

# UZBEK-KYRGYZ RELATIONS: OVERCOMING THE PROBLEM OF THE BARAK ENCLAVE

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## ABSTRACT:

**This article analyzes the features of the new geopolitical situation in the Central Asian region, located in the center of the Eurasian continent. The article focuses on the Barak enclave, one of the most problematic areas between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the sub region, and highlights the state of the enclave's demise.**

**KEYWORDS:** Enclave, exclave, region, geopolitical relations, delimitation, demarcation, loss of enclave, warm neighborly relations.

## INTRODUCTION:

Central Asia is a region of diverse ethnic groups. The people of the region have lived on the basis of integrated economic relations for thousands of years. However, in the recent past, political processes, the separation of different ethnic groups, and the demarcation of national-territorial boundaries have gradually led to the emergence of various differences between nations. In particular, the process of moving to enclaves / exclaves in the region, which resulted from inappropriate demarcation, has become problematic and has become a disputed area. However, in recent years, good neighborly relations have found a positive solution to many problems, and the integrity of the region has become more important.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS:

In this article, one of the contentious regions of the region – Barak enclave studied the modern geopolitical situation, using the methods of geographic comparison, historical – geographical analysis, systematization, the causes and factors of the emergence of enclave were studied and analyzed until today's loss of the feature of the enclave.

## RUSULTS AND THE MAIN PART:

Central Asia, which is located in the heart of the Eurasian continent, is of particular importance among the regional, economic, social, historical, cultural and other aspects of the world [5, - P. 1]. Ethnos were separated from each other in territorial terms by the national-territorial boundary, which was held in 1924-1930 years of the XX century and the formation of “nation-states”, which were carried out in the following years. During the Former Union, many border problems, territorial disputes arose after the states gained independence, even if this restriction was almost insignificant. In particular, enclave / exclave areas can be included in the list of such problematic areas. With the disintegration of the former multinational Union and the beginning of the period of independence, 8 enclaves / exclaves were formed in Central Asia (Sokh, Shakhimardan, Northern Sokh or Chon-Qora, Djangail, Sarvak, Vorukh, Kayragach, Barak) [2, - P. 93].

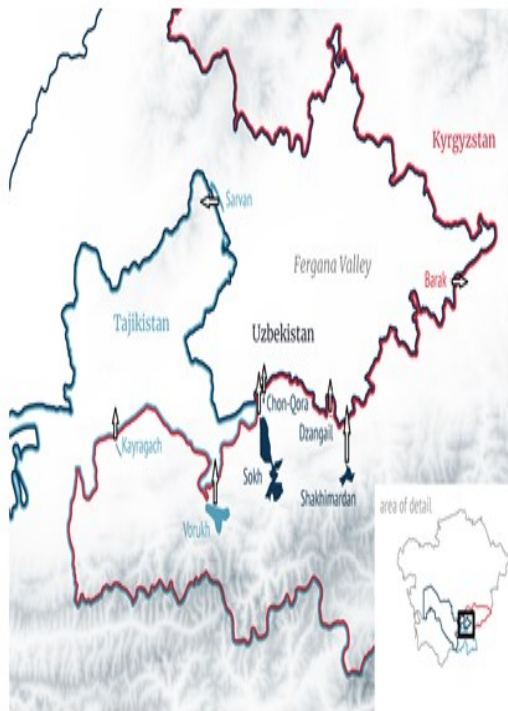


Figure 1. "Geopolitical archipelago" in the Fergana Valley

All of the enclave / exclave areas in Central Asia are located in the Fergana Valley, which is an interethnic area, and the enclaves / exclaves formed there are a "result" of imperfect delimitation, as in many parts of the world. Although most of the enclaves were formed between 1930 and 1955, their formal geopolitical conversion to enclaves began in 1991 (Table 1). While the enclaves are considered a "geopolitical island," the enclaves in the Fergana Valley are reminiscent of a "geopolitical archipelago" in terms of their location (Figure 1). However, their geopolitical, social and ethnic, geoeconomic and transport-geographical features are radically different from each other.

Sokh is an exclave of Uzbekistan located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It covers an area of 236 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 77,7 thousand people. The length of the border with the surrounding state is 135 km. The closest distance to the main state is 11 kilometers [15].

Shakhimardan is an exclave of Uzbekistan located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It covers an area of 90 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of over 6,1 thousand people. The closest distance to the main state is 14,8 kilometers [9].

North Sokh is an exclave of Uzbekistan located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It covers an area of 261 hectares and has a population of more than 1,4 thousand people with 240 apartments. The closest distance to the main state is 2,3 kilometers [10].

Djangail is an exclave of Uzbekistan located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It covers an area of 42 hectares and has a population of more than 150 people, and the closest distance to the main state is 0,76 kilometers [13].

Vorukh is an exclave of Tajikistan located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It covers an area of 130 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of over 35,0 thousand people. The closest distance to the main state is 3,7 kilometers [7].

Sarvak is an exclave located in the western part of the Pop district of Namangan region of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with a length of 14 km and a width of 600 m. It covers an area of 8,4 km<sup>2</sup>, has a population of more than 530 people and the closest distance to the main state is 1,2 kilometers [6].

Kayragach is an exclave of Tajikistan located in Laylak district of Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. The area is 0,88 km<sup>2</sup>, the closest distance to the main state is 2,36 kilometers [8].

Table 1  
Enclave/exclave areas in Central Asia

№	Enclave / exclaves	The year the enclave was formed	The main ethnic unit
Exclaves of Uzbekistan			
1	Sokh	1955	tajik
2	Shakhimardan	1930	uzbek
3	North Sokh	1955	uzbek
4	Djangail	1991	uzbek
Exclaves of Tajikistan			
5	Vorukh	1950	tajik
6	Sarvak	1935	uzbek
7	Kayragach	1930	tajik
Exclave of Kyrgyzstan			
8	Barak	1936	kyrgyz

The table was compiled by the authors

Among the above-mentioned Central Asian enclaves, Barak is a relatively small but somewhat socio-political area between the main and surrounding states.

