

# STUDY GUIDE

## CABINET OF DZHOKHAR DUDAYEV



VISIONMUN  
MODEL UNITED NATIONS



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# 1. Letter from Founder & Secretary General

Dear participants,

As the Founder & Secretary General of the conference, It is my utmost pleasure and honor to welcome you to our conference, VISIONMUN'25!

This conference is not merely a simulation, but a dynamic intellectual platform where ideas collide, solutions emerge, and global issues are addressed through the unique lens of youth.

Our aim is to provide you with an environment where you can refine your diplomatic skills, strengthen your critical thinking abilities, and express yourselves on an international level with confidence and clarity.

As the Founder, my foremost priority in shaping this platform was to establish an academic structure grounded in knowledge, guided by vision, and rooted in ethical values. We believe that the leaders of tomorrow are not only those who are well-informed, but also those who act with justice, responsibility, and empathy.

Do not forget that the value of a conference is measured not only by the topics discussed, but by the manner in which those discussions are conducted. Therefore, we expect each and every participant to uphold integrity, maintain respectful dialogue, and embrace a solution-oriented approach throughout the conference.

May this experience grant you not only academic enrichment, but also meaningful friendships, lasting memories, and newfound inspiration for your future path!

Thank you in advance for your dedication and contribution. I wish you a successful, thought-provoking, and truly memorable conference.

With my sincere regards,

Şule Aydın

## 2. Letter from Under Secretary Generals

Dear Delegates and Participants,

It is our highest privilege and enthusiasm to greet you on behalf of VisionMun and, more specifically, on behalf of the Cabinet of Dzokhar Dudayev. This crisis committee is set amidst the turbulent period of the First Chechen War, a conflict that shaped the modern history of the Caucasus and challenged the geopolitical status quo of the post-Soviet area.

As members of Dzokhar Dudayev's Cabinet, you will be at the helm of a newly independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria during one of the most severe military and political crises of the 1990s. The Russian Federation has refused to acknowledge Chechnya's independence, and with the onset of war, you will need to make the critical decisions that will determine the future of the republic. Will you focus on military resistance, diplomatic talks, or consolidation within? How will you handle international response, economic stability, and the morale of the Chechen nation? These are just a few of the challenges that confront you.

This committee will be fast-moving and highly dynamic, requiring not only strategic thinking but also the ability to react to ever-changing circumstances. Your decisions will have both short-term and long-term consequences, affecting the outcome of the war and the fate of your government. As the crisis unfolds, your leadership, negotiating skills, and strategic thinking will be put to the test. We encourage you to read extensively, think hard, and engage fully in the debates. The First Chechen War was a defining moment in regional and global politics, and through this simulation, you will gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of war, self-determination, and international intervention.

We are confident that you will bring passion, intellect, and diplomacy to this committee, and we eagerly anticipate the strategies and resolutions that you will develop. Win or face challenges deemed insurmountable, your work in this committee will be a testament to your skills as future leaders and decision-makers.

We look forward to witnessing the passion and expertise that you will contribute to this challenging yet rewarding experience. Should you have any questions or require any assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best regards, and see you in committee.

Under Secretary General's  
Ömer Olgun and Yahya Bedir Sancar



### 3. HISTORY OF CHECHNYA

The first signs of settlement within Chechnya are from cave paintings and artifacts near Lake Kezenoyam around 12500 BC. Their ancestors were the Nakh people. They have lived through the invasion of Cimmerians and the invasion of the Scythians. During the medieval period the people of the Chechen region had many castles, shrines, churches, burial vaults and towers. Their politics and trade consisted of interactions with Turkic, Mongol, Georgian and Armenians. The Chechens were pagans practicing the Vainakh religion with a significant number of orthodox Christians due to the Georgian missionaries, yet consistent Mongol invasion caused the population of orthodox Christians to degrade. Post modern era Chechnya was the end of most Mongol invasions towards the north caucasus. The Ottoman - Persian - Russian rivalry was the main cause of the Chechen people converting towards Islam. The Chechen people have long inhabited the mountainous territory of the North Caucasus. Initially a pagan people they gradually started to Islamize in the late medieval period. Being fiercely independent and possessing natural defences of the Greater Caucasus mountains did not save them from the southward expansion of The Russian Empire. The Russian incursions into the Caucasus in the late 18th century were met with defiant resistance from the Chechen people until the late 1860s when Russia finally seized control of the region.

#### 3.1 CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CHECHNYA

Prior to the adoption of Islam, the Chechens practiced a unique blend of religious traditions and beliefs. They partook in numerous rites, rituals, many of them pertaining to farming; these included rain rites. A celebration that occurred on the first day of plowing, as well as the Day of the Thunderer Sela and the Day of the Goddess Tusholi. In addition to sparse written records from the Middle Ages, Chechens traditionally remember history through the illesh, a collection of epic poems and stories.



