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## ON THE REASONS FOR THE PROBLEMS OF MIGRATION, IDENTITY, RESTORATION OF ETHNIC BUSINESS, RIGHTS OF PEOPLES IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS FEDERAL DISTRICT

**Abstract:** *in the article, the authors examine such painful issues for the Sevaro-Caucasian Federal District, one of the smallest districts, occupying only 1% of the territory of the Russian Federation. The North Caucasian Federal District is the smallest district and has the potential for economic growth as an investment. Basically, state funds are developing only the Stavropol Territory, while the rest of the regions of the North Caucasus Federal District are rather struggling for economic survival, such as problems of migration, identity, restoration of ethnic business, modernization and development issues of the North Caucasus, the rights of peoples and ways to solve the problems of the outflow of the Russian population from the North Caucasus republics.*

**Key words:** *North Caucasian republics, multi-ethnicity, outflow of Russian population, identity, restoration of ethnic business, modernization, development of the regions of the North Caucasus Federal District, rights of peoples, migration problems, Russian Federation.*

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### Introduction

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The North Caucasian Federal District is the smallest district, occupying only 1% of the territory of Russia. It is also the smallest in terms of economic

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growth potential. Investments are mainly government funds. Only the Stavropol Territory and partly Dagestan are developing. The remaining regions are rather struggling for economic survival. But clearly the North Caucasus Federal District at the time of its creation and now are completely different territories. The terrorist component has been practically leveled out, the conditions for its growth in the Caucasus no longer exist, and the social base of terrorism has significantly decreased. The danger to national security is now posed by external factors operating, in particular, in the Middle East. In seven years, three plenipotentiaries have changed. Is it possible to somehow characterize the periods of their leadership? The first plenipotentiary was Alexander Khloponin. His appointment was received with great skepticism. But he organically integrated his activities into local specifics and became a real political link. As a person with experience in creating large corporations, he focused on economic development. The regional leadership in the district under Khloponin became noticeably more mobile and efficient. In the North Caucasus economy, there was a predominance towards trade and services. The task was set to develop industry. The horizontal connections between regions, enterprises, and leaders that existed in Soviet times were lost. The embassy focused its work on creating and restoring these connections. The region is very poorly involved in foreign economic activity. Khloponin tried to change the situation. It didn't quite work out. But the goal was clearly defined - to increase the technological level and update the base. It seems to us that the results of that policy are producing results today. Very specific projects are being implemented in all regions. The North Caucasus is changing its appearance.

### **When appointing General Sergei Melikov, did they decide to shift the emphasis to security?**

Melikov is a multifaceted politician. He closely monitored the situation, intervened in solving problems even at the district level, and was very mobile. In one day he could travel through several regions and hold meetings on a wide variety of topics - from environmental problems to religious issues. He managed to put together institutions of civil society around him. He argued, listened to opinions, listened to recommendations. The district is celebrating its seventh anniversary with a new plenipotentiary - another security official Oleg Belavtsev. What can you say about him? Have you already managed to prove yourself somehow? Yes, this is a combat officer, but, more importantly, a person with experience in post-conflict resolution and creating the preconditions for economic growth. A leader who will work to create points of balance and develop the territory.

Yes, he is not very noticeable in the media space. But that's his style. We believe that the appointment of such a leader is an indicator of the improvement of

the situation. At the same time, for example, the opportunities for the tourism industry here are unique. In 2021, 80 thousand tourists visited Chechnya, and 100 thousand were already expected in 2022. The same situation is in the Tseyksy Gorge in North Ossetia. At the more popular resorts, in Dombay and Arkhyz, it was necessary to pre-book places several months before the season. But there was not enough energy to implement industrial development programs. Analysts note that there are almost no workers left. This sector was occupied mainly by specialists who came on assignments from other regions. There were technical schools that were preparing shifts. But now this is not the case. The outflow of the Russian population, the closure of many educational institutions. The republics send applicants to study in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Rostov, Stavropol. But many do not return. Having received an education, the graduate cannot find application for his knowledge in the region. It turns out to be a vicious circle. Yes, the North Caucasian Federal District has the highest unemployment in Russia. The republics developed programs for the return of Russians. What came of it? There were such programs in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, but now they are not in effect. All three programs are considered failures. When Yunus-Bek Yevkurov headed the republic, he asked to show him at least one Russian family that had returned. They could not do this, despite the fact that the program was targeted. It is obvious that, in reality, none of those who have already left these regions will return back. We must stop engaging in this profanation and try to consolidate those who still remain there in the republics by including them in the regional elites. This is possible. And this, by the way, is being done in Ingushetia and Chechnya. The head of North Ossetia, Vyacheslav Bitarov, met with the Russian community. He stated that their initiatives will be supported. We believe that this was correct, and it can have an effect, since a lot depends on interethnic harmony in the North Caucasus. The creation of the district helped solve some problems. But some remain: subsidies, corruption, social instability, the outflow of Russians, the spread of extremist ideology, etc. The outflow of Russians has already stopped the economy and undermined the development of higher education. Look at the Oil Institute in Grozny - it is in dire need of qualified personnel. The same is with electronics industry enterprises in the North Caucasus. They are practically not recoverable. The spread of extremist ideology has also already "borne fruit..." Now we need to predict the development of these processes, their mutation. In particular, extremists began to work more delicately and targeted him for their own purposes. Remember the last operation that took place in the village of Tsotsi-Yurt. There they carried out recruiting and kept in touch with like-minded ideologists from Syria. And we would like to

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draw your attention: Tsotsi-Yurt is a prosperous village; they have long forgotten what special operations and shootings are. We must take a very serious approach to forecasting the development of something that has already sprouted. After all, we must admit that in the 90s we missed the Caucasus and allowed ideological seeds to sprout. Now they have risen and become large trees, in the crowns of which terrorist cells are sheltered. Today, jihadist groups in the North Caucasus are less comfortable. Extremists are really persecuted, they are not allowed to live. Therefore, they are trying to dissolve in megacities. This is a dangerous trend. It is necessary to create anti-extremist virtual networks as a counterweight- **both the security forces and the clergy should do this...**—The clergy is the main enemy of the terrorist underground. Look at the target audience of radicals now. They are trying to turn representatives of other religions into Wahhabis and extremists. We also need to fight this trend, identify the mechanisms and break them. One of the first alarming signals of the beginning of the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus were the events in Chechnya back in the late 1950s. The systemic reason is the ongoing politicization of traditional ethnic groups, provoked by the Soviet, Marxist in its foundations, the so-called “national policy.” Its essence is giving all ethnic groups and peoples of the former Russian Empire political attributes, defining them with the political category “nationality” - hence the so-called “national republics”. One of these “national republics” was the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, which was the first to experience the consequences of Marxist politicization. This was expressed in the Chechen unrest of 1958, which occurred immediately after Khrushchev’s rehabilitation and had a clear ethnic nature, which quickly turned into a political plane. In August 1958, mass clashes took place over three days in Grozny and its environs, which were provoked by the murder of a Russian. These events already clearly demonstrated that the politicization of ethnic groups as a factor was present in Soviet reality, and ignoring it would lead to the most dire consequences. From the same moment, there was a gradual decline in the share of the Russian population of Checheno-Ingushetia, which by 1970 amounted to 14.5%\*. But the most intensive displacement of Russians from the Caucasus, as a result of which the number of Russians rapidly began to decline, began in the late 1970s. However, the outflow of Russians from Chechnya in particular and from the North Caucasus in general reached its peak indicators towards the end of the 1980s. According to the chief researcher of the Complex Research Institute named after Kh.I. Ibragimov RAS Vakhit Akayev, this was due to the fact that the process of industrial development, and, as a consequence, economic growth began to stagnate. “There were 2.5 times fewer Chechens in Grozny than the Russian population.

According to the 1989 census, the population was 401 thousand, of which 250 thousand were Russians, 101 thousand were Chechens, 19 thousand were Ingush, and the rest were insignificant. The migration of Russians from Chechnya began when oil production in Checheno-Ingushetia as a whole fell from 23 million tons per year to 8 million tons. With the outflow of Russians, a decline began. The political self-awareness of the Chechens was growing. That is why in Checheno-Ingushetia a Chechen has never been appointed as the first leader of the republic. When the Chechen Zavgayev was elected, this served as a signal for the bosses, the nomenklatura, who were subordinate to the center - the nomenklatura of the CPSU Central Committee. Enterprises of union importance were operating in Grozny, and these people [who worked there] slowly began to move to other places, find work there, and others followed them. The war brought the situation to its logical conclusion. As a result, the industry was completely destroyed." According to official data, between 1979 and 1989 the Russian population in the North Caucasus decreased by 187 thousand people, which represented approximately one-fifth of the original number of Russians in the region\*\*\*. However, the situation really became a turning point after the collapse of the USSR. What began to happen in the North Caucasus from the late 1980s, and reached its peak in the 1990s, continues to this day. If in the period from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1980s we were talking about a reduction in the Russian population of the North Caucasus by an average of a few percent per year, then in the subsequent period the reduction in the number of Russians, primarily due to migration, became widespread. Today, Russians are the people whose migration from the North Caucasus is the most massive. It is Russians who predominate among forced migrants and refugees - 58.7% in the North Caucasus and 69.9% in Russia as a whole. Sociological surveys show that on average, a third of respondents from the Russian population are still inclined to leave the republics of the North Caucasus. Among other things, the Russian population of the North Caucasus openly talks about the limitation of their rights. Two-thirds of Russians in the North Caucasus reported ethnic inequality in their ability to be elected or appointed to leadership positions. We should immediately make a reservation: we are talking here specifically about the situation in the Russian North Caucasus, although the trends described are similar to those that have manifested themselves all these years in the former Soviet republics. In a sense, the fact that during the period under review our country, as a result of the collapse of the USSR, changed its administrative-territorial status is only a formal expression of “centrifugal” political trends that go hand in hand with the demographic processes we describe. Over the past two decades, migration processes in the North Caucasus have continued to

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have a pronounced ethnic character. 1989 is the year of the last all-Union population census, during which the most detailed and reliable demographic statistics were compiled and ethnic balance was recorded in various spheres of life in the region. At the same time, this year is a border year in terms of the development of processes of political destabilization in the country. From that moment on, the migration outflow of the Russian population, which was also recorded based on the materials of previous censuses, was supplemented by the factor of natural population decline: on average for the region, it was in the late 1980s – early 1990s that the rate of natural growth of the Russian population crossed the zero mark and went negative.

### Main part

The problem of reducing the Russian population in the North Caucasus region of Russia is periodically voiced by the country's leadership with varying degrees of concern. However, unfortunately, a systematic approach to solving this problem has not yet been developed. Reasons for outflow from the North Caucasus. In an interview in 2020, Deputy Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation, former President of Chechnya Allu Alkhanov admitted that the reduction in the number of Russians in the republics of the North Caucasus is a source of increasing the level of social tension in these regions. Speaking about the problem of the forced resettlement of Russians from the Caucasus, Alkhanov pointed out the inadmissibility of infringement of the rights of citizens in the regions of Russia on ethnic grounds, recognizing that such violations are widespread. In this regard, he expressed the idea that the protection of the rights of Russians in the Caucasus should become one of the priority national projects (namely, the fifth national project in addition to the four previously announced). And Alkhanov called ensuring their decent representation in local government bodies as one of the main measures to prevent the outflow of Russians.