**Barak** (Arabic, *خصبة* so blessed, lucky) - was an exclave of Kyrgyzstan located in Kurgantepa district of Andijan region of the Republic of Uzbekistan from 1936 to 2018.

The enclave is located in an irrigated farming area, which has caused many conflicts, irrigation and transportation problems with the surrounding state as the neighborly relations are not based on warm relations. In fact, during the period of national-territorial delimitation in 1924-1926, there were no administrative units belonging to the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous District of the RSFSR in the territory of the Uzbek SSR. Also, maps compiled by the Central Asian Cartography Factory under the General Cartography Department of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the former Soviet Union and published in 1936 do not show the presence of the Barak (Kizil Bayrak) enclave of the Kyrgyz

SSR in the Uzbek SSR [1, - P. 27]. Administratively, this area, which belongs to the village of Ak-Tash, Karasuv district, was formed in the form of an enclave of Barak settlement in the Uzbek SSR in 1936-1955 as a result of disorderly actions of Kyrgyz land users [2, -P . 107]. It covers an area of 230 hectares [3] and until the 2000s, the enclave had a permanent population of 1 250 people. The ethnic composition of the population is 60% Kyrgyz and 40% Uzbek, and the population has gradually declined as the enclave's "geopolitical island" character has grown.

The location of the village as an enclave in another state had a negative impact on its development. After the decision was made in 1953 to abolish the border line between Kyrgyzstan and the Uzbek SSR, the villagers regarded it as Barak's accession to Uzbekistan and, as a result, the first land disputes arose in the area.

These problems have worsened since independence. Due to problems with the use of irrigation systems in the territory of Uzbekistan, the population of the enclave began to move to the main state. In particular, the demographic size of the enclave fell to 728 in 2011 [12], while in 2013 only 20 families remained in the village [14].

Also, the relations with the army were getting colder. To this, in a certain sense, the measures taken on the security of Borders also showed their impact. After Shavkat Mirziyoyev was elected President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a new period began in the geopolitical life of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations, as well as in the Central Asian countries.

In 2016, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at a joint session of the Oliy Majlis identified the development of cooperation with neighboring countries in Central Asia as one of the priorities of Uzbekistan's foreign policy. This was an

important step towards intensifying negotiations on state borders with neighboring countries.

During the official state visit of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Kyrgyz Republic on September 5-6, 2017, the problems between the two countries and the issues of delimitation and demarcation were discussed. It was agreed to solve the problem by exchanging land in equal areas instead of the enclave.

Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 5, 2018 "On measures to radically improve the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and strengthen its responsibility in the implementation of foreign policy and foreign economic priorities" The decree identified priorities for the development of foreign policy and foreign economic cooperation of the Republic of Uzbekistan with major foreign partners in the medium term [16].

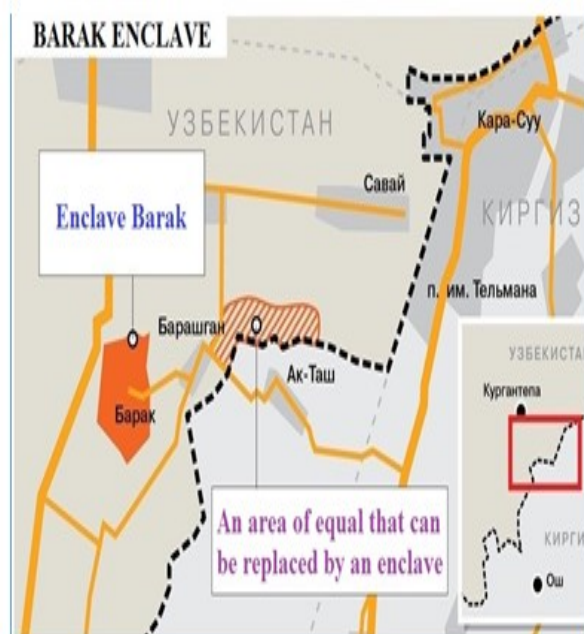


Figure 2. Barak enclave and the area of land designated to replace it in an equal area instead [9]

The fact that particular attention was paid to the program "the strategy of action on the five priority directions of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021" on the acceleration of the process of international legal formalization of the state border opened a wide way for Uzbekistan and the army to further facilitate its geographical position in the region, reaching.

As a result of agreements on border issues, in particular on enclave, on August 14, 2018 Bayyish Yusupov, the first representative of the Kyrgyz government in the Osh region, announced that an agreement was reached on the implementation of the Barak to Uzbekistan on delimitation and demarcation of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border [4]. At the same time, instead of the Barak enclave, Uzbekistan transferred to Kyrgyzstan the territory of the Birlashgan village of Kurgantepa district of Andijan region, located on the border with Ak-Tash in the east and Kara-Kyshtak in the south (Figure 2). It is planned to relocate the population of the enclave to the territory provided by Uzbekistan instead of Barak by 2021. As a result, Barak enclave was lost on the maps, and the problem of enclave / exclave, which has not been solved for many years, has been eliminated.

#### CONCLUSION:

As a result of the analysis, it can be said that the relations between the two countries will be purposeful if they are organized on the basis of warm relations and bilateral interests. Indeed, among the positive changes in the geopolitical life of the countries of Central Asia, which has reached a new level, the problem of one of the enclaves has been solved, and the number of the enclaves / exclaves in the region is now seven. This means that regional cooperation is a dynamic process that is beneficial in all respects, positive and brings about joint development.

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