

**'RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA : A STUDY IN  
INTER-STATE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1991'**

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DECLARATION

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA: A STUDY IN INTER-STATE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1991" submitted by ARUN KUMAR is partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of the DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY. It is an original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of any university.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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TO MY PARENTS  
WITH LOVE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Few human efforts succeed without the cooperation of fellow human beings. And so in this exercise, I am indebted to many. I feel, it is high time to appreciate and acknowledge them.

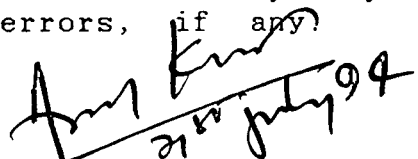
First of all, I, in all my sincerity, would like to record my sense of gratitude towards my Supervisor, **PROFESSOR R.R.SHARMA**. His affectionate and affable guidance, constructive encouragement have gone long way in writing and shaping my dissertation. Undoubtedly, his keen insight on the subject helped me to explore many difficult ideas during my research work. Above all, in the process of learning, his constant counselling has saved me from committing many errors, which otherwise, I might have committed. I am again especially thankful to him for all that he made many important suggestions during my work.

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Inspite of the fact that I have taken advantage from different streams of intellectual ideas, the views presented in the present work are entirely my own and I am solely responsible for errors, if any.

  
(ARUN KUMAR )

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## Introduction

The Soviet Union inherited the Russian Empire, which was created by the Tsarist Russia from 15th to 19th century. It had expanded from Baltics to Caucasus and from Central Asia through Siberia to the Pacific. USSR which had history of its own and was built on the proclaimed principles of self-determination and free secession saw its peaceful demise on 21st December 1991 at Alma Ata.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union began at Minsk on 8th December 1991, when the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus announced that the "Soviet Union no longer exists". Infact, the constitutive agreement of 8th December 1991 only designated Minsk (Bylorussia) as the seat of the coordinating bodies where the work-group of the CIS was to be operated. It does not, however, have any political functions, but solely assumes the task of coordinating the preparations for the meetings of the heads of state and governments. In practice, Minsk is the depository location for the CIS agreements, including the agreements which have not been signed by Bylorussia itself.

It was on 21st December 1991, at Alma Ata that eleven independent republics of the former Soviet Union signed the historic protocol and the Soviet Union formally ceased to exist,

without any massive use of force. One of the reasons for such a peaceful demise of a military block, which once threatened many parts of the world, is the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), whose intended purpose was to guarantee the performance of essential functions of the atrophying U.S.S.R. Disintegration being quiet peaceful and with it the emergence of CIS as a successor institution has given rise to various developments among the emergent independent states. These developments of varied nature are, on the one hand, of one to one relation i.e.:-

- (a) between successor states themselves.
- (b) between successor states and the neighbouring countries with respect to their socio-cultural and economic affiliations.

On the other hand, it is between CIS as a successor institution, and the independent republics as an integral unit of the erstwhile USSR. The future relations of these newly independent republics are to be viewed by looking into their growing political, economic, ethnic and military developments after the disintegration.

### **Commonwealth of Independent states**

The CIS was first founded on 8 December, 1991 by Belorussia, Russia and the Ukraine. This was followed swiftly by a summit in Alma Ata on December 21, 1991 at which there were

Kirghizia, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Moldova-to sign several documents to establish the bare structure of the CIS.<sup>1</sup>

Just only after a year most of the members have found themselves deadlocked on the terms of a proper charter for the CIS. In the course of the year the leaders have met several times and have signed multilateral accords in multifarious fields. For example the agreement on the joint use of airspace and of the Baikonur and Plestsk space-vehicle launching sites, reaffirmed the desire of the member states to have border troops under a unified command. This agreement was also to deal with the fulfillment of the commitments of the former USSR with respect to the international treaties on chemical weapons and the reduction of armed forces. The agreement on the creation of Commonwealth peacekeeping forces states: our "blue helmets" will be sent to hot spots only with the consent of the sides involved in a given conflict.<sup>2</sup>