The main language of the Chechen people is Chechen. Chechen belongs to the family of Nakh languages (Northeast Caucasian languages). Literary Chechen is based on the central lowland dialect. Other related languages include Ingush, which has speakers in the neighbouring Ingushetia, and Batsbi, which is the language of the people in the adjoining part of Georgia. At

various times in their history, Chechens used Georgian, Arabic and Latin alphabets; as of 2008, the official script is Russian Cyrillic.

### **3.2 SOVIET UNION MEMBER CHECHNYA**

After the toppling of Tsars, Chechnya's short-lived attempt at independence was thwarted by Bolshevik Russia in 1921, as the new rulers of Russia incorporated the Chechen homeland into the Soviet Union as the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Social Republic. The defining moment of Soviet rule was the deportation of the Chechen people to the Central



Asian region on March 7 1944, on the orders of Stalin, which led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Chechens.

On January 9, 1957, Khrushchev implemented a policy which allowed deportees and their families to return, and the republic was restored. Chechnya was one of the poorest regions of the Soviet Union and the Native Chechens were institutionally disadvantaged. Until 1989 only ethnic Russians had been appointed to the position of first secretaries of the communist party of the autonomous republic. So, the Chechen people had every right to be unhappy with Soviet rule. On November 27, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic adopted a declaration on the state sovereignty of the Checheno-Ingush Republic, and on May 24 1991, according to the amendments to Art. 71 of the Constitution of the RSFSR, the autonomous republic began to be called the Checheno-Ingush SSR.

### **3.3 POLITICAL STANCE OF CHECHNYA**

The modern day political stance of Chechnya is connected with the Russian Federation. Laws within the Chechen region are consistent with rules within Sunni Islam. The Republic of Chechnya is a constituent republic and federal subject federation. The current leader of Chechnya, Ramzan Akhmatovich is a colonel general in the Russian military. Due to him being involved with the Russian Federation, the Chechen people have trouble trusting him, as well as his rule similar to a dictator. The official end of conflict within Chechnya and the Russian Federation was in 2017.

## 4. FIRST CHECHEN WAR

With the fall of the Soviet Union, many nations were gaining independence. One of these nations that wanted freedom was Chechnya. In 1990 the all- national congress of chechen people elected Dzhokhar Dudayev, a soviet air force general. In 1991 he was elected president. During the fall of the Soviet Union, president Boris Yeltsin encouraged people to “Grab as much freedom as you can”, yet it was a different case for Chechnya. They did not want Chechnya to be independent. On 7 November 1991, Boris Yeltsin signed a decree proclaiming a state of emergency in Chechnya, sending 1000 Russian soldiers to the Chechen region of Grozny. As soon as the unit landed at the Grozny airport they were surrounded with armed supporters of Dzhokhar Dudayev.



Leading them to leave without fulfilling their mission. After this confrontation, the Chechen people started taking control of MIA and KGB buildings, military bases and key transportation infrastructure. Four days later, the state of emergency was abolished, and the Russian military as well as police started to leave Chechnya, which enabled Chechen authorities to take control of the Soviet military bases in the region, allowing them to create a functioning army. It was certainly a humiliating defeat for Boris Yeltsin and Russia. This created a fear within Russia, a fear that if one of the minority regions they controlled successfully interrupted their authority, it may cause a domino effect. Although it is possible to sign a treaty like Tatarstan in 1994,

Chechnya was insistent on sovereignty. Russians did not trust Dzokhar Dudayev. It increasingly seemed like a situation that would lead to violence. It is necessary to note that the socioeconomic situation within Chechnya was quite bad, due to it being left out on trades with the Soviet Union. the main source of income for Chechnya was its oil extraction, yet it meant nothing since there was a lack of skilled workers. Bad economy and instability caused Dzokhar Dudayev to be less powerful. 1992, Chechen opposition activists seized Grozny's television and radio stations and demanded Dzokhar Dudayev's resignation. Dzokhar Dudayev's national guard crushed this attempt at removing his power. All of these were the first steps towards the great Chechen war of independence.

## **4.1 IMPACTS OF A PAST SOVIET NATION STARTING A WAR**

According to the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, 3,826 troops were killed, 17,892 troops were wounded, and 1,906 troops are missing in action. According to the *NVO*, the authoritative Russian independent military weekly, at least 5,362 Russian soldiers died during the war, 52,000 Russian soldiers were wounded or became diseased and some 3,000 more Russian soldiers were still missing in 2005. However, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia estimated that the total number of Russian military deaths was 14,000, based on information which it collected from wounded troops and soldiers' relatives (only counting regular troops, i.e. not the *kontraktniki* (contract soldiers, not conscripts) and members of the special service forces). The list which contains the names of the dead soldiers, drawn up by the Human Rights Center "Memorial", contains 4,393 names. In 2009, the official number of Russian troops who fought in the two wars and were still missing in Chechnya and presumed dead was some 700, while about 400 remains of the missing servicemen were said to have been recovered up to that point. The Russian military was notorious for hiding casualties.

