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ALBENISTAN: ELECTION DAY

Situation

The long delayed Albenistan national elections have finally arrived. The campaigning has been short and, in many areas, violent. While Holy Motherland Albenistan was broken after its disastrous attempt to use a biological weapon in Khorfojan (the adventure from *the Khorforjan Gambit*), intelligence information indicates it is slowly rebuilding. Even without the HMA, the months leading up to the election have been marred by sectarian violence. Though CASFOR-A—the Central Asian Stabilization Forces - Albenistan—has grown in size, it does not have anywhere near the capacity to police the country. Election observers from around the world have arrived and have joined the various UN observation teams situated across the two stable provinces. No UN teams have been assigned to the Autonomous Province of Qurghon Khujand due to its extreme instability and critical security situation. CASFOR-A has supplied small contingents for security, but reports of an HMA plan to target Camp Parker near Khorforjan, have ensured the main CASFOR-A precense will remain there.

While this adventure is written for Albenistan, as presented in the adventures *Raid on Ashkashem*, *the Qalashar*

Device, and *the Khorforjan Gambit*, it can easily be ported into any unstable area, or region attempting to move from a dictatorial form of government to a more representative one. The situation itself, and the adventure scenarios would be harder to adapt to areas that already have strong democratic traditions or in which the rule of law is more robust.

Mission

UN Observation Team KH521 is assigned to the polling station in the small neighbourhood of Buston Varzob, in the Bohtar Rudaki District, a rougher section on the outskirts of Khorforjan. The area is almost a separate village rather than a suburb of a major metropolitan area. A CASFOR-A squad has been assigned to provide security. While the polling station is minor, the leader of the Albenistan Revival Party is expected to vote at that polling station at 1200. The polling station opens at 0800 and will close at 1600. At closing, a deputy from the Elections Commission will arrive with



authorization documents to retrieve the polling boxes.

The PCs

There are a variety of roles for the PCs in this adventure. Easiest would be to have the PCs play CASFOR-A soldiers. If the PCs are already involved in a military campaign, they could be attached to CASFOR-A as augmentation troops. Their unit may have been cycled into CASFOR-A. Even as part of a special operations force, they may be assigned due to the sensitive nature of the situation—though the Albenistan Revival Party is a very minor player, its leader is a vocal, non-violent opposition member. If the PCs have complete the Albensitan series of adventures, *Election Day* could be expanded to allow the PCs to use the contacts and knowledge they have amassed.

The PCs could also be government officials, non-governmental organization representatives, journalists, or even movie or rock stars. None of these individuals can legally carry weapons, and most would not under any circumstance. If your PCs are enarmored of their firearms, you may want to make this clear. Many governments with interests in Albenistan, including the participating countries in CASFOR-A, will have representatives on site to monitor the elections. Also, the UN will have staff doing the same. These individuals will all have official standing granted by the Elections Commission, meaning they have a right to interfere in the actions of local election officials if they feel an irregularity is taking place. With less official standing, but still deeply involved in the process would be representatives from non-governmental organizations. These individuals are also monitoring the actions of the local election officials, as well as the officials of the UN and foreign governments. Though they may or may not have been granted credentials by the Elections Commission, a complaint or report of election irregularities brought by an NGO rep will be taken seriously.

Outside of the election process yet involved for all intents and purposes are journalists and media stars. Journalists are usually restricted to the safer areas of Albensitan, save for the most adventurous or those who could pass for locals. Journalists will likely have many contacts and lots of information on the situation, but are not likely to volunteer this to the Elections Commission, or indeed any other group or organization save for their employer. As a PC, though, a journalist might have as much stake in seeing a fair election as reporting on it. Media stars are usually brought into such areas through NGOs, and their sole purpose is to shine the spotlight of media attention on the situation. It is hoped that the added scrutiny will deter election irregularities.

The PC group could easily be a mixture of these. A military PC is acting in a security, while the UN official is the “host” for the NGO rep who is bringing along the media darling for his star power.

Scenario

There is a specific scenario around which *Election Day* is planned. However, some alternate situations are presented in the timeline below. These are to give some variety to the adventure, and these need not be the only situations the PCs encounter. If this adventure is being used as part of an ongoing campaign, try to weave in a thread based on the campaign’s plot. For example, if the PCs have completed the Albenistan series of adventures, perhaps the remains of the HMA has put a bounty on their heads, and their precense at the polling station is actually causing more trouble than they are preventing. There might be an attack aimed at the PCs rather than the polling station.

