The ever increasing influence of Russia and China in Central Asia is keeping the United States fairly agitated. Predictably enough, over the last couple of years Washington has noticeably stepped up its efforts to dominate the region through both economic and military means.

In this context, the emphasis that the US placed on developing its ties with Uzbekistan deserves a separate mention. The amount of efforts invested in deepening bilateral ties has been examined in much detail by the American analytical company Stratfor, that is often being referred to as the shadowy CIA. Unsurprisingly, all this hustle hasn't been undertaken all for nothing, as out of all the countries of the former Soviet block Uzbekistan is by far the strongest. That is precisely why Washington wants both Moscow and Beijing out of this republic as soon as possible. It is said that it's going to try to revive its economic ties with Tashkent in spite of the ever growing number of investments committed by Russia and China into the development of Uzbek economy. At the same time, Stratfor makes no big secret out of the fact that the United States will once again try ruin every agreement, union or association across the region that will not be benefiting its foreign policy.

This will be no mean feat, as the only way through which the US can hope to bring the One Road One Belt (OBOR) initiative to a screeching halt is through destabilizing Central Asia, and Beijing is fully aware of this fact. In addition, if Washington manages to gain a foothold in a number of local capitals, it will be able to exercise tighter control over the situation in China's Muslim-populated Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Then, should it succeed in its attempts to radicalize local population, Moscow will find itself particularly vulnerable, as Russia serves a home to a massive Muslim community a part of which travels regularly to Central Asia due to the absence of visa restrictions.

Washington's efforts to turn Uzbekistan into a pillar of Western influence are dictated by the fact that it's a densely
populated Muslim country that shares a common border with all of the countries of the region, which may help the US secure its long-term foreign policy goals in this part of the world.

Last February, yet another round of Uzbek-US consultations was held in Tashkent, with the Pentagon demanding a meeting of high-profile generals of both Central and South Asia. It has recently been made clear that the US would root for Uzbekistan playing the role of a mediator in the negotiations aimed at resolving the Afghan conflict.

It should be noted that the military cooperation between Uzbekistan and the United States reached its peak after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Back then, the United States would place a military base in this republic that would be used to facilitate Washington's operations in Afghanistan. However, things changed in the aftermath of the Andijan events, when Washington felt bold enough to criticize Tashkent for its handling of the situation. However, Uzbek authorities were not inclined to swallow their pride as they demanded the US armed forces stationed in the country to pack up and leave. However, in recent years, bilateral ties between the US and Uzbekistan started to improve gradually, as the parties found mutual interest in staging different military activities together, the fact that is underlined by the frequent visits of US military missions to the Uzbek capital.

Against this backdrop, Washington would try to urgently strengthen its embassy in this country by sending seasoned veterans to occupy various positions in Tashkent. Therefore, for those who have been following the situation in Uzbekistan closely the announcement that Daniel Rosenblum was appointed the new US ambassador to Tashkent came as no surprise.

This decision would seem to go in line with the trend of the day as US ambassadors change frequently and some of them, especially those that would have been sent to Central Asia in recent months. Those gentlemen enjoy the reputation of renowned troublemakers, especially William Moser and John Pommersheim. However, the appointment of Daniel Rosenblum doesn't fit in with this trend. After all, he's not your regular congressman or yet another presidential campaign sponsor, but a seasoned professional.

Daniel Rosenblum is a graduate of Yale University, a historian with a degree in Soviet era studies and international economics. In fact, he's a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia. Moreover, unlike his predecessor on this post, he's not just a professional, but a man who has been working in the fields for many years.

It's curious that ambassador Rosenblum is a diplomat with an extensive amount of experience in managing NGOs and public organizations. Additionally, his father spent decades on attempts to undermine the USSR through the framework of Jewish organizations that promoted migration from the Soviet Union. Rosenblum Jr. would carry on the torch by advancing the US foreign policy by financing non-governmental organizations across the CIS through USAID, with some of those states he targeted suffering destabilization and coup d'etat attempts.

Thus, the appointment of Daniel Rosenblum serves as an evidence that the Central Asian region has become the cornerstone of US foreign policy. But just like with its appointments in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, Washington expects its seasoned troublemakers to use the experience they've accumulated over the years to influence the development of political processes in Uzbekistan and Central Asia as a whole, in a desperate move to achieve the ultimate goal of driving the region away from Russia and China.

*Martin Berger is a freelance journalist and geopolitical analyst, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”*