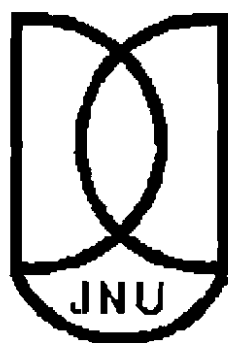


China's Soft Power Diplomacy in Afghanistan, 2001- 2013

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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INDIA

2014



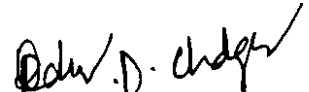
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DECLARATION


I declare that this dissertation entitled “China’s Soft Power Diplomacy in Afghanistan, 2001- 2013” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.


Rahul Dev

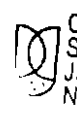
CERTIFICATE

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Dedicated to

My Mother

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Foremost, I wish to express my gratitude to the Almighty for enabling me to complete this work on time. I pray for His blessings and guidance in my future endeavors. I am also very thankful to my loving parents and family who have made me able enough to undertake this research in a prestigious institution like Jawaharlal Nehru University. The process of making this dissertation has been a challenging experience both personally and academically. I have cherished this opportunity of working under the able supervision of Dr. Ambrish Dhaka. He has always been a pillar of strength and indulged me precious time and perspective in understanding the intricacies of the subject. He has played a profound role of being a mentor to me. My love and respect for him has grown immensely over the period of our association.

The staff and research facilities at the JNU Main library were very helpful and they allowed me to access material relevant for my research and deserve special thanks. Moreover, a few people deserve a special mention, their roles being vital in the successful completion of this work. I am grateful to my friend Alka for her continuous encouragement and support. I am also indebted to my friends Iqbal, Rohit, Komal, Arshi, Shivani, Harmeet, Piyush, Akshat, Parvir, Anurag and Sagir for standing by me in crunch moments and acting as a pillar of support and strength.

Rahul Dev

Preface

Perhaps no country in the modern history has suffered as much as Afghanistan due to mutual Rivalry of external powers. During the colonial era, it served as a buffer zone between the British Empire and Czarist Russia. In the post World War II period, unfolding of the Cold War rivalry on this unfortunate land led to near collapse of economy and boosted the tendencies of ethnic fragmentation. The ethnic divisions coupled with faltering economy created a fertile ground for civil conflict which was fully exploited by the regional powers for their own strategic designs. As the civil War intensified, Afghanistan become a symbol of failing state in the Third World. From the debris of Civil War emerged Taliban who not only implemented the harshest interpretation of medieval type of Islam but also provided safe haven for international terrorism

While analysing the post conflict situation in Afghanistan post 9/11, the study has developed a theoretical framework for post- conflict reconstruction, peace building and role of China and other international efforts in its reconstruction. In post Cold War state failures and civil wars have become the most debated topics in the vocabulary of International relations. The spill over effects of Afghan conflict for more than three decades has convinced international community to rethink about Afghanistan. But the tragedy of 9/11 turned entire world into Afghanistan. US launched war on terror overthrow Taliban regime within a month and established democratic government. The presence of US in south Asia near borders of three regional powers India, Russia and China was not acceptable to these states. But the announcement of US in 2009 of its withdrawal in 2014 once again attracts the attention of regional players to engage in Afghanistan reconstruction and to reap benefits by engaging in economic investments. Both India and China tried their best to get hold over Afghan natural resources and in this regard employ their Soft power to gain access inside Afghanistan. China on the name of reconstructing Afghanistan signed many cooper and iron ore deals and portray its soft power in Afghanistan in the form of loans, Grants ,

scholarships and humanitarian assistance to safeguard its strategic and economic interests.

The study has analysed the impact of Civil war on Afghanistan, from the advent of Soviets to the American withdrawal in 2014. The study has critically examined the consequences of American withdrawal and Chinese massive infrastructure building and economic investments and its implications for India and other regional powers.

The very first chapter has provided background about Afghanistan its relations with US and Soviet Union during cold war, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, its withdrawal in haste and American war on terror and post 2014 emerging scenario in Afghanistan. Chapter 2 has dealt with the concept of soft power rise of Chinese soft power and its public diplomacy and humanitarian assistance as its means of soft power and role of Confucius institute in bolstering Chinese soft power. The subsequent chapter has elaborated the Chinese interests in Afghanistan its strategic objectives and economic objectives, the investments in Afghanistan and its dream as an South Asian hegemony. Chapter 4 has examined the instruments of Chinese soft power in Afghanistan its cultural, diplomatic and academic exchanges with Afghanistan. Chapter 5 has discussed the major findings of the study the future of China – Afghan relations its implications for other regional players and role of Taliban and sustainability of Afghan State.

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BRICS	Brazil Russia India China South Africa
CCP	Chinese communist party
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
ETIM	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administrated Tribal Ares
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IPT	Islamic Party of Turkestan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KP	Khyber Pakhtoon
NAM	Non Alignment Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NWFP	Northern Western Frontier Province
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PRC	People Republic of China

Wakhan Corridor

Badakhshan
Farakh Provincial Capital

Balkhshim

WAKHAN CORRIDOR

Khankud

Galat Panja
(MCCS Base)

WAKHAN RIVER
Sahad-e-Groghal
WAKHAN RANGE
Karakoram Range

Big Fan
Potential Protected Area

Big Fan

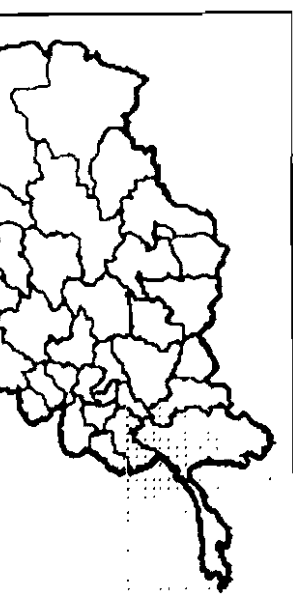
Little Fan
Potential Protected Area

Teq Germasru
Potential Protected Area

Wakhan Valley
Potential Protected Area



- International boundaries
- Provincial boundaries
- Location
- Water feature



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located in Southern Asia that borders China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. For millennia the area called Afghanistan has been the crossroads of invading empires, a network of trade routes and center or meeting place of different cultures. The modern Afghan state was created in 1747 by Ahmad Shah, a Pashtun who unified the Pashtun tribes and created the Durrani Empire. Since then Afghanistan was a pashtun dominated state .Pashtun are in majority in Afghanistan and accounts for 42% of its total population. Being a landlocked country Afghanistan since ancient times occupies a very strategic and political position in South West and Central Asia. Beginning in the 1800s Afghanistan become a battleground between two imperialist powers the British Empire and Czarist Russia and give rise to "Great Game" of the 19th century where both the colonial powers want to control Afghanistan. Afghanistan act as a buffer state between two superpowers and restrict their further expansion. The Wakhan corridor a narrow 76 km border between China and Afghanistan was added to Afghan territory under Anglo – Russian boundary commission of 1885.

Since 1839 Britain was involved in three wars with Afghanistan to check Russian expansion and try to install a puppet regime in Afghanistan to safeguard their interests but failed all the time. In 1907, Anglo – Russian convention was signed which brought an end to the period of the Great Game. The third Anglo- Afghan war resulted in the complete independence of Afghanistan under king Amanullah Khan, who tried to modernize Afghan society by promoting western education and women empowerment. Soviet Union in 1919 was the first country to recognize Afghanistan and in 1921 the two countries signed "treaty of friendship" which laid the foundation of full diplomatic and friendly relations between them. During the cold war era Afghanistan was a land of huge

significance for both US and USSR. Soviet Union during the Cold war era was a major aid provider in Afghanistan, which enabled it to maintain its foothold over Afghanistan. For Soviets Afghanistan was at a strategic location, where it can counter US-Pakistan nexus. The Soviets entered Afghanistan in 1979 with the aim of establishing a key position in Asia, one with trade possibilities and access to Gulf oil (Rubin 2002: 121). Soon after their entry into Afghanistan, the Soviets imposed military and social reforms. The Soviet invasion of 1979 was criticized by west and the US and they imposed many sanctions on Soviet Union including boycotts of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

US and Pakistan in an attempt to defeat the Soviets in Afghanistan backed Afghan Mujahideen who saw themselves as fighters in Jihad directed against infidel government backed by Moscow. US provided Mujahideen with arms, money and training which was funded by the CIA and distributed through the ISI, in Mujahideen struggle against the Soviets. Until the mid 1980s the Afghan invasion was costing \$5 billion to Soviets annually and its economy was continually going down. By the time in mid 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power Soviet realized that they could not win the war in Afghanistan and decided to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan by the end of 1990. Soviet finally withdrew their troops under the terms of Geneva Accord signed in 14 April 1988 leaving Afghanistan in the hands of weak Marxist government headed by Najibullah. Anarchy prevailed in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal and Najibullah government was deposed 15 April 1992 by the Mujahideen and plunged the country into bloody civil war with different ethnic groups trying to seize power in Kabul.

In the midst of anarchy and chaos, the Taliban movement emerged in Afghanistan in 1994 in Kandahar province. The Taliban was mostly drawn from Pashtun clan who fought against the Soviets and were trained in Pakistan and funded by the US. Members of the Taliban were originally religious students who were studied and trained in *madarassa* in Pakistan and their movement was led by the former Mujahideen commander, Mullah Omar. Taliban finally came to power in 1996 and ruled till 2001 when they were overthrown by US. The Taliban movement was initially welcomed by Afghanistan because it was able to restore some kind of law and order. But later, after coming to power Taliban were criticized due to their human rights violations, the

imposition of Sharia law (Islamic law), atrocities against women and persecution of religious minorities and were failing to gain international reorganization. During the initial years from 1994- 1996 US supported the Taliban with its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia because it considers the Taliban as pro US anti Iran and Russia. The bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania by Osama – Bin- Laden in 1998 was an eye opener for US where it turned its eye towards AL- Qaeda and Taliban for the first time that was providing refuge to Osama- Bin- Laden in Afghanistan (Rashid 2002).

However the events of 9/11 were much more disastrous for US than past where 3,000 people were killed in twin attacks on the World Trade Center and Washington DC and caused at least \$10 billion in property and infrastructure damage. The US held al- Qaeda responsible for this act of terror and ordered the Taliban to hand Osama- Bin – Laden to US. The Taliban denied the involvement of Laden in the attacks and demanded proof from US over his involvement. US launched its “Operation Enduring freedom” in 2001 to overthrow the Taliban regime and to avenge 9/11 attacks. The Taliban was finally overthrown in December 2001 and US installed a democratic government for the first time in Afghan history under Hamid Karzai. The US engagement in Afghanistan for the last 12 years have resulted in many casualties, billion of dollars wastage and international condemnation from home as well as abroad and finally decided to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. The announcement of US withdrawal in 2014 has brought many regional players in forefront to have their say in Afghan domestic politics. Both India and China are leaving no stone unturned to have their say in post 2014 Afghanistan. China is eyeing at lucrative investments in Afghanistan and is engaged in massive infrastructure building and reconstruction of Afghanistan to reap the benefits post 2014 US exit by generating its good will among common Afghans by employing its Soft power. How far China is able to get benefits from Afghanistan by investing in mines and railroad projects will depend on stability and security of Afghanistan post 2014. A stable Afghanistan endowed with massive untapped hydrocarbon reserves will be a huge asset to China for its regional security and economic prosperity.

1.1.1 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan 1979

The Soviet involvement in Afghanistan dates back to the 19th century, when it competes with British Empire to get hold of Afghanistan but was never successful. With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Afghanistan entered into a new phase of chaos, lawlessness, tyranny and bloodshed which is still continuing even today. Since the independence of Afghanistan in 1919 the Soviet Union was a major power broker and influential player in Afghan politics, and provided Afghanistan with arms, military training and economic assistance. In December 1979 in the midst of the Cold War, the Soviet 40th Army invaded Afghanistan in order to support up the communist government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) headed by Babruk Karmal a pro- Soviet communist and to overthrow the regime of President Hafizullah Amin. The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan was primarily motivated by geopolitical interests in the region and to establish a friendly regime in Kabul. On 25 December 1979 Soviet forces entered Afghanistan and took control of Kabul. The international community was quick to criticize the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the UN passed a resolution in 1980 and ask Soviet Union immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of Soviet troops (Misdaq 2006: 156).

United States President Jimmy Carter declared a Soviet invasion as a threat to world peace and termed Soviet attacks as a violation of the UN Charter and greatest threat to world peace since the Second World War. The communist takeover of Afghanistan in 1978 threatened the basic governing institution of Afghan life "*Pashtunwali*" which is cherished by Afghans as their heritage. Afghans resist to the Soviet invasion as it becomes a matter of honor for them and wage a holy war, Jihad against the Soviets to salvage their pride. The Afghan Mujahedeen or the holy warriors in initial years came from nearly all ethnic groups of the country. In an attempt to make Afghanistan as Soviet Vietnam US openly declared its support to the Mujahedeen and believed that they are the zealous and devoted anti-Soviet fighters and assured they all support in the form of money and arms. All financial support that came from US was channeled by ISI backed by Pakistan. The Saudi's and Arab World including Kuwait, Iraq, Libya and United Arab Emirates considered communism as a threat to Islam and extended their full cooperation

to Mujahedeen in their holy war in the name of Allah (Misdaq 2006:159). By the end of 1989 US and Saudi Arabia have already provided US \$1.3 billion to Mujahedeen groups fighting against Taliban. The Mujahedeen fought guerilla war with the Soviets and were well familiar with climatic and topographic conditions of Afghanistan inflicted huge losses on Soviet army. By the end of 1985 Soviet army has lost already 15,000 of its soldiers and billions of rubles in Afghanistan and its economy was in a bad shape.

The Afghan occupation by Soviets Union brought no success and finally Russian President Gorbachev opted for compromise and decided to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan under the terms of Geneva Accord 1988. As per Geneva Accord both Soviet Union and Afghanistan will not interfere and non- intervene in each other's matter and was finally signed by both the sides on 14 April 1988. The total withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Afghanistan was completed on 15 February 1989, in compliance with the terms of the Geneva Accord Soviet placed their pro- Marxist leader Najibullah at the helm of affairs in Afghanistan whose existence was doubtful without Soviet assistance (Dorronsoro 2005:121).

The withdrawal of the Soviet Union did not bring peace to Afghanistan and further degenerated Afghanistan into chaos. The civil war was erupted in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal between various factions to hold the reigns in Kabul. The unpopular government of Najibullah installed by the Soviets was finally come to an end in 1992, when Mujahedeen dragged Najibullah out of the UN compound in Kabul and execute him along with his brother publicly. After the fall of the communist government in Afghanistan the civil war entered into a new stage of struggle where the country was divided into various war zones under powerful warlords divided along ethnic lines also.

On April 24, 1992, the leaders in Peshawar agreed on and signed the Peshawar Accord establishing the post-communist Islamic State of Afghanistan. It was a power sharing agreement between Massoud and Gulbuddin Hikmatyar which Hikmatyar declined to sign. Peshawar Accord laid the foundation of interim government headed by Badruddin Rabanni to initiate electoral process and to write a new constitution for Afghanistan. Unfortunately, without external assistance these attempts were not successful and Afghan leaders fought among themselves to control over Kabul. This chaos and disarray give rise

to the Taliban. It spread throughout Afghanistan and formed a government in Kabul and by the end of 2001 controlled 90% of Afghan territory with Kandahar as their capital. Taliban regime got diplomatic reorganization from Pakistan Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. The Taliban leaders were influenced by Deobandi fundamentalism and were made up of Afghan Pashtun tribesmen. They were criticized for their strict interpretation of Islam and treatment of women and minorities. And were finally overthrown by US in December 2001 under "Operation Enduring Freedom".

1.1.2 Afghanistan under Taliban from 1996- 2001

As a result of Mujahedeen forces fighting against each other to control Kabul after Soviet withdrawal with American provided military weapons resulted in killing of Afghans and lawlessness in country. In reaction to the anarchy and warlordism prevalent in the country, and the lack of Pashtun representation in the Kabul emerged a movement named Taliban which provide a ray of hope to Afghans that soon Afghanistan will be back on track. Taliban in Arabic means "students *or seekers of knowledge*" and were educated in *madrassas* in Pakistan mushroomed in NWFP in Pakistan during Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and were mainly drawn from rural Pashtun backgrounds. Most of the Taliban students seeking knowledge in Pakistan were those who were born and brought up during Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and were orphaned during Soviet war with Afghanistan with no means of livelihood. These young students fled to areas adjoining Afghanistan and Pakistan where they were nurtured by ISI in *madrassas* and were taught distorted Islam and jihad to avenge Soviets. Pakistan found it an opportunity to use these jihadis in Kashmir to spread insurgency in its struggle with India to liberate Kashmir.

Taliban were mostly from Sunni sect of Islam composed of Pashtun students from Southern Helmand and Kandahar regions in Afghanistan and owe their allegiance to "*Pashtunwali*". In initial years of their advent they were welcomed and supported by Afghans who consider them as their savior in the situation of anarchy and were able to maintain some sort of law and order in country. Taliban were finally able to control Afghanistan in 1996 with the fall of Kabul to them and consolidated their position in most parts of Afghanistan. By the end of 1998, the Taliban occupied about 90% of the country, limiting the opposition largely to a small largely Tajik corner in the northeast

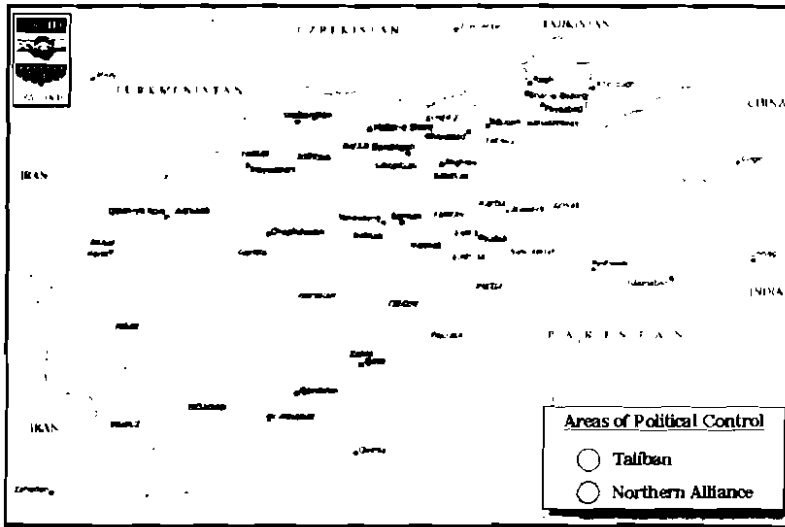
and the Panjshir valley. In the beginning from 1994- 1996 US supported Taliban due to its alliance with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and considers it as an anti Iranian and pro west and neglects their human right violations. After maintaining their foothold over Afghanistan Taliban imposed strictest interpretation of Islam based in part upon rural Pashtun tradition upon the entire country and commit grave human right violations particularly directed against women and girls. Some of the decrees issued by Taliban were following:

- Women were not allowed to step outside home without male companion and were prohibited wearing fashionable clothes they must cover themselves from head to toe with *hijab*.
- Female patients should go to female doctors. There should be separate room for male and female patients, male doctors were not allowed to enter female wards. Hospital staff should pray all the time in mosque.
- Men were not allowed to shave their beared and those barber who will shave beared will be severly punished and were prohibited from wearing western clothes.
- All music shops were closed and those who found selling music CD's will be punished and their shops will be closed.
- Kite flying was prohibited and playing with birds was deleared Un-Islamic
- Women who were wearing Iranian *hijab* were prohibited from travelling in public transport and if a driver picks them he will be severly punished.

