

## RUSSIA

*The main threat to education came in the Caucasus, where schools were attacked and teachers and academics were murdered.*<sup>1330</sup>

### CONTEXT

Teachers, academics and religious scholars in Russia have been targeted for assassination by suspected armed Islamist militants seeking to impose their religious views.

Vladimir Putin has held the political reins since December 1999, during which time the country faced increasing attacks by Islamist insurgents in the northern Caucasus. The militants' objective was a regional emirate based on Sharia law.<sup>1331</sup>

The issue of whether students should be allowed to wear headscarves was contentious in parts of Russia.<sup>1332</sup> Official permission to wear a headscarf in school was granted by the government of Dagestan, a mainly Muslim republic, in September 2013, whereas in the nearby Stavropol Region, the ban had been upheld by the Supreme Court five months earlier.<sup>1333</sup>

Russia's net primary enrolment was 93 per cent,<sup>1334</sup> gross secondary enrolment was 89 per cent<sup>1335</sup> and gross tertiary enrolment was 76 per cent (2009).<sup>1336</sup> Adult literacy was 100 per cent (2010).<sup>1337</sup>

### ATTACKS ON SCHOOLS

From 2009 to 2012, at least three schools were attacked.<sup>1338</sup> As noted below (in Military use of schools), two schools were attacked as an apparent response to their designated use by government forces.<sup>1339</sup> In June 2009, militants reportedly fired

grenades at a school in Grozny, Chechnya. The reasons were not known.<sup>1340</sup>

Separately, at least four bomb and gun attacks in the vicinity of schools were identified in the North Caucasus.<sup>1341</sup> In one incident, alleged terrorists exploded several bombs near School No.1 in Kizlyar, Dagestan, in March 2010, killing 12 people and injuring around 30; however, no students from the school were reported dead or injured.<sup>1342</sup>

### ATTACKS ON SCHOOL STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL

During the period 2009-2012, five teachers were killed in Dagestan, several of them by suspected Islamist insurgents, the others by unidentified assailants, according to news reports.<sup>1343</sup> In one case, a physical education teacher, opposed to extreme Islamist beliefs, was cut down by sub-machine gunfire as he left a mosque after praying, in Tsbari village, Tsuntin region, in June 2012.<sup>1344</sup> In at least two cases, head teachers were reported to have been assassinated because they were against the wearing of headscarves or hijab at school.<sup>1345</sup> In one of these incidents, a head teacher was shot dead in July 2011 by two assassins in front of his family in the courtyard of his home in the village of Sovyetskoye near the Azeri border, Dagestan.<sup>1346</sup>

### MILITARY USE OF SCHOOLS

Two schools were set aside for use as military bases during 2009-2012: in June 2012, suspected armed militants burned down one school and then attacked another in Tsyntuk village, Dagestan, apparently because government forces had earmarked them for use as bases for counter-insurgency security operations.<sup>1347</sup>

## ATTACKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Five academics and scholars were shot dead or killed in explosions by armed Islamist militants.<sup>1348</sup> In December 2010, a leading Kabardino-Balkaria scholar, Aslan Tsipinov, was killed by armed militants. His work on Adyghe national culture was seen by Islamic extremists as spreading paganism.<sup>1349</sup> In March 2012, a medical school director, Magomedrasul Gugurchunov, was killed in Makhachkala after receiving death threats from extremists in an attempt to force him to pay their extortion demands.<sup>1350</sup> Fear of armed Islamic militants in the North Caucasus caused academics to curtail their research.<sup>1351</sup>

## ATTACKS ON EDUCATION IN 2013

In 2013, teachers continued to be targeted.<sup>1352</sup> On 4 March, it was reported that Magomed Biyarlanov, a teacher at an Islamic school in Karabudakhkentsky in Dagestan, died after being shot eight times in the chest.<sup>1353</sup> On 15 July, a teacher in the Tsumada district of Dagestan was killed by armed attackers wearing illegal military-style uniforms who arrived at his home, separated him from his family, then shot him several times at close range.<sup>1354</sup>

## ENDNOTES RUSSIA

<sup>1330</sup> This profile covers attacks on education in 2009-2012, with an additional section on attacks in 2013.

<sup>1331</sup> ICG, *The North Caucasus: The Challenges of Integration (II), Islam, the Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency - Europe Report N°221* (Brussels: ICG, 19 October 2012), 1.

<sup>1332</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>1333</sup> "N.Caucasus region permits headscarves in schools," RIA Novosti, 3 September 2013.

<sup>1334</sup> The World Bank, "School enrollment – primary (% net)," The World Bank Data (2009).

<sup>1335</sup> The World Bank, "School enrollment – secondary (% gross)," The World Bank Data (2009).

<sup>1336</sup> The World Bank, "School enrollment – tertiary (% gross)," The World Bank Data (2009).

<sup>1337</sup> The World Bank, "Literacy rate – Adult, total," The World Bank Data (2010).

<sup>1338</sup> Vefader Melikov, “Gunmen Attack Two Schools in Tsuntinsky District of Dagestan,” Riadagestan.com, 1 June 2012; “Two Schools Attacked in Dagestan,” Caucasian Knot, 1 June 2012; Valery Dzutsev, “Dagestan Sees a Spike in Violence as The Government Promises Political Reforms,” The Jamestown Foundation, 4 June 2012; and “Soldier Killed in Clash with Militants in South Russia,” RIA Novosti, 16 June 2009.