**“Let me tell you about one specific case. I knew for sure that on this day – it was the end of February or the beginning of March 1995 – forty servicemen of the Joint Group were killed. And they bring me information about fifteen. I ask: “Why don't you take into account the rest?” They hesitated: “Well, you see, 40 is a lot. We'd better spread those losses over a few days.” Of course, I was outraged by these manipulations.”**

*-Anatoly Kulikov*

The Chechen formations also suffered fairly high losses. According to the militants, they lost 3,000 fighters. According to official Russian data, Chechen militants killed 17,391 people.

According to the World Peace Foundation at Tufts University,

Estimates of the number of civilians killed range widely from 20,000 to 100,000, with the latter figure commonly referenced by Chechen sources. Most scholars and human rights organizations generally estimate the number of civilian casualties to be 40,000; this figure is attributed to the research and scholarship of Chechnya expert John Dunlop, who estimates that the total number of civilian casualties is at least 35,000. This range is also consistent with post-war publications by the Russian statistics office estimating 30,000 to 40,000 civilians killed. The Moscow-based human rights organization, Memorial, which actively documented human rights abuses throughout the war, estimates the number of civilian casualties to be slightly higher at 50,000.

Russian Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov claimed that fewer than 20,000 civilians were killed. Médecins Sans Frontières estimated a death toll of 50,000 people out of a population of 1,000,000. Sergey Kovalyov's team could offer their conservative, documented estimate of more than 50,000 civilian deaths. Alexander Lebed asserted that 80,000 to 100,000 had been killed and 240,000 had been injured. The number given by the ChRI authorities was about 100,000 killed.

According to claims made by Sergey Govorukhin which were published in the Russian newspaper *Gazeta*, approximately 35,000 ethnic Russian civilians were killed by Russian forces which operated in Chechnya, most of them were killed during the bombardment of Grozny.

According to various estimates, the number of Chechens who are dead or missing is between 50,000 and 100,000.

## **4.2 THE AIM OF HAVING A CHECHEN NATION**

The aspirations of the Chechen nation are based on a complex history of conflict and oppression. Chechen nationalists have long been striving for self-determination, believing in the right to establish an independent Chechen state. This desire has been built up over centuries of resistance against Russian rule, marked by periods of brutal repression and forced deportations. The two Chechen Wars of the 1990s and early 2000s poured fuel into these ambitions, leaving deep scars and a powerful sense of national identity. For the Russian government, Chechnya is part and parcel of the



Russian Federation, and points out advantages in terms of economic and political integration. This point is usually combined with fears of regional instability and the possible spread of separatism throughout the country. The international community generally supported the territorial integrity of Russia, but demanded more autonomy for Chechnya with respect for human rights. On balance, the situation remains complex: there are many debates and disputes on Chechen national identity in relation to Russian federalism.

The Chechen people have a strong national identity and rich cultural heritage. Their history has this long-standing fight for independence from as far as the 18th century to a period wherein they resisted Russia's expansion to the Caucasus region. Such a thing would happen for the most part in the 19th and 20th centuries to majorly culminate in their two Chechen Wars of the 1990s and the early 2000s, which was actually catastrophic conflict destruction of Chechnya and did untold human sufferings. Such hardships notwithstanding, the people of Chechnya have stood really remarkable in their quest for cultural preservation and identity.

The aspirations of the Chechen nation for self-determination are very complex and multifaceted. They combine a need for freedom and independence with strong national pride and cultural identity. Yet, they are tempered by realities of the present political situation. It is quite a challenging situation for the people of Chechnya to keep balancing their aspiration for self-determination with keeping the region peaceful and stable.

## 4.3 ALLIES OF CHECHNYA

### Foreign Mujahideen:

The Mujahideen in Chechnya were foreign Islamist Mujahideen volunteers that fought in Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus. It was created by Fathi al-Urduni in 1995 during the First Chechen War, where it fought against the Russian Federation in favor of Chechnya's independence as the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. During the Second Chechen War it played an important part in further fighting. During the First Chechen War





they were notorious and feared for their guerilla tactics, inflicting severe casualties on Russian forces. The mujahideen also made a significant financial contribution to the Chechen cause; with their access to the immense wealth of Salafist charities like al-Haramein, they soon became an invaluable source of funds for the Chechen resistance, which had little to none resources of its own. After the withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya most of the mujahideen decided to remain in the country, including Khattab who married a woman from Dagestan. In 1999, foreign fighters played an important role in the War of Dagestan. Shamil Basayev and Khattab had created the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade which was composed of Chechen fighters. The invasion was started in support of the Islamic Djamaat of Dagestan separatist rebels. After the battle, they retreated back into Chechnya. The incursion provided the new Russian government with a pretext for intervention and in December 1999 Russian ground forces invaded Chechnya again.