In 2001, as part of a drive against relics of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic past, the Taliban destroyed two large statues of Buddha in Bamiyan province and announced the demolition all of pre Islamic statues in Afghanistan, and their act were condemned globally. From the mid-1990s the Taliban provided sanctuary to Osama bin Laden, a Saudi national who had fought with them against the Soviets, and provided a base for his and other terrorist organizations. US launched a manhunt against Bin laden who was

accused of planning bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam in 1998 in American Embassies. US make repeated attempts to Taliban to handover Osama Bin Laden but all in vain. 9/11 attacks on World Trade Centre and Washington DC led to significant and widespread changes in U.S. politics towards Taliban. US saw it as a handiwork of AL-Qaeda backed by Osama- Bin –laden and ordered Taliban leadership to hand him over to the US. On contrary Taliban denied involvement of Osama- Bin- Laden and demanded proof of his involvement. This infuriated president Bush who launched operation “Enduring Freedom” and Taliban was finally overthrown in November 2011 and Afghanistan was again plunged into an endless war (Rashid 2002: 230).

Afghanistan: Areas of Political Control



Source:www. Afghanistan chamber.com

1.1.3 US war on terror and Nation Building in Afghanistan post 9/11

It was expected that end of Taliban period in Afghanistan post 2001 will ushered a new era of peace, development and stability in Afghanistan. With the establishment of democratic government for the first time in Afghanistan history, the era of chaos, misgovernment and anarchy came to an end. But the events of 9/11 once again make

Afghanistan as battle ground between US and Taliban. Post 9/11 president Bush vowed to eliminate Taliban from Afghanistan soil and dismantle Al-Qaeda and their safe havens in Afghanistan. Although UNSC did not pass resolution regarding US- led military operations in Afghanistan but US congress passed legislation titled Authorisation for the use of military force against terrorists, which was signed on 18 September 2001 by President Bush. It authorized the use of U.S Armed Forces against those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. After Taliban refused to extradite Bin- Laden to US, The United States refused to negotiate and launched Operation Enduring Freedom on 7 October 2001 with the United Kingdom and was later joined by the forces of Northern Alliance. The US attacks on Taliban began at 8:30 pm on Sunday evening when the first of 50 cruise missiles was fired from British submarines on Al- Qaeda training camps and military installations in Kandhar (Rothstein 2006: 19).

In December 2001, the United Nations Security Council established the (ISAF), to oversee military operation International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and to train Afghan National police and Army. The ferocious attacks by US forces lead to the downfall of Taliban on 13 November 2001 with the capture of Kabul city by Northern Alliance. Most of the Taliban leadership was killed in US drone attacks and those including Mullah Omar fled to FATA areas in Pakistan and ordered Taliban insurgents to hide in mountainous regions of Afghanistan and continue their operations against US in guerilla warfare style. The Taliban insurgents were provided with safe haven, weapons and places to hide in Pakistan by Pakistani Army and ISI to continue their war with NATO.

The Taliban were never defeated in the meantime they retreated and regrouped in Pakistan and in 2006 were again controlling the large areas of Swat valley and Southern Western Afghanistan thereby inflicting heavy casualties on American forces by adopting guerrilla attacks, ambushes and suicide bombings. US launched drone attacks in 2006 to eliminate Taliban from mountainous regions of FATA resulted in insurgency in Waziristan and US were being hated and criticized as civilians were being killed in its air strikes directed against Taliban. On 2 May 2011, United Navy Seals killed Osama Bin Laden in Abbotabad in Pakistan and after that US president announced troops withdrawal

from Pakistan as they consider that with the killing of Bin- laden they have dismantled the global network of terror and have avenged 9/11 attacks. And announced complete troops withdrawal by the end of 2014 in phases. The US announcement of troops withdrawal invite other regional players like China, India and Russia to play their part in Afghan reconstruction and to benefit lucrative investments in Afghanistan.

After the successful execution of “Operation Enduring freedom” and overthrow of Taliban regime international community intensify its effort to democratize and rebuild Afghanistan. In post Taliban era all ethnic groups geared up to get there share in new government, most prominent among them were Pashtuns. The other group northern alliance was composed of Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. Pashtun wants a larger share as they consider themselves as the founder and traditional rulers of the country, and were most influential and dominant group in country.

The democratization foundation stone for Afghanistan was laid by Boon Agreement in December 2001. On 14 November 2001, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1378 which mandated a “central” role to the UN in “establishing a transitional administration and inviting member state to send peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan to secure stability and reconstruction. The Boon Agreement stands out a unique political event in the history of Afghanistan and raises hopes of Afghanistan development endorsed by external players. It set basic rules and time frame for the future political development and power sharing in the country.

As per the provisions of Boon agreement and agreed by all parties an interim government will be established headed by Hamid Karzai, an emergency *Loya jirga* (Grand Assembly) within six months to decide future transitional government. It also mandated creation of a central bank, a supreme court, and an independent human rights commission. Afghans articulated mixed reaction over the UN sponsored Bonn Accord. Some analysts argued that it would achieve in bringing peace and prosperity in Afghanistan. Others took it as an “imposed Accord” which held no connotation in restoring a lasting peace in Afghanistan (Mastoor 2010 :14).

1.1.4 China's renewed interests in Afghanistan post 9/11

With the imminent drawdown of US forces from Afghanistan and shift to full Afghan sovereignty by 2014 means that US influence will be diminish in Afghanistan post 2014 and will create a power vacuum. The regional players bordering Afghanistan consider Afghanistan as a vital aspect for their security guarantee post 2014 and want stability in Afghanistan at any cost. The most important among them is China which has direct geopolitical access to Afghanistan and its energy mineral resources. China remain silent spectator in Afghanistan since Soviet invasion and post 9/11, but it consider post 2014 as an opportune time to directly engage in Afghanistan by investing in energy sector and safeguard its interests in Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan. China would like to use its economic potential for leveraging Afghan situation that would increase its influence both in the East and South Asian region (Dhaka 2014).

China has diverse interests in Afghanistan ranging from economic to security issues and is busy in employing its soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan by engaging in providing economic aid and massive reconstruction activities. It is eyeing to explore massive untapped hydrocarbon reserves in Afghanistan amounting \$3 billion to fulfill their energy security in future. Through huge aid diplomacy China want to buy peace for it safeguarding its wide ranging vital interests in Afghanistan so crucial for China's great power dream it has set for itself since 1949. China has three primary goals with respect to Afghanistan. To ensure the security of Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan, to secure the development of greater economic links, including investment in natural resources and to combat the influence of United States and India. China's interests in Afghanistan extend beyond security considerations, it has major economic interests in Afghanistan as well and Chinese firms are constantly getting rights to extract Afghanistan's vast mineral wealth which is valued at about \$1 trillion by the US geological survey and \$ 3 trillion by Afghanistan minister of mines Clarke 2013)

China consider Afghanistan as a pivotal land bridge linking central and south Asia thus pursued a comprehensive strategy in Afghanistan based on its goal of achieving security for Xinjiang, economic development and cooperation on non- traditional security issues via Shanghai cooperation organization (SCO). China look 2014 as an opportune year to

get involved in Afghanistan as US is withdrawing elections are due in Afghanistan and will try to support a government which builds a democratic Afghanistan. China know that unstable Afghanistan post 2014 will be a great security threat to it and will thwart all its ambitions and reconstruction activities and billion of humanitarian aid will go in vain, finally resulted in the dominance of radical groups or criminal warlords.

China has adopted a grand strategy to gain in Afghanistan after US exit which rests on actively participating in Afghanistan economic development, cooperating with Afghan government on nontraditional security issues, use SCO to address Sino- Afghan concerns so that it should not come under the influence of other regional players like India or US. Increase education and cultural exchanges between China and Afghanistan by promoting infrastructure and economic development by generating good will among Afghans. China knows that 2014 is going to be defining year for it and coming years will determine the outcome of Chinese investments in Afghanistan. Post 2014 will be a test for China whether its infrastructure development and its economic assistance to Afghanistan will bring a desired result for China or not. In some ways Beijing tools in Afghanistan are limited it does not want to enter in political spectrum of Afghanistan and want no confrontation with Taliban and has no intensions of taking security role. Beijing is aware of the fact that any military of political altercation with Taliban will make it a target of international terrorist network which is quite possible due to its oppressive policies against Uighur Muslims.

1.1.5 Repercussions of US exit from Afghanistan post 2014

As time of US withdrawal is approaching the anxieties about the future of Afghanistan have increased. The questions looms large that what happen to Afghanistan after US withdrawal, will it be able to sustain and what will be the role of regional powers? Mapping the future of Afghanistan is indeed a tough task Will 2014 be a repeat of Soviet withdrawal of 1989, which left a power vacuum to be occupied by Taliban or will it result in the emergence of a stable nation-state? What makes situation more worse is the power rivalry among Afghan neighbors to gain access to Afghanistan for strategic leverage. Pakistan is looking for strategic depth against India, Iran wants departure of US forces from its soil and to restore their Shia influence in the area, China is eyeing

economic investments without definite commitment of investing in security and stability. India wants stable, democratic and friendly Afghanistan to counter Pakistan and to gain from its untapped resources (Behuria & Chandra2012).

The conflicting interests of all regional powers might again bring chaos, turmoil and instability in Afghanistan if they were not addressed properly. In this backdrop all regional powers should work on a coherent strategy to deal with Afghanistan post 2014. The deceives factors of post 2014 situation will be readiness of Afghanistan security forces to deal with Taliban, international aid commitment, politics of regional actors especially Pakistan, and Afghanistan's fragile political system. If the political system failed in Afghanistan it will result in emergence of Taliban, dominance of criminal warlords, drug trafficking and transnational crimes. An unstable Afghanistan will again invite external players in the region and will undermine India's objectives and leverage. Stability in Afghanistan will benefit India's foreign policy its economic objectives and security in region.

If Taliban comes to power post 2014 it will seriously threaten Indian and Chinese objectives in Afghanistan due to its closeness with Pakistan. China somehow will be able to preserve its investments due to alliance with Pakistan, but India will face the brunt of their policies. The Pakistan will use Islamic fundamentalists to balance both India and Iran there by making region more destabilized and breeding ground for all terrorist activities in the world. This will again draw the attention of other superpowers and will make region again a staging ground for "great games". After their ouster from Afghanistan in 2001, Taliban has made Pakistan as their new home to carry out their activities the Pakistani Taliban and TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) will unconditionally support Taliban to assume power post 2014. This situation is likely to constitute a key determinant of Pakistan – Afghanistan relations in future (Grare 2014).

The prospects for a brighter future beyond 2014 are still bleak are therefore limited despite the billions of dollars invested in the reconstruction of the country. The resurgence of Taliban in Pakistan and Pakistan continuous support to Taliban makes thing more difficult. The Taliban order of restraining Afghans to vote in 2014 elections and increase in Taliban attacks over US soldiers and its attack on Indian embassy in May suggest that

Taliban is still in strong position in Afghanistan and can attack anywhere. After the withdrawal of international troops regional players like India and China should contribute in security sector in Afghanistan and should train Afghan National Security forces to deal with any threat emanating from inside or outside. The International community should provide aid to Afghanistan as promised and continue their humanitarian assistance. Security transition by post 2014 has created a sort of decision anxiety for the people in Afghanistan. International investors and aid agencies have put their projects on hold and will analyze the situation post 2014 for further investment in Afghanistan instead major investors are planning to shift their business if situation will become grim again in Afghanistan (CRS Status Report, November 2011). Not only the Taliban post 2014 Afghanistan has to deal with other pressing challenges including unemployment, lack of appropriate fundamental industrial infrastructures, possibilities of farmers re-emergence towards poppy cultivations and high level of illiteracy rate are the considerable challenges that are warning the nation and government. The international community including US should try to address all these issues to make Afghanistan a prosperous stable and developed state.

1.2 Definition, Rationale and Scope of study

The objective of the study involves the study of Chinese recent engagement in Afghanistan, its ambitions and objectives in Afghanistan. China was almost silent for a decade since the arrival of US lead NATO forces in Afghanistan. But announcement by US President in 2009 that all US and NATO forces will be out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014 prompted China to play its active part in Afghanistan, as it looks itself as a major power in Asia and responsibility lies with China to reconstruct and keep Afghanistan stable after US withdrawal. Afghanistan shares border with China via Wakhan corridor an unstable Afghanistan is threat to Chinese security as it too have recently entered into many economic deals with Afghanistan. Another reason for engagement of China in Afghanistan is that it has severed relations with both India and US and it don't want US troops stationed near it in Afghanistan and India should not take the benefit of security vacuum created after 2014 by involving more itself in reconstruction effort and gained

economic benefits from Afghanistan. Chinese policy on Afghanistan is double standard where it is using its both hard and soft power capabilities very effectively. Chinese leaders have observed that the rise of prior great powers relies not simply on coercive power, but also on attractive values and cultural influence. In light of China economic and military power having been perceived as a world-wide threat the Chinese leaders particularly after Hu Jintao assumed core leadership, having actively prompted soft power to mitigate any fears of China threat as well as garner international support. The approaches of Chinese soft power strategy have centred on promoting Chinese culture, providing economic aids and advocating a peaceful development. These approaches have contributed to enhance China's positive image in Afghanistan and central Asia. It follows that the looming NATO draw down offers China a unique opportunity to develop a constructive Afghanistan policy through economic instruments such as loans, grants, large scale infrastructure investment and mineral resource exploration, development and production. Policy makers in Beijing are aware that a secure and stable Afghanistan can pave the way for stable and constructive strategic cooperation. China will not want to miss out the opportunity that lies ahead. Partnership with Afghan government will enable China to be more deeply engaged in the region, secure its western provinces from threat coming out from Taliban backed Xinjiang further more with its untapped natural resources and underdevelopment infrastructure, Afghanistan offers numerous opportunities for China's public and private enterprises.

1.2.1 Research Questions

1. Does China wish to satisfy its ever increasing energy requirements from Afghanistan as it want to exploit its vast hydrocarbon reserves?
2. Is China really serious about reconstruction of Afghanistan, or it just wants India and US away from Afghanistan as they are hostile to its national security?
3. To what extent China is worried that after withdrawal of US troops there might be revival in East Turkestan Movement?
4. What is the impact of Chinese reconstruction and economic activities in Afghanistan?

5. To what extent China is able to use its soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan and what is Afghanistan response to its policy?

1.2.2 Hypotheses

1. China is using its soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan to have more say in Afghan domestic politics and act as a dominant regional hegemony after 2014.

2. There is possibility of civil war in Afghanistan after 2014 that will thwart all Chinese ambitions and economic reconstruction plans in Afghanistan.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research problem is aimed at studying the discourse and their implications in analytical perspectives. Historical perspectives and study of a time period visualizing the developments, its consequences and stock of achievements is the central research focus of my study. The study will be on various initiatives on an assessment of role of soft power in world to get desired results without indulging in armed confrontation Further in next chapters I will try to analyse growing influence of Chinese soft power, how it has used it in Afghanistan to get desired outcomes, and the tactics adopted by Chinese leadership in 21st century. I will look at various dimensions of soft power from economic aid to state building in Afghanistan. The study has referred both primary and secondary sources of information and data. The primary source included various reports of governments, research institutions international organizations such as United Nations Development Programme, World Bank report and ADB report and interview with concerned authorities etc. The secondary sources include books, journal articles, newspapers, unpublished research documents and other relevant material published from time to time, which has been used in the study. Internet sources were useful in this research for the procurement of secondary resources.

1.4 Tentative chapters

The proposed study will be organized in the following scheme of chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will introduce the topic in broader perspective. It will deal with the definition and concept of soft power as whole. The application of soft power in world and Chinese soft power in reality in world politics

Chapter 2: The Soft power Approach in Chinese Foreign Policy

This chapter will examine the model of Chinese concept of soft power, how China has used soft power in last few decades its peaceful rise and shift of its foreign policy undertaken by Hu – Jintao

Chapter 3: China's Security Concerns in Afghanistan

This chapter will deal with Chinese security threats emanating from Afghanistan, the Taliban support to independence of Xinjiang and the policy adopted by China to deal with this menace, and its economic and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

Chapter 4 Instruments of China's Foreign Policy in Afghanistan

This chapter will deal with instruments of Chinese Afghan policy i.e., promoting Chinese culture, providing economic- aids and advocating a peaceful development. The role of Pakistan, SCO and other regional organizations.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter will outline the summary and drawn conclusions of the research work. It would discuss the finding of the research work and its implications. Further the role of China and India in Afghanistan post 2014 will be highlighted.

1.5 Summary

The first chapter deals with the history of Afghanistan, the emergence of modern Afghan state its ethnic composition and the great game of 19th century. In this chapter I have discussed about the foundation of Afghan state in 1747, the Anglo – Afghan wars and Afghanistan's close relations with Soviet Union post Bolshevik revolution. how Afghanistan become a battle ground during cold war rivalry between US and Soviet Union. Further, I have talked about the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and their departure in 1989. The next section deals with the emergence of Taliban on Afghanistan soil and US and Pakistan support to them and harsh policies adopted by them. In preceding sections I have illustrated the impact of US war on terror on Afghanistan and downfall of Taliban. How US was able to gain Pakistan support against Taliban and was

able to manipulate world leaders opinion. Further I have talked about nation building in Afghanistan and the role of Bonn agreement with it for the first time democratic government was elected in Afghanistan with power sharing agreement. The third section of the chapter deals with repercussions of US exit from Afghanistan, the changed role of regional players and capability of Afghan security forces to handle security post 2014. I have also talked about the prospects of Taliban again coming to power and its implications for India and China. The section 2 of first chapter deals with rationale and scope of study, research questions, hypothesis and major findings of study. The part of section 2 dealt with the tentative chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

The Soft Power Approach In Chinese Foreign Policy

Chapter – 2

The Soft Power Approach in Chinese Foreign Policy

2.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a comprehensive study of the concept of Soft power and public diplomacy. Before talking about soft power, the application of soft power in international relations and the soft power approach in Chinese foreign policy it is very important to understand fundamental variables of the study as understood in the theoretical paradigm of international politics. China in recent times has emerged as an important world power mainly derived by its robust economic growth over the last three decades and post reform period starting from 1978. China has emerged as a major economic power, has maintained over 10% of growth rate since last three decades it has become the second largest economy in 2011 next only to US and is expected to become the largest economy by the end of 2030. Its economic growth and huge population has made it the centerpiece of world politics and is the only country which can challenge US hegemony in future.

This chapter will do a detailed study of soft power, the rise of China in contemporary times. For this purpose I have divided this chapter in three sections. First section will give a detailed explanation of concept of soft power its origin and application, the rise of China and its foreign policy discourse. Second section would discuss about the public diplomacy of China and its link with soft power, and the role of Confucius institutes in bolstering China's image worldwide. This section would also discuss about the future prospects of Soft power in China's foreign policy and how the Chinese can successfully practice it. I would also discuss about the deep reforms carried out by Chinese policy makers and would attempt to explain how reforms (social, economic and political) have helped China in transforming its image from a belligerent state to benign state and by practicing its soft power in Asia, Africa and Middle East, how much it has gained and to what extent can pose challenge to US. The third and final section of this paper will comprehensively talk about the humanitarian assistance as Chinese soft power approach

its aid in world and massive reconstruction efforts undertaken by it in post war countries. This section will also correlate the differing Grand Strategies being followed by US and China to maximize their soft power.