The intended scenario for *Election Day* revolves around a political VIP. Yaqub Iskandarov, the leader of the Albenistan Revival Party, will be voting at the Buston Varzob polling station. The remanents of Holy Motherland Albenistan intend to assassinate him as part

of a planned series of attacks designed to deter voting and put the results in question. The PCs may note the assassins as they reconnoiter the polling station. This will offer them the chance to surmise the situation and prepare for it. Even without the hints of the impending assault, the PCs should be prepared for some kind of attack, and hopefully will be able to react when the attack comes.

There are a couple of themes woven into the alternate scenarios. Those themes are election irregularities and racial tension. There have not been many elections in Albenistan. Living memory would encapsulate only one other election before this one. That election was called into question, with fingers pointing to election irregularities. The PCs are going to learn just what kind of irregularities happen during elections in Albenistan. It is important that the PCs exert what authority they have to curb these and help insure a free and fair election.

Free and fair elections are not the only concern for the citizens of Albenistan. With the deteriorating economic conditions and the increasing amounts of violence along the border with Afghanistan, racial tensions have bubbled to the surface. Buried deep during the Communist period, the division between the Russians, the Tajiks, the Pashtos and the Uzbeks has grown since the civil war. Holy Motherland Albenistan was tightly linked to the anti-Soviet insurgency in Afghanistan, and it remains a Pashto organization in the minds of many. The Russians, though a minority, own the richest and most influential companies in the country. The Tajiks make up the majority, and they wield tremendous political power, but they see themselves as victimized, and blame both the Russians—for prejudice during the Soviet era—and the Pashtos—for the violence linked to the situation in Afghanistan. The Uzbeks, a minority among the minorities, are slowly disappearing as they realize there is no bright future in Albenistan, especially for them.

Throughout this adventure are shaded boxes. This text can be read directly to the players.

Briefing

The briefing will take place the night before the election. The PCs should be aware that they are going to be involved in monitoring a polling station and that there is the possibility of violence. The briefing is written as though the PCs are being directed by a superior authority, which fits if they are military or even bureaucratic, though not some other roles. The GM may need to alter the briefing to fit the circumstances.

You are assigned to UN Observation Team KH521. You will be monitoring the Buston Varzob polling station in the Bohtar Rudaki District. Be advised, this is not a secure location. While violence is not anticipated, it is certainly a possibility. You can expect a response time of fifteen minutes should the Quick Reaction Force be required. The polling station opens at 0800 and will close at 1600. All individuals who can provide a citizenship card will mark the ballot with indelible ink. That means someone who has voted will have an ink mark on a finger, and cannot vote a second time. Other than that, all citizens should have the opportunity to vote.

A VIP is going to be casting his ballot at 1200. This is Yaqub Iskandarov, the leader of the Albenistan Revival Party. Mr. Iskandarov is an important voice among the moderate opposition. He and his party are non-violent and therefore very important to the political process. Due to Mr. Iskandarov's position, we can expect the press. Here's the thing, recent electoral laws prohibit reporters from entering polling station or interviews within 20 meters of the polling station with voters who have cast their ballot. Keep the press in line.

At closing, 1600 and no earlier, a deputy from the Elections Commission will arrive with CASFOR-

A escort. The official will present authorization documents. The ballot boxes may be relinquished only to a deputy from the Elections Commission with the proper documents. Team KH521 is responsible for the security of the station while the station is in operation. You are to maintain the integrity of the voting process. You are not to allow even local law enforcement and government officials to interfere with the polling station. Only electoral officials with the proper documentation may have access to the ballots or in any way become involved in the election process. Team KH521 will not relinquish command or care without the express authorization of the commanding officer, CASFOR-A.

The mission will commence 0715 with ETA 0745. Questions?

Any information can be provided that the PCs can realistically expect to know. The briefing officer will not know everything, but reasonable questions will have answers be mission launch.

Timeline

0745 When the PCs arrive at the polling station, there are three local election officials. The station is a battered and all but ruined building that once housed the municipal government neighborhood office. There are two rooms, one in which the voting will take place. There is a padlocked door which leads to the room in which the blank ballots and the sealed ballot boxes are stored. The lead official has the only key, though the padlock could easily be broken off.