### **Ukrainian National Assembly – Ukrainian People's Self-Defence:**

The Ukrainian National Assembly – Ukrainian People's Self-Defence was a Ukrainian nationalist organisation. It was composed by a political wing (the Ukrainian National Assembly – UNA) and a paramilitary wing (Ukrainian People's Self-Defence – UNSO). According to Andreas Umland and Anton Shekhovtsov, the UNA-UNSO was created in 1991 as a "formation manned by UNA members who had served in the Soviet armed forces ... to confront the State Committee on the State of Emergency". The UNA-UNSO has been described by International-security expert Andrew McGregor as a "influential but fringe movement", which deeply influenced far-right politics in Ukraine due its visibility and militancy, although it still had small numbers. Although the Ukrainian National Assembly (Ukrainian: VHA, UNA) was the organisation's political wing, on 22 May 2014 it merged with Right Sector; the UNSO continues to operate independently. The UNSO has participated in multiple international conflicts by sending volunteers to support various belligerents. Including the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, Transnistria War, the War in Abkhazia, First Chechen War, the Yugoslav Wars and the Russo-Ukrainian War.

The UNA was created on 30 June 1990 in Lviv as the Ukrainian Interparty Assembly (UMA). On 3–4 November 1990, a congress of the Ukrainian National Association (UNA) was held in Kyiv. On 11 January 1991, UNA squads headed by Yuriy Tyma guarded the Seimas Palace during the January Events in Lithuania. On 30 June 1991, about 200 UNA members held a torchlight parade in Lviv commemorating the 1941 declaration of Ukrainian independence. During the first days of the 1991 Soviet coup d'état attempt, a UNA squad led



by Vietnam War veteran Valeriy Bobrovych left for Moscow; the squad later laid the foundations for the Argo battalion. On 19 August 1991, during the struggle against the State Committee on the State of Emergency, the UNS created squads of the Ukrainian People's Self-Defense (UNSO) in Kyiv. The squads were formed around a small group of ethnic-Ukrainian Soviet army veterans of the war in Afghanistan. In December 1990 Yuriy Shukhevych, the son of Roman Shukhevych, was elected as the first leader of the UNS.[3] Because of the 8 September 1991 Declaration of Independence of Ukraine, the sixth session of the UMA was renamed the Ukrainian National Assembly; it became known as the UNA-UNSO, due to the UNSO's close association with the UNA. Since its 1991 independence, Ukraine has had separatist movements aiming to reunite portions of Ukraine with Russia and other neighbouring countries. UNA-UNSO stopped People's Deputy Goncharov of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union from reestablishing the Donetsk–Krivoy Rog Soviet Republic and the Donetsk National Guard in the Donbas. In Kyiv, the Patriotic Forum (Otechestvennye forum) was abolished. In November 1991 the UNSO held a rally, and due to a brawl involving UNSO fighters the government made the first mass arrests of UNSO activists. In Odessa UNSO halted an initiative to create a Novorossiysk Republic, influencing separatist movements in Bukovina and Zakarpattia. On 7 June 1992, an UNSO group from Lviv broke up a Romanian congress in Chernivtsi which advocated the unification of northern Bukovina and Romania. In early 1993, the UNSO had a reported 4,000 members.

## **GREY WOLVES:**

Established by Colonel Alparslan Türkeş in the late 1960s, the Grey Wolves rose to prominence during the late 1970s political violence in Turkey when its members engaged in urban guerrilla warfare with left-wing militants and activists. Scholars hold it responsible for most of the violence and killings in this period, including the Maraş massacre in December 1978, which killed over 100 Alevis. They are also alleged to have been behind the Taksim Square massacre in May 1977, and to have played a role in the Kurdish–Turkish conflict from 1978 onwards. The attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in 1981 by Grey Wolves member Mehmet Ali Ağca was never formally linked to Grey Wolves leaders, and the organization's role remains unclear. The organization has long been a prominent suspect in investigations into the deep state in Turkey, and is suspected of having close dealings in the past with the Counter-Guerrilla, the Turkish branch of the NATO Operation Gladio, as well as the



