
ESCALATING CONFLICT ON THE KYRGYZ-TAJIK BORDER: WHITHER THE REGIONAL SECURITY ORDER?

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23.09.2022

The Diplomat (22 September 2022)

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While the world is following the dissolution of Russian imperialism along Ukrainian frontlines, the existing status quo might be shaken up in other corners, too. The recent escalation of conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the one hand, and between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on the other, are prime examples. If U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's fresh visit to Armenia brought much-needed attention to the Caucasus, recent events in Central Asia have received barely a mention in international media, despite their profound significance for regional security.

Beginning September 14, Tajik and Kyrgyz forces exchanged sustained gunfire along several points of the undemarcated border between the neighboring Batken and Soghd provinces of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, respectively. After a short ceasefire, on September 16, fierce fighting resumed and extended from the initial border areas deep into the territory of Kyrgyzstan, including the provincial city of Batken and remote areas in Osh province. Despite Kyrgyzstan's demands for a ceasefire, Tajikistan was unwilling to entertain dialogue and continued regular shelling until September 18.

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