0900 The four HMA terrorists planning to assassinate the leader of the Albenistan Revival Party make their first recon of the target area. They are driving an old, beat-up, European sedan that doesn't exactly disappear into the surroundings. Still, it requires a successful Spot check against DC 20 to note it in the early morning traffic. If one or more of the PCs has stated that s/he is

watching the road, or keeping an eye on traffic, lower the DC to 15 for that character(s).

If a PC(s) succeeds in the Spot check, the GM may read the following:

Traffic is heavy at this time. You note many battered old vehicles, from the boxy, Soviet-era economy cars to Japanese pick-up trucks; from scooters zipping between lanes to long European sedans that appear only slightly less battered than the economy cars. One large sedan catches your eye, as the occupants are not focused on the road, nor are they conversing amongst themselves, instead they seem fixated on the polling station. Their faces are covered by scarves and their heads by head-dresses.

If the PCs ask for more information, the vehicle's licence is partially obscured, but the visible part can be noted. It is a brown, German-made vehicle.

1000 As the number of individuals waiting to vote increases, a group of soldiers in Albenistani army uniforms arrive. There are ten soldiers, all with AKMs. They begin to ask those waiting for identification. Those who refuse, are told they cannot vote. Some individuals who comply are also told they cannot vote. The soldiers are removing those people with 'suspicious' names—specifically Pashto and Muslim names. This is strictly forbidden by the electoral legislation.

Ten soldiers in the uniforms of the Albenistani regular army have arrived and are speaking with individuals who are in line to vote. Some individuals leave after speaking with the soldiers. You notice at least one individual has produced identification which a soldier is considering. The soldier hands back the identification and speaks harshly to the individual. After a short argument, that individual leaves.

If a PC can understand Tajik, the soldier has told the individual that he cannot vote. The man asks why. The soldier indicates that the man's papers are not in order.



The man argues that his identification is valid. The soldier insists that it is not, and that the man cannot vote. The man insists that he has every right to vote. The soldier tells the man that either he leaves, or he will be arrested. At this point, the man relents and leaves.

If the PCs do nothing, the soldiers will take over control of the crowd, and will continue to turn away ‘suspicious’ voters. It is the PCs duty to intervene and maintain the integrity of the polling station.

1035 The large, German sedan driven by the assassins makes another pass. It does not drive as slowly this time, but the assassins are carefully noting any changes

in position of the PCs. If the PCs noted the vehicle before, they will recognize it with a Spot check against DC 15. If they had not noticed it before, the Spot check is against DC 20.

If the check is successful, the GM may read the following.

You think you spot the same brown sedan you saw earlier in the day. Four men are riding in it, scarves covering faces and headdresses covering heads. They seem to note your interest, and the men look away, the vehicle speeding up and disappearing down a side road.

If the PCs did not previously see the vehicle, but note it now, the GM may read the description from 0900 and add, at the end:

One of the four men seems to note your interest. He turns away. After a heartbeat, the others also look away, the vehicle speeding up and disappearing down a side road.

1100 There is a commotion of shouting and shoving along the line to the polling station. Two groups of men are forming, though the women remaining in line are shouting support and excoriations. One knot of men are ethnic Tajiks while the other knot are ethnic Pashtos. Pashtos are a minority group in Albenistan, but there are a fair number along the border with Afghanistan. It looks like things are going to get ugly.

Both groups are speaking Tajik, though both groups include speakers of Russian. If the PCs intervene, the Tajik side will state its case first. The Tajik ‘spokesperson’ will say: “These people are Pashto and they aren’t even Albeni. They’re from Afghanistan. They’re probably terrorists or drug smugglers. They’re trying to ruin our election.”

The Pashto spokesperson will counter: “We are citizens of Albenistan. We have our documentation. We have a right to vote just like every other Albenistani. These men are thugs from one of the political parties, trying to make sure their opponents don’t get to vote.”

Everyone in both groups has the required documentation, and the documentation seems valid. If the PCs want to verify, they can make Forgery skill checks. There is no DC as there is no Forgery to detect.