For the first time, a reduction in the number of Russians in the North Caucasus was noted already in the 60s of the last century, the impetus for which was the return of Chechens and other deported ethnic groups after the rehabilitation of 1956. However, researchers attribute the outflow that has begun mainly to the exhaustion of the possibilities for extensive development of the region, which was given a powerful start in the first stages of Soviet state construction. From this time onwards, the preconditions made themselves felt, which later took shape in obvious ethnocentric tendencies in national formations. Within Soviet society, certain rudiments of future national states were ripening, the formation of state languages, elite groups and ideologies was latently taking place, and the ethnic homogenization of the population was underway. This process, which went through a turbulent and bloody period and

continues to this day, is absolutely unique in the history of the Caucasus.” An important signal in this regard was the Chechen unrest of 1958, which occurred immediately after Khrushchev's rehabilitation of the peoples evicted during the Second World War and had a clear ethnic nature. These events clearly demonstrated that ethnicism as a factor is present in Soviet reality, and ignoring it promises the most dire consequences. From the same moment, there was a gradual decrease in the share of the Russian population in Checheno-Ingushetia, which by 1970 amounted to 14.5%, although it was still occurring against the background of a general quantitative increase.

But the most intensive displacement of Russians from the Caucasus began in the late 70s, when in a number of regions of the North Caucasus and Transcaucasia the number of Russians began to decline. According to official data, in the period from 1979 to 1989. the Russian population there decreased by 187 thousand people, approximately one-fifth of the original number of Russians in the region. However, the situation really became a turning point after the collapse of the USSR. What began to happen in the North Caucasus at the end of the 80s reached its peak in the 90s - and partly continues to this day. If in the period from the mid-60s to the end of the 80s we were talking about a reduction in the Russian population of the North Caucasus by an average of a few percent, then in the subsequent period the reduction in the number of Russians, primarily due to migration, became widespread. Today, Russians are the people whose migration from the North Caucasus is greatest. Russians predominate among internally displaced persons and refugees (58.7% in the North Caucasus and 69.9% in Russia as a whole). Sociological surveys show that the Russian population is increasingly inclined to leave the republics of the North Caucasus: about one-third of those surveyed (only one-tenth of the “titular” population expresses a similar intention). Thus, 31% of Russian residents of Nalchik (Kabardino-Balkaria) want to leave for another Russian region, and among Kabardians and Balkars this figure is only 9%. In Vladikavkaz, 17% of Russians and 9% of Ossetians declared their desire to leave North Ossetia, in Maykop - 28% of Russians and 1% of Adygeis. A significant part of Russians consider the interethnic relations developing in the region to be bad. In Ingushetia, half of the Russians and only 9% of the Ingush think so. In Karachay-Cherkessia there are a quarter of Russians, 8% Karachais and 11% Circassians. The Russian population of the North Caucasus openly talks about restrictions on their rights. In Ingushetia, 57% of Russians and 25% of Ingush say this; in Chechnya - 40% Russians and 21% Chechens; in Kabardino-Balkaria - 29% Russians, 9% Kabardians and 21% Balkars; in Dagestan - 17% Russians and 13% Dagestanis. In Vladikavkaz, 54% of Russians and

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25% of Ossetians surveyed spoke about inequality of opportunities for different ethnic groups to receive higher education; in Grozny - 40% Russians and 17% Chechens; in Nazran - 43% Russians and 16% Ingush; in Nalchik - 54% Russians, 56% Balkars and 25% Kabardians. 56% of Russians in Karachay-Cherkessia report ethnic inequality in employment; in Chechnya - 79%; in Kabardino-Balkaria - 73%; in Adygea - 68%. 18% of Russians in Karachay-Cherkessia and 20% of Russians in Dagestan declare a connection between their ethnic origin and their difficult financial and economic situation. Two-thirds of Russians in the North Caucasus reported ethnic inequality in their ability to be elected or appointed to leadership positions, and more than 13% described themselves as victims of humiliation or insult based on their Russian or Orthodox identity.

Before we begin to analyze the situation and its causes, we should make a reservation: here we are concentrating specifically on the situation in the Russian North Caucasus, although the trends we describe below are naturally similar to those manifesting themselves in the former Soviet republics. This will give us a reason to talk below about the administrative structure of the Russian Federation as one of the factors contributing to the alienation of the North Caucasus from Russia as a result of the gradual transformation of local administrative entities into similarities to national states. In a sense, the fact that during the period under review our country has changed its administrative-territorial status is only a formal expression of “centrifugal” political trends that go hand in hand with the demographic processes we describe. Russian migration: 1989-2020 Migration processes in the North Caucasus have a pronounced ethnic character. To assess the scale of the analyzed phenomena, we will take as the base time periods from 1989 to 2002 and 2010 to 2020. The choice of these dates is due to the following considerations: 1989 is the year of the last all-Union population census, during which the most detailed and reliable demographic statistics were compiled and the ethnic balance was recorded in various spheres of life in the region. At the same time, this year is a border year in terms of the development of processes of political destabilization in the country. From that moment on, the migration outflow of the Russian population, which was also recorded based on the materials of previous censuses, was supplemented by the factor of natural population decline: on average for the region, it was in the late 80s - early 90s that the rate of natural growth of the Russian population crossed the zero mark and went into minus.<sup>44</sup> Since 1989, there has been a permanent departure of the Russian population from almost all the republics that are part of the North Caucasus economic region, with the exception of the Republic of Adygea. The largest number of Russians (except for Chechnya) for the period 1989-2020. was observed from the Republic of

Dagestan, where every fifth Russian resident left. In the rest - from 3.9 to 5.7%. At the same time, in all the republics of the North Caucasus there was a positive balance of migration of the titular ethnic groups of these republics. The next point - 1999 - is the year of the introduction of the counter-terrorist operation regime in Chechnya - the beginning of the “second Chechen campaign”. By this moment, the monoethnicization of Chechnya and Ingushetia, grandiose in scale and consequences, was almost completely completed, accompanied by the genocide of the Russian population (which we will discuss in more detail below), as well as the de-Russification of Dagestan. In 2002, the next population census was carried out, based on the results of which one can reliably judge the state of affairs in the field of Russian demography. So, in the period from 1989 to 1999, the Russian population decreased in Checheno-Ingushetia as a whole from 23% to about 1-5%. It should be noted here that if the initial figure directly corresponds to census data, then the estimates for 1999 are approximate and derived by comparing data from various sources. It is safe to say that by the early 2000s, at least nine out of ten Russians living in 1989 had left Chechnya. The number of Russians inhabiting neighboring Ingushetia decreased by about 13 times.<sup>46</sup> “The largest exodus of Russians from the territory of the former Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was the greatest. As a result of two Chechen wars, both republics turned into ethnically homogeneous regions - 293.8 thousand people left them. In fact, the same thing - without any war - is happening in other republics. Thus, according to the State Statistics Committee, at least 20 thousand people left the Karachay-Cherkess Republic in the second half of the 90s (10.7% of the total number of Russians in the Karachay-Cherkess Republic). More than 22 thousand people. (about 9% of the total Russian population) left the relatively calm Kabardino-Balkaria in 2010-2020.”

In general, during this period, the number of Russian population of the entire North Caucasus decreased from 25.6% to 19%. Of course, Chechnya and Ingushetia stand out noticeably against the background of the overall picture. However, we should not forget that in the other republics of the Russian Caucasus the process of de-Russification continues to this day, while in Chechnya and Ingushetia it was practically completed by 1999. This means that if urgent measures are not taken, it is only a matter of time before the situation in the North Caucasian Federal District “levels up” to the Chechen level. Specifically, according to Goskomstat, for the intercensal period from 1989 to 2002, the share of the Russian population of Dagestan decreased from 9.2% to 5%; Karachay-Cherkessia - from 42% to 33.65%; Kabardino-Balkaria - from 32% to 25%; North Ossetia - from 30% to 23.4%; Adygea - from 68% to 64.5%. At the same time, it is important to note that

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the migration growth of the population in all of the listed entities without exception was carried out during this period exclusively at the expense of representatives of the titular ethnic groups. No data available to date allows us to doubt that the upcoming 2020 Census will show us a further deterioration in these trends.

Analysis of the reasons for the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus: description of the problem Moving on to the analysis of the reasons for the described situation, we can identify several factors that directly or indirectly influence the outflow of the Russian population from the North Caucasus. A rather significant problem is the classification of intra-Russian migration movement during the period under review. If in the case of armed ethno-territorial conflicts we can speak with confidence about the forced (forced) nature of the movement of local residents, then in the phase of “smoldering” or relative peace in most cases there is no need to talk about natural migration. In view of the circumstances discussed below, we find it acceptable to talk about the stressful (or voluntary-forced) nature of migration as combining a range of reasons - from economic to political - clearly related to the presence of signs of often deliberate formation of conditions of disadvantage in terms of the residence of specific population groups, in our case - not the titular peoples of the national formations of the North Caucasus.

So, let's look at the reasons that interest us in order. The first of them is related to ethno-territorial conflicts in the North Caucasus. Naturally, this factor is decisive when analyzing the situation not only in the “hot spots” themselves, but also in the territories adjacent to them. In addition, such conflicts often have a “smoldering” character, while representatives of the civilian population continue to become their victims. It is also important to note that the most intensive reduction of Russians in Checheno-Ingushetia occurred not during the military campaign of 1995-1996, but precisely during the period of the so-called “Khasavyurt peace”. Thus, the former mayor of the city of Kovrov, Irina Tabatskova, who often visits relatives in Chechnya, in an interview with the North Caucasus News Agency talks about the death of her own aunt, who lived in Grozny at that time: “My aunt was killed in her own apartment in 1996 in Grozny after that, when General Lebed signed the so-called “Khasavyurt peace”. It was at that moment that people came to her apartment. She lived on Rosa Luxemburg Street, building 2, apartment 26. My aunt Nadya's house is located in a prestigious area, all the apartments in it were destroyed, but several apartments remained undamaged, including the one in which my aunt lived. Armed people came into her apartment and fired two machine guns at her. Then they wrapped the body in a carpet and threw it from the second floor onto the street.” This period is characterized by a paradoxical situation in which

Chechnya's legal affiliation with Russia was secured, but at the same time, in essence, the extra-legal policy of ethnic domination of Chechens on the territory of the republic was legitimized. During this period, thousands of Russians were not only forcibly expelled from their places of residence, but also deprived of their property and simply killed. The use of the term genocide in relation to the situation with the Russian population that developed in the Chechen and partly the Ingush republics in the period from 1991 to 1999 is justified by the fact that the killings of Russians during the said period in the designated territories actually became factors in the statistical decline of the Russian population, along with the migration outflow and negative natural growth. Let us recall that according to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, genocide is “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such.”<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the category of such actions includes not only direct murder, but also the infliction of grievous bodily harm or the deliberate creation of unbearable living conditions for persons based on the specified group characteristics. The difficulty lies in the fact that the facts of genocide during this period were not only not taken into account statistically, but were deliberately hushed up, including through the efforts of the federal center, which was not interested in so that the extreme severity of ethnic tension in the Russian Caucasus becomes a fact of public consciousness. At the same time, a number of examples in their comparison with the general context allows us to be confident that the policy of exterminating Russians was systematic. Here are just a few examples taken from open sources, namely:

V. Kobzarev, lived in the Grozny region: “On November 7, 1991, three Chechens fired at my dacha with machine guns, I miraculously survived.” V. Nazarenko, lived in Grozny: “He lived in Grozny until November 1992. Dudayev condoned the fact that crimes were openly committed against Russians, and for this no one among the Chechens was punished. The rector of the Grozny University suddenly disappeared, and after some time his body was accidentally found buried in the forest. They did this to him because he did not want to vacate the position he held”;

B. Bfankin, lived in Grozny: “In May 1993, in my garage, two Chechen guys armed with a machine gun and a pistol attacked me and tried to take possession of my car, but could not, because it was under repair. They shot over my head. In the fall of 1993, a group of armed Chechens brutally killed my friend Bolgarsky, who refused to voluntarily give up his Volga car. Such cases were widespread. For this reason I left Grozny.” O. Shepetilo, born in 1961: “She lived in Grozny until the end of April 1994. She worked in the station. Kalinovskaya is the director of

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a music school in the Hayp district. At the end of 1993, I was returning from work from St. Kalinovskaya in Grozny. There was no bus, so I walked into town. A Zhiguli car drove up to me, a Chechen with a Kalashnikov assault rifle got out of it and, threatening to kill me, pushed me into the car, drove me to the field, where he mocked me for a long time, raped and beat me.” D. Gakuryany, lived in Grozny: “In November 1994, Chechen neighbors threatened to kill me with a pistol, and then kicked me out of the apartment and settled in it themselves.” (For a complete table of facts of the genocide of the Russian population in Chechnya, see the Appendix) To be fair, it must be said that, although on a much less monstrous scale, this trend continued throughout the 2000s. Here is just one example: “In the summer of 2006, more than ten Russian families in the Republic of Ingushetia suffered from attacks and arson; the deputy head of the Sunzhensky district administration, Galina Gubina, was killed (she was involved in the program for the return of Russians to the republic). On the night of July 16, 2007, in the center of the village of Ordzhonikidzevskaya, Sunzhensky district, the murder of 55-year-old teacher Lyudmila Terekhina and her two children was committed. During the funeral of the victims of this murder on July 18, 2007, an explosion occurred, injuring more than ten people.”

The rise of ethnic self-awareness in the North Caucasus. The next factor, identified as one of the main ones and directly related to the motivation of behavior of representatives of the titular ethnic groups of the Caucasian republics in a stressful political situation, was such a large-scale phenomenon as the rise of ethnic self-awareness of the population. Manifesting itself at the cultural and information level, the rise of ethnicism gave rise to the phenomenon described by G.S. Denisova. In particular, according to Denisova: “Acquaintance with a fairly extensive regional journalistic and scientific-journalistic literature allows us to identify several intertwining plots of discourse on the problem of the exodus of Russians, namely:

1. consideration of the imperial past historical interaction between the Russian people and the Caucasian ethnic groups, the leitmotif of which is the idea of necessary material compensation from the state for the losses suffered by the Caucasian peoples. (Here the opposition arises - a strong militarized imperial (Soviet) center and proud, free, forcibly subjugated, but not humble peoples);

2. a critical attitude towards the Soviet experience of building an economy in the North Caucasus republics;

3. contrast between the everyday, strictly regulated culture of life of the Caucasians and the culturally marginal, degrading Russian population.”

Today, this topic has already become the object of attention of a number of specialists. So candidate of historical sciences V.M. Gateev also draws attention

to the fact that “the efforts of various nationalist ideologists of individual peoples of the North Caucasus contribute to a distorted perception (by part of the indigenous population) of Russia and Russians. Nationalists, supporters of Chechen separatists and “jingoists” of the North Caucasus are trying to present the region not as an integral part of the Russian Federation, but as a “special territory” where the economic, political, cultural values of the entire multi-ethnic and multi-confessional country contradict the fundamental foundations of the cultures of the North Caucasian peoples.” Thus, the former mayor of the city of Kovrov, Irina Tabatskova, who often visits relatives in Chechnya, testifies to the fact that the separation of the concepts of Chechnya and Russia occurs constantly and at all levels. In an interview with the North Caucasus News Agency, she says: “There was an incident in Chervlennaya. My husband and I decided to have a bite to eat. And we were wearing shorts, it was summer, it was hot. A local soldier approached, all belted with all sorts of American-made Brownings. And he says: “Where are you?” We answer: “In Chervlenaya.” “This is Chechnya for you, not Russia.” I say: “It’s amazing, but I thought that Chechnya was Russia.” Further in the text: “Not because it’s dangerous, but because they think that mom will shell out the money now. Instead of money, I gave them the crust and said that I would create an international scandal for them if my son was not returned to the car now. They: “You are violating our rules, we have Chechnya here, not Russia.” This is their favorite saying.” Please note here that we are talking about current events in 2021. The active exaggeration of these themes by the singers of local “independence”, the newly-minted “soilists”, contributes in the terms of a candidate of historical sciences, associate professor of the Rostov-on-Don State Pedagogical Institute. G.S. Denisova “expanding interethnic distance,” which ultimately leads to “accumulation of the potential for interethnic tension.” The simple concepts produced by such authors serve as an apology for the regression of administrative and economic forms, asserting the alienness of the Soviet-modernization “tax” to the economic mentality of local clans, traditionally oriented toward extracting natural rent: “Thus, the professional activities of representatives of the pochvennicheskoy direction of ethnic intellectual circles are aimed to destroy the results of modernization of Caucasian societies achieved during the Soviet period.”<sup>62</sup> The author of the report explains the demand for such discourse by the need for “a compensatory and protective reaction to the problems that the North Caucasian republics faced in the shock therapy situation of the 90s.” In the sphere of political behavior, such discourse serves as justification for blackmail of the federal center by local elites. For the journalists themselves, the soil writers, its relevance makes it possible to “affirm their significance in

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ethnic culture, obscuring their professional lack of competitiveness.” So, individual cultural and media figures contribute to the formation of a negative attitude towards the Russian factor in the life of Caucasian ethnic groups, present Russian culture and methods of management introduced by Russians as deeply alien to local culture, traditions and mentality. The idea of “our land” is being actively introduced as opposed to the idea of belonging to a single Russian statehood. All this contributes to the formation of a special mental background, against which much more “tangible” moments of the said “rise” of ethnicity unfold and represent its most crude and destructive forms. Manifesting itself at the administrative level, this “rise” gives rise to a disproportion, sometimes colossal, in the degree of representation of “non-titular” peoples in the bodies of the republican and local levels, in law enforcement agencies. A typical example of this trend is the change in electoral legislation undertaken in 2020 in the Republic of Adygea (today Adygea is the only subject of the North Caucasus where the Russian population is numerically predominant - 64.5% as of 2022). According to the accepted procedure for the formation of the Council of Representatives of the Republican Parliament, the cities of Maykop (75% of 154.6 thousand people are Russians) and Adygeisk (Russians - 19% of the total 14.5 thousand inhabitants) 66 received equal representation in this body. Already from this example, one can imagine the approximate scale of the disproportion in the representation of Russians in the republic in comparison with the Circassians. A less egregious, but generally similar situation is typical for other national republics. Moreover, the ousting of non-titular peoples from the sphere of governance is not always accompanied by attempts to legalize it. As a rule, everything comes down to ordinary patronage, where the notorious clannishness becomes the decisive factor. Economic reasons for the outflow of Russians further, manifesting itself in the economy and causing the “squeezing out” of Russians from the production and commercial spheres, the ethnicization factor acts as an integral part of a broader topic concerning the economic situation in the region. And she is, as we know, frankly deplorable. Today, all subjects included in the North Caucasus Federal District are subsidized from the federal budget. In general, the North Caucasus has the highest unemployment rate and the lowest cost of living in the country. When analyzing this situation in its connection with changes in the ethno-demographic balance, it is fundamentally important to take into account the role of the Russian population of the North Caucasus as the predominant source of professional personnel for high-tech and highly organized economic sectors, science and education. According to general estimates, Russians still make up 80% 67 of the total number of residents of the North Caucasus employed in these areas. Respectively, the

strengthening of ethnomonopolies on production automatically entails a worsening of the trends described above, giving rise to archaization, and in some cases, the extinction of entire sectors of the economy. A typical example of this is the voluminous military-industrial complex of Dagestan, which today has completely “come to a standstill.” The problem of employing representatives of non-titular ethnic groups is acute, for example, in Adygea. As Nina Konvalova, chairman of the Union of Slavs of Adygea, told a NCFOnews correspondent, the leading cadres in the republic are predominantly occupied with Adyge people. “The same largely applies to law enforcement and justice. The bias is very large in ethnic terms. The trouble here is that the positions and opportunities they receive are far from being the best,” she added.<sup>68</sup> However, Konvalova noted, this is not said out loud, but can only be seen from the results. “...it turns out that the Circassians are four times more talented than all other young people. It turns out that with this principle, everyone else is much more stupid,” notes the chairman of the “Union of Slavs of Adygea” in an interview with the North Caucasus News Agency. At the same time, according to a seemingly paradoxical logic, the fewer Russians remain in the Caucasus, the more and more confidently the trend toward “nationalization” of all spheres of public life by representatives of the titular ethnic group manifests itself, the harder and more uncomfortable the life of the remaining Russians becomes, the more Their motivation to leave for the North also becomes stronger.