Turkish mafia. Among the Grey Wolves' prime targets are non-Turkish ethnic minorities such as Kurds, Greeks, and Armenians, and leftist activists. A staunchly pan-Turkism organization, in the early 1990s the Grey Wolves extended their area of operation into the post-Soviet states with Turkic and Muslim populations. Up to thousands of its members fought in the First Nagorno-Karabakh War on the Azerbaijani side, and the First and Second Chechen–Russian Wars on the Chechen side. After an unsuccessful attempt to seize power in Azerbaijan in 1995, they were banned in that country. In 2005, Kazakhstan also banned the organization, classifying it as a terrorist group. The organization is also active in Northern Cyprus, and has affiliated branches in Western European nations with a significant Turkish diaspora such as Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. They are the largest right-wing extremist organization in Germany. The Grey Wolves were banned in France in November 2020 for hate speech and political violence, and calls for similar actions are made elsewhere. In May 2021, the European Parliament also called on member states of the European Union to designate it as a terrorist group. While it was characterized as the MHP's paramilitary or militant wing during the 1976-1980 political violence in Turkey, under Devlet Bahçeli, who assumed the leadership of the MHP and Grey Wolves after Türkeş's death in 1997, the organization claims to have reformed. According to a 2021 poll, the Grey Wolves are supported by 3.2% of the Turkish electorate. Members of the Grey Wolves fought on the Chechen separatist side during the First Chechen War (1994–96) and the Second Chechen War (1999–2000). CNN reported in 2000 that the Grey Wolves with the most pro-Chechen stance were those affiliated with the Islamist Great Union Party (BBP), which had split from MHP in 1993. The article suggested that they "run the mosques and commercial activities in some parts of Istanbul. It is in these mosques, in the suburbs of the city, that offerings are collected after daily prayers for the Chechen refugees. It is money that probably also goes to soldiers on the front lines. According to Svante Cornell it is "widely believed that the Grey Wolves organised arms shipments to Chechnya, probably with at least the partial knowledge of the Turkish authorities. Russian media has alleged that the Turkish government knew and possibly supported, or at least did not prevent, the activities of the Grey Wolves in Chechnya. Georgian Minister of State Security Valery Khaburdania stated in 2002 that the Grey Wolves were the "conduit of assistance" to the Chechen militants. Azerbaijani Grey Wolves also participated in the fight against Russia.[ In January 1995 Kommersant cited the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK) in stating that the Azerbaijani Grey Wolves sent 80 fighters to Chechnya. Another 270 fighters went to Chechnya in December of that year.

## 5. CHARACTERS

### FIELD COMMANDER

#### Ruslan Gelayev :



Ruslan Gelayev was born in 1964 in the village of Komsomolskoye (Saadi-Kotar) near Urus-Martan, 10 years after his parents had returned from the Stalinist deportation of Chechens into Central Asia. He was from Chechen Highland trip Glukhoy. Gelayev lived for several years outside Chechnya in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, held various jobs and, at one point, served in the Soviet Army. Gelayev fought against the Russian federal forces in the First Chechen War of 1994–1996, notably as a senior commander in the Battle of Grozny, for which he became one of the first to be awarded Chechnya's highest medal Kioman Syi (Honor of the Nation). In early 1995, he became the commander of the South-Western Front for the

separatist forces, tasked with defense of the Argun Gorge area. The Russians nicknamed him the "Black Angel" (Чёрный ангел), after his radio communications call sign, "Angel". Following the fall of Grozny and the Russian push into the highlands, Gelayev personally led the defense of the mountain village of Shatoy, where he was wounded several times. Mumadi Saidayev then took over the command of the front. During this battle, on 27 May 1995, Gelayev announced that if the aerial bombing of the village continued, a number of captive Russian military aviation officers would be killed every day and, according to the Russian human rights group Memorial, eight Russian POWs were executed as Gelayev carried out this threat. The later President of Ichkeria (and still later the self-proclaimed leader of the Caucasus Emirate) Dokka Umarov initially served under his command, together with Akhmed Zakayev, before they left it to form their own units. On 16 April 1996, Gelayev and Saudi Arabian pan-Islamist militant Ibn al-Khattab ambushed and destroyed a large convoy of Russian armored vehicles in the famous Shatoy ambush, killing scores - or possibly hundreds - of federal soldiers, almost all of them within the first 15 minutes of the attack, with minimal losses on their own side. Previously, on 6 March 1996, Gelayev had led a surprise raid on Grozny, seizing large parts of the city for two days and inflicting serious losses on Russian forces, before leaving with more than 100 civilian hostages. This was seen as a rehearsal before the recapture of the city in the Battle of Grozny (August 1996), in an operation led by Basayev in which Gelayev

also participated, and that ended the war. After the war, Gelayev became a deputy prime minister under the new Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov in April 1997. He went on a Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and took the name Hamzat. The following year, in January 1998, he was appointed the defence minister of Chechnya, a largely honorific post which he held until he was replaced by Magomed Khambiyev in July 1999. Gelayev became the first deputy defense minister in charge of security forces, including personal command of the Sharia Guard. Gelayev, however, maintained links with both Maskhadov and his rivals, in particular with Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev and Salman Raduyev.