There are no terrorists, no drug smugglers, no thuggery for any political party, just short tempers and ethnic tensions, but if the PCs don’t intervene, there’s going to be a fight. If the PCs let it go as far as a fight, within

10 minutes, a patrol of soldiers will appear. They will try yelling and pushing for a couple of minutes, then they will fire their weapons into the air. This will cause a general panic which will route those waiting. The polling station will remain pretty quiet for a couple of hours after that, meaning that when the VIP arrives, it will be to a deserted polling station, which won't impress anyone. Since the Albeni soldiers will be gone, the PCs will be blamed.

How the PCs wish to deal with it is thier matter. As long as they are somewhat diplomatic, but also maintain a show of determination, the groups will back off and voting will continue. If the PCs seems to favor one side or the other, this will escalate matters, and they will be called collaborators. This could escalate into violence again without some decisive—though diplomatic—action on the part of the PCs.

1115 The large, German sedan driven by the assassins makes another pass. The assassins are expecting the VIP to arrive at any time. They are tense, and one is holding his weapon relatively high, and certainly visible to the PCs. If the PCs have noted the vehicle before, a successful Spot check against DC 10 allows them to note it again. If they have not seen it, it requires a successful Spot check against DC 20 to note it. Once the vehicle has been spotted, the PCs require a successful Spot check against DC 15 to notice the weapon—the barrel of an AKM.

If the check to spot the vehicle is successful, the GM may read the following.

That same brown sedan you saw earlier in the day slowly drives past. They don't even seem to be trying to hide themselves. The four occupants—faces and heads covered—watch the building intently, but don't seem to notice your group.

If the PCs did not previously see the vehicle, but note it now, the GM may read the description from 0900.

If the check to spot the weapon is successful, the GM may read the following.

One of the men in the back seems to be holding something. Focusing, you believe its the barrel of an AKM pointed at the ceiling of the vehicle.

1130 As the scheduled arrival of the VIP approaches, the orderly line of citizens waiting to vote is joined by a disorderly mob of reporters and cameramen. At first, there are only a few, but within minutes, it seems like every reporter in Khorforjan is at this polling station. The thing is, Albenistani law prohibits reporters from entering polling station. It also prohibits interviews within 20 meters of the polling station with voters who have cast their ballot. The problem is that very few of the reporters either know this or care. At different times, cameramen will attempt to enter the polling station and just about every voter who emerges from the polling station is assaulted by shouted questions and microphones.

For the most part, with minimal effort, the PCs can contain the press. Simply explaining the rules will suffice for most of the press, though there will be a few choice comments about unreasonable policies—no matter how reasonable they might be. At least one reporter, though, will ignore the rules and attempt to enter the polling station. He will ignore orders and warnings and he will need to be physically removed from the polling station. He has a cameraman filming the whole time. He will complain about the PCs actions (“Since when do you side with a sociopath dictator over the need to insure a safe and free election?” “I’ll bet you love it here, where you can manhandle the press. What’s next? Are you going to put that gun in my face?”) the whole time his cameraman films the confrontation. Next, he’ll try to interview exiting voters, no matter how many times he is told to stop. The only way he will be stopped is if his equipment is taken or he is moved 20 meters from the polling station. He will threaten the PCs (“I’ll be

making a complaint to the UN and to your government. Freedom of the press is supposed to mean something to you people, no matter what the local tinpot tyrant says.”) and if the PCs attempt to take his equipment, he will become physically abusive, striking the nearest PC with whatever he has at hand, even if it is his own hand.

The reporter is Adam Gibbs, a freelancer now on assignment for the International Broadcast Service. Shooting him is not an option, nor is a caning. His cameraman is a local, Ahmad Teishiyev.

1145 A group of 10 HMA Assassins have infiltrated the line of voters. They wear a double layer of loose robes in the hopes of hiding their weapons. They carry only pistols. Weapons are not particularly surprising on the streets of Khorforjan, but they are illegal near polling stations. Still, even if someone in the crowd noticed the pistols, they wouldn't report anything. The PCs require a Spot check against DC 25 to note one of the assassins. If the PCs are scrutinizing the potential voters, expecting trouble, a successful Spot check against DC 20 will alert them.

You note a man of about medium-size, wearing the loose robes and thick beard common among the residents of the border area. There is a bulge along his hip. It might be nothing—perhaps an undershirt, perhaps even some kind of disfiguring injury from the civil war—but it might be something dangerous.

