

## **Civil Society and Political Transformation: Comparing the Effects of Colour Revolutions in the Central Asian Region**

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Paper abstract submitted to the first annual international conference "*Twenty Years of Central Asian Independence: Shared Past, Separate Paths?*" at the AUCA, Bishkek, 14-16 October 2011.

This paper surveys strategy of democracy promotion by the main international actors and compare the way it has been applied by different actors (Russia, the EU, the US) to grasp how this has affected civil society development in different geopolitical realities of Central Asia. By doing this it explores the attitude of civil society organisations to political change and the way it has been received in different republics of Central Asia by political and non-politicised actors.

There is a vast literature focusing on the causal relationship of civil society development and politics. This paper is distinguished by two interpretative frameworks: a) Shifting the focus from the interaction of two factors, civil society and politics, it suggests that civil society may not only be considered part of the structuration process (Giddens 1979), but also that it interacts with other forces not necessarily purely political such as people and international actors; b) Going beyond traditional approaches, it moves through the inner political structures, the power relationship within an institution or a state, the informal agreements between main actors and the attitude of politicians during political protests (it is not that people move to the opposition because they are ideologically committed with democracy, they do it because the boat is sinking). The goal is to produce empirical evidence on the relationship of civil society with other forces in Central Asia to explain how they have led to the different results we are witnessing.