A blatant case of how the director of one of the enterprises in the city of Prokhladny was forcibly removed and replaced with a Kabardian was told by one of the employees of this enterprise to the correspondent of the North Caucasus News Agency: “I started my work experience with the Republican Supply Base.” Tretyakov (director of the Base) earned this business with his work and hump. After some time, they began to notice that the director began to come to the pavilion not alone, but with three more people of Caucasian appearance. Of course, rumors spread. And it turned out that a certain Deshev wanted part of the tasty morsel. Tretyakov, being always a cheerful person, became gloomy. In the office, meanwhile, active preparations were underway for another manager’s office, opposite Tretyakov’s office. So another director appeared. Soon, the house in which Tretyakov lived with his family was attacked by armed masked men. They beat him severely and forced him to leave the entire enterprise and leave. So now Deshev wanted not a piece, but a complete kingdom. His wife and children were at home at the time. Yulia, Tretyakov’s daughter, suffered a broken arm, Roman suffered a concussion and long-term treatment in the hospital. Viktor Grigorievich suffered the most. His kidneys were lost and he had to undergo long treatment in the hospital. Later, after about 4



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months, he appeared with us, it was a solid bruise. The eyes were swollen, red, it was scary to look at, and after four months it was impossible to imagine what had happened before. He gathered us all and said that he was leaving with his family, and Deshev would be our director. You can also understand him, if you have already raised your hands against his family, there is no choice." Naturally, the victims of the process of progressive monoethnicization of the republics of the North Caucasus are not only Russians, but in general all the "non-titular" ethnic groups inhabiting them. Thus, in this context, the question of the responsibility of Russians as a state-forming people for the fate of all other non-titular ethnic groups who find themselves in other republics also arises. Of course, the objective process of purposefully ousting Russians from the social niches they occupy is in the overwhelming majority of cases illegal. Examples like the one given above - regarding changes in election laws - represent attempts to legalize such displacement. However, it is obvious that in a number of areas such legalization is not possible. Thus, in these areas, the process of pressure on the Russian population is in the nature of a direct violation of their rights. These violations range over a wide range - from murders and robberies, which were widely practiced especially during periods of hostilities, to the artificial creation of bureaucratic obstacles when Russians tried to open their own business or expand production, get a job, receive social guarantees, buy or even keep the available living space. The next important factor of concern for the Russian population of the Caucasus, provoking its outflow, is the intensification of political Islam. Some researchers attach independent importance to this factor, others are more inclined to consider it as one of the manifestations of the same ethnicism and even call Islamism a "camouflage" of nationalism. However, it cannot be denied that in the discourse of a number of extremist organizations, at least at the level of declaration, the religious and doctrinal component clearly prevails over the national-separatist one. First of all, this concerns all kinds of projects to build an independent theocracy in the Caucasus or to include this territory in an even more extensive formation of the corresponding kind. A striking example of this is the "Caucasian Emirate," whose leader Doku Umarov, simultaneously with the proclamation of the creation of the "Emirate," resigned as president of the unrecognized Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, or the "Great Circassia" project. In any case, political Islam of the revisionist sense, in contrast, is an additional factor aggravating the alienation of the Russian population of the Caucasus from local social processes and the ethnic groups involved in them. All this - not to mention the fact that the terrorist activity of Islamic militants creates a general stressful background that contributes to the outflow of the population from "dangerous" regions. Those who remain, having no other, first of all, their

own, Orthodox identity, are forced, in order to relieve themselves of the social pressure of representatives of the titular ethnic groups, predominantly of the Islamic faith, to imitate the local population - either externally or even by accepting Islam. For example, the small Russian population remaining in Chechnya is rapidly becoming "Chechenized," reports a source from the North Caucasus News Agency in Grozny. "I saw these Russians. They became numb. And they look more like Chechens than the Chechens themselves," the source said. As for the Orthodox believers living in the capital of the republic, then, according to the source, the local Orthodox parish numbers no more than 20 people. "On holidays, as they themselves claim, about 50 people gather." According to Irina Tabatskova, who visited the city of Grozny for Easter (04/04/2020), "with the exception of the Easter celebration itself, the Orthodox Church of Grozny was closed for the entire subsequent Easter week." Coverage of the problem of ousting Russians from the North Caucasus An additional factor aggravating the situation in this area is the extremely weak, in fact negligible, coverage of this problem. Of course, local authorities are in no way interested in publicizing such facts. Accordingly, they put pressure on local media, which receive such information but do not disseminate it. So, according to an employee of the Interfax-South news agency, who wished to remain anonymous, such information comes to the agency, but does not appear in the feeds. "We do not give everything that concerns the oppression of the Russian population in the North Caucasian republics, although such information comes to us. If she appears, then the leadership of the corresponding republic calls directly our leadership in Moscow, saying, "Why are you inciting ethnic hatred." And they, accordingly, hit our leadership in the head. So we try not to give such news, out of harm's way," an Interfax-South employee told a correspondent of the North Caucasus News Agency. As for professional human rights NGOs operating in the North Caucasus, they are not fundamentally concerned with this problem. It is enough to look at the annual reports on the websites of Memorial, the SOVA agency, and other similar organizations to "consider" a clear element of ideological bias among the authors of these reports and the collectors of relevant information. The main emphasis in these studies is on the violation of the rights of the titular ethnic groups of the North Caucasian republics. The subject of these violations, one way or another - directly or indirectly - is the federal center in the person of its local representatives, and mainly the state security structures.

Indicative in this regard is the confession of the famous human rights activist Lidia Grafova, made to her following the results of the "Chechen human rights campaign" in the mid-2000s: "We are to blame for the Russian refugees from Chechnya. We are, in general, a human rights movement. It was at our

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instigation that public compassion focused only on the Chechens. This is probably an overstep of democracy - to support the minority even at the cost of discrimination against the majority... And I must admit - we sincerely believed that we should give preference to them over the Russians. Because they felt historical guilt for the deportation. Most human rights activists still adhere to this opinion. Personally, my sense of guilt towards the Russians gradually outweighed me." Thus, instead of providing the full range of available information about legal violations in the North Caucasus, these NGOs are more likely to promote the same local ethno-nationalists. Information that falls outside this category, when attempting to publish it, as a rule, is classified as conducive to inciting ethnic hatred. This type of action, systematically practiced by both local authorities and "independent" human rights activists, directly contributes to the silencing of objectively existing problems and indirectly to their further aggravation. As for the current state of affairs, with coverage of the problem of ousting Russians from the North Caucasus, it is significant that all the interlocutors of the correspondents of the North Caucasus News Agency in conversations from February to April 2020, as one, refused to mention their real names in reports and news, which indicates a difficult situation in this area, despite the fact that local "national" elites report on the prosperous condition of the Russian population in the North Caucasus republics. For example, a doctor of political sciences, who deals with the problems of interethnic conflicts in the North Caucasus, in particular, the topic of the outflow of Russians from Adygea, refused to report such facts and asked not to mention his name, while stating: "there are a lot of such facts, but no one will tell you won't give them. To be honest, I'm scared too. Because of this, he moved from Maykop to Pyatigorsk. But I still have relatives there. I can offer you general, theoretical information, my scientific research on this topic."

Another interlocutor of the North Caucasus News Agency, a retired colonel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a doctor of political sciences, specializing in Cossacks, also asked not to mention his name, did not give information, but promised to help find people who could provide it. Since then, no information has been received from him.

As for Chechnya, here the interlocutor of the North Caucasian Federal District simply began to assure the portal's correspondent that "everything is fine with us, the local authorities are on very good terms with us, it's a sin to complain," although the opposite conclusion could be drawn from his voice and intonation. It is significant that despite the fact that "everything is fine," the interlocutor also asked not to mention his name. A similar answer was given by a scientist, researcher of the settlement of ethnic

groups from Karachay-Cherkessia: "We have a more or less favorable situation with the Russians."

As for Kabardino-Balkaria, here, despite the authorities' assurances about the absence of facts of oppression of Russians, one of the employees of the local publication "Gazeta Yuga", stating a "catastrophe in the villages", in a telephone conversation categorically refused to meet with a representative of the North Caucasus News Agency, who was in Nalchik at that time, did not give any contacts and asked not to mention him. Another interlocutor of the North Caucasian Federal District, representing the local Cossacks, nevertheless provided some information, but asked not to indicate his name, citing the "need to maintain subordination" in relation to the leadership, which he "did not inform when meeting with you," which, according to according to him, could lead to the impossibility of such a meeting.

The Agency's interlocutor in Ingushetia, who asked not to be named, briefly stated that judging by the questions, the North Caucasian Federal District correspondent "correctly understands the problem," while laconically stating: "There are almost no Russians left here, only old people."

The interlocutor from Dagestan, whose name is not indicated for the same reasons, lives in the city of Kizlyar, a former deputy of the Kizlyar City Council, takes, according to the testimony of those who know him, a fairly tough pro-Russian position, is well aware of the situation in this Russian region of Dagestan, so he didn't give any information. "Young people are leaving because there is no employment," the Agency's interlocutor briefly stated.

All this indicates that obtaining information about violations against the Russian population from the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District is still as difficult as in previous years. And this despite the fact that the situation in the region has apparently stabilized, and local authorities are demonstrating loyalty to the federal center. At the same time, local newspapers located in the republics themselves do not publish such information. The episode with the attack on the editor-in-chief of "Newspaper of the South" after a series of similar publications finally closed this topic. The current situation in this regard cannot be called anything other than a "conspiracy of silence." Those who have such information do not have access to the media, and if it is local media, publication of such information is impossible. Those media outlets that are located outside the region do not depend on local authorities, and are ready to publish such information, but do not have access to sources of information. At the same time, information about violations by the Federal Center against representatives of local ethnic groups is actively disseminated, creating a one-sided picture of perception. This situation will not be resolved until data on violations of the rights of the Russian

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population in the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District begins to appear, breaking the veil of silence around this topic, and forcing local authorities to pay more attention to resolving the problem of the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus. All the episodes of oppression of Russians in the North Caucasus described above indicate a trend that, unfortunately, continues to this day. For example, two raids of representatives of the Kabardian ethnic group from Argudan and the city of Terek into the village of Kotlyarevskaya (Kabardino-Balkaria) in 2009 ended in grandiose fights, in which there was a dead person, hospitalization, shooting and a wounded policeman. The incident was quickly “hushed up” and no clear assessment of what happened was given, Evgeniy Kuzmichenko, a resident of the city of Maisky, told the North Caucasus News Agency. As for Maisky himself, the nightly organized visits of hooligans to this area from neighboring ones have long ceased to be friendly. The author sets out the details in his article entitled “The Maysky district and the city are degrading,” published on the SKFOpe\U8 portal. Also in the article, the author points out the economic infringement of the rights of the Russian population in Kabardino-Balkaria: “... in the privatization processes, Russians were inferior to immigrants from other cities and regions. Enterprises began to pass into the hands of representatives of the titular ethnic group.” At the same time, as the author of the article believes, “... the presence of the Russian population in the region is not only an important geopolitical factor, but also a factor in the stability and economic development of the region.” It is significant that immediately after the publication of this article on the North Caucasian Federal District website, an FSB officer came to the author’s home and was interested in two cases of mass fights that occurred in 2009 and were mentioned in the article. Following the visit, the FSB began an investigation. After this, local district police officers came to Kuzmichenko, They offered to go to the prosecutor’s office to testify about the publication. Kuzmichenko refused to go without an official invitation. Soon, Kuzmichenko received an official invitation, visited the prosecutor’s office, where for 4 hours he was interrogated on the text of the article, they persuaded him to retract his words. As a result, they forced me to give a written explanation on some points of the article. The result of this visit to the prosecutor’s office was that Kuzmichenko refused to cooperate with the North Caucasian Federal District, citing the fact that he “really got cold feet.”