All the assassins are watching the PCs, so if they approach one of the assassins to search or detain him, the PCs will need a very intricate plan not to be noticed. In any case, the assassin singled out will go for his concealed weapon if he believes the PCs are about to accost him. The other assassins will not intervene, knowing that Iskandarov will soon arrive. If the assassin is captured alive, he will not offer any information, even under duress. The PCs, of course, still have lots of time to search the rest of the crowd. After capturing

one, if the PCs indicate they are searching the crowd, they only require a successful Spot check against DC 15 to note another assassin. Each successful Spot check uncovers another suspicious character. Some may be acting strangely (being very careful not to look at the PCs while everyone else in line is staring at them intently), another might have his hand on his weapon under his clothing. Try to vary the description of the suspicious behavior.

1150 Iskandarov's lead party arrives, including a Security Intelligence Group (SIG) protection detail. If the players have did not complete *the Khorforjan Gambit*, the GM can remind them that elements of SIG were involved in an anti-government conspiracy, aiding the extreme nationalist faction Holy Motherland Albenistan. The leader of the protection detail is Captain Dostiyev, and he expects to have full control of the scene. That was not a part of the PC's brief.

Three large, imported sedans—black with tinted windows—pull up in front of the polling station. They all have government plates. A total of twelve men disembark, half of them in the uniform of the paramilitary Security Intelligence Group, known as SIG. The other men wear dark suits and brandish MP5 sub-machine guns. The eyes of the suited men are hidden by fashionable sunglasses. One of the SIG officers—a captain—approaches your group.

The captain will speak in Tajik first. If he is not understood, he will say: "They come here to tell us what to do, but can't even speak our language." Then he will repeat his statement in Russian, and finally English.

The captain gestures to the polling booth. "We will take over security. You can resume control once Mr. Iskandarov leaves."

While the captain might seem overbearing, he is simply very conscious of the many reporters and the importance of his mission. He is reasonable and if approached with respect, will be willing to compromise. If, for

example, the PCs accepted that the captain is primarily responsible for Iskandarov's security, and indicate a willingness to cooperate in any fashion, but that their orders will not allow them to relegate control, the captain would be happy to work with the PCs. For the captain, recognition of his authority, especially in front of his men and the press, is his main desire. A show of professional respect from the PCs will soothe his ego and he will be much more pliable after this.

If the PCs make mention of SIG's involvement in the anti-government conspiracy and use this as a reason not to hand over control, the captain will become very angry. He will make statements—easily overheard by the press—denouncing CASFOR-A for their prejudice and racism. He will go so far as to contact Iskandarov and imply that the polling station is not secure and that the CASFOR-A forces are hindering his attempts to secure it. Iskandarov has no choice but to vote at the station (the press is there!), but he will lodge a complaint with CASFOR-A—or whatever authorities or organizations control the PCs—and there will be heck to pay at the end of the day.

1155 Iskandarov arrives on time. The press is prepared. If the PCs and Captain Dostiyev have a working relationship, the captain will ask the PCs if they wish to aid him in escorting Iskandarov to the polling station. Rejection of this offer—if done in a professional manner—will not anger the captain or bother him in any way. If the PCs have annoyed the captain, he will attempt to screen off Iskandarov from the PCs, as though he considered them a possible threat. In this situation, the protection detail will not allow the PCs to approach Iskandarov, going so far as aiming their weapons at the PCs. Iskandarov will call them off, but believing what the captain tells him, will berate the PCs and demand that they respect the sovereignty of Albenistan and restrain their prejudices against the Albenistan people and organizations.

While Iskandarov addresses the press, the assassins in their sedan will make a final pass. They are ready for their attack, and three of the assassins (all save the driver) have their AKMs ready. If the PCs have noted the vehicle before, a successful Spot check against DC 10 allows them to note it again. If they have not seen it, it requires a successful Spot check against DC 20 to note it. Once the vehicle has been spotted, the PCs require a successful Spot check against DC 10 to notice the weapons

Another large, black, imported sedan with government plates pulls up. The suits with HKs surround it while the SIG contingent screens the man who steps out of the back. This is Yaqub Iskandarov, the leader of the Albenistan Revival Party, one of the leading moderates in the country. He wears a dark suit that has seen better days. His shoes, though, are polished to almost mirror crispness. He waves to the crowd of citizens waiting to vote, and even shakes a few hands and shares a few words before moving on to the gathered press. He voices platitudes of reform, democratic change, and a better future for Albenistan.