The council of Heads of Government also discussed about the introduction of national currencies and the protection of the interests of those states that remain in the ruble zone. They also discussed the measures to normalise the financial

1. Andrei Zagorski, "Developments in the CIS : Challenges for Russia", Aussen Politik, II/93, p-144.

2. For the details of multilateral accords see, "Tashkent Summit Signals CIS Realignment", CDSP, VOL. XLIV, NO. 19, June 10, 1992. pp.1-2.



situation in the CIS. After all these agreements, discussions and suggestion it has been found by all of them that/a very few of them have been carried out. The most important reason for this deadlock was that the member states failed to agree on the things that really matter—control of over strategic armed forces and over nuclear weapons, and the establishment of coordinating institutions and joint economic bodies.

Disagreement on these issues have evolved from the sharply differing concepts of the very nature of the CIS. Is the CIS to be a coordinating agency or a supranational body?—the basic issue on which the Soviet Union broke up? The series of developments that took place in the form of various summits has thrown some light on the prospects and viability of CIS. Equally, if not more significant, were the agreements reached among the 'participants states' in Moscow [ 6 July 1992 ] and Tashkent [16 July 1992 ] which provided more substance to the collective security agreement reached in mid-May. The two meetings specifically addressed the twin and significant issues of the creation of a CIS 'blue helmet' force [Moscow Summit] for rapid deployment in the area of regional conflict within the CIS and the issue of security of the southern border of the CIS [Tashkent meeting.] The Moscow summit, among others, witnessed discussion and reached agreements on missile attack early warning systems, operational principles of Supreme Command of CIS joint Armed forces, and the approval of the Statute of the CIS State Border Security Committee.

What was especially not worthy was the active participation, and in fact insistence of the Central Asian republics in putting the two critical issues of "blue helmet forces" and the security of the southern borders of Central Asia on the agenda. Islam Karimov, President of Uzbekistan, had put the rest of the participants on the spot by his relentless pressure to put the issue of border security along the southern republics, especially those facing Iran and Afghanistan on the agendas of the Moscow Summit and Tashkent Meeting.<sup>3</sup>

In particular, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and President Yeltsin of Russia have expressed their unreserved support for a powerful CIS. Nazarbayev's initiatives, which were aimed at developing the CIS into a kind of confederation or even a union, are indicative of this stance. After Nazarbayev made the proposal during the Moscow Summit meeting of 6 July, 1992 to appoint a Supreme Economic Council of the CIS, it was suspected by some of the member states that the intention is to restore the Council of Ministers of the former Soviet Union. The basic reason for this suspicion was the Economic Council was to possess executive powers vis-a-vis member states.<sup>4</sup>

The summit meetings in Bishkek on October 9, 1992 and November 13, 1992 were held to patch up the cracks inflicted so

3. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, "Russian Foreign Policy and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus", Central Asia Survey, VOL. 12, NO. 2, 1993, p-202.

4. Andrei Zagorski, n.1, p.146

far, but as in the past these meetings churned out their own quota of accords. Kazakhstan President, Nursultan Nazarbayev's proposal for joint economic bodies with real power was turned down and on the eve of the summit, Azerbaijan's Parliament refused to ratify its former President's decision to join the CIS. This was also added by the Moldova by dropping out of the Summit (Bishkek Meeting). Ukraine and Turkmenistan, the two member republics completely rejected the draft charter in Moscow Summit, and by introducing its own currency Ukraine proved out the fact that, there was no prospect for a common CIS currency. The optimism was recognised by only six republics—Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizia and Armenia to form a rouble zone.<sup>5</sup>

Ukraine which was opposed of any new "power structures" of the kind contemplated by the draft charter and in particular to Russia's proposal to place urgently all strategic nuclear arms under its loan control was of the opinion that Russia's proposal "is a departure from agreements" reached in the frame work of the CIS" last year, the CIS, he explained, is "a transitional structure: . It cannot create any new" interstate structures within the frame work of the CIS". According to him the Ukraine's membership is vital for dividing the heritage of the former Soviet Union, and when all these problems will be solved "the status of the CIS and Ukraine's roles in it will be defined".