## MILITARY COMMANDER

### Aslan Maskhadov:



On 21 September 1951, Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov was born in Karaganda Region of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) of the Soviet Union, in the small village of Shakai, during the mass deportation of the Chechen people ordered in 1944 by Joseph Stalin. His family was from the Alaroye trip (of the Al Khan neke branch). In 1957, his family returned to Chechnya, where they settled in Zebir-Yurt, Nadterechny District. Maskhadov joined the Soviet Army, trained in the neighbouring Georgian SSR and graduated from the Tbilisi Artillery School in 1972. He then graduated with honours from the Leningrad Kalinin Higher Artillery in 1981. He was posted to Hungary with a self-propelled artillery regiment until 1986 and then from 1986 in the Baltic Military

District. He served from 1990 as the chief of staff of Soviet missile and artillery forces in Vilnius, capital of the Lithuanian SSR. In January 1991, Maskhadov participated in the January Events, the seizure of the television tower by Soviet troops (which he regretted later, but didn't participate in the assault itself. During his service in the Soviet Army, he was presented with two Orders For Service to Homeland. Maskhadov retired from the Soviet Army in 1992 with the rank of a colonel and returned to his native land. He was at the head of ChRI civil defence from late 1992 to November 1993. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in the summer of 1993, Maskhadov took part in raids on the armed opposition against the government of Dzhokhar Dudayev in the Urus-Martan, Nadterechny, and Gudermes districts. An unsuccessful

anti-Dudayev mutiny in November 1993 resulted in the dismissal of Viskhan Vakhabov as chief of staff of the Chechen armed forces, Maskhadov was appointed as the acting chief of staff and, in March 1994, as the chief of staff.

In December 1994, when the First Chechen War broke out, he was the senior military figure on the Chechen side during the war and was widely seen as being instrumental to the Chechen victory over the Russian forces. As the First Deputy Chairman of the ChRI State Defence Council (ChRI President Dudayev was the chairman) and the chief of staff, Maskhadov organised defence of the Chechen capital during the Battle of Grozny. Maskhadov commanded the city from the Presidential Palace in Grozny, where on one occasion a Russian bunker buster bomb landed 20 meters from him but failed to explode. In February 1995, Dudayev promoted Aslan to divisional general. Beginning in June 1995, Maskhadov took part in peace talks in Grozny to resolve the crisis in Chechnya. In June 1996, at the negotiations in Nazran, Ingushetia, Maskhadov, on behalf of the ChRI administration, signed the Protocol of the Commission's Meeting on Ceasefire and Measures to Resolve the Armed Conflict in the CRI. In August 1996, after Grozny's seizure by Chechen units he repeatedly held talks with Alexander Lebed and on 31 August 1996, the signing of the Khasav-Yurt Accord took place, a ceasefire agreement, and peace treaty which marked the end of the First Chechen War.

On 17 October 1996, Maskhadov was appointed Prime Minister of Ichkeria, while he also remained chief of staff and defence minister. Running with Vakha Arsanov, who became his vice president, Mashkadov won a majority of 60% of the votes and was congratulated by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who pledged to work towards rebuilding relations with Chechnya. Maskhadov was inaugurated on 12 February 1997, and at the same time he assumed the office of prime minister and abolished the office of Defence Minister he had occupied since late 1996. Maskhadov remained commander-in-chief of the republican armed forces. On 12 May 1997, Maskhadov then attained the apex of his political career when he signed a peace treaty with Yeltsin at the Kremlin. By the end of 1996, when Maskhadov assumed his office, nearly half a million people (40% of Chechnya pre war population) had been internally displaced and lived in refugee camps or overcrowded villages. The economy was destroyed and the warlords had no intention to disband their militias. Under such circumstances, Maskhadov's political fortunes began to wane. His political standing within Chechnya became increasingly insecure as he lost control to Basayev and other warlords. Even his Vice-President Arsanov became his political enemy. Just like in the years before the First Chechen War under Dudayev, the years of Chechen independence were notorious for organized crime, including kidnapping, leading to several public executions of criminals. Maskhadov attempted with only limited



success to curb the growth of Wahhabism and other fundamentalist Muslim groups supported by Basayev, producing a split in the Chechen separatist movement between Islamic fundamentalism and secular Chechen nationalists. In February 1999, as a concession to radical Islamists, Maskhadov introduced Islamic Sharia law. The Sharia courts that were established sentenced people to death, flogging, executing people for crimes such as adultery. Maskhadov survived assassination attempts on his life three times, on 23 July 1998 and 21 March and 10 April in 1999, in which the attackers used anti-tank missiles and bombs. Russian secret services were officially blamed.