The outflow from the North Caucasus and the original Cossack population continues. As journalist Yuri Soshin writes in his article on the portal of the North Caucasus News Agency, “...in Kabardino-Balkaria, the confrontation between Cossacks and Meskhetian Turks is intensifying in the Maysky region, in the northern steppe villages of the Prokhladnensky region, there is a mass exodus of the

Russian population and replacing it with Balkars and Meskhetian Turks. Thus, in the village of Granichny in 2021, not a single Russian child went to the first grade of the local school, only children of Meskhetian Turks went,” the author reports.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, it should be noted that there has never been a confrontation between the Balkars and the Cossacks. As for Chechnya and Ingushetia, as the ataman of the Terek Cossack army Vasily Bondarev said in a conversation with the author of the article, “the situation with the Russian population in Chechnya and Ingushetia has crossed the threshold of irreversibility.” In this regard, Yuri Soshin believes that “If we face the truth, in Chechnya and Ingushetia the Russian government is of a symbolic nature, Dagestan is ready to explode, the situation in the until recently calm Kabardino-Balkaria and in the south-eastern regions of Stavropol is becoming more and more complicated”. The North Caucasus News Agency was told in detail about the oppression of Russians in the modern period by a girl who asked not to use her name and currently lives in Moscow. She begins her story with the words: “I am a simple person, and there is no certain protection behind my back. And besides, my relatives and people close to me continue to live in Kabardino-Balkaria. But still, I am not indifferent to what is happening there. Having lived there all my life, I have to some extent come to terms with the indifference and disregard for the Russian people. The overwhelming majority of Russians also put up with this, only because they need to continue to live somehow. In my life I have often had to deal with threats and onslaught from Kabardians.” Meanwhile, the oppression of Russians occurs not only from the titular ethnic groups, but also from other, atypical ethnic groups that have settled in the republics of the North Caucasian Federal District. So in Adygea, the oppression of Russians occurs from the Kurds who settled there. As the head of the Union of Slavs of Adygea, State Council deputy Nina Konovalova told the North Caucasus News Agency, “Clashes between Russians and Kurds in Adygea are ongoing. Because Russian youth are simply not given a pass - neither boys nor girls. Just a week ago (at the time of the interview - 2022) in the village of Elenovskoye there was a big clash between the Kurds and the Russians. At the same time, local authorities, despite saying something and promising something, do nothing in this regard.” Facts of oppression of the Russian population continue to accumulate at the current moment. It is enough just to briefly list the events of recent days: In 2021, in the regional center of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, the city of Maiskoye, there was a complete attack on the Cossack cornet Sergei Anatolyevich Koptev on ethnic grounds. The beatings shouted “Russian pigs! It's time to kill you long ago! ”; According to a statement to the Department of Internal Affairs for the Novolavsky district, four Russian men were kept in slavery on the

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territory of a brick factory, having been fraudulently brought to Dagestan in the village of Chapaevo. Released in April 2022; On April 7, in the village of Yantarnoye, Prokhladnensky district of Kabardino-Balkaria, Kabardian youth with brass knuckles attacked Russian schoolchildren with the connivance of local police officers, ethnic Kabardians. During a mass brawl in the village of Yantarny, Kabardians beat up Russian schoolchildren,<sup>86</sup> which was reported to the North Caucasian Federal District portal by the chief of staff of the Yantarny Cossack community, Alexander Pavlovsky. The fight started at the Shkolny stadium after a football competition. “The [Altudites] shouted, “If you don’t lose, we’ll cut you and beat you.” Well, ours won, so they beat them up for this.” “Then a group of Kabardians, about 30 people, began to walk around the stadium and around the school grounds, attacking Russian school-age children and beating them.” “The Altudskys - young people 20 years old and older, many of whom are students of technical schools, beat children 14-16 years old with brass knuckles. The Kabardians specially came to fight, this is not the first such case,” said Alexander Pavlovsky. Immediately after the incident, local resident Olga Viktorovna Mizikina, born in 1974, stated that Kabardians beat her son Valera and her nephew. The son lost consciousness from the blows: “They beat the children for no reason. They were beaten with brass knuckles and their teeth were knocked out. There are bruises on the neck and everything in the world.”<sup>88</sup> Later, Valera told a correspondent of the SKFOnews portal that the Kabardians “just came up and started fighting with us after the match.” Olga Mizikina immediately took her son to the district hospital. However, the situation did not end there. On the same day, the mother of the Kabardian man who beat Mizikina’s son called her and threatened her with murder and physical harm if she reported to law enforcement agencies. According to available information, six people were seriously beaten in the brawl, all of them Russian. According to Pavlovsky, “...one guy was barely alive, nine teeth were knocked out.”<sup>89</sup> Another 18 people were also injured. As for the Kabardians, as Pavlovsky notes, none of them were hurt: “They are adults, with brass knuckles. One hits - he falls, and the others kick.”<sup>90</sup> It is also significant that during the fight, the local police commissioner Mazloev and his assistant Shiriev did not intervene in any way. Shiriev did not arrive at the scene of the incident at all, citing the fact that he was on vacation, and in a conversation with the villagers he sided with his fellow tribesmen. As the SKFOnews source notes, both policemen are Kabardians, natives of Altud. “We say openly everywhere that they themselves [precinct officers] are from Altud, they are committing outrages here. We want to remove them, but where should we remove them? The head of the administration protects them. She is devoted to them - there is nowhere else

to go. She works miracles herself - she doesn’t do anything in the village and lets them.” Another source of the North Caucasian Federal District portal also drew attention to the fact that that in Russian settlements Kabardians from other settlements are appointed as local police commissioners. This, according to the source, “has long been the order of things.” At the same time, “a Russian will never be appointed as a district police officer in a Kabardian village.” The injured schoolboy Valera also said that this happens “not often, but it happens from time to time.” According to him, in Yantarny after the events of April 7, “everyone is in shock.” “The behavior of Kabardians visiting the village only causes irritation among local residents.” “Like night - they drive cars so hard that the brakes whistle. During the day it’s the same. If you come on Saturday or Sunday, it’s dangerous to pass, so they drive.” “The fight at the stadium caused discontent among the schoolchildren. “The students are rioting, demanding that this kid, a Kabardian from Altud, who started the fight, be removed from school altogether,” Pavlovsky said. According to the ROUD officer on duty at Prokhladny (conversation on April 9), after the fight, the Kabardians wrote statements to the police against the schoolchildren. On April 10, 2020, the press service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the KBR sent out an official message to the media that the Yantarny district police officers were suspended from work. However, on the same day, but a little later, another official press release was sent out, in which the information from the North Caucasus Federal District was almost completely disavowed, although the fact of the fight itself was recognized. The press release stated that the residents of Yantarny were outraged by what was published in the North Caucasus Federal District, photographs of beaten children were edited, and Pavlovsky’s words were “fiction.” In common

In a press release, the Yantarny authorities call the local Cossacks “gypsies”, “impostors” - “in the spring, several people in the village, three of whom are gypsies, formed an association, calling it “Cossack”. This group, without bearing any responsibility, constantly distorts the events taking place in the village and region. At the same time, their so-called “ataman” went somewhere to the north of the country to earn money.” Upon publication in the North Caucasus Federal District, Pavlovsky was summoned to the prosecutor’s office, severely intimidated, and he was forced to retract his words. Pavlovsky’s wife Ekaterina fell ill with a heart attack.” Already on April 12, the local Ministry of Internal Affairs began looking for informants in the North Caucasian Federal District. Inspections of the Internet salons from where the messages were coming from began, and it was allegedly established where two letters to the editor “came from.” Employees held conversations with the management of the Internet data salons. On the same day, the local FSB took

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<b>ISI (Dubai, UAE)</b>	<b>= 1.582</b>	<b>PIHII (Russia)</b>	<b>= 3.939</b>	<b>PIF (India)</b>	<b>= 1.940</b>
<b>GIF (Australia)</b>	<b>= 0.564</b>	<b>ESJI (KZ)</b>	<b>= 8.771</b>	<b>IBI (India)</b>	<b>= 4.260</b>
<b>JIF</b>	<b>= 1.500</b>	<b>SJIF (Morocco)</b>	<b>= 7.184</b>	<b>OAJI (USA)</b>	<b>= 0.350</b>

charge of the situation. Intimidation of schoolchildren and their parents began. The schoolchildren themselves wrote about what happened the day before, their stories are kept by the representative of the Kolkhodnensky private newspaper "Your Town", Balkar Nadezhda Kaneeva. And similar incidents occur quite regularly. April 9, 2022 - a conflict occurred between students of the Russian village of Soldatskaya and the Kabardian village of Karagach. On the same day in Dagestan, an unknown person threw a bomb into the courtyard of the Russian Orthodox Church. On April 11, at about 21-00, an attack occurred on Russian residents of the village of Aleksandrovskaya, Maysky district of Kabardino-Balkaria.

The attackers came from the Tersky region, populated by Kabardians, in two cars with Kabardino-Balkarian license plates. On April 11, in Adygea, in the village of Novo-Sevastopolskoye, an Azerbaijani man hit a Russian woman with an ax. The victim ended up in intensive care. On April 13, a resident of the Tersky district was detained for raping a schoolgirl from Aleksandrovskaya. A resident of the village of Khamidiya, Terek district, born in 1984, was detained on suspicion of committing rape of an 8th grade student at secondary school No. 9 in the village of Aleksandrovskaya. On April 17, in Dagestan, A. Efremova, a 27-year-old resident of the Burnatsky village of the Novoanninsky district of the Volgograd region, was released, who was forcibly held in the Halal cafe, located on the 213th kilometer of the Astrakhan-Makhachkala federal highway. According to the victim, the owner of the cafe, a 51-year-old resident of the village of Kochubey, Tarumovsky district of Dagestan, I. Israpov, took her passport and, against her will, from July 2009 to February 2010, forced her to work in the establishment as a cook. And similar cases continue to occur almost daily. Summarizing all the listed factors, we can say that the "exodus" of Russians from the Caucasus is facilitated by the emerging social climate that is unfavorable in their regard, which has both its own impersonal (mainly economic) prerequisites and its own face - the nationalism of the titular ethnic groups of the North Caucasian national administrative entities. It may seem paradoxical to say that these administrative forms themselves are, in fact, the cause, or at least the fundamental institutional context, of these processes. However, this is exactly the case, because, as noted above, these processes themselves are completely new for the Caucasus. In connection with all of the above, namely, that the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus occurs in the context of the monoethnicization of national republics and the "nationalization" of local administrative and production institutions, the problem arises of essentially the "revival of the multiethnicity" of the Russian Caucasus, as formulated by the head of the department for national policy Chechen Republic

Vadud Gerikhanov. For the final and most harmful consequence of the monoethnicization of these subjects is the strengthening of "centrifugal forces," that is, tendencies to separate the corresponding territories from the Federal Republic under the slogans of creating independent national states.