If the check to spot the vehicle is successful, the GM may read the following.

The brown sedan that keeps driving past appears again, this time moving very slowly, perhaps coming to a stop. All of the occupants, even the driver—faces and heads covered—seem fixed on the crowd of reporters.

If the PCs did not previously see the vehicle, but note it now, the GM may read the description from 0900.

If the check to spot the weapon is successful, the GM may read the following.

You see that three of the occupants of the vehicle have weapons held just at the line of the bottom of the window. They may be trying to hide them, while keeping them ready to use.

The assassins (Def 16; HP 43; +7 ranged 2d8, AKM) will first fire from the car. If Iskandarov survives the first

volley, all four will disembark and attack Iskandarov's position while using the vehicle as cover. The ten further assassins (Def 16; HP 43; +7 ranged 2d6, Beretta) hidden among the voters will draw out their pistols and attack. The protection detail will be surprised, though the PCs may not be. In fact, if the PCs shout a warning, they can alert the protection detail and no one will get surprise. The PCs can instead simply attack—or warn the protection detail while attacking—and the assassins again won't get surprise.

The assassins will not retreat. The Crowd Assassins, those with pistols, will attempt to acquire better weapons from fallen opponents. They will try to get into melee combat, hoping their numbers will help them and also will overcome their weapon inferiority. If the protection details or the PCs attempt to withdraw with Iskandarov, the assassins will advance. They will not stop until they are all dead or incapacitated. If Iskandarov goes down, the assassins will not retreat without being certain Iskandarov is dead.

It will take 15 minutes for help to arrive, and that will be in the form of the Quick Reaction Forces from CASFOR-A. The Quick Reaction Force consists of 5 Warrior Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles (AIFV) with a total of 32 Royal Marines Commando troopers and 15 crew. Once they arrive, the fight is pretty much over.

With the assassins all dead and the QRF on scene, things will slowly return to normal. Reinforcements will arrive 20 minutes after the QRF did, and the PCs will be relieved (if military) or detained for questioning (if not). However, if the GM would like to continue the adventure, the questioning could be completed on scene. Perhaps CASFOR-A is stretched thin—the HMA have attacked other polling stations and there just isn't enough help to go around. There are lots of other scenarios that the PCs could encounter through the rest

of the day. Some suggestions for further encounters include:

- Albenistan soldiers stationed at polling station after the attack wish to close it down early. It is scheduled to remain open until 1600, but by 1330, with the excitement over, they figure it would be better just to close it. The PCs should understand that one does not simply close down a polling station early. In the end, the soldiers simply leave.
- A group of men dressed in loose robes and with thick beards arrive and ask many questions. One problem

is that they only speak Pashto. It turns out these are refugees from the nearby internally displaced persons camp, and they are interested in voting. They are not, however, Albenistanis, or at least they have no identification that can prove this. Perhaps they are from Afghanistan. Not really knowing too much about the whole process, they are interested in voting. If one needs to be a citizen to vote, they want to become citizens, obviously ignorant of difficulties and time frame involved. The crowd shows obvious animosity, and this leads to heated comments from both sides. It's up to the PCs to insure the situation gets no further than a few insults.



- A group of soldiers arrive, indicating they are there to collect the ballot boxes. These soldiers will not approach the PCs, but will attempt to intimidate the local election officials into handing over the boxes. If questioned, they do not have papers and are not authorized. They are not particularly forceful, and the local officials will refuse. The PCs should intervene, but if they don't, the soldiers will make threats and brandish their weapons, but will back down and leave.

- Later, a group of SIG troops arrive to gather boxes. Like the soldiers, they do not have papers and are not authorized. The PCs should intervene, but if they don't, the local officials will do their part and deny access to the troops. Once denied, the troops indicate that they are required to "inspect" the boxes. The troops are not even trying to hide the duffel bags they are carrying, bags packed with fake votes. Given the chance, they will try to stuff ballot boxes with these fake ballots.