5. For details of Bishkek Meeting see, "Central Asia: 5-State Commonwealth Set up", The CDSF, VOL. XLV, NO. 1, February 3, 1993, pp. 3-4.

The Alma Ata summit, which proclaimed that the USSR "ceases to exist", set up two bodies for the CIS—a Council of the Heads of State and a Council of the Heads of the Government. Proposals for other "co-ordinating institutions" were to be formulated later for consideration by the heads of state. The Alma Ata Declaration confidently declared that "allied command of the military strategic forces and a single control over nuclear weapons will be preserved". Nine days after Alma Ata, another summit was held to put some flesh on the skeleton of the CIS. Some 15 agreements were signed, of which only two were of real significance. The agreement on strategic forces recognised the "need for joint command", which amplified the accord on nuclear weapons by making consultation with the heads of the other member republics" of the CIS. The other agreement on "armed forces and border troops" confirmed the right of each member to its own armed forces. Ya Kalisichenk was made commander in chief (c-in-c) of the border troops and was asked to work out "a mechanism" for their deployments.<sup>6</sup>

Another summit in Moscow from January 16 to 17 in 1992 was followed, in which, accords on naval symbols, the form of service, and others were deliberated. A working group of officials headed by a co-ordinator was set up on a permanent basis to work out the details for the CIS summits to consider. By now Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova declared that they will take command of their own armed forces. It was only during summit, Russia's dispute with Ukraine over the ownership of the Black Sea

6. For strategic nuclear forces see, SWB/SU/1532, Nov 7, 1992

Fleet became aggravated.

At the third summit, in Minsk on February 14, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova opted out of the deliberations on a unified Command for a two year transitional period. They refused to sign the agreement on "general purpose forces" or the one on the defence budget. All, except Moldova, signed the Strategic forces" Status Agreement which placed the command of these forces under the Council of Heads of State and in C-in-C of the Joint Armed Forces of the CIS. All the three republics gave a severe blow to the concept of a unified CIS force. These republics were also joined by the Belarus, who for a couple of years limited its participation.

In the international field, CIS gained new dimension when all the former Soviet republics except Georgia became the members of the North Atlantic Organisations Co-operation Council as well as the Council for security and Co-operation in Europe. But internally the divisions were getting deeper with the passage of time. At the Kiev summit on March 20 a set of eight documents on the armed forces was signed, but there was no agreement on the contributions to the maintenance of the Joint Armed Forces or even on the units that should be characterised as strategic forces. The accord on the CIS's peace-keeping forces for use in trouble spots on request was signed by all, but not so the one on border troops.

The clear cut differentiation was observed on May 15, 1992 in Tashkent, when a Treaty on collective securities on the lines of the Warsaw Pact was signed by Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. As a result of it a close knit nucleus emerged, comprising the six which signed the collective security treaty.

### Russia in the Transitional Phase

Though political and economic developments in Russia after the demise are at a transitional phase and are very essential to be discussed before sanctioning Russia's predominance in all the strategic theaters emerged after the disintegration. Going into the details of political developments in Russia, it is noted that Parliament and Government have continued to derive their powers from the old Soviet Constitution. The Soviet constitution have been amended 250 times (in the last 18 months), and is not clear about the separation of powers of government and Parliament. The Constitution is also not clear on the principle of rule of law, federalism or the role of political parties.

More over the present Parliament was elected in 1989 (based on Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms) and therefore the election of its members were not based on a straight multiparty party contest. Even though some of the candidates have won on the

basis of hastily formed parties, but all of them have changed or dissolved over the year, and as a result of it many parliamentarians are not accountable to any party. This development has to be taken seriously since a political party is an important mediator in a political system.