The Russian factor and the development of the region: problems of modernization - economic, political, social, associated with the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus. The Caucasus region is today one of the most important strategic centers of political dominance on the Eurasian continent. During the imperial and Soviet periods, Russia, with great difficulty and incredible efforts, achieved political and economic dominance over this strategically important region of the world, and today it is catastrophically losing it. The strategic aspect of the "Russian presence" in the North Caucasus As stated in the previous part of the report, the last two decades of the life of the Russian state were marked by a gradual and increasing outflow of the Russian population from the "national republics" of the North Caucasus, which, after a special decree of President Medvedev, entered the North Caucasus Federal district. The development of this process was influenced by many factors, most of which have a stable historical nature. These include the specifics of the traditional political system, some features of the mentality of the indigenous ethnic groups of the North Caucasus, their clan-based social structure, the weak economic development of the region compared to other regions of the Russian Federation and other factors. Today we are increasingly convinced that this process is destructive, anti-state in nature, and it must be reversed in the very near future. Thus, the outflow of Russians from the territories of the North Caucasus is most directly related to the undermining of Russia's geopolitical potential in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia. The current state of affairs in the migration sphere clearly dictates to our country the abandonment of its age-old geopolitical goals and aspirations in this region. The North Caucasus, as a "rear zone" for the advancement of Russian interests in a southern direction, is an extremely important strategic node. After all, the region in question is not only a platform for the Russian "leap" into Transcaucasia, where without the Russian presence the share of influence of Turkey, a member of NATO, radically increases. In addition, it is closely adjacent to the entire region of Russian lands from Taganrog to Astrakhan. Thus, in a certain situation, the North Caucasus risks becoming a springboard for the advance of the Western geopolitical pole and, including Turkish, influence on traditional Russian territories. The very possibility of today's attack on Russia using the territories of Turkey and, possibly, subsequently Iran, is due to the destabilized state of this most important "transit" (in economic and military terms) region. In turn, the destabilization of

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the Caucasus is a multifactorial process, but its defining components are based on the lack of Russian presence in the region. It should be noted that the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus fundamentally undermined the foundations of the legal and legitimate exercise of Russian political power in this region. The consequence of this was the rapid growth of separatist sentiments, which led to two military campaigns on the territory of Chechnya and even beyond its borders. Today it becomes clear that full-fledged public administration on the territory of the Chechen Republic, its strong integration into the system of territorial-administrative relations of the Russian Federation is possible only if the Russians, as the state-forming people, are recognized as having a leading role in the leading political and economic processes in the North Caucasus. But when implementing this strategy, a number of significant legal problems immediately arise. Thus, according to the 1993 Constitution, Russians generally lack any kind of legal personality on the territory of the Russian Federation, unlike many small nations that have their own quasi-state entities<sup>106</sup>. Moreover, some Russian lawyers from among the representatives of the national elites of the Volga region and the North Caucasus believe that the Russian Federation is a confederal entity, and the “national republics” within it have full state sovereignty<sup>107</sup>. Such “specialists” allow themselves to make statements that cast doubt on their professional suitability: “... the Russian people, living throughout the entire territory of the country and not having their own national-state formation within the Russian Federation, seem to fall out of the system of federal relations.” Meanwhile, it should be noted that it is the Russians, among other things, who bring with them a specific cultural code that allows them to properly formalize the existing political and social system in the North Caucasus and make it function efficiently and clearly. To correct this disastrous situation, it is necessary to give the Russian people an official legal status that excludes the reduction of its significance to the scale of a separate ethnic group, but gives it a state-forming status. It is in this case that it will act as a fundamental “brace” uniting the North Caucasus. The already difficult political and social situation in the region was aggravated by the events of 1993, which secured at the constitutional level the potentially disruptive subject status of the regions of the Russian Federation. The subsequent adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the assignment of full national status to its Gastaut ethnic groups “relegated political parties and public organizations to the role of extras in the political drama played out by senior officials of executive structures and their partners in business and financial circles”<sup>109</sup>. Thus, fuel to the fire is added not only by the fact of the lack of official recognition of the existence of the state-forming Russian people, but also by clearly incorrect formulations in Russian

legislation, which allow an ethnic group to acquire the status of “nationality”, and ethnic administrative territories - the status of “national republics”, therefore, to receive formal the right to declare one's state independence. Moreover, the threat of separatism is implicit in the Constitution and the Federative Treaty of the former national autonomies of the RSFSR, which actually received the status of subjects of international law - republics possessing full or part of state sovereignty. From a legal point of view, the dispute about the bearer of state subjectivity between the federal center and the republics has not been resolved, but has been postponed for political reasons. The contradictions inherent in the federal structure of modern Russia give rise to separatist tendencies and lead to increased tension in interethnic relations. This is especially true for regions with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, such as the North Caucasus and the Volga region. And here the presence of the “Russian factor”, capable of demonstrating the will to build and preserve the Russian state, can help. The negative impact of the outflow of Russians on the state of the economic, administrative, scientific and educational systems of the Caucasus is noted as obvious by all researchers. The opposite statement is in circulation only within the framework of the notorious “North Caucasian discourse”, which was discussed in Part 2 of the report, and within the framework of which a banal substitution of concepts is carried out. It should be emphasized once again that the “Russian question” in this case is an element of the general complex of economic problems associated with the monoethnicization of the “national republics”. As V. Gateev notes, “the division of labor along national lines is typical for the multiethnic population of the North Caucasus. Division of labor between national groups (for example, between Kabardians, Balkars, Russians, etc. in Kabardino-Balkaria, between Karachais, Circassians, Russians, Nogais, etc. in Karachay-Cherkessia), assignment of certain types of activities to representatives of a specific ethnic groups in stable and prosperous periods of social development do not cause an aggravation of ethno-political tensions. In a stable society this is perceived as normal. For example, in Dagestan, the Avars, Rutuls, Tsakhurs, Aguls and others have long been occupied for the most part in sheep breeding, the Dargins and Lezgins - in sheep breeding and gardening, the Kumyks - in grain farming and vegetable growing, the Laks - in sheep breeding and specialize in various crafts, the Tabasarans - in agriculture and gardening. and carpet weaving. In the national consciousness of each people of the region, a system of assessments and values is formed that determines the prestige of this or that type of activity, as a result of which, in the multi-ethnic society of the North Caucasus, ethno-professional niches are formed, traditionally, often for many generations,

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Accordingly, the displacement of non-titular ethnic groups from the economic niches they traditionally occupy aggravates the imbalance and systemic failures in the economies of the republics. It is obvious that the factor of the Russian population occupies a special place in this context, since, as said in Part 2 of the report, the functioning of the most complex, technologically and intellectually intensive components of the economic and humanitarian spheres, with the progressive deterioration of the economic situation in the region, is connected with the Russian presence, facilitated by the outflow of Russians, the indigenous population also leaves economically deprived regions. As a result, the whole process takes on an avalanche-like character and threatens to lead to complete economic paralysis of the region. Already today, the subsidized status of the North Caucasian republics is chronic, which gives rise to a dangerous idea in the minds of residents of the regions of central Russia, which is a mirror reflection of Caucasian ethnic separatism - the idea of the economic feasibility of removing “dependents” from the Russian Federation. Ethnic elites, on the contrary, develop a dependent attitude towards the federal

center, which is ready to buy off a socially and economically disadvantaged region with huge contributions from the federal budget. Being extremely short-sighted from the economic point of view, this idea does not stand up to any criticism from the point of view of geostrategy and the prospects for changing the cultural and civilizational picture of the Eurasian continent. A high level of corruption remains an important threat to the North Caucasus in the public sphere. Informal relations between local ethnic elites, who have made their way into the political governance of the region, with Moscow officials, representatives of law enforcement agencies, party functionaries and leaders of public organizations also sometimes come down to the defense of common interests. Power and party vertical Moscow-Grozny, Moscow-Makhachkala, Moscow-Nalchik, etc. in practice, it consists in establishing mutual relations between the leaders of ethnic clans that have broken through to power and their federal patrons, as well as in the formation of a mechanism of mutual responsibility that holds corruption schemes together. The spread of corruption schemes has actually led to the loss of the state's monopoly on violence within the North Caucasus. The consequences of this fact are now manifested in the activities of mini-armies poorly controlled by the state, subordinate to various patrons (Chechnya, Dagestan), and permanent terrorist activity (which is not always explained by separatism and, especially, international terrorism). In a situation where the bearers of state sovereignty are outside the controlled territory and at the same time are involved in complex corruption schemes, criminalization and the habit of a system of large “kickbacks” to the budget of the republic begin to rapidly develop. One of the main reasons for the current situation is the penetration of archaic ethnic structures into the leadership of the “national republics”. Clans have powerful, a stable ethnic identity, a consolidated worldview, however, this worldview cannot be synchronized with national tasks, since it operates in the categories of an ethnic group, not a people, or a state. Hence all the failures of attempts to modernize the North Caucasus, and in fact, forcing local elites to renounce their own identity and incorporate them into federal authorities has led to a tragic result over the past 20 years. Thus, it is necessary to state the importance of transferring the political and military sphere of relations in the North Caucasus into the hands of representatives of the state-forming Russian people. The economic situation in the Caucasus also leaves much to be desired. The massive outflow of Russians, caused by wars, ethnic cleansing, the liquidation of the labor market, and the chaos of the 90s, led to the collapse of the entire industrial and knowledge-intensive base of the Caucasus. Today, in order to at least partially restore the economic potential of the region, the active participation of Russians in the economic life of the region is



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necessary. Without meeting this condition, the modernization of the Caucasus will forever remain a utopian and bright plan set out on paper. The construction of high-tech industries, new institutions, and promising design organizations are traditionally those areas in the formation of which Russians played a leading role even during the Soviet industrialization of the Caucasus. Not to mention such areas of production as defense facilities and research institutes, where traditionally Russian personnel accounted for at least 80%. Thus, without the massive involvement of Russian specialists with the highest degree of qualification in the restoration of the Caucasus, it will be impossible to conduct a constructive conversation about a new economic breakthrough. In addition, a feature of the restoration and modernization of the North Caucasus Federal District should be the motivation of these people to permanently reside in the Caucasus. Linking Russians to industrial and scientific centers will create the first impetus for their return to the Caucasus, and therefore for the economic development of the region. Here, the political and legal imbalance in the situation of Russian and “national” regions is aggravated in many respects by the economic policy pursued by the federal center, which is of an accentuated “peripheral” nature. The main recipients of total subsidies from the federal budget are the republics of the North Caucasus - Chechnya and Dagestan (obtaining complete information on the amount of contributions from the federal budget to the budgets of the republics is extremely difficult. Often even high-ranking government officials Patrakova V.F., Chernous V.V. About some reasons for the outflow of the Russian-speaking population from the national republics of the North Caucasus // Russians in the North Caucasus: challenges of the 21st century. 2001. Federal and regional levels operate with different figures, which is caused by imperfect statistics and the complexity of the methodology for calculating socio-economic and financial indicators). However, in general one can rely on the statement that the level of subsidies for the “national republics” of the North Caucasus is generally higher than for the “Russian regions”. According to unofficial data, the leaders in percentage terms are the Republic of Ingushetia (up to 90% of the republican budget) and the Karachay-Cherkess Republic (about 65% of the republican budget).

The financial policy of the federal center in relation to the Chechen Republic deserves special consideration. Let us only note that although the new President of the Chechen Republic, R. Kadyrov, has removed the sore point for Moscow about the division of powers between the federal center and the Chechen Republic, the republic continues to remain the main recipient of financial contributions from the federal budget. As a counter-argument, representatives of the ruling elite of the Chechen Republic cite the argument

that revenues from the sale of Chechen oil go to the federal budget.