2.2 Concept of Soft power

In the realm of international relations the concept of soft power was first time introduced by Joseph Nye of Harvard University in 1990 in his book, "Bound to lead": the changing nature of American power. It was used to describe the extraordinary strengths of The United States that went well beyond American dominance. He describes soft power as an ability to get desired outcomes through cooperation, persuasion, attraction rather than using money force or coercion. As Nye (1990) put it, there are three ways to do that coercion (sticks), inducements (carrots) and attraction (Soft Power). A power is an ability to make others do according to your choice by using whatever means ranging from cooperation to coercion, it means of dictating your will on others to do whatever you want which they will not do otherwise. According to Nye a soft power of a country rests on three premises its culture, its political values, and its foreign policy. In contrast to hard power which rests on military action, coercive diplomacy, war, secret alliance, and economic sanctions a soft power rests on attraction and encompasses nearly everything other than economic and military power. Nye further extended his definition of soft power and included in it the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes. Soft power behavior is characterized by attraction and agenda setting, the primary currencies being values, culture, policies institutions and government policies being shaped mainly by public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Soft power builds attraction and encompasses nearly everything other than economic and military power (Cooper 2004)

A culture of a country plays an important part to promote and enhance its national image for example: the idea of unity and diversity has contributed to the stability of democracy in India. Indian values of non interference and peaceful co existence with mutual cooperation from the very basis of its foreign policy towards China known as "*panchsheel*" in 1960's and on the same basis was founding member of Non Alignment

Movement (NAM) during cold war helps India to pursue its soft power globally and emerges out responsible nuclear power, with its policy of no first use of nuclear weapon. A state can increase their soft power capacity if they live up to their political values at home and abroad. The international consensus on democracy, human rights, market oriented economic reforms; literacy and gross national happiness are the indicators of a state soft power. For ex: The successful working of democracy in US for the last 200 years and its commitment to promote democratic values globally enhances US soft power. Another major instrument of soft power is foreign policy, soft power in the field of foreign policy relates to areas like bilateral and multilateral diplomacy when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority.

For Nye, the US was the archetypal exponent of soft power, home as it is to Boeing, Intel, Ford, the i pod the I phone, Microsoft, MTV, Hollywood and Disneyland and McDonalds and most of major products that dominate daily life globally. The attractiveness of these assets and emblems of the American lifestyle is that they permit US to maximize its soft power and enhance their ability to attract and persuade others to adopt the American agenda. (Tharoor 2008). Therefore soft power helps in building an overall image of the country; the degree of the attractiveness of the image reflects the soft power potential. As evident from the resources mentioned above soft power help, build a brand of a country in following ways.

- Its civilization, culture and values are respected and are given upmost primacy by external world. For ex: Chinese and Greek civilization and French values of liberty, equality and fraternity.
- Its political values and system are considered as ideal type and others tries to uphold and follow them. For ex: American Presidential system, democracy promotion and Human rights.

- Its foreign policy commands legitimacy and support of external world. Has an assertive foreign policy which looks after national as well as others interests. For ex: Indian foreign policy during 1999 under the Gujral doctrine (Sandhu 2012).

The various governments use public diplomacy as an instrument to mobilize these resources to communicate with and attract the public of other countries rather than merely their governments (Roberts 2007). According to Josef Batora soft power of a country is developed, maintained and promoted by the application of public diplomacy.

The realist Approach consider hard power as an essential instrument of state craft, whereas liberals emphasis on soft power to carry out foreign policy negotiations .No doubt that the allies of hard power are much more numerous visible and powerful than their soft power counterparts. Nye argues that the importance of soft power has been increasing. Due to what he calls as “democratization of technology,” the instruments of mass destruction are becoming available not only for states but also for non-state actors. In addition, the information revolution has reduced the cost and facilitated the ease of global communication.Nye argues that these trends have significantly increased the impact of terrorism. When international security principally concerned states, each state exerted its influence by relying on its hard power resources. However, Nye argues, as the technology improves and as non-state actors gain greater influence, the importance of soft power has grown. A soft power cannot be a substitute but should be seen as complementary strategy with hard power.It can be best understood as a natural by-product of cultural and political appeal, it is an attraction based on the ideals and principles a government or a country values, stands for projects and how it performs. The attraction derives from a perceived consistency between what a political actor says and does. Nye argues that soft power is a form of power to obtain desired outcomes, when our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.

The success of soft power heavily depends on the State’s reputation within the international community, as well as the flow of information between States. Thus, soft power is often linked to the rise of globalization and neoliberal theory. Popular culture and media is often identified as a source of soft power, as is the spread of a national language, or a particular set of normative structures. A nation with a large amount of soft

power and the goodwill so won can inspire other countries to acculturate, thus avoiding the need for expensive hard power expenditures. A Soft power thus is created partly by governments and partly in spite of governments (Nye 1990).

2.3 Rise of China and its foreign policy discourse

China's massive rise in last three decades has attracted considerable attention of entire world. Its rise has been characterized by multilateralism, economic diplomacy and good neighbor policy. Prior to 1970's China was mostly isolated and underdeveloped with high rate of poverty, but reforms and openness policy carried out by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 transformed China from revolutionary state to market oriented state with slogan of China's "peaceful rise". Its rise was considered by some countries as threat to regional peace due to poor human rights record, the Tiananmen square incident of 1989, sudden military buildup and communist ideology all which indicates that it is not going to be peaceful in coming future (Mingjiang 2009: 35). China's foreign policy till end of 20th century mainly focused on how to break away from international isolation and then on managing a string of domestic crises. In 21st century Chinese premier Jiang Zemin outline the road map for Chinese peaceful development for coming two decades. During 16th Chinese communist party (CCP) congress in 2002, Zemin stated that "the next two decades are strategically important period and China will do its utmost to develop its economy and will be a well- off society by 2020" (Jiang Zemin 2002). In 2007 when Hu Jintao reached helm of affairs he continue to follow the policy of his predecessors and during CCP 17th congress he stated that China needs to enhance its soft power and give upmost importance to promote Chinese culture and language (Hu Jintao 2007). By 2004 Chinese leadership replaces word peaceful rise to peaceful development and Hu Jintao introduced the concept of harmonious world- a term that focus on foreign policy assurances and employed a more benevolent tone. Chinese leadership very effectively by wielding soft power through public diplomacy towards its neighbors were able to remove US- led encirclement, to limit influence of US in its periphery and assure its neighbors that China is likely to be a benevolent power (Cheng Sun 2011:57).

Chinese leadership is aware of the fact that "the legitimacy of China's peaceful rise derives from its soft power" and soft power in turn will promote the development of

China's hard power. China knows that any military built up and economic rise will be considered as threat to its neighboring countries like India and Japan. In the past decade Beijing has initiated a practice of multilateral diplomacy, also China's fast growing economic strength provides a foundation and resources for its economic diplomacy. In recent past Chinese government has focused more on strengthening economic diplomacy. Chinese leaders had made frequent visits abroad and are directly involved in diplomatic activities by "Track 1 diplomacy". Beijing multilateralism and economic diplomacy has gone beyond Asia and has reached many parts of the world, including Africa, Europe and Latin America. In hope of getting more leverage China emphasized more on peaceful development, harmonious world and responsible nation by providing aid and peacekeeping forces to under developed countries. A typical example in this case is China's efforts to build international multilateral institutions like ASEAN plus one (ASEAN plus China 10 + 1), the ASEAN plus Three (ASEAN plus China Japan and South Korea 10+3), Shanghai cooperation organization (SCO), and initiating six party talks on North Korea's nuclear issue (Zheng and Zhang 2012).

The bulk of Chinese soft power since its introduction in 2003 has mainly focused on following areas.

- Foreign policy including its good neighbor policy by settling boundary disputes with its neighbors.
- Domestic values and policies its development model projecting Beijing consensus.
- Chinese traditional culture especially Confucius and establishing Confucius institute in entire world including US.
- Providing economic aid humanitarian assistance and sending largest peacekeeping forces among G-5 countries and promoting multilateralism

China's economic rise has been mainly due to its "reform" and "open-door" policies. China's phenomenal growth of about 10% in last three decades has alarmed US and western countries. It is the fourth largest country in terms of nominal GDP and second largest economy after United States (Litao 2007). Its entry into WTO in 2001 was the

most prominent step; China has increased its international governmental organizations membership from just over 30 in 1986 to 53 in 2009. It has also doubled the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties that it has joined between 1990 and 2008 (Mead 2004). To overcome its international isolation over Tiananmen Square incident of 1989 China in 1994 was the first country to formulate "Agenda 21" for environmental protection and went one step ahead with passing the air pollution law in 1996 as per the provisions of UNFCCC and try to portray its image as benign power and thought would gain international prestige in being proactive in environmental protection cooperation. With employing above mentioned efforts Beijing hopes to counter "China threat theory" propagated by western media.

It is often considered by many analysts that the declining of American soft power post 9/11 was another reason of China's rising soft power. Till 1990's America projected its soft power by various means mostly through Hollywood, Voice of America Radio and American lifestyle. But post 9/11 US followed the policy of unilateralism and inappropriate use of hard power which include NATO to launch 1999 Kosovo war, overriding the UN Security Council. Later, Washington unilateralism reached its peak after September 11 terrorist attacks and its war against Iraq to overthrow Iraqi regime which Washington blame of possessing weapons of mass destruction, but had a hidden agenda of capturing oil fields. US decision of waging war against Afghanistan and killing of innocent Afghans by US drone strikes and Iraqi invasion was even criticized by US opposition and US citizens. In human treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo bay and Abu-Garib prisons by US forces had serious setback to US soft power post 9/11. As a result, Washington over use of hard power caused many countries suspicious and mistrust American hegemony. On the other hand China continue to expand its global influence through its peaceful rise, its international influence grows due to its economic rise and deeply engaged itself into existing international system. Post 9/11 China entered into many multilateral organizations most prominent among them are WTO, SCO, BRICS and China-ASEAN which helps China to increase its clout over international politics. The most important among was formation of BRICS in 2009 with five major economies of the world and can be seen as an alternate and challenge to US hegemony in coming years. BRICS leaders in 2013 summit in South Africa announced the establishment of

BRICS bank and to carry out trade in *yuan* among them poses a serious challenge to US dollar. World Bank and International Monetary fund in which US has the largest share (Zheng 2012).

China is also accused of building its soft power at the expense of the United States. Former journalist Joshua Cooper Ramo argues that the Washington consensus has been replaced by Beijing consensus due to shrewdly wielding of soft power by China through public diplomacy. But it is believed that China still has to travel considerable distance to match with American soft power (Yi 2005:75). Beijing consensus describes the miraculous rise of China despite fundamentally changing its one party communist rule. The US failed occupation in Iraq and spread of democracy by the use of force further eroded Washington consensus. But the world is still suspicious of China's rise as Chinese diplomacy is not guided by any moral principles like good governance, rule of law, transparency and respect for human rights. To pursue economic and strategic interests China in recent past have forego friendly relations with many authoritarian regimes of the world like Sudan and Zimbabwe which are facing sanctions by the western world. China's soft power is undermine is west because China suffers from corruption, inequality, human rights lack of democracy and state controlled media despite it is attractive in authoritarian and semi authoritarian third world countries (Nye 2005). Kurlantzick, the author of *China's charm offensive*, argues that America cannot be underestimated although it is true that its soft power has declined in 21st century but still it offers values of freedom, prosperity and democracy which are appealing to average people around the world, and it is US which world will turn again if China will not be able to live up to its promise. Even American soft power is making inroads in Chinese society as young people in China's major cities saw Westernization is China's future, wants to learn English, prefer studying outside China, are playing sports which are popular in west and are inclined towards western cooperate culture. Therefore I conclude by saying that like China's military and economic power is far from matching with United States, similarly China's soft power is not an equal of the United States particularly in terms of its political values and moral appeal (Zhao 2009: 262).

2.4 China's soft power strategy and its public diplomacy

In the past decade Chinese officials have tried hard to promote China from a regional power to global power by strengthening its soft and hard power. China is striving hard to propagate its values, ideas and culture which is different from west over entire world. Chinese leaders had realized the fact that great powers not exclusively relies on coercive power but also on attractive values and culture. Chinese soft power Strategy is three fold rests on following premises.

- Prompting Chinese culture by establishing Confucius institute to spread Chinese language and offering scholarships to students to study in China.
- Providing economic and humanitarian assistance to third world countries and projecting Chinese model of development to them to come out of poverty in short span of time.
- Advocating a peaceful development, project China as responsible state by releasing various white papers and to counter China threat theory and self restraint over controversial issues.

Hence it is very evident that China has used its cultural heritage, economic aids, and peaceful development to garner its positive image in international community, which has welcome China's peaceful rise (Sun 2011: 64).

"Those who are close to you are pleased, those who are far away from you are attracted by your reputation" (Analects 16:13).

China by following the above Confucius statement has tried to promote its soft power through its culture. China sees its culture as the biggest tool in its soft power arsenal, as well as driving force behind its agenda setting ambitions. President Hu Jintao during 16th CCP congress stated that

“Culture has become a more and more important source of national cohesion and creativity and a factor of growing significance in the competition in overall national strength. We must enhance culture as part of the soft power of our country to better guarantee the people's basic cultural rights and interests” (Jintao 2007).

In recent years China has taken various initiatives to promote Chinese culture overseas. Sun Jiazhen the Chinese minister of culture in 2006 declared that culture had become the third pillar of China's diplomacy after economy and politics. China's cultural promotion includes opening up of Confucius institutes, exchange programs, broadcasting, 24 hours Chinese radio in different languages as par with voice of America and BBC and promoting the study of ancient Chinese culture (Harting 2013: 165). In contrast to America China rests its soft power on cultural exchange rather than media diplomacy as Chinese culture is highly developed and its media is still at nascent stage. Thus, China is very proactive in realm of cultural diplomacy which is depicted from events like China - French cultural year 2004, the China – Russia national year 2005 and the China- India friendship year 2006. Chinese cultural promotion includes book exhibitions, movie festivals, art exhibits, scholarly exchange, tourism and sports to enhance China's image. The grand opening ceremony of 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2010 Shanghai World expo were two events where China got a chance to showcase its rich culture to the outside world and have helped in promoting “brand China image. However China's cultural diplomacy is limited by its economic resources, fragile political system and state controlled media (Lai 2012: 86).

The second aspect of China's soft power strategy is its good neighbor policy and its efforts to share its development benefits with neighboring countries. To ease the concern of some neighboring countries about the rise of China, Beijing developed policy of “peaceful rise and harmonious world”. For ex: China – ASEAN free trade area which is beneficial for both sides. China has portrayed a benign image towards its neighbors and

has projected itself as a responsible Asia power. China's decision not to devalue its currency during 1997 Asian financial crises is seen by many countries as an act of benignity from China which enhance its soft power in region China knows that India is the only country in Asia which can pose any challenge to China in future therefore to secure its interests the neighboring countries of India like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka are high on Chinese agenda. China gives equal important to small states bordering India and have initiated various development projects to enhance its soft power in South Asian region which I have discussed in detail in next chapter. China frequently hosts leaders of smaller countries, especially from Africa and South Asia; these leaders are flattered by China's hospitality. China's top leaders frequently travel to these smaller countries to generate positive opinion about China's rise. Chinese leaders and diplomats are most skillful and amiable than any other country in Asia. China is trying to express its benignity simply by paying attention to others, engaging in dialogues and actively pursuing bilateral and multilateral diplomacy (Denise 2010).

The third aspect of Chinese soft power strategy is advocating its peaceful development and counter "China threat theory with China peaceful rise" theory advocating multilateralism and multipolarity. Its strategy include providing aid to third world countries to project that Chinese development model is best and is the only way out for poorer countries to come out of poverty. China's recent engagement with Africa is prime example in this case and president Hu Jintao in 2009 pledge to double China's aid to Africa. In 2010 China overtakes UK as the third largest trading partner with African countries only next to USA and France (Tull 2006).

Chinese analysts claim that in modern history, industrialization was spearheaded by Western civilization but were unable to provide any solution to various problems being faced today including environmental degradation, international and regional conflicts, poverty and migration. Traditional Chinese culture according to their view are capable of solving these problems facing by mankind and project itself as an example in alleviating poverty in just two decades, thus putting Chinese culture in more advantageous in post industrialization, information era. China want that now world should follow China model

as West has completely failed in addressing these issues the poverty in Africa has increased in last two decades despite US best efforts. China claims that answer of all these problems lie in ancient Chinese texts. So far China has remained as a mute spectator over many controversial issues facing international politics ex: Syrian crises US sanctions over Iran, Russia-Ukrainian issue and war in Afghanistan and Somalian crises. On contrary US has actively involved in all these issues and have faced criticism over this which have eroded its hard as well as soft power. China however has stick to its policy of “Non interference in domestic issue” which has helped to increase its clout in these countries.

No doubt China has done a lot to promote its soft power which includes large scale cultural activities, putting in large amount of financial resources to cultivate better image of China, promoting its mass media and sponsoring Confucius institute throughout the world. Despite all these efforts, Chinese leadership is still skeptical about the ultimate fate of China’s soft power. Another reason why China lags behind west in terms of soft power is its more reliance on traditional Chinese cultural legacies and government has not done enough in conducting international public relations particularly in dealing with western media (Li 2009: 36).

To overcome global apprehensions about China’s rise, China lately realized that it should manipulate its public diplomacy to mitigate negative propaganda of west about is peaceful rise, Since then the Chinese government has paid more and more attention to its public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is a means by which government can communicate its decision, policies and agenda to other countries for the purpose of influencing actions and politics of other governments. Film, television, music, sports; video games and other social/cultural activities, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting are considered to be tools of public diplomacy (Wang 2008:257). In recent years, public diplomacy has become a hot topic for many Chinese scholars and many students are taking it a topic for their research while Chinese newspapers and magazines frequently discuss public diplomacy mainly focus on to counter “China threat theory”. China has not been able to pursue its public diplomacy effectively due to following reasons

China was under the impression that due to its sheer size and population others will respect it and will be scared of it. It paid more attention to its development and enhancing GDP at expense of others which in return portray its negative image.

- China focus on expanding its economy internationally, while neglecting its culture in initial years. It has projected on traditional Chinese culture and has nothing new to offer.
- Chinese believed that China should be respected by the world because of its long history and splendid civilization, but forgets that historical legacy needs to be redefined.

These misconceptions were prevailing over Chinese leaders and public. But the west has the different opinion about China. The westerners seem to like Chinese history and culture but dislike contemporary China as it poses challenge to their hegemony and is less liberal and political in its outlook. Another thing which west dislike about China was Communist party of China and name "People's Republic of China" which it linked to communism which is anti capitalist the path followed by western countries. Westerners want to invest in China want to reap benefits of its growth but don't want to live in China due to pollution, corruption, lack of liberty and censorship of media (Zhao 2005).

However China has realized that public diplomacy is a very important source to wield its soft power, which is centerpiece of China's grand strategy of "peaceful rise" Finally China realize that its greatest threat is from inside that is its national image which can only be rectified by manipulation of its public diplomacy. Therefore China adopted a new policy for the implementation of public diplomacy, which is more upbeat and aims at China's positive engagement with outside world. China knows that it has edge over others including US in implementation of its public diplomacy due to following reasons:

- Firstly China's robust economic and political development and its "Brand China model invites the attention of world.
- Second China has huge size and massive population it means that China can send large number of teachers to propagate Chinese language and culture in any part of world, can send largest peacekeeping contingent and its 1.3 billion population is a huge market for west.
- Third China has strong government and abundant political, cultural and economic resources. Most third world countries are eyeing towards China for aid which gives it leverage against West (Wang 2008).