## FIELD COMMANDER

### Salman Raduyev:



Former Chechen warlord Salman Raduyev is pictured in the village of Pervomaysk 11 January 1996. Raduyev who in 1996 led a spectacular hospital hostage-taking that took more than 2, 000 people hostage at Kizlyar in Dagestan, died in December 2002 in a Russian prison hospital. Just before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Chechnya proclaimed independence and in 1992 separated from Ingushetia. The then Russian president Boris Yeltsin launched a military intervention in Chechnya in December 1994 which ended in 1996 with an accord that failed to address the region's final status. A new conflict erupted in October 1999 and has since left at least 4,500 Russian soldiers dead, according to official figures although other groups say the true

number is closer to 13,000. There are some 70,000 Russian soldiers based in the republic, while Moscow estimates the rebel forces at around 1,500 to 5,000.

# MILITARY STRATEGIST

## **Lecha Khultygov:**



Lecha Abdulkhalakovich Khultygov is a Chechen brigadier general and director of the national security service of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Lecha Khultygov was given the nickname "Mountain Falcon" by Dzhokhar Dudayev. Khultygov took part in 14 major combat operations and battles. Battles of "local significance" and local skirmishes with the enemy do not count. He is credited with having destroyed dozens of Russian armored vehicles and having downed 2 helicopters. A common tactic of Khultygov was exhausting the enemy's forces by hitting them in the rear and delivering sudden attacks on the gathering of military vehicles and equipment. This method of warfare caused the enemy to panic and suppressed their will to resist. He emerged victorious from any

seemingly hopeless situation. There were once counted 72 holes from shrapnel and bullets on his clothes. After getting seriously wounded during a battle, he walked on foot from Novogrozny to Ils Hana-Yurt bleeding, and without assistance.

# FIELD COMMANDER

## **Turpal-Ali Atgeriyev:**



Atgeriev was a former Soviet traffic police officer and a veteran of the Georgian-Abkhazian War. During the First Chechen War he coordinated all units during the battles of Grozny and served as a field commander of the Shelkovskaya District of Chechnya, including taking part in the 1996 Kizlyar-Pervomayskoye hostage crisis in Dagestan. Later, he became a Deputy Prime Minister in the government of the Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov. In July 1999, while trying to engage

in talks with the Russian side, Atgeriev was briefly arrested at Moscow's Vnukovo airport together with Chechen Deputy Prosecutor-General Adam Torkhashev and two officials from the Moscow office of the Chechen Interior Ministry. He has twice told Russian media that he alerted the then Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB) Director Vladimir Putin in the summer of 1999 to the imminent incursion into Dagestan. Atgeriev did not take active part in the Second Chechen War (at this time, he had no armed men under his command besides his personal bodyguards). Nevertheless, he was falsely implicated in the scandalous prisoner swap of Andrei Babitsky, a Russian journalist kidnapped by the Russian military. Atgeriev, whom Nezavisimaya Gazeta termed "the last remaining member of the Chechen leadership who is unequivocally loyal to President Aslan Maskhadov," was captured in October 2000 and sentenced to 15 years in prison. On 18 August 2002, while serving the sentence in Yekaterinburg prison, Atgeriev mysteriously died from "internal bleeding" that was attributed to leukemia. The Chechen Deputy Premier Akhmed Zakayev accused the Russian authorities of murdering Atgeriev. His relatives claimed he was tortured to death. The case was highlighted in the open letter by Memorial to Putin.

## MILITARY COMMANDER

### **Akhmed Zakayev:**



Initially a military commander, Zakayev later became a key political representative of the Chechen separatists. He served as a deputy prime minister under Maskhadov and later acted as the foreign minister of Ichkeria. After the Second Chechen War, he fled to the UK, where he was granted asylum. Russia has repeatedly sought his extradition, accusing him of terrorism, but he remains a prominent figure in the Chechen diaspora.

## COMMANDER

### **Ibn al-Khattab:**



Ibn al-Khattab was a Saudi-born jihadist commander who played a significant role in bringing foreign Islamist fighters into Chechnya. He was responsible for several devastating ambushes on Russian forces, including the 1996 Yarysh-Mardy ambush, which destroyed an entire Russian convoy. His radical Islamist influence helped shift the Chechen resistance from a nationalist struggle to an Islamist insurgency. Russian intelligence assassinated him in 2002 by poisoning a letter sent to him.

## CHIEF PROPAGANDIST

### **Movladi Udugov:**



Movladi Udugov was the chief propagandist for the Chechen separatist movement, responsible for media campaigns and negotiations. He played a key role in shaping international perception of the war, ensuring that Russia's war crimes and atrocities were widely reported. Over time, he embraced radical Islamism, leading to his disappearance from public view.

