the 10-day talks, the sides focused on the first item of the agenda for inter-Tajik negotiations that had been agreed upon in Moscow: reaching an agreement on a ceasefire. In principle the parties adopted different stances toward the issue. The government delegation sought for a permanent ceasefire, hoping to deprive the opposition once and for all of the right to take up arms against the state and to replace the military confrontation with the negotiation, which would allow the government the time to consolidate its rule so as to minimise the challenge from the

¹⁷¹ The text of the draft constitution is found in Tajik Radio, Dushanbe, 19 April 1994 (BBC SWB, 3 May 1994).

¹⁷² UNSG Report, S/1994/716, 16 June 1994.

¹⁷³ Slim and Saunders, "Managing Conflict," p. 42.

¹⁷⁴ For a short summary of the round, see *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1994 (CDPSP, vol. 46, no. 26, 27 July 1994, p. 20).

opposition. The opposition, in contrast, insisted on a temporary ceasefire because it still deemed armed struggle as a more reliable means to achieve its political aims than the negotiation.¹⁷⁵

This basic difference resulted in the inconclusiveness of the round of the talks. The sides managed to set the parameters for a ceasefire agreement. In other words, they agreed on a temporary nature of the ceasefire as well as on what kind of hostile activities were to be prohibited under the agreement.¹⁷⁶ However, the difference over the timing of its effectuation prevented them from signing the agreement. The government side demanded that the agreement should come into force immediately after its signature and pledged to meet the opposition's conditions in the subsequent period of the ceasefire. The conditions were threefold: releasing political prisoners and detainees, dropping criminal cases against opposition members, and lifting the ban on opposition parties, movements and media. The opposition, for its part, suggested that the agreement should take effect at the same time as the implementation of the above conditions by the government. Although the opposition eventually dropped its third condition, the government side refused to link the effectuation of the ceasefire agreement to the fulfilment of any conditions put forward by the opposition, thus making the signing of the agreement impossible.¹⁷⁷

The inability of the parties to seal the agreement can be attributed in part to the low level of their representation, which remained unchanged from the first round (Zukhurov representing the government and Latifi the opposition). In particular, the government side, in having failed to send negotiators senior enough to Tehran, revealed its lack of political will to engage in serious negotiations with the opposition. The government's strategy was a "dual policy of pursuing negotiations and then not participating in the process" designed to "buy time" and "put the opposition in a tight corner, gradually

¹⁷⁵ ITAR-TASS, 23 June 1994 (via Lexis-Nexis); and Radio Moscow International, 29 June 1994 (BBC SWB, 5 July 1994).

¹⁷⁶ UNSG Report, S/1994/893, 28 July 1994 (see Annex).

¹⁷⁷ UNSG Report, S/1994/893, 28 July 1994; and Radio Moscow International, 29 June 1994 (BBC SWB, 5 July 1994).

the border troops as part of its observer delegation at inter-Tajik talks.²⁰⁵

Another important issue discussed during the UN-facilitated talks was the government's plan to conduct parliamentary elections on 26 February. The government was then under pressure from the UN and the OSCE to postpone them in order to allow time for creating conditions for a free and fair electoral process. Indeed, Rakhmonov, in his meeting with Piriz-Ballon, offered to put off the elections on the condition that the opposition would actually take part in them and recognise their outcome. But the opposition demonstrated no interest in participating in the elections at this point. Instead, it called for such measures as the lifting of bans on opposition parties and the media to be taken in the first place. As a result, the government proceeded to the elections according to its own plan. The UTO parties were left out and the Party of People's Unity, which Abdullajanov had set up in Leninabad, boycotted the vote, being frustrated by the government's obstructionism.²⁰⁶ And the elections produced expected results; a new parliament turned out to be "thoroughly Soviet" with "roughly the same political makeup as the previous one."²⁰⁷ The government's attempt to further legitimise and perpetuate its rule through the parliamentary elections, following the November 1994 presidential election, intensified the conflict and made negotiation even more difficult.