The predominance of Russia is again restricted by the role of President whose power has been confined by the Parliament. For instance, the President nominates the Prime Minister, but the Parliament is the one who confirms his choice. The President can veto the power of the law, but the parliament can overturn this through majority, as Presidential decrees have to be approved. This has led to endless disputes between the President Yeltsin and the Parliament led by Ruslan Khasbulatov.

It was Ruslan Khasbulatov only who played a key role in persuading Parliament to give Yeltsin extraordinary powers in November 1991 to control economic policy.<sup>7</sup> Before this he was the one who sided with Yeltsin in his confrontation with Gorbachev. And Yeltsin for his part had earlier helped Khasbulatov to become the parliamentary speaker, despite the vehement opposition of the "Conservatives".

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7. For the formation of a common economic space and on the progress of constitutional reforms see, CIS Inter Parliamentary Assembly ( St. Petersburg 28-29 Dec 1992), SWB/SU/1575, Dec 31, 1992.

It was only by the end of 1992, when the words "free market" and "democracy" lost their magic and the full weight of the structural adjustment programmes came to be felt by the average Russians, that "democrats" like Ruslan Khasbulatov and Alexander Rutskoi, whom Yeltsin had chosen as his Vice-President, have started distancing themselves from the disastrous policies of Yeltsin and his new advisers. There has not been any evidence of fundamental ideological differences emerging between the erstwhile allies in the recent times. The difference which has led the two staunch supporters of Yeltsin to maintain distance was only on the grounds of the pace of reforms introduced by the President and of course to an extent Yeltsin is authoritarianism.

It was been accepted by the some of the Russian academicians that the "shock therapy" applied by the Yeltsin Government to put the country irreversibly on the capitalist path, has only resulted in "plenty of shock but with no therapy". Ruslan Khasbulatov and Alexander Rutskoi were of the view that Yeltsin's policies would in the long run not only undermine the economy, but will also alienate the public from the new edifices of democracy that were being built up.

An effort to remedy the parliamentary wrangle and to break the jam Soviet politics was sought with the emergence of the Civic Union in June 1992. It combines three groups: the Democratic Party of Russia, led by N. Travkin (with 50,000 activists), Vice President Alexander Rutskoi's Free Russia People's



Party, and A. Yolsky's Renewal league. They all have offered an alternative programme for economic and political reform based on gradualism and democracy. The deadlock created between Parliament and Yeltsin, which was predicted to lead to Yeltsin's Waterloo during the seventh congress in December, was resolved because of the Civic Union ability to negotiate a deal with the President. Though Yeltsin gambled for an 'all or nothing' deal by threatening a referendum, the Civic Union managed to retain Parliament until April, when a new constitution is to be passed, a referendum held and elections called.<sup>8</sup>

Yeltsin for his survival was facing, as discussed before, nationalist and communist opposition, but has also sought credible support of the radical democrats and the free marketeers. As the referendum of April and the elections in December 1993 have shown, Yeltsin and the radical democrats together enjoy majority support despite the mixed voting results. Therefore ruling by plebiscite rather than gaining a parliamentary vote has itself been technique in this transitional period. However, one essential ingredient in the power coalition is still missing: Yeltsin having no party of his own. This accounts, in part, for his plebiscitary rule and the instability of Russian politics. His Ministers are his servants without independent political authority: in this they resemble American administrations.

8. For economic and political reforms under 'Civic Union' see SWB/SU, March 2, 1993. pp. B1/B3.

Such instability in economic and political situation in the transitional phase has only one important element of stability in Yeltsin's power equation - the Army. The army is the most committed to the former Soviet territory and is in itself the single Soviet institution in place; quixotically enough, it has become the surest supporter of this breaker of the soviet system and Union. Ideologically, the nationalist and Communist Opposition is closer to the army than to Yeltsin as the election results in December 1993 and numerous surveys have shown. But the Army prefers Yeltsin for being a single and reliable authority which parliament or Duma has failed to become. It can achieve many of its goals, which the parliamentary opposition also wants, through yeltsin. The most important is retaining control of the former soviet space through a Brezhnev - Monroe Doctrine and nuclear monopoly of that area with the option of first strike.