There are certain constraints to China public diplomacy in wielding soft power. China in implementing its public diplomacy carries huge language and cultural gap communicating with the outside world. English language is not understood by common Chinese citizen and vice-versa. There are many Chinese phrases which have not been translated in English and can only be understood in Chinese created confusion among many Scholars and politicians about China's rise (Shen 2007) Nevertheless, China has a bright prospect for promoting its soft power to the outer world in an era where US soft power is sharply declining in the wake of increasing Anti- Americanism in the Islamic world and the global recession faced by it since 2008 and its tough immigration policies towards third world countries particularly after 9/11. Therefore in order to successfully brand itself as a peaceful and responsible great power and manage a favorable national image in long run, China needs to adopt more lucrative and careful public diplomacy and should make serious efforts to implement political and social reforms (Sandhu 2012).

In the preceding section I will attempt to study how the traditional Chinese culture particularly Confucius has helped China to bolster its image worldwide and how China by waving loans to poor African countries and humanitarian assistance has become its largest asset in promoting its soft power.

2.5 Role of Confucius institutions in bolstering Chinese soft power

In recent years China has devised a program and taken numerous initiatives to promote Chinese culture overseas. To promote Confucius and to establish Confucius institutes in order to spread Chinese culture, values and tradition worldwide is its main agenda. They aim to improve Chinese image and cultural appeal in its immigrant neighbors in European countries and in the United States, as well as in third world countries. Confucius institute are believed to have a political agenda to present a kinder and gentle image of China to the outside world and to marginalize Taiwan's international influence. Confucius institute are non-profit public institutions established under the Ministry of Education People's Republic of China. In Chinese civilization Confucianism is a core factor that presents Chinese values and vision in a different way from west. Countries neighboring China especially South-East Asian countries are familiar with Confucius values which include family as the focal point of social structure, concerns over virtues and ethics, the primacy of group over individual, emphasis on unity or harmony, hard work and importance of education in life, China want that west should inculcate these values in their lifestyle and prevent itself from moral degradation. Not only in social field, China also extended Confucius to diplomatic negotiations. Diplomatic principles such as "live peacefully with neighbors, bring prosperity to them" and harmonious world all have taken from Confucius philosophy (Cho and Jeong 2008: 470).

Zheng Bijian first time introduced the idea of peaceful rise in 2003 which later was renamed as peaceful development by Hu- Jintao in 2004, was the very basis from where the idea of Confucius was generated. The first Confucius institution was established in Seoul in South Korea in 2004 and in July 2006 first Confucius institute conference was held (Lai 2009: 92). Some 200 representatives from 38 countries met in Beijing to discuss institute character, curriculum and expansion around the world. China till July had established 80 Confucius institutes around the world and their strength keep on increasing every year. By 2010 the number of Confucius institutes and Confucius classrooms rose by 322 and 369 respectively in 96 countries. In addition to this over 50 countries in 2009 express their desire to establish Confucius institutions in their respective countries. Till today China has established 440 Confucius institutes globally.

And over 500 Confucius Classrooms are in operation worldwide at middle and primary schools. US have the maximum concentration of Confucius institutes outside China. Till 2010 there were total 71 Confucius institutes in US accounting 22% of global Confucius institutes. All major US universities have the Confucius study center in collaboration with the host university. The 8th global Confucius Institute Conference has taken place in Beijing in 2013 which was attended by 2,200 attendants from 400 Confucius institutes around the world where issues related to their working, expansion and promoting cultural exchanges between host universities and Chinese universities were discussed. The event brings together university presidents and heads of Confucius Institutes from all over the world. About 850,000 students have registered at these institutions, and more than 20,000 activities have been held since the first Confucius Institute was established in 2004 (Tsoi 2012). In India there are two Confucius institutes at Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi and Vellore institute of technology.

Confucius Institutes are being set up by joint ventures between Chinese and foreign institutions. Though China claim them to be nonprofit organizations Confucius institutes are being run under the guidance of office of Chinese council international, known by its abbreviation *Hanban* who's task is to administer, supervise and finance all Confucius Institutes in world and is headed by a group made up of members from state ministers and other organizations. The Chinese government shares the burden of funding Confucius institutes with the host universities and each institute is responsible for drawing and managing its own budget under the guidelines from headquarters. These institutes are formed on the basis and par with Chinese version of the Goethe institute of British Council and Danish cultural institute to promote its culture and language overseas. According to *Hanban* program director Confucius institutes have three main objectives to teach Chinese, to promote cultural exchange and to facilitate business activity. Due to these efforts lots of people wants to do business in China, now Chinese diasporas is understanding Chinese culture and values and is ready to invest in China (Paradise 2009: 663).

The rapid expansion of Confucius Institutes worldwide has become the subject of controversy and criticism. Critiques has accused China of promoting espionage, the

quality of language impart, academic viability, surveillance of Chinese students abroad, ploy to spread communism in west and undermine the Taiwan influence in world. As a result of such criticism several institutions, such as University of Melbourne and University of Chicago have opposed the establishment of Confucius Institutes (Don 2009).

China has acknowledged the importance of cultural diplomacy by opening Confucius institutes worldwide but only time will tell that whether Confucius institutes helped China to project a more sympathetic and benign image. Still China has not get the desired outcomes which it has anticipated after opening of Confucius institutes, rather they have faced protests in some parts over imposing their system forcefully on poor African and Latin American countries. But establishing Confucius institutes means opening up of China to outside world and its universities will gain more as the foreign enrollment in past years has increased dramatically (Callahan 2005).

2.6 Humanitarian aid as means of Chinese soft power

In the past few years People Republic of China has (PRC) has bolstered its diplomatic presence and has garnered international goodwill through its policy of “openness” and providing economic aid to poorer nations of the world in the form of infrastructure development, skill building, developing natural resources and large economic investment in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Overall the Chinese foreign assistance in last few years have been mainly driven by Beijing desire to secure and transport natural resources which are needed by fast growing China for its overall development. Another reason of China recent engagement in these countries is to establish goodwill, promote Chinese development model and to establish diplomatic relations with them to increase its clout among them (Lum 2009). China’s use of economic instruments to foster relations in the developing world is not new. With the rise of its economic power China is planning to invest in third world countries to reap the long term benefits later by establishing diplomatic relations with them and frequently press these third world countries to sever relations with Taiwan. In past China has donated US\$ 2.4 billion to

help African states from 1956 to 1977. Beijing has given equal importance to its neighboring South East Asian nations. South East Asia's total trade with China today has surpassed US and Japan. Since 2002, China has delivered about US\$80 million of humanitarian relief to nineteen countries worldwide including Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan and Ethiopia (Wuthnow 2008).

It is difficult to quantify China's foreign aid as Chinese government did not release or disclose its foreign aid and investment overseas. However according to some reliable sources and media reports it is estimated that China's investment and government supported economic projects in Africa, Latin America and South East Asia has increased from US \$ 1 billion to US\$ 27.5 billion in 2007. Africa has shown the most significant increase in aid and development related projects. China has maneuver its soft power in Africa very cautiously where most of the Chinese projects in Africa aims at financing or concessional loans for infrastructure projects, large economic investment, signing of free trade agreements and reducing tariff on commodities being export. These countries have welcomed China's investment and aid in their respective countries as they have been relatively neglected by major aid donors for a long time. China's fast growing soft power in African and Latin countries has become a matter of concern for US policy makers and Members of Congress as they consider China is gaining continuously on the expense of America due to America's war on terror, they also criticized China of failing to promote democracy, equitable and sustainable development and environment preservation in these countries (Lancaster 2007).

Therefore, since 2004 Hu- Jintao trip to Africa, China has emerged as a large donor to African nations. China's investment and its aid in third world countries often garner appreciations due to following reasons.

- China often grant loans and aid easily without imposing any conditions and time frame which other financial institutions do not agree and ignore social, political and environmental conditions.

- China often promotes economic projects in countries areas, and sectors that developed country governments and multinational corporations have avoided due to lack of time, feasibility and unfriendly to them.
- China undertake those kinds of projects which are explicit and visible and provide short term benefits like building stadiums, Railway lines, Highways, Mosques, and Telephone lines.
- China often announce these projects in bilateral meetings, summits waive loans which were being followed and telecast by foreign media and symbolize friendship between China and other country.

China's aid to Africa is driven largely by its objective of securing access to oil and natural resource for its growing economy. Nearly 70% of entire Chinese investment in Africa is concentrated in Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Sudan which have major oil fields. African oil accounts for nearly 80% of the total trade with China (Hanson 2008). China has made its international engagement more sophisticated and has developed more sophisticated tools of soft power. In the past several years, China's aid to Africa has grown significantly. During 1970's and 1980's China provide assistance in the form of infrastructure projects, technical and public health assistance and scholarships to study in China. it has diplomatic aims to forge relations with African nations to isolate Taiwan. But with the advent of Hu- Jintao there was a paradigm shift in Chinese policy towards Africa which is now based on enhancing mutual cooperation, increasing people to people contact holding annual bilateral summits and project African states as Chinese partners in development. In 2007, China launched the \$ 5 billion China - Africa development fund, managed by China- Africa development Bank to support Chinese firms in Africa. In last 5 years China has cancelled over \$ 10 billion worth of African debts and provided about \$5.5 billion aid to the continent. It too has undertaken many infrastructure building projects in Africa including rebuilding of Railway stations in Angola and Nigeria. China now has focused more on building people to people contacts by funding anti malaria clinics, building up schools and offering more scholarships to African students to study in China. And trying to boost China's public appeal through its soft power (Harman 2007).

Owing to its proximity and historical ties South East Asia is another region of great importance for China. Strategic interests are likely to influence China's policy towards South East Asia as compared to Africa and Latin America. China has become a largest source of infrastructure financing in South East Asia. It provides assistance to South East Asia in the form of Official development assistance (ODA) as per Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Prior to 2008 US Japan and EU were largest trading partners of ASEAN nations, but post 2008 China became the second largest trading partner of ASEAN only after US. In 2008, China's trade with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, was \$230 billion, was larger than its trade with Africa (\$106 billion) and Latin America (\$142 billion). The US increased engagement in South East Asia and owing to China's Claim over South China sea China has tried to support South East Asian nations militarily it provided military equipments to Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar (Kurlantzick 2006: 122).

In recent years, PRC government entities have financed many infrastructure, energy-related (especially hydro power), agricultural and other high profile development projects. Chinese engineers, labors and construction companies are constantly engaged in these countries building up of Railway lines in Vietnam and Philippines. China is also adopting measures and engaged in counter narcotic trafficking and human trafficking in the golden crescent region comprised of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to check their flow into China. China has growing interests in Latin American region primarily due to its objective of gaining broader access to its natural resources and agricultural commodities such as oil, ores and soybean. Beijing want to bolster its diplomatic engagement in the region as 12 countries of Latin America has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. China knows that US is the dominant power in Latin America but still tries hard to forge ties with Latin America as it saw it as a huge market for Chinese goods. EU is the major foreign investor in the region with \$620 billion investments followed by US with \$350 billion. From 2000 to 2007 China's trade with Latin America has increased ten folds and reached \$ 142 billion still five times less than total US trade. China's largest trading partners in Latin America are Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru in these countries China is only next to US.

2.7 Summary

The opening section of this chapter deals with the concept of soft power, the evolution of soft power in 1990's. It was a time when cold war has come an end and American soft power was at its zenith. The wave of Americanism has swept the world and there was no formidable challenge to American soft as well as hard power. America was an ardent champion of soft power till 2001 when Chinese soft power starts evolving particularly after Hu- Jintao in 2003. In next section second I have discussed how Chinese 10% annual growth rate for a decade and surpassing Japan as second largest economy helps it to pose challenge to US soft power. China popularizes its slogan of "peaceful rise" to showcase its growing power in world. On other hand America's war against Afghanistan and Iraq led to downfall of its soft power. In the section third I have elaborated the China's soft power strategy and its public diplomacy by establishing Confucius institutes and providing humanitarian assistance, how they have help to bolster Chinese image worldwide. How the reforms carried by Chinese policymakers have helped China to transform its image from a belligerent state to a benign state. In the concluding part of this chapter I have argued that no doubt China has achieved remarkable growth rate, its soft power has increased massively since last decade, but in terms of soft power it is not par with US. US soft power has a global appeal its largest instrument is its language English by which it can spread its agenda ideology in any part of the world by its free media. US soft power is in our homes and our day to day life styles which include Mc Donald's, KFC, Lewis, Hollywood, Disney land Microsoft etc. China is far behind than US in terms of soft power and Chinese soft power is only confined to Chinese food and needs lot more to do to match with US soft power in future.

CHAPTER THREE

China's Geopolitical Interests In Afghanistan

Chapter -3

China's Geopolitical interests in Afghanistan

3.1 Introduction

The announcement by US president in 2011, that all the US and NATO troops will be out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and shift to full Afghan sovereignty marked the end of 30 years of bloody civil war in Afghanistan where two superpowers of cold war era Soviet Union from 1979 - 1989 and USA from 2001 - 2014 were one by one involved in Afghanistan for their respective personal interests. For more than a decade Afghanistan was a battle field between US lead NATO forces and Taliban, it has ravaged the country in many ways all its political and social order is in shambles. The events of 9/11 proved to be a turning point for Afghanistan. The Taliban was overthrown as a result of the US attack in October 2001 to bring about regime change and apprehend Osama-bin- Laden after Taliban refused to hand him over to the US as demanded. The Taliban regime collapsed in November 2001 (Zaidi 2006) Now the question is how the other regional actors including China, India, Russia and Pakistan are ready to assume a larger role in promoting Afghan stabilization post 2014. Since the arrival of US forces in Afghanistan in 2001 and overthrow of Taliban regime no regional power has missed an opportunity to forge friendly relations with Afghanistan. Geopolitics has been defined as: "The study of geographic influences on power relationships in international politics." Its maxim is the words of Sir Halford John Mackinder, founding father of geopolitics and geostrategy

"Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island;
who rules the World-Island controls the world."

The "Heartland" is Eurasia; the "World-Island" consists of Eurasia and Africa. If a country can control Eurasia its political and military position is essentially unassailable because geography precludes rivals. China which shares a narrow border of about 55 km with Afghanistan via Wakhan corridor is greatly concerned with Afghan stability as it has massively invested in Afghanistan since last decade. It is believed that post 2014 Afghanistan is going to face at least three major challenges-economic, political and security. The frame work for post Taliban reconstruction was laid down in the UN – sponsored Bonn Agreement of December 2001 where principles of Islam, democracy, pluralism and social justice were upheld and all regional and western countries pledge their support to reconstruct Afghanistan in future (Shkuri 2007). It is believed that post 2014 there will be a power rivalry between India and China to get hold over Afghanistan both want their maximum stakes in Afghanistan and consider themselves as a major regional actor post 2014 shaping Afghan policy as per their interests. China has diverse interests in Afghanistan ranging from economic to security issues and is busy in employing its soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan by engaging in providing economic aid and massive reconstruction activities. It is eyeing to explore massive untapped hydrocarbon reserves in Afghanistan amounting \$3 billion to fulfill their energy security in future. Through huge aid diplomacy China want to buy peace for it safeguarding its wide ranging vital interests in Afghanistan so crucial for China's great power dream it has set for itself since 1949 (Sharma & Dixit 2013).

China has three primary goals with respect to Afghanistan. To ensure the security of Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan, to secure the development of greater economic links, including investment in natural resources and to combat the influence of United States and India. China's interests in Afghanistan extend beyond security considerations, it has major economic interests in Afghanistan as well and Chinese firms are constantly getting rights to extract Afghanistan's vast mineral wealth which is valued at about \$1 trillion by the US geological survey and \$ 3 trillion by Afghanistan minister of mines (Clarke 2013).

China consider Afghanistan as a pivotal land bridge linking central and south Asia thus pursued a comprehensive strategy in Afghanistan based on its goal of achieving security

for Xinjiang, economic development and cooperation on non- traditional security issues via Shanghai cooperation organization (SCO). China look 2014 as an opportune year to get involved in Afghanistan as US is withdrawing elections are due in Afghanistan and will try to support a government which builds a democratic Afghanistan. China know that unstable Afghanistan post 2014 will be a great security threat to it and will thwart all its ambitions and reconstruction activities and billion of humanitarian aid will go in vain. finally resulted in the dominance of radical groups or criminal warlords.

3.2 Sino – Afghan Relations and role of SCO

Both China and Afghanistan share warm and cordial relations since ancient times. Buddhism has connected the two countries together as well as old silk route stretching from China to Central Asia. The year 2010 marked the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between people Republic of China and Afghanistan. Their relations dates back to 1960 when China and Afghanistan signed “A friendship and mutual Non- Aggression treaty”, they called it a new “Silk Road” evoking nostalgic memories of a link between the two countries established 2100 years ago.(Dai 1966). Both China and Afghanistan agreed not to take part in military alliance directing each other. to respect each other territorial integrity and non interference in each other internal affairs and agreed to further develop and strengthen economic and cultural relations. Their relations were generally cordial barring some minor hiccups till the advent of communist regime in Afghanistan in 1978. Both established diplomatic relations by opening embassies and consulates in each other countries, started air links, resolve boundary disputes and started cultural exchange between them. Their relations deteriorated in 1978 when Afghanistan was drawn into Soviet influence and it becomes largest trading partner with Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had a monopoly on influence in Afghanistan until 1989, when it was compelled to withdraw its troops (Huesang 2014).

China strongly condemned Soviet invasion of 1979 provide military assistance and moral aid to Afghan *mujhahideen* and Pakistan. Post 1992 China did not recognize Taliban government in Afghanistan as it supported East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)

for the independence of Xinjiang, and provide Uighur rebels with material support and place to hide those who fled China. In fact it supported North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces to overthrow Taliban from Afghanistan (Pallival 2011). Since 2001 after the demise of Taliban China has close friendly relations with Afghanistan. China was the first country visited by Afghan president Hamid Karzai immediately after the formation of provisional government and Chinese embassy was reopened in Kabul. Both have regular meeting and exchanges between each other particularly on the sidelines of Shanghai cooperation Organization (SCO) meet every year of which Afghanistan has been granted observer status by China. China's efforts focus on solidifying the political basis of the bilateral relationship promoting economic cooperation and providing financial and other assistance to Afghanistan.

In 2006 during second visit of Hamid Karzai to China both sides signed treaty of "Good Neighbourly Friendship and Cooperation." Both vowed to fight against terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking. The two governments agreed to strengthen economic relations, with emphasis on developing natural resources, generating electricity, constructing goods, improving agriculture, building transportation and working on other infrastructure projects. After the demise of Taliban China took an active part in international activities to rebuild Afghanistan including international conference on Afghanistan in London in 2006 the conference in Paris 2008, the conference in Hague in 2009 and the conferences in London, Istanbul and Kabul. China's position on reconstruction activities in Afghanistan rests on five principles: Guarantee Afghanistan as an independent and sovereign state, finally it should be governed by Afghans, reach peace through political reconciliation, promote a progressive society, and have an Afghanistan friendly to its neighbours (Clarke 2013).