- At 1600, the properly designated election officials will arrive with a small CASFOR-A escort. With the boxes delivered to the proper officials, the PCs think they can finally relax. It will take time to shut down the polling station, and late arrivals will become belligerent when they aren't allowed to vote. The PCs may be required to do some crowd control in order to protect the local election officials, who are only trying to do their job.

Appendix 1: NPCs

These are the stats for NPCs whom the characters might encounter. Remember, a GM does not need to rely on mechanics for all NPCs, and situations with locals or non-combat situations can be done with simple narrative rather than reference to stat blocks.

Captain Dostiyev, commander of the protection detail
Dedicated Ordinary 2/Fast Ordinary 2/Strong Ordinary 2: CR 5; 36-year old Male; Medium-size humanoid;

HD 2d6+2 plus 2d8+2 plus 2d8+2; HP 19; Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, touch 20, flatfooted 18; BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, rifle butt), or +5 melee (1d4+1, combat knife) or +6 ranged (2d8, AKS-74); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; AL SIG rogue faction; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4; Rep +1; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +6, Investigate +5, Knowledge (civics) +3, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Knowledge (tactics) +6, Knowledge (technology) +3, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +3, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Read/Write Language +2 (English, Russian, Tajik), Repair +3, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Speak Language +2 (English, Russian, Tajik), Spot +7

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Occ: Military (Hide, Knowledge [tactics])

Possessions: AKS-74 carbine, 4 AKS-74 magazines, BDUs, combat knife

Background: Dostiyev comes from near the border with Tajikistan. His parents were farmers and he was the third son. There was no money for his education. Knowing he was mostly a drain on his family, Dostiyev left soon after his 18th birthday. He worked as an itinerant laborer and a smuggler. He committed crimes and informed on criminals. By his 19th birthday he was in Isherbazi and the civil war raged. He applied to the Security and Intelligence Group stating that he had graduated from the University of Khorforjan, assuming the government would not be able to verify this. His ruse paid off.

Dostiyev entered SIG just as the civil war was winding down. With the economic crisis, he felt certain he would lose his job. While he questioned the wisdom of arresting individuals whose only real crimes were opposition to the government, fear of losing his job goaded him to set aside his qualms. He earned himself a promotion and some small job security.

By the time Dostiyev had become a senior lieutenant, he had worked in Isherbazi, along the border region with Afghanistan and even in the Autonomous Province of Qurghon Khujand. His experience and loyalty led to his present position in Khorforjan, and his eventual command of the protection detail.

Goal: Dostiyev really just wants to be useful and to make a difference. He isn't sure about democracy, and figures that the existing government has been hobbled by the opposition, his is not question why. He has great satisfaction in his present position protecting politicians as he is starting to see how Albenistan could actually improve.

Motivation: Having seen much of the country during the civil war and the economic crisis, Dostiyev is certain that the insurgents cares less about the republic than the Soviet Union did. He believes that the government must put the needs of the people first.

Tactics: Dostiyev is a canny fighter. He will use cover as much as possible. When attacking, he will double tap anyone within 4 range increments. If outnumbered, he will attempt a fighting withdrawal, always moving from one place of cover or concealment to another, turning and autofiring to keep his opponents off-balance. He will have two subordinates spirit Iskandarov away under cover fire from the rest of the detail.

SIG Troops, standard troops for the Security Intelligence Group

Strong Ordinary 2/Tough Ordinary 2/Fast Ordinary 2: CR 5; HD 2d8+2 plus 2d10+2 plus 2d8+2; HP 35; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, touch 20, flatfooted 18; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, nightstick), or +6 ranged (2d8, AK-74); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; AL SIG; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will ; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Drive +3, Hide +8, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Move Silently +8, Profession +5, Repair +5, Spot +4, Tumble +6

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Dodge, Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Occ: Military (Hide, Move Silently)

Possessions: AK-74 assault rifle, 6 AK-74 magazines, BDUs, nightstick

Background: The troops involved in the protection detail for Iskandarov have a higher level of training than most. That doesn't mean too much. They have been chosen based mostly on the amount of combat experience they have had, in the civil war and later.

Goal: Most of the SIG troops in Khorforjan are just doing a job, looking for a paycheck. Many like to wield a heavy hand, to abuse the authority their uniform offers them. They are looking to keep their job and profit however they can.

Motivation: Some like the power their uniform gives them, some feel a responsibility to the citizens to provide security and some are just happy to have a job.