## COMMANDER

### **Lecha Dudayev:**



Lecha Dudayev was a nephew of Dzhokhar Dudayev and a prominent Chechen commander.



He was heavily involved in urban combat operations in Grozny and Arjun, leading a unit of elite fighters. He was killed in battle during the later stages of the war.

## FIELD COMMANDER



### **Ramzan Akhmadov:**

Ramzan Akhmadov was a Chechen field commander specializing in ambush and guerrilla tactics. He led several successful attacks on Russian supply lines during the war. He was later killed by Russian special forces in 2001.

## BRIGADE COMMANDER



### **Isa Munayev:**

Isa Munayev was a Chechen brigade commander known for his tactical expertise. He led the defense of Grozny and was responsible for organizing resistance movements. After the Second Chechen War, he fled to Europe but later joined Ukrainian forces in the Donbas War (2014–2015) against Russian-backed separatists. He was killed in action in 2015 while fighting against Russian forces.

## **Dokka Umarov:**



Dokka Umarov was born in 1964 in the Chechen village of Kharsenoi, Shatoysky District, Chechen-Ingush ASSR. He was from a prominent Chechen family and graduated in construction engineering in Grozny before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Before the wars, he was not politically active, but when the First Chechen War broke out in 1994, he became involved in the separatist movement. He soon gained a reputation as a courageous commander and was given command of a company of fighters. After the war ended in 1996, Umarov was appointed head of the Ichkerian Security Council, which had charge of internal security.

He was one of the dominant figures in the power struggles that emerged among Chechen leaders in the late 1990s. As the Second Chechen War broke out in 1999, he continued fighting Russian forces, commanding large units in southern Chechnya. He later was Vice President to Abdul-Halim Sadulayev and finally became the de facto leader of the insurgency after Sadulayev's murder in 2006. Umarov declared the Caucasus Emirate in 2007, shifting away from Chechen nationalism towards a broader Islamist insurgency. He also claimed responsibility for a number of terrorist attacks, including the 2010 Moscow Metro bombings and the 2011 Domodedovo Airport bombing. He was reported dead several times before Russian intelligence confirmed his death in 2013, most likely due to being poisoned or a special forces operation that led to his assassination.

## **Magomed Khambiev:**

Magomed Khambiev was born in 1969 in the Nozhay-Yurt District of Chechnya. He was of a military background and had undergone formal training in law enforcement before the collapse of the Soviet Union. When the First Chechen War started in 1994, he joined the separatist forces and went on to become one of the most reliable commanders in Aslan Maskhadov's army. He



took part in numerous battles against Russian forces and was appointed Defense Minister of Ichkeria after the war ended in 1996. Between the wars, Khambiev was engaged in reorganizing the Chechen armed forces. As the Second Chechen War began in 1999, he commanded fighters in several battles before escaping into the mountains. He was one of the oldest separatist movement leaders, but since 2004, he went into hiding when Russian soldiers doubled their efforts against him. Under increasing pressure, Khambiev defected to the Russians in 2004 after Russian soldiers bullied his family, as reported. He later defected to Ramzan Kadyrov's pro-Russian government in Chechenia, becoming a Chechen Parliamentarian and holding numerous political positions.

## ***Vice President of Ichkeria (Chechnya)***

### **Vakha Arsanov:**

Vakha Arsanov was born in 1950 in Chechnya and spent most of his childhood working as a truck driver. Unlike most other Chechen commanders, he did not have formal military training before the wars. At the beginning of the First Chechen War in 1994, he traveled to join the resistance and established himself as a leader. He led units in a number of battles and served as a key figure in guerrilla warfare against Russian forces. Following the end of the war in 1996, he became Vice President of Ichkeria under Aslan Maskhadov. Strongly anti-Russian, he was also a divisive figure within the government accused of corruption and mismanagement. He was seen as a vocal and unpredictable leader, and this led to clashes with other Chechen officials. When the Second Chechen War broke out in 1999, Arsanov went into hiding and continued to be active in his backing of the separatist cause. He was underground for some years but was finally found and killed by Russian troops in 2005 as part of a counterterrorism operation.



## **Yunadi Turchayev:**

Little is publicly available about Yunadi Turchayev's early life, although he was a Chechen field commander who was involved in the First and Second Chechen Wars. He would have likely joined the separatist movement in the early 1990s and fought against Russian troops. He is reported to have commanded soldiers in a number of battles but did not possess a high-level government or military position like some other commanders. Following the start of the Second Chechen War in 1999, he continued to fight on as a field commander. Some sources say that he had been involved in guerrilla warfare and sabotage activities against Russian troops. However, details of his later life, activities, and whereabouts remain meager.