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) comprising of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan came into being in 2001. It is a political, economic and military organization created to counter the common threats of separatism, extremism and terrorism. Bulk of SCO members and observers are Afghanistan's neighbors and has spillover effect on them if Afghanistan remains destabilize. The SCO was established in same year in which 9/11 happened and in some

ways Afghan situation was one factor leading to the establishment of SCO. Without the resolution of Afghan problem the security and stability of Central Asia can hardly be achieved. The advent of US lead NATO forces in Central Asian region and building up of military bases by US in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan enhanced the role of SCO where all member states consider that it will jeopardize the regional security. Since 2001 all SCO members have proactively involved in Afghan affairs to keep US away from Central Asian regional politics, and try to reconstruct Afghanistan under the ambit of SCO. To enhance cooperation with Afghanistan it invited Hamid Karzai to attend SCO summit as a guest in 2004 in Tashkent and establish SCO – Afghan contract group. Since then Afghan president has attended all SCO summits till 2012 where SCO finally granted observer status to Afghanistan. In the UN General Assembly meeting on Afghanistan in 2005 SCO laid out its views on promoting political stability, economic development as well as national reconciliation in Afghanistan and build a stable Afghanistan free from war, narcotics and poverty at the same time SCO adhered to the principles of Afghanistan state sovereignty under UN leadership (Huesang and Kuchins 2012).

China by playing SCO card has somehow able to contain the flow of drugs from Afghanistan and to check Ugyhur separatist movement. It is estimated that more than 30,000 people die every year due to drug abuse in Central Asian and Russia coming from Afghanistan despite heavy presence of NATO forces and Afghan soldiers (UNODC Report 2011). In last few years SCO has started playing crucial role in Afghanistan by providing assistance to US led NATO forces and called for a joint operation in combating terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime emanating from Afghanistan at Moscow conference in 2009. To overcome the threat of terrorism SCO has initiated Tashkent – based Regional Anti Terrorism Structure (RATS) where all members are assigned to share information to check terrorist and separatist threat across the region as most of the states in Central Asia are grappling with this problem (Torjsen 2010).

Till today the situation in Afghanistan is mired with the geopolitics of regional and extra-regional players. So far SCO has not been able to play a potential role in stabilizing Afghanistan due to inherent contradictions, economic limitations and greater emphasis on bilateral engagement with Afghanistan by the member countries other than multilateral

engagements. The geographical proximity of Afghanistan with SCO member states demand continued attention from its neighbors to engage Afghanistan bilaterally. The SCO should focus more on areas like controlling drugs, fighting terrorism and organized crime rather than engaged in internal political affairs of Afghanistan and to install their friendly regime. However Afghanistan absence as a permanent member of SCO, rivalry between India and Pakistan and constant engagement of NATO for more than a decade provide very little space to Afghanistan to integrate into SCO (Roy 2010).

3. 3 Security threats emanating from Afghanistan to China

In geopolitical terms Afghanistan is one of the key areas for great power competition today. All the major powers have stationed their troops in Afghanistan, something which is incompatible to Chinese security. On the other hand China is grappling with the threats coming out from its far western region Xinjiang for its independence. China knows that a unstable Afghanistan will again become a breeding ground for Uyghur separatists where during Taliban regime it openly supported their struggle for independence. China is trying hard to stabilize Afghanistan so that it can curb Uyghur problem, illegal arms trafficking, drug trafficking and various terrorist organization operating from Central Asian states.

3.1.3 Uighur Problem

A stable and secure Afghanistan is in China's interests. China has fear that withdrawal of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan will take a worse turn and there is possibility of revival of East Turkestan Islamic Movement. Xinjiang is a far western region in China having total population of about 15 million out of which Uyghur who are predominantly Muslims are in minority. The region is largest of Chinese administrative regions, most Uyghur's are Muslims and they are culturally and ethnically closed to Central Asian people. Xinjiang holds the bulk of Chinese natural resources and is a gateway to access further resources from Russia and Central Asia. Here the Uyghur's have been struggling for independence since 1949 when Xinjiang was incorporated into China. Xinjiang share border with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan and Uyghur's living in these countries have strong ethnic ties with Uyghur's living in

China. After the collapse of Soviet Union Uyghur's living in and outside Xinjiang have visualized the possibility of a separate Muslim homeland " East Turkestan" (Dwivedi, 2006). Minorities in Xinjiang have struggled for decades to get a separate homeland which their kin's in neighboring states received overnight and in Xinjiang they do not have access to human rights freedom of expression and free press to highlight their cause (Sheives 2006).

After the fall of Najibullah's government in Kabul 1992 and the victory of *mujahideen* Afghanistan become a reliable base of terrorism and extremism. During Taliban regime from 1996 – 2001 it openly supported the cause of Uyghur independence and provided them with arms, training and place to hide. There are reports that Uyghur's who have made their bases in Afghanistan and Federally Administrated Tribal Ares (FATA) in Pakistan are fighting against NATO troops in Afghanistan and have a close linkage between Taliban and al- Qaeda (Pantucci 2010).

In past Uyghur rebels have been associated with many terrorist activities and bombings in and outside China. The large scale riots in Urumqi the capital of Xinjiang, on July 5 2009 was the largest major manifestation of the activity of East Turkistan in Xinjiang. This was the largest and most violent riot since the establishment of people republic of China in 1949. According to official reports 197 people were killed and more than 1700 people were injured. The latest major manifestation of their activity was the knife attack on Kunming railway station on 1 March 2014 which leaves 33 people dead and scores injured. It has been established that the perpetrators were linked with East Turkestan Movement.

Advent of US and NATO forces after 9/11 provide much relief for China, where they uprooted their strong base hold in Afghanistan and ensures Chinese security in future but China is worried that after US withdrawal in 2014 it might again become a safe haven for Uyghur's separatist movement and challenge Chinese sovereignty. There is fear among Chinese that post 2014 will create a power vacuum in Afghanistan and here is every possibility of Taliban and Al- Qaeda will emerge again and will continue their support for East Turkestan Movement (CSIS Report 2010).

Picture shows Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan



(Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/af.htm>)

3.1.4 Terrorist organizations operating from Central Asian States

There are about one dozen terrorist organizations operating from Central Asian states today most of them have their bases in bordering areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan and few are operating from volatile region of Xinjiang and Fergana valley. Some of them are East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Party of Turkestan (IMU), Hizb –UT- Tahir (Hut), Imirat Kavataz (IK), and Afghan Taliban (Rashid 2002). Both Russia and China are threatened due to their presence in their vicinity and these are always held responsible for fuelling insurgency in China and Russia. For example Chechen rebels were held responsible for Domodedovo airport bombings in 2011 where 37 people were died and over 180 were injured, similarly they were responsible for Beslan school carnage where over 380 innocent children were died and kept hostage for three days. Uyghur rebels in past were indulged in riots in 2004 in Urumchi and knife attack at Kunming railway station. The IMT and HT declared their

objective of overthrowing constitutional system in Central Asia liberation of Chechnya, Dagestan, Tatars and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in order to establishment Islamic Caliphate in Central Asia (Dwivedi 2006).

The Tajik civil war from 1992 – 1997 and the victory of Taliban in Afghanistan in 1996 - 2001 provided additional stimulus to insurgency in Central Asian region where all secessionist movements intensify their struggle and Afghanistan become epicenter of global terrorism. The Events of September 11, proved turning point against global war on terror, it draws US forces in Central Asia where both China and Russia victims of separatist movement got an opportunity to collaborate with US in its operation “*enduring freedom*” to overthrow Taliban which was constantly supporting all groups hostile to them. China very shrewdly seized the opportunity to link Uighur nationalist movement to link it with Taliban without distinguishing between them and prompt US to take military action against them and promised to provide US all military assistance and information sharing without actively involved in war. China knows that defeat of Taliban regime and other Muslims extremists will weaken Uyghur separatist movement and it will have better grip over entire Central Asia (Ong 2006).

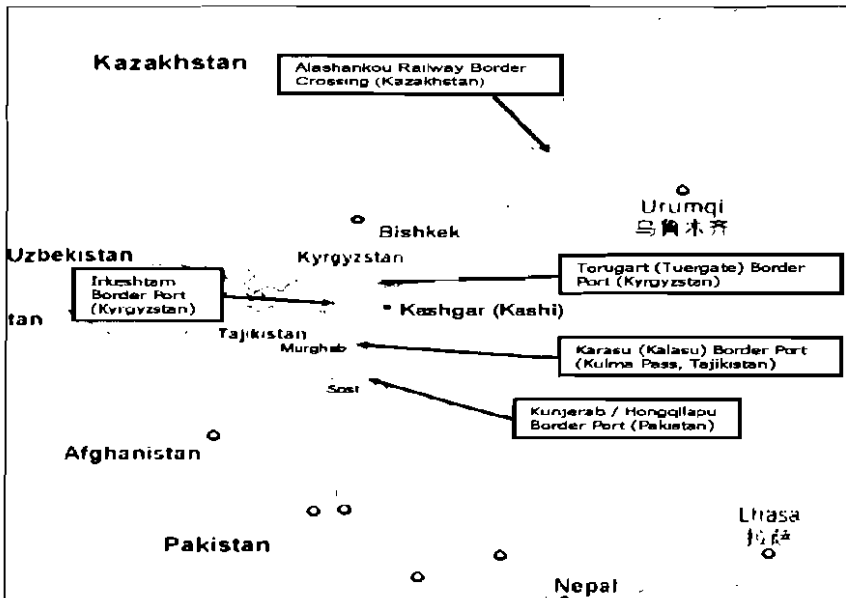
3.1.5 Drug and Narco terrorism

Other than curbing the separatist backlash in Xinjiang, China is also concerned about smuggling of drugs from Afghanistan which has become the largest source of income for all terrorist organizations in Central Asia. Afghanistan is the main producer of opium in the Golden Crescent region comprises of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. (Pallival 2011). The main drug producing provinces are Helmand followed by Kandahar and Farah. In 2007 92% of global opium production comes from Afghanistan due to high sale prices (UNODC 2008). Afghanistan’s long period of war, domestic warlordism and political and economic turmoil has encouraged drug production. Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan over the years has become a major hub of drug trafficking through which drugs are entered into China and are transported to the western countries and Russia. Chinese police due to lack of Information, porous border, Corruption and unprofessionalism are unable to check the flow of drugs. Some of the major highway routes used by drug peddlers are:

- From Pakistan—to Kunjerab / Hongqilapu) border pass—to Kashgar (*Kashi*;)—to Urumqi.
- From Tajikistan—to Karasu (*Kalasu*;—to Kashgar (*Kashi*;—to Urumqi.
- From Kyrgyzstan—to Tuergate to Kashgar—to Urumqi
- From Kyrgyzstan—to Irkeshtam [also spelled Ilkshtam, Ilkstan (*Yierkeshidan*; to Kashgar—to Urumqi.
- From Bishkek (*Bishekaike*; to Urumqi (Jie and Songlin 2009).

According to Chinese law enforcement agencies the increase in drug production in Afghanistan is directly proportional to the rise of extremist movement in Xinjiang and Central Asia. The money generated from the drug procurement is used for buying arms, imparting training and carried out terrorist activities in China. China is worried that despite NATO presence in Afghanistan they was threefold increase in drug production in Afghanistan, till 2011 when Afghan government impose ban on poppy cultivation. After 2001 Taliban increased drug production in Afghanistan so that money generated by drugs can be used against US forces in Afghanistan. Ethnic tensions in Xinjiang may have undermined the willingness of Uyghur's to Cooperate with Chinese police against drug traffickers and it is believed that there is a strong nexus between Taliban and Uyghur's separatist in production and smuggling of drugs so that they can use the generated money to achieve their ambitions. (Scott 2011)

Routes of drug trafficking from Afghanistan



(Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/af.htm>)

3.1.6 Taliban, Al-Qaida and Pakistan

The emergence of Taliban dates back to 1980's when US and Pakistan supported Afghan *mujahedeen* to oust Soviets from Afghanistan. The involvement of two superpowers in Afghanistan changed the international approach towards South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular as in next three decades both Pakistan and Afghanistan becomes hub of global terrorism. The area bordering Afghanistan and Pakistan for ex: Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtoon (KP) become epicenter of all terrorists operations launched against NATO and Pakistani army. The oust of Soviet forces, departure of US in haste in 1980's after funding *mujahedeen* for a decade, political and military vacuum and chaotic economic and security conditions played significant role in emergence and popularity of Taliban (Akhtar 2008).

Taliban a radical group of mostly Pashtun clerics emerged in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar around September 1994 was founded by Mullah Omar and was largely funded by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) through Pakistan's Inter services intelligence (ISI). By the end of 1998 they were controlling 90% of Afghanistan and were able to

install their regime over Afghanistan from 1996 - 2001. The Taliban rule was based on the strictest interpretation of Islam and their objective was to impose *shariah* (Islamic) law over entire Afghanistan and Pakistan. Taliban was largely criticized due to their inhuman policies against women and minorities chiefly against Hazara Shia's. US recognize the growing threat of Taliban after bombing of its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 but it was 9/11 which provoked US to take action against Taliban, when Taliban denied to handover Osama – bin – Laden to US (Rubin 2007).

Post 9/11 US vowed to eliminate Taliban and dismantle their entire network which was supporting Al- Qaeda. US needed Pakistan support to launch its war against Taliban, Pakistan which has supported, recognized and funded Taliban in past was reluctant to join hands with US. But on 19th September 2001 when US president George Bush declared, "either you are with us or with the terrorists" and "those who will harbor terrorists would meet the same fate". It intimidate Pakistan and it took U – turn on its policy towards Taliban and promised US to extend its full cooperation by providing air bases and transit routes to NATO forces to enter Afghanistan.(Shrivastva 2007) Pakistan objective in nurturing and creating Taliban were that they would recognize Durand line, a friendly Taliban regime will work under Pakistan and in future will provide access to energy rich Central Asian states, will provide a strategic depth against India and will secure its western border from Indian influence as it always accuse India of fuelling insurgency in Baluchistan by opening its consulates in areas adjoining Pakistan (Bahadur 2007). But recent documents and reports revealed that Pakistan double cross US as it secretly supported Taliban provide them safe passage, place to hide and divert the money they received from US to strengthen their military capabilities against India.

The Northern Western Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) become frontline in so called war on terror after overthrown from Afghanistan they have made it their new base and are operating from these areas. FATA shares 400 km porous border with Afghanistan the *pashtoon* on both sides don't recognize boundary between them and have strong ethnic solidarity and make it extremely difficult to monitor their cross border movement. FATA is one of the most neglected regions of Pakistan lack of socio – economic resources and basic facilities like

education, health and employment make it easier for Taliban to gain a foothold in the area. US has remained its policy against Taliban as “US- Af Pak” strategy to deal with Taliban as Taliban is operating in both Afghanistan and FATA in Pakistan where Afghan Taliban is fighting against Kabul administration and western forces whereas Pakistan Taliban is belligerent against Pakistani military and police. But they share same culture, goal, ideology and exchange fighters and expertise (Lieven 2009).

It is assumed that situation will become worse after 2014 as Pakistan and Afghan national army lack skills, equipments, numbers and motivation to uproot Taliban from its new base in FATA. It has alarmed the other regional players like China and India. China is worried that its disturbed region of Xinjiang shares border with FATA and which in past have supported (ETIM) and is worried about the security of its workers and projects it has initiated in Afghanistan. Insurgency in FATA means stationed of US troops near China and Russia border and granting memberships of NATO to former soviet allies which Russia has always objected. Huge presence of NATO forces and Pakistan army on both sides of the border has failed to check the growing menace of Taliban. There is resentment among local population because of US drone attacks which killed innocent civilians. The West and Pakistan government should look for other viable options rather than using force against Taliban. On contrary these attacks are used by Taliban to justify their *jihād* against NATO and America. The US is least bothered now to restore peace in FATA and Afghanistan as it has accomplished its goal by killing Osama- bin- laden and realized that it has lost its war against terror in Afghanistan and are geared up to leave by the end of 2014 (Ghufan 2009).

3.4 China’s economic interests in Afghanistan

China’s interests in Afghanistan extend beyond security considerations, as it has major economic interests in Afghanistan as well and Chinese companies are constantly getting rights to extract Afghanistan rich untapped hydrocarbon reserves amounting billions of dollars. In economic terms China is the only country which has gained maximum since 2001 in terms of economic investments in Afghanistan without directly involving in the war by surpassing India and Western countries. Afghanistan can be a great land of opportunities for China due to its growing population and China is the second largest

economic giant in the world. China has been accused of free riding on the US – led efforts to stabilize Afghanistan and gaining at the expense of United States and its allies in Afghanistan without its substantial contribution to ISAF. To add insult to the injury US troops are guarding the areas where Chinese firms are operating. The departure of US forces post 2014 mean that Chinese companies will lose an important source of security for their projects (Downs 2012).

3.4.1 Afghanistan’s rich mineral and hydrocarbon reserves

China needed immense natural resources to safeguard its energy security and to assume a super power status in world. Afghanistan’s rich mineral deposits and hydrocarbon reserves offer numerous opportunities for Chinese private and public companies. Afghanistan has vast mineral wealth which is valued at about \$1 trillion by the US geological survey and \$ 3 trillion by Afghanistan ministry of mines. The natural resources of Afghanistan include oil and gas in northern part of country lithium, iron and cobalt is between Herat and Panjsher valley, gold reserves are found in Northern provinces of Badakshan, Takhar and Ghazni. And copper fields exist in Jawzjar and Darband. The Aynak copper mine is located at about 30km southeast of Kabul (Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, Afghanistan 2013). China has following projects in Afghanistan:

- In 2007 China Metallurgical Group won a contract for a 30-year lease on the Aynak copper mine in Logar province, south of Kabul. The site is believed to hold one of the biggest copper deposits in the world. The Aynak mine is projected to produce some 180,000 tons of copper initially, of which China will be entitled to half. China also pledges to build, roads, schools and mosque for population in areas adjacent to the mine (Zyck 2012).
- In 2011 China national petroleum corporation (CNPC) and its Afghan partner, Watan oil and Gas secured the right to three oil blocks in the provinces of Sari-i-pul and Faryab in northern western Afghanistan which CNPC expects to invest \$ 400 million initially to develop.

- In the instance of the Anyak deal, CMGC, in collaboration with the Chinese government, have undertaken to construct a 400-megawatt, coal-fired power plant and a shipment railroad that will connect Xinjiang with Pakistan via Tajikistan and Afghanistan.
- Chinese aid from 2002- 2010 was about \$205.3 million at the same time China has remitted \$19.5 million of debt. It invested in construction a lot for ex: construct state hospital in Kabul and Parvan, irrigation projects, human resource training, where by more than 800 afghan officials and technical staff have been trained in China. And export tariff privileges whereby it decided to exempt taxes on 95 percent of commodities imported from Afghanistan.

China- Afghanistan trade volume (\$ millions)

Year	Total	China's export	China's import
2002	19.99	19.19	0.08
2003	27.06	26.45	0.61
2004	57.92	56.97	0.95
2005	52.77	51.21	1.56
2006	100.66	100.47	0.19
2007	171.00	169.00	2.00
2008	-	-	-
2009	367.99	360.00	7.99
2010	715.70	704.00	11.70
2011	987.75	1085	13.55

Source: Sino – Afghan bilateral relations January 2009, <http://www.fmprc.gov.in>

Afghanistan and China's economic relations enter in new heights where both signed the treaty of "comprehensive partnership cooperation" during president Karzai visit to Beijing in 2010, both countries lifted custom duties on 278 commodities. Both China and Afghanistan have identified a number of sectors including natural resource, electricity, road construction and agriculture. Trade between them has increased three fold since

2005 (Trojseen 2010). China has visualized a dream of global super power in future needs massive hydrocarbon reserves in coming years and wants to develop Afghanistan and Central Asia as an alternate to its energy demand. It considers Afghanistan as a pivotal land bridge linking south to Central Asia. As bulk of Chinese oil and gas is coming from Iran and West Asia due to turmoil in West Asia and sanctions imposed on Iran China want to develop a “New Silk Route” by connecting Afghanistan to Central Asia via Xinjiang so that it can be less dependent on West Asia for its energy demand (Starr, 2008). The development these projects in Afghanistan have the potential to be the drivers of sustained economic growth in Afghanistan. It is estimated that the mining projects undertaken by MCC in Aynak and Hagigak iron ore deposits with Indian conglomeration will provide 90,000 jobs to Afghans and generate annual fiscal revenue of \$ 500 million annually (World Bank 2010).