Since 1994, the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in the North Caucasus have received special financial contributions (transfers) from the Federal Fund for Financial Support to the Regions (FFSR). The official goal of the Fund is to equalize the levels of average per capita budget income of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation for the most complete financing of average expenses, as well as to mitigate the deficits of territorial budgets. All subjects of the North Caucasus Economic Region (North Caucasus Economic Region), including Chechnya, are subsidized, that is, they receive transfers from the FFPR, while the North Caucasus as a whole accounts for more than 21% of the Fund’s funds (in 1995 - 14.76 %). The highest share in the total volume of federal assistance from the Figures are given as of the first half of the 2000s.

FFPR has Dagestan (more than 5%), Kabardino-Balkaria and the Rostov region receive 3% each, more than 2% - Krasnodar and Stavropol territories<sup>115</sup>. However, despite financial contributions to republican budgets that are significantly higher than those of the “Russian regions,” the level of effectiveness of these injections is highly questionable. All direct financial support from the state budget sometimes disappears without a trace in the corridors of power and/or is distributed extremely unevenly among representatives of ethnic clans in power. And here, in order to understand the current difficult situation, it is necessary to change the perspective from economic to ethnosociological.

The question of the Russian population becomes double-edged: it finds its, very often unexpected, continuation, already in “Greater Russia”. The displacement of Russians from the Caucasus results in a massive influx of the Caucasian population into other Russian regions, causing enormous interethnic tension. In parallel, the economic and sometimes political squeezing out of the Russian population from the “titular” republics continues, contrary to state programs specifically adopted in a number of regions (Republic of Ingushetia, Republic of Dagestan). The internal colonization of Russia is a logical continuation of the process caused by the outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus. The significance of this process cannot be underestimated: “The mass exodus of the Russian population threatens the existence of the Russian Federation itself. The Russian people are the state-forming people of the Russian Federation, one of the main bonds on which Russian statehood rests.

Unfortunately, this fact has not yet found proper understanding among the Russian elite leadership.”<sup>1</sup> The situation in the Chechen Republic is perhaps the most difficult issue. On the one hand, the new leadership of the Chechen Republic, headed by Ramzan Kadyrov, advocates for the unity of the

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Russian Federation almost more directly than Moscow does, especially recently, when liberal-pro-Western tendencies are gaining more and more strength in the capital. Ramzan Kadyrov directly and unequivocally opposes himself to Moscow liberals. His slogans are “Our choice is forever with Russia”, “We defended the integrity of Russia”. This last one is especially important. Kadyrov believes that the Chechens are today the main force capable of resisting the West’s attempts to destroy Russia, since Russians are losing their own faith and identity and are unable to resist alcoholism and debauchery (unfortunately, he is stating the obvious). Ramzan Kadyrov speaks out for strengthening the vertical power and sovereignty of Russia, the equality of the Chechen Republic with other constituent entities of the Russian Federation and the inappropriateness of signing an agreement on the division of powers between the Federal Center and the Chechen Republic. This position of Ramzan Kadyrov really relies on the support of the majority of Chechens, since supporters of separatism and the so-called. The “Chechen Republic of Ichkeria” has long taken the position of hard Islamism of the Wahhabi-Saudi type. Chechens, while remaining Muslims, give preference to adat (local customs) over Sharia, and do not accept Islamist rule. This is the position of Ramzan Kadyrov. Despite all the conflicts, Russia is closer to the Chechens than, say, Saudi Arabia or Pakistan. Another thing is how they see their own position within the Russian Federation and the position of the Russian people. The slogan “Allah is above us, Russia is below us!” is certainly popular among Chechens, including those who support Ramzan Kadyrov. The events in Kondopoga showed that the desire for violence against Russians outside Chechnya can rely on support from within this republic. Fear arises: what will happen if Kadyrov’s supporters take more significant positions in Moscow? Supporters of “Russian separatism” and “regionalism” are speculating on this, having invented the special term “Kadyrovism” and using it to refer to any, including Russian, desire to centralize power and “establish order.” The situation in the Chechen Republic is indeed very difficult. Today in the republic the Russian civilian population is less than 1%; in the parliament of the Chechen Republic, out of 58 deputies, there are three Russians. The government includes the heads of 15 ministries and 15 committees and departments, of which only one is Russian. “Now that all government structures have been handed over to the Chechen security forces, Russians can only work there as janitors,” says Irina Tabatskova, the former mayor of the city of Kovrov (Vladimir Region), who spent most of her life in Chechnya. In the Shelkovsky and Naursky districts (where many of her relatives live), previously there were extremely few Chechens, as in the Stavropol Territory. Of the five thousand households, all were Russian. Today the picture has changed completely. All Russian yards

have now been bought up by Chechens: mostly women live there. Almost all Chechens (with the exception of those who work in law enforcement agencies) work in the Urals, Siberia, Norilsk, and Tyumen region. I don’t know what they are doing there. In Chervlenaya itself (the home village of Irina Tabatskova), in fact, only women and children live.” The following should be noted here. The attitude of Chechens towards Russians is strongly influenced by the self-identification and self-awareness of the Russians themselves: the more stable it is, the higher the “degree of respect” of the Chechens - this is an important factor Irina Tabatskova: Russians in Chechnya are not considered people in ethnopsychology. Thus, the majority of Chechens negatively perceive the liberal tendencies of Russian politics, starting with the “democratic socialism” of the perestroika era (it is no coincidence that during the time of Dzhokhar Dudayev they called themselves “the last bastion of the USSR”, as, indeed, today they call themselves “the last bastion of Russian unity”). They also perceive negatively the pro-American tendencies in Russian foreign policy and the “freedom of morals” that reigns in Russian cities. The author of these lines had the opportunity to talk with a group of Chechen students, moreover, belonging to today’s Chechen “elite”, close to Ramzan Kadyrov. It was very surprising to hear such words (and after all the “Stalinist deportations”): “The communists were better than the current ones, the Romanovs were better than the communists, well, we don’t know what was there before.” This is clearly an indication: we must look, first of all, at ourselves. Noteworthy is the result of surveys of parents in connection with the introduction of courses in the fundamentals of religious culture or “secular ethics” in schools. In the Russian regions of the Russian Federation, only 20 percent of parents were in favor of the military-industrial complex course, and in the Chechen Republic, 99 percent were in favor of “Fundamentals of Islam.” So, in many ways, our weakness in the face of Chechen nationalism lies in ourselves. In this regard, it is necessary to pay attention to the demographic factor. The “titular peoples” of the Caucasus in matters of marriage and childbearing behave as the religious morality of Islam prescribes: regardless of the financial situation of families - and for today’s Russians in matters of childbearing, the factor of security plays a decisive role. The adoption by the Russian Federation of the European Social Charter and the proposed introduction of juvenile justice will further lead this problem to a dead end. We have to admit with sorrow: for the majority of Russians, the imperatives of Orthodoxy in this area are not imperatives. Moreover, the greater the desire of church hierarchs to “fit into European Christianity” and “condemn Soviet times,” the less authority they will enjoy among the Russians of the Caucasus, and other ethnically “problematic” regions, since it is in

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them that the Russian population is on its own experienced all the consequences of “anti-Sovietism in action.” And this despite the fact that it also experiences all the negative consequences of Soviet policy, first of all, the so-called. “Leninist national policy”. Thus, to a large extent, the position of Russians in the Caucasus republics is explained by the fact that they are there in the position of a “secondary people”, as if twice: the status of the Russian people is not legally fixed at the federal level, and in the national republics Russians are a “non-titular nation”, equated to national minorities. And this is despite the fact that the bill “On the fundamentals of state policy in the field of interethnic relations in the Russian Federation” (the law has not been adopted) clearly states that “representatives of the Russian people cannot be considered as national minorities on the territory of Russia.” On the other hand, some circles associated with the “local elites,” although they talk about “equality of Russians,” are, in fact, leading to their assimilation. “Dagestanians are not only indigenous peoples, but also representatives of other ethnic groups permanently residing here. Living on the territory of Dagestan, they contribute a lot to traditions, which we convert into our common culture. Take the same Russians. Politically, we believe, and they themselves consider themselves Dagestanis, that is, there is a multi-level identification.” In connection with everything that has been said - and not only this - the idea of the so-called seems completely utopian. “Russian civil nation” put forward by V.A. Tishkov and his colleagues at the Institute of Etiology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This essentially liberal version of the old communist theory of “the Soviet people as a new historical community” leads to the destruction of historical Russia and the emergence in its place of some completely different territorial entity, the population of which is controlled only by economic interests and economic mechanisms. Moreover, its implementation does not close the path to the domination of those ethnic groups that are on the rise and the oppression of those in decline. In reality, it leads to the destruction of Russians as such. “Modern Russian leadership,” writes E.A. Popov, “in general continues the Soviet national policy, the distinctive feature of which was the redistribution of resources in favor of national entities at the expense of the indigenous Russian territories.” In fact, the asymmetrical system of Russian federalism and such redistribution, according to many experts, will lead to the fact that “the modern Russian state, unless its internal and foreign policy is radically changed, will most likely repeat the fate of the USSR.” In this regard, the same E.A. Popov speaks directly about “the contradiction between the principles of the federal Russian state and the situation of the Russian people, deprived of their legal personality, aggravated by the inadequate budgetary policy of the federal center and the growing threat of

uncontrolled external and internal migration.” The way out is “it is necessary to start with the restoration of historical justice - to introduce into the current constitution a provision on the state-forming role of the Russian people and other indigenous peoples of Russia.” The problem of “clanism” and the role of the Russian factor in overcoming it Active de-Russification of the region is aggravated, among other things, by the specifics of the socio-political structure: clanism or clientism. It is thanks to the dominance of more archaic forms of social relations that numerous ethnic groups living on the territory of the North Caucasus Federal District manage, on the one hand, to preserve their uniqueness, culture and mentality, and on the other hand, to lag far behind the mainstream of social development of Russian society, at the same time turning into a heavy burden for federal center and a constant source of ethnic conflicts. Even in the Soviet period, there was a tendency towards increasing ethnic homogeneity of the majority of the “titular” national administrative entities of the North Caucasus<sup>130</sup>. In the 50s - 80s of the twentieth century, in most North Caucasian republics there was a reduction in the Russian population only in proportional terms. Since the end of the 70s, in a number of regions of the North Caucasus and Soviet Transcaucasia, the percentage of Russians in relation to the so-called. “titular nationalities” began to decline: Russians by this period had reached the peak of their presence in the region, which was followed by a reverse process. “According to official data, in the period from 1979 to 1989. The size of the Russian population of Transcaucasia decreased by 187 thousand people, mainly due to migration. This corresponds to approximately one fifth of the original number of the Russian ethnic group in the region.” Moreover, “among the factors determining the nature of the migration behavior of Russians, interethnic problems have clearly emerged. Even then, the contours of the problems of the 1990s were visible, when the rootedness of Russians, at least in the national republics, was called into question and they began to be slowly pushed out of their inhabited places, as if forming a powerful future migration potential of Russians.” However, the real turning point came in the early 1990s. The collapse of the USSR and the parade of sovereignties in the Russian Federation itself gave a powerful impetus to ethnic separatism in the national republics and, as a consequence, a sharp increase in the migration of Russian residents from there. The low economic functionality of the clan system of social relations, harmonious for a traditional society, is a certain obstacle in the conditions of the vital modernization of the North Caucasian Federal District, because the power of clans and client groups that have achieved political and economic success immediately causes resistance from clans and groups that have not achieved formal “superiority.” This is largely due to the fact that the losing clans and the

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huge social groups behind them believe that they were defeated “unfairly” and “justice must prevail.”

