

Kyrgyz Says Fate of U.S. Base Not About Money

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Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev **Sergei Porter**

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan — The president of Kyrgyzstan says keeping the U.S. air base in his country beyond June 2014 depends on how developments in Afghanistan affect regional stability as well as increases in rental payments.

Almazbek Atambayev told public broadcasters Wednesday that the fate of Manas Transit Center would be decided in the nation's best interests.

He said U.S. assumptions that the base would remain in place simply in exchange for higher rent were unfounded. The United States pays \$60 million annually for the base.

Atambayev's remarks appear to signal a slight shift from his earlier position that the base deal would effectively be terminated.

All U.S. troops moving in and out of nearby Afghanistan travel through Manas. Large numbers of troops are set to come home in 2014 as the war winds down.

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