China by engaging local Afghan youths in development projects like construction mining and maintenance wants to ensure that they should not again fall prey to Taliban and disturb its ambitions; it will have spillover effects to Uyghur separatist movement if they will not get required support from their Afghan counterparts. China wants to ensure peace, prosperity and development in the entire region bordering Afghanistan and Xinjiang. China is concerned that departure of US forces post 2014 means that it will lose a major source of security for their projects and doubt the credibility of Afghan police to provide them adequate security so that cooper can be reached to market from mines (Blank 2005).

3.4.2 Protecting Central Asian investments

China’s investments in Afghanistan have witnessed the largest hike compared to any other country. India, US and many western countries are actively involved in war in Afghanistan and have donated billions of dollars but China despite providing much less aid to Afghanistan have gained maximum in all sectors from mining to bilateral trade. India has donated US\$ 2 billion to Afghanistan while US investment is as high as \$ 56 billion and China has donated US\$ 75 million .China has invested millions of dollars in Afghanistan is now alarmed about its security and to protect investments made by it post 2014. China wants to reap long term objectives by investing in Afghanistan it knows that

economic security will lead to political security. It knows that investing in Afghanistan will lead to prosperity and high standard of living and stability in entire region and will generate jobs for Afghans and Uyghur's on other side of border and will result in political change in Xinjiang for their call for independence. It wants to integrate Xinjiang into reconstruction process in Afghanistan to check threats to its security. Many Chinese pipelines with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan pass through Xinjiang to integrate it with mainstream China. China knows that any instability in Afghanistan is bound to invite the intervention of other super powers. China is concerned that after investing of billions in Afghanistan US troops are leaving and will mark a power vacuum in region and this will intensify economic competition in Central Asia in search for oil by major powers and will threaten Chinese investments and goals (Ong 2005).

China is also worried about the security of its nationals and workers working in Afghanistan as in past times many Chinese engineers were threatened and killed in Afghanistan. If situation deteriorates post 2014 providing security to Chinese workers and projects will be a main issue for China as it could result in scrapping deals which it has entered with Afghanistan, and other Central Asian countries and will lose a major market to sell its products. China's knows that its role in Afghanistan may lead to a larger Chinese presence throughout Asia and bind all the countries of Central Asia together with Afghanistan under SCO. China can very aptly play this role due to its geographical proximity, sheer size, 1.4 billion population second largest word economy with 10% growth rate annually and willingness of its government to support diplomatically and finically the weak states of Central Asia (Downs 2012).

3.4.3 Chinese access to Gwadar port via Pakistan

To counter Indian influence in Afghanistan and Persian Gulf, China in 2002 responded by working together with Pakistan on developing of Gwadar port in Baluchistan province of Pakistan which is just 76 km from Chahbar port being developed by India The construction of the Gwadar port is an important component of China's overall initiative to facilitate trade with the landlocked states of Central Asia. Both China and Pakistan have shared interests in Afghanistan and are trying to develop strategically important Gwadar port which will provide them direct access to oil rich West Asia, heavily

populated South Asia and new resource rich Central Asia. China knows that by developing Gwadar port Afghanistan can be integrated into regional trade and transit network it will encourage cooperation and promote stability in Afghanistan. Opening up of Gwadar port will reduce Afghanistan dependence on India and Iran where Afghan goods are shipped through Chahbar port developed by India as China want to reduce Indian influence in Afghanistan. Similarly China wants to export copper extracted from Aynak mine for which it needs a convenient and accessible ports and Gwadar port can be of a great benefit to China. By using Gwadar port and developing transit corridor from Kashgar in China's Xinjiang province to Gwadar China want to reduce its dependence of energy from west by developing and integrating Iran and Central Asia (Observer Research Foundation Report 2013).

3.5 Power and Hierarchy of China in relation to US

The situation arises after 9/11 in Central Asia brought regional as well as extra regional players on the battle field again which remained of the "Old Great Game" of the 19th century. In Great Game of 19th century only Russia and Britain were involved but the rivalry between China and USA and other regional players will mark the beginning of "New Great Game". There is stiff competition between US and China to get hold over Central Asia. US wants that since it initiated war on terror spend billions of dollars and lost precious lives of its soldiers so it should determine the future course of action for Afghanistan and Central Asia. China on the other hand consider it as a regional Asian Hageman and thinks that responsibility lies with it to stable its neighboring Central Asian States by keeping US out of region because both states are eyeing to capture oil and mineral resources. The rise of China in past one decade has alarmed US as it knows that the next threat to US interests in future will come from China.

3.5.1 Keeping the US out of South and Central Asia

The war on terror started by US to eliminate Taliban and Osama- bin – Laden brought it to the regions of South and Central Asia, for the first time US stationed its troops in Afghanistan and Pakistan, build naval bases in Indian ocean get access to Pakistani military bases in Shamsi and Peshawar and transit routes passing through NWFP to

supply arms and ammunitions to NATO troops. China has a close vigil over this and is opposed to US long term presence in South and Central Asia. Since 9/11 America has been involved in stabilizing Pakistan and Afghanistan against threats of terrorism and Islamic radicalism and want to promote democracy economic liberalization and nation building (Raja Mohan 2008).

The new US – *Af Pak* strategy in 2009 and its announcement of surge of troops in Dec 2009 make China more skeptical of US intensions in the region. China's ambition as a powerful regional player with growing range of interests in Central Asia makes relations between Washington and Beijing more complex. US in its *Af Pak* strategy consider both Afghanistan and Pakistan as a same unit and pursue similar policy against them. However China consider both Afghanistan and Pakistan two different countries as Afghanistan question over Durand line and give more leverage to Pakistan and it fears that US by and entering in New Delhi – Washington axis and signing Indo – US nuclear deal might spoil its relations with Pakistan as Pakistan want similar kind of nuclear deal with Washington and China might lose its biggest ally in South Asia. Another Chinese concern is the encirclement of China by US and NATO by entering into formal alliance with India and South Korea, waging a war in Iraq, by establishing permanent military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and threatening Iran and North Korea over their nuclear enrichment will brought US more closer and involved in Asian affairs. According to China US policy is two folded to contain China in Asia and to get hold over energy rich Central Asia. US tries to undermine Chinese's Xinjiang separatist movement to link it with Chinese domestic problem with no global ramifications. China considers SCO as the only hope to counter US containment strategy (Guihong, 2003).

The nations of Central Asia are trying to modeling themselves on American style democracy where they want free press, respect for human rights, democracy and liberalization the colour revolutions in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine are testament to the fact and have made China more skeptical of their shift towards western democracy, is something which will have spillover effects in China and threaten its internal security in future (Pantucci 2010).

3.5.2 China Pakistan Special Relationship

China and Pakistan share close and warm relations and refer each side as an “all – weather friends” that is higher than the mountains and deeper than the oceans. Their relations date back to 1950 when Pakistan became the first Muslim country and the third non- communist state to recognize the weak and largely isolated China. The year 2011 marks the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan which were established on 21 May 1951. Their relations got further impetus in 1955 at Bandung Conference where both sides played an important role in promoting understanding, and developing friendly and cooperation between the two countries (Singh 2007).

The strategic rivalry with India has spurred considerable defense cooperation between Beijing and Islamabad. After 1962 Sino- Indian war and 1965 Pakistan India war, India’s growing ties with former Soviet Union created an alarming situation for both countries where both decided to enhance their cooperation in Defense, nuclear technology, border sharing and surveillance and decided to build Karakoram Highway, linking China’s Xinjiang province with the Northern Areas of Pakistan. China support Pakistan both diplomatically and economically with its two wars against India in 1965 and 1971 (Aneja 2006). India always accuse China of bias towards Pakistan on terrorism and think that China is using Pakistan against India as a balancer for its own self interests to maintain a balance of power in South Asia. Post 9/11 scenario Pakistan – China relations reach new dimensions where both supported US against its war on terrorism, enhance their cooperation and frequency of bilateral exchange visits increased. During president Mushraff visit of China in December 2001 both pledged to work together for peace, security and respecting sovereignty of each other where neither party will join any alliance with third party which infringes territorial integrity of either nation and signed several agreements in field of trade, communication and transfer of energy. Time and again they support each other to counter Indian influence in the region in 2005 China proposes Pakistan name as an observer status in SCO whereas in the same year Pakistan staunchly support China’s observer status in SAARC to counter growing Indian influence in Central Asia and South Asia. The chances of future cooperation between China and Pakistan are very bright with the changing of regional and global economic,

strategic and security paradigms as their policies are India centric, the emerging ties between India and US and Pakistan's deteriorating relations with US after hunting down of Osama- Bin – laden in 2011 inside its territory which Pakistan always denied and US congress scrapping of millions of aid to Pakistan. Both want each other to counter threat of regional and extra regional players in their vicinity (Azeemi 2007).

Pakistan considers China as an all weather friend whereas US is a fair weather friend. Post 9/11 US suddenly turned toward Pakistan provided it with massive aid to uproot Taliban, lift sanctions over Pakistan which it imposed after Pakistan nuclear test of 1998 and in lieu of that demanded Pakistani air space and transit routes for NATO troops and Pakistan's full cooperation on war on terror. On contrary China is less worried about Pakistan support of *Jihadi* groups rather it is more concerned about its own security that Pakistan should not provide support to EITM movement and its *madarsas* in area bordering Xinjiang have attracted students from the Chinese Uighur Muslim community. By cooperating with Pakistan and connecting Xinjiang with NWFP China is eyeing to reap long term benefits from its current planned infrastructure development in Pakistan, China wants access to Persian gulf and Central Asia whereas as Pakistan want Chinese support to bring back on track its crippled economy and infrastructure development in the form of aid. From Pakistani perspective Beijing has served as a loyal and trusted friend who backs its stand on India and its position on Kashmir. Pakistan also reciprocates China on vital issues by supporting its stand on Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang. China also can often count on Pakistan to act as an intermediary for China in the Islamic world (CNA Report 2010).

3.5.3 China's dream of Asian Hegemony

Being the largest country in Asia, bordering fourteen out of 42 countries by land, with the largest population, permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council, second largest growing economy and largest standing army in the world, China is all set to play a hegemonic role in coming years and obviously one of the decisive voices in Asian continent (Kondapalli and Mifune 2008). The peaceful rise of China in the last two decades, its growth rate of about 10% and massive economic development has alarmed the US and west that they cannot ignore China anymore and it is all set to

transform unipolar world into a multipolar world order. Events of 9/11 provide US an opportunity where it can directly involve in Asia, particularly in Central Asia where it has limited presence since Cold war as Central Asian States are more inclined towards Russia and China due to their ethnic and historical linkages. With the 2014 military drawdown of US forces is approaching China is preparing to fill up security vacuum in Central Asia making relations between Washington and Beijing more complex. Post 9/11 both China and US compete with each other to maintain their hegemony over Asia. US worries about rise of China and not rise of India, what concern China most is how to prevent US - Indian relations from becoming a formal alliance in South Asia similar to US – Japan alliance in East Asia (Guihong 2003: 161).

For more than a decade Central Asia has become a battlefield between NATO troops and Taliban about 10,000 soldiers of different countries are stationed near Chinese border the constant presence of US military in Asia harm Chinese interests. China is aware that US interests in Asia is not solely based on war on terror but also very much related to oil and gas deposits. It is quite possible that weak states of Central Asia might permit US to stay for some longer time to gain economic gains which will thwart Chinese ambitions. China want to develop markets of Central Asian states, want to exploit oil and gas by building pipelines and wants to link its western region with Central Asian economy but US presence in the region will undermine all these Chinese interests. China consider that September 11 incident provided an opportunity and excuse to US which has profound impact on Asian continent now, prior to 9/11 Asia was considered as center of post war competition where China with its supreme economic and military power was undisputed champion of Asia. US on the name of war on terror is trying to encircle China by forging alliance with its new partners in Asia to limit Chinese growth by its policy of 'carrot and sticks'. China under the umbrella of SCO has tried to restrict the US penetration into the region to some extent by improving its relations with Russia and India. China knows that by improving its relations with India it can keep US out of the region otherwise US at any time can use India against China in its containment strategy (Farroq 2007).

The location of South Asia is placed between oil rich Middle East and the Southeast Asian region. South Asia has a great importance for China and Indian Ocean has a pivotal

importance it connects oil rich Middle East with China, 75 percent of global merchant shipping pass through the Indian Ocean region. In future energy hungry China wants more energy to claim it as a competitor against US wants to divert its energy supply from Gulf to Central Asia which is more accessible, cheap, and free from piracy and terrorism. The signing of 30 years deal worth of \$ 400 Billion between Russia and China on 20 May 2014, when Russia – US relations are at lowest point due to Ukrainian crises is one such glaring example of China diverting its dependence on West and Middle East (Panda 2008)

Post 9/11 marked a “paradigm shift” shift in US policy toward Asia; US aim was to avenge 9/11 by punishing its perpetrators and destroying weapons of mass destruction. The branding of “Axis of Evil” to Iran, Iraq and North Korea in 2002 by President Bush reinforce Chinese perception that US has planned a long term military engagement in Asia by launching war against Iraq and threatening Iran and North Korea about their Uranium enrichment. Chinese policymakers are worried that in future after ending its occupation in Afghanistan US might launch military occupation against either of these two states and threat Chinese security as both Iran and North Korea are close to China. China wants its complete domination over Asia and no other outside power can dictate its will over Asia without considering Chinese interests in mind. China and Russia in past have extended their full cooperation to Iran over their nuclear program and criticized US for imposing sanctions on Iran (Kakihara 2003).

China wants to enhance its maritime power in Southeast Asia by claiming its control over South China Sea. Meanwhile, the South China Sea has developed into an intense hot spot in Sino – US relations in recent years. Since 1990’s China is claiming its sovereignty over territories and waters in South China Sea which in result has deteriorated its relations with Philippines, Malaysia Japan and Vietnam. The abundant reserves of oil and gas and in South China Sea makes the region as an area of potential conflict between Southeast Asian Nations and China. China’s claim and domination over South China sea no doubt will increase its stature in international relations. Once China controls South China Sea, it will become easier for it to get access to critical sea routes and possibly put Southeast Asia under its influence. With China supposedly claiming South China Sea as

its “core interests” a clash of interests seems inevitable between US and China in coming future if both sides do not come to terms through negotiations.

3.5.4 Summary

The current chapter deals with the China’s geopolitical interests in Afghanistan, the Chinese security concerns from Afghanistan and its economic investments in Afghanistan. The section first of this chapter dealt with Sino- Afghan historical relations and treaties signed by both of them. In next section I have thrown some light on Chinese concerns about Afghanistan, the support of Taliban to ETIM and policies adopted by China to curb this, the terrorist organizations operating from Central Asia and Chinese approach to deal with them and illegal money generated by drug trafficking to fuel insurgency in Xinjiang. In next section I have talked about Chinese interests and economic investments in Afghanistan. Discovery of rich mineral and hydrocarbon reserves in Afghanistan have renewed Chinese interests in Afghanistan and is investing heavily in copper and iron ore projects inside Afghanistan. In the last and third section I h talked about Chinese nexus with Pakistan development of Gwadar port to facilitate trade between China and Central Asian republics. And Chinese policies to counter growing influence of India and US near its border as it consider them as hostile to its security.

CHAPTER FOUR

Instruments of Chinese Soft Power diplomacy in Afghanistan

CHAPTER 4

Instruments of Chinese Soft Power Diplomacy in Afghanistan

4.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters I have discussed about the concept of Chinese soft power in detail, and have tried to illustrate how China is emerging as a new center of global politics. In Chapter third I try to find out China's global reach its interests in Afghanistan and what policies and tactics China adopt to achieve its goals. In this Chapter I would discuss about the instruments of Chinese Soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan, what are Chinese means and sources to get desired outcomes in Afghanistan? How China is trying to win the hearts of local Afghans? .And will discuss about Chinese aid and investments in Afghanistan. For this purpose I have divided this Chapter into three sections focusing on all instruments of Chinese soft power in Afghanistan. In section first I will discuss about Chinese humanitarian aid to Afghanistan since 2001 including military aid, monetary aid and its humanitarian assistance to Badakshan flood victims.And the problems faced bu China and International aid agencies to distribute ais in Afghanistan. Then I will through some light on Chinese investments in Afghanistan including Aynak Copper mine and coal fields. Chinese contribution to build Afghanistan society trough opening of telecommunication lines, schools, hospitals and Mosques. In section two I will chalk out Chinese strategy of cultural diplomacy in Afghanistan through cultural, educational and academic exchanges and providing scholarships to Afghan students to study in China. Further I will discuss about trade and transport linkages between China and Afghanistan opening up on International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chinese plan of revitalizing old "Silk Route" through Afghanistan to facilitate trade with Central Asian countries and Europe. In the last section I will talk about Chinese strategy to Counter India's influence in Afghanistan, to enhance its ties with Pakistan and reap the benefits of US withdrawal post 2014 and how SCO will help them to

achieve their goals in Afghanistan without worrying about regime in Kabul whether its Taliban or democratic government.

4.2 Chinese humanitarian aid Afghanistan to post 9/11

Over the last decade Central Asia, largely Afghanistan has become the most important geographical concern for China. Afghanistan has recently being more discussed in international platforms due to withdrawal of NATO by the end of 2014. From Chinese point of view post 2014 will be a defining year for both China and Afghanistan. Chinese strategic interests in Afghanistan are focused around economic relations, domestic security and to counter growing Indian and US influence (Reeves 2010 :24). Chinese government has designed short and long term policies to mitigate these concerns including providing aid to Afghanistan, immediately establishing its diplomatic relations with Hamid Karzai government after ouster of Taliban, granting Afghanistan SCO observer status and make huge economic investments. The goals of Chinese economic activity in Afghanistan are very clear, through large scale investments and rebuilding Afghanistan, China wants to buy peace for Afghanistan, eyeing to access its untapped natural resources by increasing its soft power in the region. This marks a departure from previous Chinese low key position on Afghanistan. Chinese policy in Afghanistan can be described as where in large extent, it manage to secure and has made substantial gains at the expense of security cover provided by NATO forces. There is lot of resentment in west due to Chinese refusal of sending its troops to Afghanistan and later on gaining lucrative investments in Afghanistan under the cover of ISAF. According to American commentators China is getting a fre ride for its modest contributions, while America is sacrificing its blood and treasure, the Chinese will reap the benefits (Kaplan 2009).

Hu Jian Associate professor of Yunnan Social Sciences University in China put forward a grand strategy for China in Afghanistan and argues that it will look after all Chinese strategic objectives in Afghanistan. Her grand strategy calls on Chinese government to stick following basic principles.

- China should participate actively in Afghanistan economic development. On contrary west is continuously devastating Afghanistan for last twelve years on war on terror. China should build up all institutions and generate a good will among Afghans.
- Increase cooperation with Afghan government on non- traditional security threats. Both government should work together to curb separatism, terrorism and extremism.
- Integrate Afghanistan into SCO to mitigate threats emanating from Afghan soil. All SCO members and observers collectively contort security and trafficking menace.
- To promote educational, cultural and diplomatic engagements with Afghanistan. Increase in people to people contact and hassle free visa policy will help to understand each other.
- Increase infrastructure, construction, better flow of information joint surveillance and economic development on China – Afghan border (Hu 2009).