In an effort to revive the parties' commitment to the negotiations, the UN sent yet another *neutral messenger* to the conflict region. Under-Secretary-General Aldo Ajello, visiting Moscow, Dushanbe and Islamabad from end February through early March, at least succeeded in securing the extension of the ceasefire agreement until 26 April.²⁰⁸ (Each side had unilaterally declared its intention to extend the ceasefire beyond the

²⁰⁵ UNSG Report, S/1995/105, 4 February 1995; and ITAR-TASS, 7 February 1995 (via Lexis-Nexis). The possibility of holding the fourth round in Tashkent was raised at a meeting in the United States between Uzbek Justice Minister Alisher Mardiyev and IRP leaders Turajonzoda and Himmatzoda, and Nuri subsequently announced it was acceptable to the Tajik opposition. See *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 2 March 1995 (CDPSP, vol. 47, no. 9, 29 March 1995, p. 16) and Voice of Free Tajikistan, 21 and 22 February 1995 (BBC SWB, 23 and 25 February 1995).

²⁰⁶ UNSG Report, S/1995/105, 4 February 1995; Zviagelskaya, "The Tajik Conflict: Problems," pp. 174-175; and ITAR-TASS, 24 February 1995 (via Lexis-Nexis).

²⁰⁷ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 2 March 1995 (CDPSP, vol. 47, no. 9, 29 March 1995, p. 16).

²⁰⁸ UNSG Report, S/1995/390, 12 May 1995.

expiration of the previous agreement on 6 February.²⁰⁹) However, both parties continued to fail to observe the ceasefire on the ground, and in early April they plunged into full-scale fighting on the Tajik-Afghan border. The opposition repeated attacks on Russian border forces from its military bases in Afghanistan. Russia, for its part, launched air raids on Taloqan, northern Afghanistan, mainly targeting the headquarters of the IRP there.²¹⁰ Concerned over the worsening situation, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan moved to jointly assume the role of *inducer*. At a summit meeting on 14 April in Chimkent, southern Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev, Karimov and Akayev issued a joint statement calling on both sides to stop fighting and return to the negotiating table.²¹¹ Against a backdrop of this escalation, Piriz-Ballon resumed the enactment of the *neutral messenger* role, helping the parties to finally get around the political quarrel over the venue problem by agreeing to meet for high-level consultations (not for the round of negotiations) in Moscow.²¹²

Those consultations convened on 19 April between the government's delegation headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Mahmadsaid Ubaidulaev and the opposition's delegation again by Turajonzoda. The weeklong meeting produced only "modest" results.²¹³ First of all, in light of the nature of the recent escalation, arrangements were made to strengthen the ceasefire by rendering the Tehran Agreement explicitly binding on opposition forces operating in Afghanistan as well as on Russian forces stationed in Tajikistan, particularly those in charge of the Tajik-Afghan border.²¹⁴ Also the extension of the ceasefire was limited to one month until 26 May, hindered by the opposition's insistence on the withdrawal of government forces recently redeployed to

²⁰⁹ UNSG Report, S/1995/105, 4 February 1995.

²¹⁰ *Segodnya*, 15 April 1995 (CDPSP, vol. 47, no. 15, 10 May 1995, p. 5); and Interfax, 7 and 10 April 1995 (via Lexis-Nexis).

²¹¹ Interfax, 14 April 1995 (via Lexis-Nexis).

²¹² UNSG Report, S/1995/390, 12 May 1995.

²¹³ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 28 April 1995 (CDPSP, vol. 47, no. 17, 24 May 1995, p. 22); and *Segodnya*, 28 April 1995 (CDPSP, vol. 47, no. 17, 24 May 1995, p. 21).

²¹⁴ To curb opposition forces in northern Afghanistan, the Tehran Agreement itself was revised. For the revised text of the agreement, see Annex to UNSG Report, S/1995/390, 12 May 1995. To restrain Russian forces, on the other hand, the Russian foreign ministry issued a separate statement recognising the binding force of the agreement upon Russian forces. For the text of the statement, see ITAR-TASS, 26 April 1995 (via Lexis-Nexis).