<sup>1339</sup> Vefader Melikov, “Gunmen Attack Two Schools in Tsuntinsky District of Dagestan,” Riadagestan.com, 1 June 2012; “Two Schools Attacked in Dagestan,” Caucasian Knot, 1 June 2012; and Valery Dzutsev, “Dagestan Sees a Spike in Violence as the Government Promises Political Reforms,” The Jamestown Foundation, 4 June 2012..

<sup>1340</sup> “Soldier Killed in Clash with Militants in South Russia,” RIA Novosti, 16 June 2009.

<sup>1341</sup> “Russia says defuses car large car bomb in volatile south,” Reuters, 30 September 2010; “Tower blocks, school evacuated over south Russia car bomb,” RIA Novosti, 30 September 2010; “Policeman killed, four wounded, suspected militant detained in Russia’s Caucasus,” BBC Monitoring International Reports, 15 February 2010; “Police, Civilians Killed as Two Blasts Hit Town in South Russia,” RT News, 31 March 2010; and “Rebels in Dagestan eliminated 4 invaders,” 16 August 2012.

<sup>1342</sup> “Police, Civilians Killed as Two Blasts Hit Town in South Russia,” RT News, 31 March 2010.

<sup>1343</sup> “Dagestan: Tsibari villagers demand to punish school arsonists and killers of teacher,” Caucasian Knot, 4 June 2012; “Teacher killed, school burnt in Dagestan,” Itar-tass, 1 June 2012; “Militants kill school teacher in Dagestan,” 1 June 2012; “Unidentified persons killed teacher and burned down school building in Dagestani village,” Georgia Times, 1 June 2012; ICG, The North Caucasus: The Challenges of Integration (II), Islam, the Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency - Europe Report N°221 (Brussels: ICG, 19 October 2012), 18; “Shootings kill nine in Russia’s north Caucasus,” Reuters, 24 September 2010; “Russian forces target militants in Dagestan,” Euronews, 25 September 2010; “Anti-hijab Teacher Killed in Russia’s Muslim South,” Thomson Reuters, 11 July 2011; Lyudmila Alexandrova, “Teachers, Muslim Leaders Killed in Dagestan for Sake of ‘Pure Islam’,” Itar-Tass News Agency, 12 July 2011; “Imam, Head Teacher Killed in Russia’s Dagestan,” BBC Monitoring International Reports, 9 July 2011; “Madrasah teacher shot dead in Dagestan,” Interfax, 10 March 2010; “Unidentified

teacher killed in Dagestan,” 26 July 2012; and “Madrasah teacher killed in Dagestan,” Vestnik Kavkaza, 27 July 2012.

<sup>1344</sup> “Dagestan: Tsibari Villagers Demand to Punish School Arsonists and Killers of Teacher,” Caucasian Knot, 4 June 2012; “Teacher Killed, School Burnt in Dagestan,” Itar-Tass News Agency, 1 June 2012; “Militants Kill School Teacher in Dagestan,” The Voice of Russia Radio, 1 June 2012; and “Unidentified Persons Killed Teacher and Burned Down School Building in Dagestani Village,” Georgia Times, 1 June 2012.

<sup>1345</sup> ICG, The North Caucasus: The Challenges of Integration (II), Islam, the Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency - Europe Report N°221 (Brussels: ICG, 19 October 2012), 17-18; and “Anti-hijab Teacher Killed in Russia’s Muslim South,” Thomson Reuters, 11 July 2011.

<sup>1346</sup> Lyudmila Alexandrova, “Teachers, Muslim Leaders Killed in Dagestan for Sake of ‘Pure Islam’,” Itar-Tass News Agency, 12 July 2011; and “Imam, Head Teacher Killed in Russia’s Dagestan,” BBC Monitoring International Reports, 9 July 2011.

<sup>1347</sup> Vefader Melikov, “Gunmen Attack Two Schools in Tsuntinsky District of Dagestan,” Riadagestan.com, 1 June 2012; “Two Schools Attacked in Dagestan,” Caucasian Knot, 1 June 2012; and Valery Dzutsev, “Dagestan Sees a Spike in Violence as The Government Promises Political Reforms,” The Jamestown Foundation, 4 June 2012.

<sup>1348</sup> ICG, The North Caucasus: The Challenges of Integration (II), Islam, the Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency - Europe Report N°221 (Brussels: ICG, 19 October 2012), 17-18; Lyudmila Alexandrova, “Teachers, Muslim Leaders Killed in Dagestan for Sake of ‘Pure Islam’,” Itar-Tass News Agency, 12 July 2011; “Teacher killed in Dagestan,” 25 September 2012; “US condemns suicide bomb that killed 7 in Dagestan,” RAPS, 29 August 2012; and Sapa-AFP, “Female suicide bomber kills six in Russia’s Dagestan,” The Times, 28 August 2012.

<sup>1349</sup> ICG, The North Caucasus: The Challenges of Integration (II), Islam, the Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency - Europe Report N°221 (Brussels: ICG, 19 October 2012), 18.

<sup>1350</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>1351</sup> Ibid., 18; and Lyudmila Alexandrova, “Teachers, Muslim Leaders Killed in Dagestan for Sake of ‘Pure Islam’,” Itar-Tass News Agency, 12 July 2011.

<sup>1352</sup> “Muslim Scholar Killed in Dagestan,” On Islam, 5 August 2013.

<sup>1353</sup> “Islamic school teacher killed in Dagestan,” Interfax, 4 March 2013.

<sup>1354</sup> “In Dagestan, primary school teacher shot dead,” Causasian Knot, 16 July 2013; and “Murder of a teacher in Dagestan may involve militants,” Ria Novosti, 16 July 2013.