China knows that 2014 will be a defining year and a test for China that its investments and reconstruction efforts will bring a positive result or not. China will host the Istanbul Ministerial Process, the major regional conclave between Afghanistan and its neighbors in August where the future strategy with newly elected government in Afghanistan will be formulate and what role it will play post 2014 will be discussed, one thing China has made clear that unlike Soviet withdrawal it is not going to sit quietly and see the country plunges into civil war again. The role played by Pakistan and other regional players like Russia India and Iran will be interested in this regard. China tools in Afghanistan are

limited it has no intentions to engage in security role and political developments unless they are not creating disturbance in Xinjiang and provide support to ETIM (Small 2014).

China post 9/11 emerged as a single largest investor in Afghanistan in many areas ranging from telecommunication, building roads, bridges, schools, Mosques, hospitals and investing in copper mines, many hope that Beijing can be persuaded to play a bigger role in Afghanistan. China in 2001 with the opening up of its embassy in Kabul provided 30 million *yuan* worth of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Since then China has immensely increased its aid to Afghanistan, at Tokyo conference China's special Envoy to Afghanistan Wang Xuexian announced US \$ 1 million aid to Afghanistan followed by US \$ 150 million to reconstruct Afghanistan. In 2006 China provide an addition 50 million *yuan* in aid while signing good – neighborly treaty with Afghanistan.(Fox and Korski 2008). In 2010 China remitted \$ 19.5 million of debt to Afghanistan, In 2011 China decided to provide 150 million *yuan* to Afghanistan. The other ways in which China has helped Afghanistan includes construction of state hospital in Kabul and Kandhar, establishing irrigation project at parvan digging up tube wells, imparting human resource training where more 800 Afghan officials and technical staff were being trained by China(Xinhua 2012) During meeting of Chinese defense minister Liang Guanglie and his Afghan counterpart Abdul Rahim Wadak China pledge to support Afghanistan militarily by providing training to Afghan forces, joint military exercises, and clear mining in Afghanistan but refrained from sending troops to Afghanistan (Jia 2011).

On 2 May 2014, a landslide hit at the Northeast province of Badakahan in Afghanistan leaving 280 people dead and many render homeless. In an attempt to reach to the victims of landslide, China offered humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Chinese ambassador to Afghanistan Deng Xijun offered all support to Afghanistan including clothes, food and shelter. He said that Chinese government is deeply saddened by this disaster and ready to provide all assistance to Afghanistan and Afghan government should provide us with the list the objects they want. Chinese president Xi Jinping sent a message of sympathy to Afghan President Hamid Karzai expressing condolences for those affected by disaster and promised to support China's full cooperation in rehabilitate the victims of disaster.

China also announced 10 million *yuan* (\$1.62 million US) in humanitarian aid to the victims of landslide (Xinhua 2014).

4.3 Problems faced by China for humanitarian aid distribution in Afghanistan

After more than a decade of major security, development and humanitarian assistance international community has failed to achieve a stable, prosperous and economically viable Afghanistan. Despite billion dollars of international aid, Afghanistan is still not able to provide basic amenities security and good governance to majority of its population, and remain a fragile state lacking human security. After the withdrawal of US forces it is quite possible that Afghanistan again will plunge into a civil war as Afghan police, army judiciary and weak institutional system lacks a coherent policy to deal with Taliban menace. The survival of Afghanistan merely depends on international aid and how international community will live up to its promise after 2014. The impact of international assistance will remain limited unless the donors particularly US device a better mechanism to deliver aid focusing on targeted areas, stop large scale corruption, waste and spending money on counter insurgency programs (International Crises Report 2011).

The international community has promised aid worth of \$ 90 billion to Afghanistan since 2001, but only \$ 57 billion has been given to Afghanistan and most of which has been spend on counter insurgency and war efforts (Development Cooperation Report 2011). The international community has failed to fulfill its pledge to rebuild Afghanistan. Another major problem in Afghanistan is the distribution of funds between center and provinces, due to heavily centralized political and public financial system and the inability of provinces to generate funds for themselves. The international community has devoted much of its resources in security sector that is to strengthen Afghan Security Forces and Afghan National Police which is still incapable of countering insurgency and ensuring stability and is unable to protect its citizens against organized crime and enforce law and order. Whereas China's approach in distributing aid to Afghanistan was somehow different. Majority of UN aid agencies and US provided military and financial

aid to Afghanistan in the form of dollars without directly involving at grass root level which resulted in corruption and wastage. On the other hand Chinese aid mainly focused on reconstruction of Afghanistan and opening employment avenues to Afghan citizens, they construct schools, hospitals and roads, create good will among local Afghans. US was frequently criticized for killing innocent Afghans in its drone strikes and its anti polio vaccination. Taliban accused health workers who administer anti-polio drops of being US spies and western plot to sterilize Muslims (Dawn News 2012). In case of Afghanistan China's strategy, interests and goals are very different from US mainly focusing on stability in Xinjiang and to prevent the impact of "Colored Revolutions" of Central Asian states on China and use SCO as a tool to chase its strategic interests vis –a-vis India and US (Zhu 2010: 124).

Recommendations for China and International aid Agencies in distributing aid to Afghanistan:

- Delink non – military assistance from counter insurgency targets increase engagement with Afghan state beyond Kabul and include provinces in identifying, determining and implementation of funding priorities.
- Limiting the use of foreign private contractors and NGO's to curb corruption, provinces should have their separate share the donor country should have an effective mechanism to distribute aid minimizing the role of ministers and war lords.
- Ensuring that military resource and personal are not deployed to provide humanitarian aid. Afghanistan National Disaster Management authority and provincial Reconstruction teams should administer aid distribution.
- There should be more investment in the fields of energy, industrial and agriculture sector so that Afghanistan can generate its own GDP World Bank and Asian Development Bank should provide loans on less interest to Afghanistan.

- Priority areas should be strengthening Afghan police, Afghan National Army, Judicial reforms ending support to Taliban greater transparency and Afghanistan neighbors should contribute more for regional peace and security (International Crises Group Report 2011).

From the above mentioned points it is quite clear that after more than a decade of too much wastage of aid the international donors should acknowledge the convergence between effective aid delivery, good governance and stabilization. Afghanistan neighbors, EU states and US should provide it humanitarian aid promised by them post 2014, so that Afghanistan be able to sustain till Afghanistan be able to generate its own revenue by exploiting its hydroelectric potential, the copper mine investments by Chinese and huge oil and gas reserves which approximately will take another decade. Afghanistan survival post 2014 is purely depends upon international aid and assistance, lack of zeal from US and other aid agencies will doubt the existence of Afghanistan post 2014. Moreover the recent tussle between presidential candidates pro American Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani over large scale fraud and rigging during 2014 elections will promote more hostility between them and will wide gulf between *pashton* and *Tajiks* to control reins in Kabul which will deter aid agencies and will provide an opportunity to Taliban to destabilize Afghanistan if its political system will be in shambles. Who so ever will elect as a president should take Afghanistan to the path of development and prosperity.

But one cannot ignore the positive impact of international aid to Afghanistan; due to international efforts Afghanistan now have a recognized government, a parliamentary system a constitution and independent election commission. It guarantees equal rights to all citizens including minorities and women which were not during Taliban regime. Literacy rate has improved now 6.2 million children are attending school, more and more girls are joining school, there is improvement in health sector now 85% of Afghans now have access to some kind of health facilities (World Health Organization 2100). Women occupy 28 % percent of seats in Afghan parliament highest in South Asia (CRS Report 2011).

for the largest investment in Afghanistan's history. the Aynak Copper mine in Logar province worth \$ 3.5 billion. China plans on extracting more than 11 million tons of copper from the mine over next twenty- five years. Once the mine will become operational it will contribute about 40% of total Afghanistan's GDP. (Wines 2009: 31). The Ayank mine is projected to produce some 180,000 tons of copper initially, of which China will be entitled to half. China has also pledged to build 400 megawatt electrical plant generating electricity constructing roads, schools and mosque for population in areas adjacent to the mine (Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, Afghanistan 2013). Another ambitious project which Chinese government was eyeing was development of Hajigak iron mine in Bamiyan province, the mine is believed to have 60 billion tons of ore and can provide employment to about 30,000 people, but this project was awarded to India by Afghanistan government in 2011 (Liabebo 2011).

In late December 2011, Chinese owned company CNPC successfully secured rights to explore the Amu Drarya basin in north of Afghanistan which is rich in oil and gas. In 2011 China national petroleum corporation (CNPC) and its Afghan partner, Watan oil and Gas secured the right to three oil blocks in the provinces of Sari-i-pul and Faryab in northern western Afghanistan which CNPC expects to invest \$ 400 initially to develop. Under this project Afghan government will receive 70% from sale profit, China also agreed to pay 15 % in royalties, as well as corporate tax and rent for land used by its companies. If this deal got successful Afghanistan in next 25 years will earn as much as \$ 7 billion which will enable Afghanistan not to depend on foreign aid. In March 2010 Chinese government signed three economic agreement with Afghan government as per the provisions of Agreement, China will provide Afghan workers with technical training, grant the state most favored status and cultivate economic cooperation in exchange Afghan government pledges full security to Chinese traders and workers working in Afghanistan (Rong and Sun 2010).

China and Afghanistan have subsequently signed multiple bilateral trade agreement since 2002 to advance overall relations and to facilitate trade between them. Between 2000 and 2009.Sino – Afghan trade grew from US\$ 25 million to US \$ 250 million making China Afghanistan largest trading partner (Xinhua News Agency 2010). Over the past ten years

China has steadily increased its involvement in Afghanistan; it has provided nearly \$ 200 million of foreign assistance to Afghanistan. To stimulate Afghan export to China, the Chinese government exempts tariff on 278 commodities from Afghanistan. The major commodities China export to Afghanistan are electronic equipments, machinery, building material, domestic appliances, light industrial goods and green tea. China imports from Afghanistan are carpets, cotton, sheep leather and other items. Majority of the trade between them is through Wakan corridor (CSIS Report 2012).

China is expanding its commercial interests in Afghanistan, Chinese giant telcommunication companies ZTE and Huawei in partnership with Afghan government are providing digital telephone network to 20,000 subscribers. (Small 2010: 82) China has also promised to construct a railway line linking Afghanistan with Xinjiang province to make Afghanistan a hub of regional trade. One of the positive outcomes of Afghan China relations is that China does not have any political interests in Afghanistan unlike other western countries.

China has actively involved in Afghanistan development and reconstruction, Beijing is involved in at least twelve development projects and infrastructure ventures in Afghanistan and a sizeable number of Chinese workers are working in Afghanistan whose safety is utmost priority for Beijing. US had made it clear that post 2014 it will be task of Afghan police and Afghan national army to provide security to Afghanistan, this makes China skeptical about safety of its workers and mines and have put Aynak Cooper mine project on hold due to security reasons till 2014 and Amu Darya oil extraction was stopped in August 2013. China has made it clear that it will review security situation after 2014, before starting work in mines. How much Afghanistan is going to gain with Chinese investment will be clear only after 2014 in the recent meeting of President Hamid Karzai with Chinese premier Xi Jipping in 2014 President Karzai urged China not to withdraw from mining projects and promised China full of security. China however has refused to send any troops to Afghanistan post 2014 and want that Afghan security will be look after collectively by regional players like Russia, India, Iran and Pakistan. The problem for China is that none of these countries have expressed their willingness to send troops to Afghanistan. It is quite possible that situation in Afghanistan will

deteriorate if no other country will support Afghanistan militarily, Afghan police and National army lack skill and resources to deal with Taliban without external support. In recent meeting of President Karzai with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Russian President Putin Afghan president demanded military equipments from both to strengthen their army which both countries denied. The best option for China is that after investing huge money already in Afghanistan it should not scrap deals rather People Liberation Army (PLA) should guard Aynak mine and other Chinese projects and civilians same as that of Indo Tibetan Border Force (ITBP) is guarding Indian development projects its workers and diplomats stationing outside Indian Embassy in Kabul.

4.5 Institutional and Cultural exchanges between China and Afghanistan

It is believed that Afghan- China relations date back to seventh century when Chinese monk travelled through Silk Road to visit Buddha statues in Bamiyan, blown up by Taliban in 2001. China and Afghanistan had a long history monks and merchants travelled through Silk Road to reach Afghanistan. Their diplomatic relations were established in 1957 when premier Zhou Enlai and Vice premier He Long visited Afghanistan. Their relations were mostly cordial both sides never interfere in each other's internal matters and respect boundary between them, their relation reached new height where both sides in 1963 signed a boundary treaty. China condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and till 2001 there were no official or diplomatic exchanges between them. However after the ouster of Taliban China was first country to open its embassy in Kabul and their relations again started growing. China established economic relations with Afghanistan when US and NATO forces were busy in deploying tens and thousands of men and dollars in Afghanistan.

China was the first country visited by President Hamid Karzai in 2002 after formation of his government and provides an impetus for good relations between them. Since then there had been many cultural, educational, trade and academic exchanges between them. After 2001 there has been "Multi track diplomacy" between China and Afghanistan

where people to people contact, citizen and scientific exchanges, international business negotiations, international cultural and athletic activities have increased. China improved its trade with Afghanistan and finds it a new market for Chinese products, Chinese traders went to Afghanistan and today Afghan markets, offices and household are full of cheap affordable Chinese products.

The 2006 treaty of "Friendship, Cooperation and Good neighborly" between China and Afghanistan opened floodgates for educational and cultural exchanges between them. In the field of education China is providing scholarships to Afghan students willing to study in China. In 2009 Chinese government funded thirteen Afghan students for two years in Taiyuan University of Technology in Shanxi province. China will provide free tuition, board and food and a monthly stipend during their stay in China (Worrel 2009). In March 2010 Hu – Jinato specified that China would subsidize education, cultural and health exchanges and train number of Afghan workers, civil servants and diplomats. In 2013 Chinese classes were opened in Kabul University by ambassador of China and chancellor of Kabul University Mr. Habibullah Habib. Chinese ambassador promised 52 scholarships for Afghan students to study in China. The Chinese study center building in Kabul University was built by the support of China. In 2010 Chinese and Afghan government celebrate the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between them, on this occasion both governments pledge to establish closer relations through regular cultural and educational exchanges and aimed at increasing mutual understanding between citizens of both the countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs People Republic of China 2010).

To spread Chinese language in Afghanistan, China opened Confucius institute in Kabul University in 2008 which is the sole of Chinese culture and education exchange in the country. Up to now, Confucius Institute in Kabul University has enrolled 174 Afghan students in 5 years and 50 of them have studied in China for two-year course with scholarship sponsored by the Chinese Government. Out of 33 graduates, some have been employed by local Chinese companies, some work for the Chinese Embassy in Kabul and others become lecturers of the Chinese language in Kabul University. On October 20th 2013, the Chinese Embassy in Afghanistan and Confucius Institute of Kabul University

jointly held "My Chinese Dream" speech competition in Chinese embassy in Kabul in which around 40 students take part and prizes were distributed by Chinese ambassador to Afghanistan Deng Xijun who was very delighted to see young Afghan students learning Chinese and extend his full support to Afghanistan for further promotion of Chinese language (Xinhua 2013).

Chinese president Xi Jinping invited Afghan President Hamid Karzai to attend the opening ceremony of Euro-Asia economic forum on 25-28 September 2013. This was first meeting between Afghan president Hamid Karzai with Chinese President after the change of leadership in Beijing after a decade expectations were high in Afghanistan that how new leadership in China perceives Afghanistan and will it follow the policy of previous leadership? During the visit Chinese president has his Afghan counterpart Hamid Karzai held talks with each other in a friendly and cordial atmosphere. Both sides discuss on wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues and reached on broad consensus. The two sides believed that the "Treaty of Good Neighborhood and Friendly Cooperation" and joint declaration made by Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and People Republic of China in June 2012 has a profound impact on the development of heir relations. After their meeting while addressing media both sides make joint declaration and agreed to work with each other on following areas to broaden strategic and cooperative partnership which include:

- Both sides would continue to strengthen their cooperation in economic, political, cultural and security fields and in international and regional affairs the five pillars of bilateral cooperation between them.
- In order to increase mutual understanding and trust both sides agreed to strengthen the high level exchanges between leaders, political thinkers and academicians where they would be able to exchange views on bilateral relations.
- Both sides express their firm support to issues concerning national sovereignty and territorial integrity and promised not to allow their respective territories to be

used by any terrorist organization. Afghan side reaffirmed its commitment to its policy of one China and express its support on Chinese position on Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang. China also reaffirmed its commitment to respect Afghanistan sovereignty, national unity and development of path suited to their national conditions.

- Both sides express their willingness to explore the ways to expand cooperation in fields of trade, investment, energy development, infrastructure development and agriculture. China will provide more support to Afghanistan to develop its economy and improve its people livelihood and impart technical training to unskilled Afghan workers.
- Both sides agreed that they will work vigorously to promote exchange and cooperation in the cultural, educational, health, media and other fields increase people to people contact. Chinese side invited Afghan side to participate 13th Asian art festival in Kuming this November. China will provide training in education and Hydraulic engineering to Afghans, will increase government sponsored scholarships. Both sides welcomed Signing of (Memorandum of Understanding) MoU between Shaanxi Normal University and Kabul University.
- Two sides express strong rejection of all forms of terrorism, extremism and separation. Both sides sign extradition treaty between them and agreed to intensify cooperation in security field to to combat threats of illegal arms trafficking, narco terrorism and strengthening cooperation in non-traditional security fields such as disaster prevention.
- The two sides agreed to stay committed in the Istanbul process with a view to build confidence at regional level. Both sides call for a stronger role of SCO to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan, Afghanistan welcomes China's inclusion as an observer member in SAARC (Ministry of External Affairs Government of Afghanistan 2013).

On 22 February 2014, Chinese foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with his Afghan counterpart Zarar Ahmed Moqbel in Kabul where both sides discuss wide range of issues. Yi expressed that Afghanistan is an important neighbor of China and China pursued a friendly policy towards Afghanistan. Wang express his willingness to celebrate 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Afghanistan next year and plan series of cultural programs, people to people contact, more youth and educational exchange programs, so that the deeply rooted friendship between China and Afghanistan should pass to the next generation. In reply Moqbel expressed his thanks to Yi, and reiterated that China was always a good neighbor and friend of Afghanistan and Afghan people cherish the China- Afghan friendship very much. China knows that it is not possible to win Afghanistan by the use of force or threat as history is a testament to it both Russian's and British Empire were never be able to woo Afghanistan to their side in 19th century, nor that of US in 21st century. Discovery of rich hydrocarbon reserves and Afghanistan's strategic location has renewed Chinese interests in Afghanistan and China by employing its soft power in the form of aid, cultural exchanges, granting observer status to Afghanistan in SCO and investments is leaving no stone unturned to make Afghanistan as its ally post 2014.

4.6 Revitalizing old Silk Route between China and Afghanistan

The Silk Road was served, some four thousand years ago as a trade route connecting regions of China, Central Asia and Middle East with other regions of the world lifting them out of isolation and providing them with access to new markets. The traders along the Silk Road carried raw or furnished products like silk, precious metals, stones, ivory furs etc. It was not only a trade route but was a meeting point between various religions, new ideas, civilizations and cultures and represented economic and cultural interconnectedness. The Silk Road was spread through its various branches and routes stretching East- West from China through Middle East and Central Asia to Mediterranean Sea and Europe as a well as to the Northern reaches of Asia and Indian sub-continent. The Silk Road gradually lost its importance due to developments in maritime transportation and political unrest in the region (Ganguli 2011).

