

## In the Headlines

Explanation: An understanding of what countries want (and who they want it from) makes international relations more predictable. The following situations are based on real news stories. Using your knowledge from the Cooley readings the context provided, explain how and why the given country/actor is likely to respond to each situation.

### Situation #1

**BRIEFING:**

- Kyrgyzstan is a major natural gas producer, which is used for heating and electricity.
- Kyrgyzstan's natural gas company, *Kyrgyzgaz*, runs all of Kyrgyzstan's gas production.
- *Kyrgyzgaz* is in financial trouble. Kyrgyzstan and Russia worked out a deal where Russia's state-owned gas company, *Gazprom*, would buy *Kyrgyzgaz* for \$1.
- *Gazprom* now has full control over Kyrgyzstan's natural gas production, but part of the deal is that *Gazprom* must supply Kyrgyzstan with gas.

**ISSUE:**

- Uzbekistan cut natural-gas deliveries to Kyrgyzstan
- Kyrgyzstan is now facing a shortage of natural gas.
- Uzbekistan ignored Kyrgyzstan's demands to resume deliveries.
- Local citizens have blocked a highway in the southern city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan for several hours, demanding that local authorities solve the natural gas and electricity shortages.

References:

Ch.4, Great Games

<http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyz-protesters-block-highway-demand-gas-electricity/25393017.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/post-2014-central-asia-afghanistan/25390563.html>

How is Russia likely respond to Uzbekistan's cut-off of natural gas to Kyrgyzstan? Why? Support your argument with evidence from Cooley's book.

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## Situation #2

### **BRIEFING:**

- The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is Moscow's alternative to NATO.
- Uzbekistan was often less than committed to the CSTO, and it has now pulled out of the organization and started requesting weapons from the West.
- CSTO rules require approval from all member states (including Russia) if one country wants to allow a foreign military to open a military base on its territory.
- Because Uzbekistan withdrew from the CSTO, it doesn't require anybody's approval to open a foreign military base.
- Uzbekistan might have made an agreement with United States, allowing them to open a new military base on Uzbek territory. This would make Russia unhappy.

### **ISSUE:**

- Planning for the Western military withdrawal from Afghanistan is in full swing.
- Over the next two years, NATO forces are expected to remove about 70,000 vehicles and 120,000 shipping containers from Afghanistan, and the way out will require rail lines and well-surfaced roads.
- Officials in Uzbekistan are offering to let NATO use Uzbek roads and railroads in exchange for any extra vehicles and supplies that NATO does not take with it.

#### Reference:

Chapters 3 & 4, Great Games.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-csto-suspends-membership/24629244.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/csto-russia-afghanistan/24802767.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/interview-analyst-says-uzbekistan-suspension-shows-csto-irrelevant/24629921.html>

[http://www.rferl.org/content/csto-wants-mutual\\_consent\\_foreign\\_military\\_bases/24429242.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/csto-wants-mutual_consent_foreign_military_bases/24429242.html)

<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1057971.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1059204.html>

How is the United States likely to respond to Uzbekistan's offer? Why? Support your argument with evidence from Cooley's book.

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### Situation 3

**BRIEFING:**

- At the end of 2014, Western forces will leave Afghanistan.
- Officials in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan have voiced concerns about the state of Afghanistan after foreign forces are gone.
- Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan have been regularly conducting military/counterterrorism exercises for months now.
- Of the Central Asian states, only Turkmenistan has not shown any concern about changes in Afghanistan, even though the two countries share a 744-kilometer border.

**ISSUE:**

- At the first session of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Chinese President Xi Jinping called on Asia to cooperate more closely in fighting terrorism.
- Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev suggested creating an Asian counterpart of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

References:

Chapters 7 & 9

<http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-china-gas-putin-visit-/25390900.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/chinese-president-calls-for-security-cooperation-at-asia-summit/25392528.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/turkmenistan-achilles-heel-central-asian-security/25265841.html>

How is Turkmenistan likely to respond to the call for the creation of an Asian security organization? Why? Support your argument with evidence from Cooley's book.

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Notes:

1. Depending on how the reading assignments are broken up, I could do one or two such scenarios for each of the main chapters. Students could complete the assignments at home or in class which could be used as background work for the any of the following activities:

a.) Students split into groups representing the players in the situation (using Situation #1 as an example): Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Russia. Each group would debate from the viewpoint of their assigned nation and debate the situation at hand: in this case, the cutting off of gas to Kyrgyzstan.

b.) Students could write dialogues between the leaders of each country/actor involved (i.e. Putin and Karimov).

c.) Students can write/draw comic strips or a make a satirical cartoon about the situation and share with the class. (This may be outside of the scope of our curriculum since there are not likely any current-open sourced political comics. However, the teacher could easily find his/her own and use to prompt discussion)

d. In pairs or small groups, students could interview one or two of the relevant parties as if on a news show. Though not necessary, it may be fun and easy to video-tape.

2. I've started compiling answer keys/guides to these questions, however, I'm not entirely sure of the best way to do this, since the questions are so open-ended. Though I do reference book chapters that discuss these issues. Is an answer guide necessary?

3. I'm also looking for some open-source videos in order to engage in cultural discussions. I am hoping to find something that will help with a discussion of this Nazarbayev quote surrounding the creation of an Asian Security Organization. "The West, in isolation from the East, without cooperation and mutual understanding or taking into account eastern traditions and values, cannot have sustainable development and aspire to monopoly in the search for truth," Nazarbayev said. I'm also looking for an open source video about some aspects of Islam that I can tie into the political discussion.