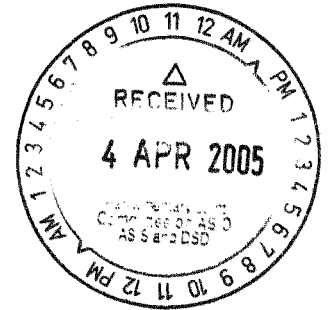




ATTORNEY-GENERAL
THE HON PHILIP RUDDOCK MP



05/2087

23 MAR 2005

The Hon David Jull MP
Committee Chairman
Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS & DSD
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Jull

I am writing to advise you that a regulation is scheduled to be considered by the Federal Executive Council on 7 April 2005 specifying Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan as a terrorist organisation for the purposes of section 102.1 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (the Criminal Code). Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (also known as: IMU, Islamic Party of Turkestan, Islamic Movement of Turkestan) was specified as a terrorist organisation under the *Criminal Code Regulations 2002* with effect from 11 April 2003.

The regulation listing Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan will cease to have effect on the second anniversary of the day on which it took effect, pursuant to subsection 102.1(3) of the Criminal Code.

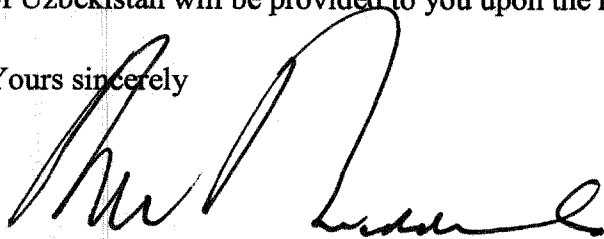
The regulation will be made on the basis that I continue to be satisfied on reasonable grounds that Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan is an organisation directly or indirectly engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of a terrorist act (whether or not the act has occurred or will occur).

I made the decision to re-list Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan following careful consideration of unclassified intelligence information provided by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) in relation to the organisation, as well as legal advice provided to me by the Australian Government Solicitor.

Section 102.1A of the Criminal Code provides that the Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD may review the regulation as soon as possible after it has been made, and report the Committee's comments and recommendations to each House of the Parliament before the end of the applicable disallowance period for that House.

To assist the Committee, should it decide to review the regulation, I enclose a copy of the Statement of Reasons provided by ASIO in relation to Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, upon which my decision to re-list the organisation as a terrorist organisation was based. Additional information detailing the procedure followed for the purposes of re-listing Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan will be provided to you upon the registration of the regulation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Ruddock', written in a cursive style.

Philip Ruddock

**Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
(Also known as: IMU, Islamic Party of Turkestan, Islamic Movement of Turkestan)**

The following background information is based on publicly available details about the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). These details have been corroborated by material from intelligence investigations overseas into the IMU's activities and official reporting. ASIO assesses that the details set out below are accurate and reliable.

The IMU has been proscribed as a terrorist organisation in Australia, and the United Nations and the governments of the United States, United Kingdom and Canada.

Background

The IMU was founded in 1997 and is a coalition of Islamic extremists from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states who oppose the current Uzbek regime. The IMU's area of operation includes Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan.

In May 2001, the group announced that it had changed its name to the Islamic Party of Turkestan. The motivation for this is unclear, although it could reflect divisions in the group or signals a change in emphasis from anti-Uzbek government activities to a wider radical Islamic agenda. The organisation has, however, continued to be known as the IMU. Despite IMU's losses in Afghanistan during the US intervention in 2002, it remains active and continues to attract recruits from throughout the region. The IMU's propaganda has always included anti-Western and anti-Israeli rhetoric. The group's tactics include hostage-taking (including foreigners), assassination, car and suicide bombing.

The IMU has close ties with al-Qa'ida and the former Taliban government. IMU fighters have trained in camps in Afghanistan, some controlled by al-Qa'ida. IMU members have been trained by al-Qa'ida instructors in guerrilla warfare, sabotage, bomb making, assassination and urban terrorism. The IMU has received funding from al-Qa'ida. Senior IMU leaders have held positions in the al-Qa'ida hierarchy.

Objectives

The IMU initially sought to overthrow the Uzbek regime and establish an Islamic state. However, by 2000, the IMU had broadened its goals to include the establishment of a radical Islamic caliphate in Turkestan, encompassing an area from the Caspian region to Xinjiang in western China.

Leadership and membership

The IMU's political and ideological leader is believed to be Tahir Yoldashev, and the group's overall military commander is Joma Namangani. The latter was reported killed in the fighting in Afghanistan in 2002 but his death remains unconfirmed. He held a position in the Taliban government prior to its fall and was reportedly one of Usama Bin Laden's deputies in 2001.

The IMU attracts support from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, principally – Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Chechens and Uighurs from western China. The IMU's membership is believed to number under 2000. These are divided into brigades (comprised of approximately 40-50 men) made up according to ethnic background.

Terrorist activities

The IMU has been involved in a number of terrorist attacks against Western diplomatic facilities and civilian targets in Central Asia, and IMU members continue to fight alongside the Taliban and al-Qa'ida against Coalition and Pakistani forces in Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.

Terrorist attacks and activities for which the IMU has claimed responsibility or for which responsibility has been reliably attributed to IMU have included:

- May 2003: bomb attack in the city of Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan;
- 29 March 2004: bomb attacks against a shopping centre in Tashkent and an apartment building in Bukhara killing 19 and wounding 26 people; and
- 30 July 2004: bomb attacks against the Israeli and US embassies in Tashkent, killing three and wounding nine people.

Conclusion

ASIO assesses that the IMU is continuing to prepare, plan and foster the commission of acts involving threats to human life and serious damage to property. Although the organisation suffered significant losses during the Afghanistan conflict, it has attracted recruits from a variety of countries within the region, and has a history of working with other international terrorist organisations from which it may draw support. This assessment is corroborated by information provided by reliable and credible intelligence sources and by official reporting. This assessment is based on reliable and credible intelligence provided by intelligence sources and official reporting.

In the course of pursuing its objective of establishing a radical Islamist caliphate in Turkestan the IMU is known to have engaged in and planned actions that:

- are aimed towards advancing its political and religious causes;
- are intended to, or do, cause serious damage to property, the death of persons or endangerment of life;
- done with the intention of coercing or influencing by intimidation the governments and people of numerous countries; and
- are intended to cause, or have caused, serious risk to the safety of Uzbek officials and civilians, and any other person visiting areas in which it operates.

In view of the above information, the IMU is assessed to be continuing to prepare, plan, assist and foster the conduct of further terrorist acts. Such acts include actions which are to be done and threats of actions which are to be made with the intention of advancing political, religious or ideological cause, or influencing by intimidation, the government of

Attachment B

Uzbekistan and other countries. The actions which IMU is assessed to be involved would, if completed successfully, cause serious harm and death to persons and serious damage to property.