The "New Silk Road" strategy was announced by US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton in 2011, where post 2014 US after withdrawing military forces from Afghanistan, will maintain its interests in Central Asia by launching an initiative that aims to improve stability by facilitating and enhancing regional cooperation in trade energy and transportation. The New Silk Road initiative is focused on Afghanistan as a main hub of economic integration, regional cooperation and transportation. It means building up of more railway lines, highways, energy infrastructure and operationalization of proposed pipelines running through Afghanistan into India. Silk Road initiative will advance liberalization of trade, foster economic cooperation, increase trade volume and establish people to people contact between Afghanistan China and rest of Central Asia. It is believed that rich oil and gas reserves of Afghanistan and its location at crossroads of Silk Road will provide much needed support to Afghanistan post 2014 and will attract more investments and provide hope to its people. The thrust on reviving The "Old Silk Route" is first global strategy for enhancing trade and fostering peace proposed by new Chinese leadership. According to the Chinese Foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying

"The maritime Silk route emphasis on improving connectivity but more importantly, it aspires to improve China's geo-strategic position in the world".

Since the "Tang Dynasty" the Silk Road was a major channel of communication between China and the outside world.(Fedorenko 10: 2013). China has made significant investments in Afghanistan to develop its road network and is working with Pakistan to develop Gawadar port for shipment of goods. The idea of reviving old silk Route was again outlined during Li Keqiang 's speech during 16th ASEAN- China summit in Brunei and Xi- Jipping speech at Indonesian Parliament. According to both the leaders Afghanistan holds the key to revitalize the Silk Road

"Afghanistan is a country with significant potential for economic development. It is well positioned to become a trade and business hub linking the markets of Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia, and China. The potential exists for sustainable economic growth in the future Afghanistan's commercial connections to regional and global economies were severely disrupted and must be redeveloped. The development of a

competitive private sector will depend on establishing access to foreign markets and developing viable export patterns" (Afghanistan National Development Strategy 2013).

China knows that Afghanistan economic potential will be fully realized when it will become a pivot in modern Silk Road project connecting markets of South, South East Asia and Central Asia and according to Center for Strategic and International Studies Report 2010, is focusing on following projects to harness economic potential of Afghanistan:

- China is trying to connect 2, 200 km Afghan Ring road which connect cities of Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar –i- shariff, Ghazni, Farah and Herat to facilitate trade. Completing Ring Road will allow the government to exercise greater control over Afghanistan and will generate revenue across the country.
- Connecting Afghanistan by Rail, China knows that Afghan rail network is virtually non-existent and is working with ADB on developing rail routes from Uzbek- Afghan border to Mazar – i- Sharif. It is also working on Kandahar rail line to link it with Pakistan rail system via Spin Boldak extension to the port of Karachi. The final segment will connect port of Gwadar via Quetta to Karachi.
- China is trying to develop Afghanistan's potential as an energy corridor, and working on supplying electricity to Afghanistan rural areas and is in negotiations with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan over this. The most significant achievement of this is the linking of Afghanistan to the Uzbek electrical grid for the provision of electricity to Mazar-i- Sharif and Kabul.
- Connecting Afghanistan through Information technology, China is laying optical fiber cables along the country's highway to increase connectivity and more effective governance and to check corruption on borders (CSIS Report 2010).

China has visualized to create an integrated region of south and Central Asia where collective potential of human and natural resources would be fully realized and Afghanistan serve as a natural land bridge between two main regions of the Silk Road (Haidari 2012). The new silk road looks more promising and instrumental in laying the foundation of regional cooperation, creating political flexibility, improving economic growth, offering trade diversifications and investing in transportation and mining sector. All these opportunities give Afghanistan and other Central Asian Republics to become important player in world economy. Particularly Afghanistan located on the path of ancient Silk Road, international trade and collecting revenue is the only option to sustain economic growth and development. The new Silk Road initiative undertaken by China, Russia, India and Iran and small scale bilateral and multilateral, governmental and private investments indicate a positive climate of building new trade and exchanges system that will bring prosperity to Afghanistan much like that of historic Silk Road. The success of new Silk Road project depends upon the stability of Afghanistan post 2014; the Chinese proposed investments, aid promised by western countries and the role played by other five Central Asian republics.

4.7 Trade and Transport linkages between China and Afghanistan

One of the most challenging tasks for China in Afghanistan is to focus on removing the impediments to continental transport and trade across Afghanistan territory. China has taken many initiatives in this regard including developing of Afghan Ring Road, Railway lines and connect it to its nearest ports etc, however there are many constraints in this project which is making it difficult for Chinese that is safety, lack of coordination, poor network of roads and inhospitable climatic conditions. China is willing to open trade and transport channels through Afghanistan, that if once it opened it will enable Afghanistan to emerge as a natural hub and transit point for roads, railway network, pipelines and electrical lines and guarantee security to both China and Afghanistan in Xinjiang, Chinese ongoing projects in Afghanistan will improve lives of average Afghans, and will generate revenue for Afghan government respectively. But the Chinese enormous efforts are blocked due to instability in Afghanistan. Until these impediments are removed

Afghanistan will remain as a barrier to continental transport via roads, railways, oil and gas pipelines rather than its most important hub (Chaturvedi 2011).

No country other than China is in a better position to lead the removal of existing impediments to assist trade with Afghanistan and its adjoining areas. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank are the most significant financial institution involved in development of trade and transport in Afghanistan. China has been mostly active in the Xinjiang region, building roads connecting Xinjiang to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and then with Afghanistan through Karakoram highway that links to the Arabian Sea the Khyber Pass and into India. China has built a road in Tajikistan connecting Xinjiang with Afghanistan via American built bridge over the Panj River. Chinese railway company Shitiju Group Corp is building a US \$50 million 33 mile railway line in Wardak province of Afghanistan. China's long term interest is to connect the Pakistani port of Gawadar which is being built by Chinese collaboration to its own railway system in western China from where it can export copper extracted from Aynak mine into China. China is also in talks with Iran where Iran is building a railway line between Khawaf and Heart in western Afghanistan. Despite international efforts to connect Afghanistan to major road and rail networks the unstable and underdeveloped Afghanistan is still a "cork in the bottle" that curtails trade along major corridors leading to it.

Absence of coordination between different projects and countries is also a matter of concern. The overall effort is enormous by all sides but everyone is motivated by its self interests rather than actually developing trade routes across Afghanistan. Chinese are constructing highway and rail network to transport copper from Aynak mine. Indian interests are largely motivated by Hagigak iron ore mine where it is building Zarang – Delaram road near Iranian border. But Afghanistan wants revenue, development and investments in whatever form come are welcome. No country other than China and India is in a better position to identify key blockages and organize necessary efforts to resolve them to make Afghanistan a hub of regional trade and major junction of rail and road networks in future (Starr 2010).

4.8 Summary

This chapter deals with the instruments China's soft power diplomacy in Afghanistan, how China is engaged in Afghanistan through its humanitarian aid. Since 2001, China has provided massive humanitarian aid in construction of Afghanistan and has promised to continue its assistance post 2014. In the preceding sections I have discussed about Chinese trade and investments in Afghanistan. Afghanistan rich hydrocarbon reserves provide massive opportunities for Chinese public and private enterprises. China has struck major deals with Afghanistan in field of copper extraction and Chinese companies are providing telecommunication services to Afghan citizens. In the next section I have discussed about cultural educational and academic exchanges between China and Afghanistan. China is providing loans to Afghan students to study in China trying to spread Chinese language in Afghanistan by opening Confucius Institutes in Kabul and is engaged in building of schools, Mosques, roads and hospitals to portray its positive image among Afghans. In the last section I have discussed about China role and interests in reviving old Silk Road to facilitate trade with Central Asian countries and Europe and to make Afghanistan as a hub of regional trade so that its security can be safeguarded by providing employment to Afghan citizens. Further I have discussed about trade and transport linkages between China and Afghanistan connecting Afghan ring road and linking it with North South Transport corridor and with Chinese railroad networks.

CHAPTER FIVE



CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The study has attempted to analyze China's active engagement in reconstruction of Afghanistan and its economic investments in the changed context of post Taliban period. Theoretically, the study has discussed the emergence and aftermaths of civil war both within the country and outside Afghanistan. The politics of international humanitarian assistance and employing soft power by China to gain economic advantages post 2014 have also been taken into account. The role of regional powers in shaping future of Afghanistan especially Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan has also been elaborated. In dealing with Afghanistan post 9/11 to gain economic benefits China has followed the policy of Deng Xioping as the golden mean " *Observe calmly, secure our position, cope with affairs calmly, hide our capacities and bide our time, be good at maintaining a low profile, and never claim leadership.* " Although China has been an active supporter, and promoter of Afghan peace and reconstruction but never aspires to claim its political leadership

Today Afghanistan is characterized by weak institutional system, faltering economy with high rate of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, corruption and bad governance. In medieval times Afghanistan was known as a land of Hindu Kush, a meeting point of diverse cultures and civilizations, a transit route to Europe and Central Asia and a place of learning and knowledge. But the great power rivalry between Czarist Russia and British Empire spoiled the basic fabric of Afghan society and turned it into a land of conflict and a never ending "great game". In the 19th century, Afghanistan acts as a buffer zone between two colonial powers and was never occupied by them despite their best efforts.

However in 21st century Afghanistan lost its historical legacy and once again became a battle ground for great power rivalry. Till Soviet invasion of 1979 Afghanistan was largely a peaceful country with its own foreign policy based on principals of NAM and ruled by hereditary monarchy. With the soviet invasion of 1979, for the first time in 21st century Afghanistan was once again plunged into a never ending civil war. The Soviet

invasion of 1979 draws the attention of other state and non state actors to involve directly in Afghanistan conflict and gave them a chance to manipulate Afghanistan according to their strategic and political interests. Within few months Afghanistan become a classic example of Cold War rivalry. Its problems aggravated with the Soviet intervention in 1979, and were further multiplied by their withdrawal in 1989 which resulted in chaos, anarchy and civil war. The decade long Soviet invasion resulted in the killings of thousands of Afghans; many flee their country, mostly to Pakistan and Iran.

After the withdrawal of Soviets in 1989, the Afghan war was hijacked by regional players like Pakistan and Iran who wants to control Kabul due to their diverse interests and situation of anarchy and chaos continues. Against this backdrop a group named Taliban emerged on the scene led by Mullah Omar a former *mujahideen* commander who fought against Soviets in 1980s with their base in Kandahar. Backed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates and funded by US through ISI, Taliban were able to capture Kabul in September 1996 and were controlling 90% of Afghanistan's territory when they were overthrown by US in 2001. During their five years rule Taliban imposed strictest interpretation of Islam based on rural puthun tradition and support insurgency in all parts of the world including Kashmir, Chechnya and Xinjiang which turned three regional powers India, Russia and China against Taliban. Their decrees were particularly directed against women and girls and were opposed to women education and killed scores of Shia's during their rule and committed grave human right violations. Afghanistan was dragged into Middle Ages with no source of employment, education, entertainment and its agriculture and industrial sector was in shambles.

US turned a blind eye towards Taliban and funded them with arms and billions of dollars as it consider Taliban as pro west and anti- Soviet and Iran. US overlook massive human right violations committed by Taliban and continued its support to them till 1998 when Taliban provided refuge to Osama- Bin- Laden who was accused of planning bombings in US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya.

But US stance towards Taliban suddenly changed in 2001, when US realized that Osama- Bin- Laden a guest of Taliban was behind the catastrophic attacks on World Trade Center and Washington DC. US ordered Taliban to instantaneously handover Osama- Bin- laden

to them or else face the brunt of war. US war against Taliban once again make Afghanistan as a battle ground between NATO forces and Taliban whose effects were disastrous for Afghan social life. Once again Tanks, stinger missiles, US drones and F-16 were up against Kalashnikov rifles possessed by Taliban inside Afghan territory mostly in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. As a result of US offensive Taliban were uprooted from Afghanistan in December 2001 and US installed a new regime under auspicious of Hamid Karzai. US deployed more troops in Afghanistan post 2001 to look after Afghan security and to uproot Taliban safe havens in FATA and other parts of Afghanistan to fully eliminate the menace.

It was expected that end of the Taliban will usher a new era of peace, development and stability in Afghanistan and signing of Bonn agreement was first milestone to achieve this cherished dream. By the time in 2001, when US forces entered in Afghanistan it was already devastated by 25 years of bloody civil war which has left 1.5 million Afghans dead and 60,000 to 2 million wounded and 6 million Afghans were refugees in Pakistan and Iran. Rebuilding Afghanistan was daunting task for US and world community as there was no infrastructure to work upon, all buildings were reduced to ashes, there were no institutions to provide social services, health and medical facilities were minimal and basic services were provided by UN missions and WHO.

US and ISAF are doing their best to restore peace in Afghanistan which still looks a far distant dream. Since 2006 after US launched drone strikes, Taliban has fled to NWFP and is continuing their guerilla war against US from NWFP region inflicting heavy injuries on NATO troops. Pakistan has continued its support to Taliban and is supplying them with weapons, money and place to hide and simultaneously is extracting billions of dollars from US to fight against terrorism which it has used to strengthen its security against India. Since 2001, Pakistan military regime has double crossed America by providing support to Taliban and extracting huge sum of money in lieu of that. Massive loss of US dollars and its soldiers in Afghanistan results U- turn in American approach towards Taliban in 2009, when US president announced troop's withdrawal by the end of 2014. US have constantly pressurized regional players like India, China and Russia to send their troops in Afghanistan to maintain security which was denied by them all the

time. US lately realized that it cannot win covert war in Afghanistan and after killing of Osama- Bin- Laden in 2011 inside Pakistan's territory it has severed relations with Pakistan and has made it mind of final troop withdrawal by 2014. US consider that its objective of killing Osama- Bin- Laden has accomplished and now it has nothing to do in Afghanistan and is leaving in haste by handing over Afghan security to incapable Afghan security forces.

The departure of US forces has brought regional players in forefront the most prominent among them is China. Afghanistan shares 76 km of border with China via Wakan corridor and instability in Afghanistan will have spillover effects on China particularly in its volatile Xinjiang region. China knows that Afghanistan can never be won by war or military occupation. Afghans are most humble and hospitable people who follow their rural tradition *pashtunwali* and only way to woo Afghans to its side its soft power and by providing them economic aid by building schools roads and mosques, it can generate a good will among local Afghans and can portray its positive image.

China knows that with the discovery of rich hydrocarbon reserves in Afghanistan it presents a great potential of trade relationship with it, but seeing the turbulent nature of Afghan political situation it is extremely difficult to anticipate future of this. Reconstructing Afghanistan will be a monumental task for China one that required broad international support, significant human resources, unconditional commitment by international donors and short, interest free loans by ADB and World Bank. The ongoing war going inside and outside country also makes situation more difficult for China. Till today China's policy could be described as one where it has sought to, and to a large extent have managed to secure substantial gains by investing in mines and copper ore projects at the expense of security cover provided by US forces, without contributing in Afghan security sector. Chinese involvement in Afghanistan was negligible throughout 20th century, but the discovery of large natural resources and growing energy appetite of China has brought it into Afghanistan post 2014. To achieve its aims it has employed soft power strategy in Afghanistan and has learnt lessons from Soviet and American invasion that only possible way to win Afghanistan is only through soft power. Due to its alliance with Pakistan, China will never take a military action against if they come to power post

2014 rather it will maintain a low profile unless and until Taliban do not hurt its workers and ongoing projects inside China. China has already poised itself in the region to play a dominant role post 2014 it has increased its political clout in Central Asian states. China in 2001 formed SCO and granted its membership to all former Soviet republics except Turkmenistan who voluntarily choose not to join any alliance and to follow its policy of isolation. In 2012 China granted observer status to Afghanistan to engage in Afghanistan more proactively. So that it should not drift towards India centric SAARC. China consider SCO as a platform where it can address issues of separatism, terrorism and fundamentalism with Afghanistan and collaborate with Afghanistan and other Central Asian republics to check illegal arms trafficking, narco terrorism and security threats emanating from Afghanistan.

If Taliban again will control the political leadership in Afghanistan, China will look for Pakistan to get a strategic depth against Taliban and in worst case scenario as a last resort will halt its projects in Afghanistan and will simply walk away out of Afghanistan. China knows that if it will enter in military confrontation with the Taliban, it will spoil its relationship with Pakistan and Muslim world and will meet the same fate as that of Soviets and Americans.

However, the bulk of Chinese aid is concentrated on economic and infrastructural projects as China has tried to avoid giving any impression that it wants to shape internal politics of the country. Chinese assistance has targeted the key sectors touching day to day lives of ordinary Afghan citizens such as health, road construction, telecommunication, power projects, building of Mosques and schools, reduction in tariffs, opening its markets for Afghan merchants and cultural exchanges. All these initiatives have generated a positive and benign image of China among local Afghans. China wants to employ local Afghan citizens in nation building and its mine extraction projects so that they should keep away from Taliban and do not create disturbance in Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan. By generating good will among Afghans and providing them employment opportunities, China wants to extract information of EITM leaders hiding inside Afghanistan who are involved in recent terrorist activities. With the 2014 looming

large in the horizon. China has taken stock of several security and strategic challenges that could possibly emanate from Afghanistan

For China a stable Afghanistan will open gates of trade with rich Central Asian States, prospect of which will be highly dependent on the situation in Afghanistan. Any instability will invite the attention of extra regional players which will blemish Chinese aim of trade with Central Asian Republics. Therefore friendly relations with Afghanistan are in national interest of China. The year 2014 is going to be very crucial for China as Presidential result is awaited and NATO forces are preparing for departure. A stable Afghanistan is essential for peace and security in the region. Hence security prevailing in the post 2014 will determine the course of Chinese foreign policy. If Afghanistan post 2014 remains peaceful and stable it will enhance Chinese presence in Afghanistan and on other side if Taliban takes control of Afghanistan it would be a tough time for Chinese policy makers.

No doubt, the path for Afghan peace process is not an easy one. But on a grass root level, China should help to build proper education system like more construction of schools and universities in Afghanistan. An educated class earning their own livelihood will be more concerned about their country and cannot be lured by Taliban. China can provide training to women for their emancipation, should construct separate schools for girls as Afghan's are reluctant to send their girls to schools with boys. It should impart new farming practices and skills to farmers so that they can generate alternate source of income and stop cultivating opium. China should invest in industry and share benefits of copper mine projects with Afghanistan so that it can generate its own revenue without depending on foreign aid. The PLA should impart training to Chinese security forces so that they can take control of security situation inside Afghanistan post 2014.

In nutshell, we can conclude by saying that before it gets late, China should formulate a concrete policy and work out on a proactive strategy to address Afghan problem. There are many more potential areas for investment in Afghanistan where China would be welcome. In an environment where Afghan government and citizens wants to free itself from US and west China has a good chance of making inroads inside Afghanistan. China should make use of past experience to chalk out a new strategy for Afghanistan where all

stake holders and ethnic groups can be taken into account for the purpose of national integration. It may be time consuming but will yield good results if successful. The youth needs a reorientation, women need to be emancipated and warlordism needs to end to put Afghanistan back on path of development. This process has to be initiated by creating proper leadership with positive mind set and by removing ethnic disputes. Since China has experience, historical and cultural links with Afghanistan, its increasing involvement will open new chapters between them thereby giving opportunities to explore the areas of mutually beneficial cooperation. Hence it is clear that China is all set to emerge as an important player in Afghan end game and it will surely have its strategic implications for India as well as the whole Central Asian region

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