In this context, Russians who arrived in the Caucasus relatively recently or are living here in the second or third generation do not have such a collective mentality and, getting into the power vertical through direct appointment from Moscow, as was the case in the USSR era, or by being recruited into the power elite on their own, do not integrate into the structure of existing groups operating on kinship or ethnic principles, but, on the contrary, play the role of a regulator of inter-clan relations. Russians, among other things, as mentioned above, bring with them a specific cultural code that allows them to properly formalize the existing political and social system in the North Caucasus and make it function efficiently and clearly.

In this sense, a certain socio-political balance, based on the proportional representation of Russians and titular ethnic groups in the power structures of the North Caucasian republics, was able to be maintained in the late Soviet Union. At that time, the clanism of the local political elites was more than diluted by the direct appointment of officials by Moscow. This, to a certain extent, blurred and neutralized the effect of constant inter-clan contradictions and conflicts. This can be clearly demonstrated using a table.

As the practice of recent years has shown, clan warfare, which often includes criminal (corruption and other criminal) “political technologies,” cannot replace the rational organization of the bureaucratic apparatus. The absence of state forms of political communication permanently produces conflict and leads to total corruption at all levels of government. And this, in turn, causes violent discontent among local residents, which is also not expressed in the form of strikes and street protests.

On the other hand, the originality of such a social structure cannot be called a unique feature of the archaic ethnic groups of the Caucasus, mired in essentially feudal relations. The vitality of this sociocultural type is largely explained by the fact that the clan and patronage-client social organization is exploited by certain financial, economic and power groups, and sometimes simply “comes down from above.” Those. it acts as the dominant principle of not only North Caucasian, but also Russian sociality. Of course, not everything is in order with clanism and corruption in other regions of Russia, but there it has a fundamentally different, individual character. The regions of central Russia are more likely to be characterized by the existence of clienteles connected by corporate interests, but not by blood relations, which is more typical of more archaic ethnic groups. The existence of client-patronage Russian groups can be explained rather by the fact that in the absence of democratic rules of the game and the underdevelopment of civil society institutions in the republics of the North Caucasian Federal District,

participation in a client group is often the only opportunity for an individual, cut off from the traditional realities of life in other regions, to realize himself and rise through the ranks. career ladder. More and more individuals consciously connect to clan and client informal structures and perceive the rules of the game operating in them as the only productive ones. When analyzing journalistic and scientific periodicals on the problems of the Caucasus, one can often find references to the functioning of various regional groups. Such materials are full of references to the “clans” of Kadyrov, Yandarbiev, Khasbulatov, Khachilaevs, Amirov, Magomedov, Batdyev, Sovmen and many others. As Michael Urban, a professor of political science at the University of California, writes, “the machinery of government is driven by a variety of patronage groups that use it for their own interests.” The difference between the North Caucasus and other parts of Russia lies mainly in the fact that here clan and client relations function largely around an ethnic basis and are well correlated with those elements of ethnic minority cultures that, despite the modernization of the socialist period, have not outlived their traditional components. In reality, the traditions of group solidarity, enshrined in ethnoculture and superimposed on post-Soviet realities, give clanism and clientism in the Caucasus a special specificity and ethnicity. The uneradicated traditional clan organization, transplanted into post-Soviet reality, provides here an almost ready-made model of a clan, which is significantly aggravated by the absence of Russians among the heads of government bodies, heads of party and other public organizations, heads of enterprises in industrial sectors of the economy and in a number of other areas of employment in the republics of the North Caucasus. Although, as practice shows, modern Caucasian clans do not completely coincide with the boundaries of the clan and other communities that have survived from their past (for example, teips and tukkhums among the Chechens). Under these conditions, clans and patron-client groups without full influence found themselves outside the institutionalized control of the federal center. But they also did not lend themselves well to direct forceful control by law enforcement agencies, which are often themselves under the supervision of certain clans and were forced to use the force of the law selectively. Patronage groups and clans are not subject to public control. Civil society is even less developed in the Caucasus than in most Russian regions, and many of its “public” organizations are in the service of the ruling clans. The need for speedy modernization, which should affect the fundamental foundations of the social, economic and political spheres of life in the region, prompted the appointment of Alexander Khloponin to the post of plenipotentiary representative in the North Caucasus Federal District. The impossibility of the two previous methods of

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solving problems in the Caucasus is becoming increasingly obvious: direct financial injections and even more direct forceful intervention. It appears that the clan and patronage social organization of the North Caucasus has strengthened during the post-Soviet years. Ethnic groups operating according to the network principle are now connected not only by archaic mutual obligations and relatively small common shadow trade, as was the case under socialism, but also by incomparably large amounts of money and, probably, the blood shed in clan feuds and the unspoken morals arising from this (“concepts”).

After all this, Moscow is only reaping the fruits of the wars of the clans, which it also endowed with state power. Such an ill-considered policy forces Moscow to forgive or not notice abuses in the regional elites allied to it. Refusal to rely on ethno-clan groups and other patron-client groups, from the Kremlin’s point of view, would create serious risks of destabilizing the situation. (Practice convincingly demonstrates that this is precisely the logic of the federal authorities’ reasoning). Reliance on formally loyal Caucasian clans and client-patronage groups, which has become a habit, does not prevent the situation from gradually sliding into chaos. The policy of warm friendship with the dominant North Caucasian elites in the interests of illusory stability does not solve the Caucasian problems and, in fact, turns the North Caucasus into a territory of frozen and potential conflicts. This policy also leads to the erosion of trust in the Center on the part of the residents of the North Caucasus, a significant part of whom are not closely connected with the clans and expect less archaic behavior from the Russian ruling class than from the ethnocratic clans close to them.

The continuing practice of mutual political bargaining between the Center and the Caucasian elite groups (clans) leads to the internal disintegration of the elites and their further departure from the interests of society. The exodus of Russians from most of the republics of the North Caucasus, who cannot fit into Caucasian clan and client network relations and, therefore, effectively compete with Caucasians, is also one of the consequences of the North Caucasus policy pursued by the Center.

There was and remains a choice. Throughout the post-Soviet years, the Center has been faced with a very real and tough alternative: a consistent fight against abuses within the dominant ethno-clan groupings and the construction of a modern type of sociality in the North Caucasus, or reliance on these groups and the acceptance of the “special” sociality of the Caucasus as an unchangeable given. Until recently, the Center made its choice in favor of regional groupings and “special conditions.” The logic of this choice can be illustrated by the example of the phraseology of political scientist Sergei Markov, a member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. In an interview with Caucasus-

Forum, he said: “at one time, the bet on the Kadyrov clan was absolutely justified.” And now, according to Markov, in Chechnya “it is more logical to transition from a presidential republic to a parliamentary one in order to simultaneously shift the stake from one clan to several.”

However, there remains hope that the Center's regional strategy can be implemented with the goal of separating the state from the clans. This is indicated, in particular, by the results of a meeting of the heads of security agencies of the Southern Federal District, held in the spring of 2023 in Vladikavkaz. It was said that corruption is based on clan relations, and therefore it is necessary to fight clanism. They also talked about providing assistance to “federal and regional authorities in making important personnel decisions.” Probably, the appointment of Kholoponin was key in resolving this issue.

But without changing the essence of the entire internal policy, which is basically the totality of relations between federal and regional clans and patron-client groups, it will not be possible to overcome clanism in the North Caucasus. So, for example, it is impossible to destroy the Caucasian clan if it is “protected” by the powerful Moscow clan. To change the situation in Russia and the Russian Caucasus, it is necessary to restore the role of Markov S. 2022 for Putin, Chechnya is no longer a question of the N1 state as an impersonal, impartial arbiter without “family” ties. It also seems fundamentally important to change the established attitude towards the North Caucasus as some kind of exotic Russian region, oversaturated with various “special conditions”: the dominance of tradition, an almost total desire for polygamy and other mythical ideas. The republics of the North Caucasus ceased to be a full-fledged traditional society along with the destruction of the traditional way of life and the development of capitalism (late 19th century), Soviet collectivization and industrialization. A huge number of Caucasians received a good education and became qualified specialists and scientists in all branches of science and technology. All that remains of their traditionalism are some peculiarities of behavior in everyday life (and even then not for everyone). Such Caucasians are ready and eager to compete for their place in the social hierarchy not by incorporating into clans, but by participating in a fair competition of knowledge and professional skills, which in turn will have a positive impact on the process of economic modernization.

Taking into account all the above factors, it seems that the formation of a modern and effective sociality of the North Caucasus should be carried out by relying on the Russian population of the region, which will be discussed in more detail in Part 4 of this report. The artificial prolongation of the existing type of social relations is not only unable to untie the tight

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knots of the North Caucasian problems, but is also gradually leading the Russian Caucasus to disaster.

### Conclusion

The significant outflow of Russians from the North Caucasus, described in detail in the second part of the report, upset the ethno-social balance of the region. The Russians were the link that integrated the peoples of the North Caucasus into the single sociocultural space of the Russian Empire and the USSR, introducing new state legal norms and guidelines there.

Russians, as a state-forming people, firmly cementing and holding together the “blooming complexity” of the cultures and ethnic groups of the Caucasus, should become a full-fledged subject of interethnic relations in the North Caucasus region. Russians in the North Caucasus must act as arbiters in inter-ethnic clashes. The active displacement of the Russian population from the North Caucasus continues to this day, despite some efforts by the Kremlin. However, despite the fact that destructive processes have already been launched, it is still possible to stop them. This will require time, a whole system of comprehensive measures of an ideological, political, socio-economic nature, and most

importantly, a fundamental conceptual rethinking of the entire complexity of interethnic relations in the Caucasus.

The further development of the existing migration dynamics threatens not only the Russians themselves and not even the state or geopolitical interests of Russia, but the Chechens, Circassians, Avars, Abkhazians, Laks, Dargins and other ethnic groups living compactly in the Caucasus themselves. With the departure of the Russians from the region, the situation here will become completely uncontrollable, giving rise to fierce religious (the project to create the Caucasus Emirate) or ethnic (“Yugoslav scenario”) enmity. Both of these scenarios are equally destructive for the “blooming complexity” and cultural identity of the numerous ethnic groups of the Russian North Caucasus and are capable of provoking the final loss of the Caucasus, followed by the collapse of the entire country. In this regard, Russians, as a state-forming people, firmly cementing and holding together the “blooming complexity” of the cultures and ethnic groups of the Caucasus, should and have all the prerequisites to become a full-fledged subject of interethnic relations in the North Caucasus region.

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