Tactics: These troops have had combat experience, and a fair amount of training, though not enough to be considered elite. Competent would be a good adjective to describe them. They know enough to use double tap on most opponents. If facing a superior force, they will attempt to make a fighting withdrawal, spraying and praying with autofire.

Protection Detail Guards, bodyguards for Albenistan's political figures

Tough Ordinary 2/Fast Ordinary 2/Dedicated Ordinary 2: CR 5; HD 2d10+2 plus 2d8+2 plus 2d6+2; HP 33; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, touch 20, flatfooted 18; BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, extendable baton), or +5 ranged (2d6, MP5); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; AL HMA; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Skills: Drive +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Spot +13,

Treat Injury +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quick Reload, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Occ: Military (Drive, Knowledge [tactics])

Possessions: HK MP5 sub-machine gun, 6 MP5 magazines, extendable baton, suit,

Background: The protection detail guards are drawn from experienced members in law enforcement or the military. They are members of the State Security Police, the federal police force, and are assigned to the Political Protection Squad. While the Political Protection Squad is considered an elite portion of the State Security Police, the pay is not that much higher, and it is very dangerous. As a result, those who volunteer for the job usually have an ideological reason to do so. These are good men and have the drive necessary to risk their lives for their charges.

Goal: While there is a certain level of "daredevil" and "men in black" to the job, the Protection Detail Guards are believers in the state and are willing to put their lives on the line to protect it. Those involved in the details for opposition politicians—such as Iskandarov—believe in democracy and have a real hope that it can change Albenistan.

Motivation: Some in the detail like to look cool and carry guns, but for the most part the Protection Detail Guards believe that the political process had a chance to change Albenistan for the better. These people do not think that violence solves problems, except the problem of assassination, which carefully applied violence will most definitely solve.

Tactics: Protection Detail Guards are very careful about protecting their assigned individual or "package." They will use their bodies as shields and do anything necessary to protect their package. When attacking, they will mostly use autofire. They do this in hoping to keep targets off-balance and re-direct attacks away from their package.

HMA Assassins, elite fanatics and the deadliest warriors available to the HMA

The Sedan Assassins

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3: CR 5; HD 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; HP 43; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14; BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+2, knife), or +7 ranged (2d8, AKM); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; AL HMA; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +3; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +5, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Spot +4, Survival +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Reload, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Occ: Rural (Balance, Survival)

Possessions: AKM assault rifle, 8 AKM magazines, knife, street clothes.

The Crowd Assassins

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3: CR 5; HD 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; HP 43; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14; BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+2, knife), or +7 ranged (2d6, Beretta); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; AL HMA; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +3; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +5, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Spot +4, Survival +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Reload, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Occ: Rural (Balance, Survival)

Possessions: Beretta 92F 9mm pistol, 8 Beretta magazines, knife, street clothes.

Background: The HMA Assassins, have been drawn from among the Elite Fanatics. These come mostly from the area near the border with Afghanistan. These are men who joined with Abbas in the days of the

Albenistan Liberation Organization or the Albenistan Motherland Army. Many fought against the Soviets and then fought in the civil war. They have followed Abbas and he has rewarded them well. Within the pecking order of the fodder, the Elite Fanatics are at the top. They do not have a say in the direction of the HMA, nor would they want one. They believe in Abbas with the devotion of disciples.

Goal: The goals of the Elite Fanatics are the goals of the HMA. They have some personal goals, perhaps to marry, have children or perhaps to learn how to read, but these are secondary to pushing the HMA to victory.

Motivation: The Elite Fanatics were men ignored and disdained by the government that have ruled Albenistan in their lifetimes. The Soviets never liked the undocumented, pre-industrial itinerants on the borders with Afghanistan. The “democratically” elected government of Albenistan considers the border region a hotbed of opposition. As such, Holy Motherland Albenistan has been the only organization which has given the men of that region a sense of importance, of shaping the future of their nation. They have sealed the bargain with their allegiance.

Tactics: Elite Fanatics are aggressive fighters. They rarely withdraw, save when vastly outnumbered, as on a scale of three to one. They will push an attack forward, always seeking cover and using autofire. They will not hesitate to throw their lives away if they think doing so will tip the balance toward victory for their comrades.

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