The Yeltsin - Army partnership has registered its main success in the near abroad, or the former Soviet territories other than Russia. This is the highest priority in foreign policy for all parties in Russia. Russia must decide whether it must shrink to its core, like Turkey after the Ottoman Empire, or retain the leadership of the former empire and the Soviet Union. This is clearly in favour of the latter.

As early as in the spring of 1992, General Grachev's draft Russian military doctrine declared that all former soviet territory was a zone of special Russian interest.<sup>9</sup> In may 1992

9. For Grachev's comments on the role of Russian Army see, SUB/SU, March 3, 1993. p. C2/1.

than, Russia signed a security pact with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Armenia. The disproportion between Russia and the rest, and the fact that former soviet units under Russian command were stationed every where, made it a vertical relationship of subordination to Russia. In December 1992, Andrei Kozarev, the very pro-European Foreign Minister, informed Stockholm conference on Security and co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in a 'diplomatic shock speech' that Russia's Asianess limited its rapprochement with the west, that the former Soviet territory was a 'post imperial space', not open for CSCE action, and 'we shall strongly insist' that the former Soviet Republics enter the security pact of the commonwealth of Independent states (CIS). —

In April 1993, a foreign policy concept announced that the maximum integration of the former soviet space with Russia in vital areas was of the highest priority; and Yeltsin demanded that the United Nations grant Russia "special powers as a guarantor of peace and stability in regions of the former USSR".<sup>10</sup> The numerous civil wars on the Russian periphery, reveal Yeltsin's of integration. Especially with regard to the Tajik civil war between the communists and the Islamists, which began in mid 1992, the Russian 201 Motorised Division stationed there has served the country's strategic interests through the communists while

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10. Yeltsin speech to the Civic Union, SWB/SU, March 2 1993. pp. B1/B3

officially being neutral. This was the one reason why Tajikistan has not fallen, and probably will not fall to the Islamists.<sup>11</sup>

The other most important issue for Russia in the transitional phase is the nuclear issue. Here Yeltsin has isolated Ukraine by enlisting the west on his side. Ukraine is under western pressure to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapons state. The first step was to remove all tactical nuclear weapons to Russia in early 1992 itself without any compensation for the fissile material. The next was the Massandra Agreement in September 1993 by which Ukraine was to transfer its strategic nuclear stockpiles to Russia. It went back on the agreement at once; and Parliament then ratified START I (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) with numerous qualifications, to Western dismay. So now Bill Clinton and Yeltsin have together virtually coerced and blackmailed Leonid Krauvchuk, the Ukrainian president, into signing the Tri-lateral Agreement on January 14, 1994. Ukraine has again committed itself, the transferring of all nuclear weapons to Russia by 1999, for which it will be compensated with supplies of Russian nuclear reactors fuel on which 30 percent of Ukrainian electricity generation depends.

Russia has thus established its leadership in the CIS and the former Soviet Union; it has ensured a continuity, in strategy, military affairs and politics from the Soviet times

11. For Russia's intervention in Tajikistan see Mohiaddian Mesbahi, n. 3, pp. 199-202.

throughout its southern underbelly; it has declared all of Soviet territory a special zone of interest to Russia with virtual rights of intervention legitimised in part by the 25 million Russian outside Russia; and the West has accepted it.

Finally, Russia has not been as passive in foreign policy, or an American satellite, as assumed. In Europe, Russia has ensured that NATO does not extend into East Europe. NATO has been sensitive to Russian anxieties; but Yeltsin had made good use of the Vladimir Zhirinovskiy Xenophobic nationalist phenomenon in this regard. Only during August 1993 did he seem to suggest permission for Poland to enter NATO; but that was quickly withdrawn. The West has therefore found a face saving formula in the Partnership for peace, announced in January 1994, to which all of North America, Europe, and the former Soviet Union could belong.

### **Russia's predominance**

Taking into account the geo-political aspect of these newly independent states, four strategic theaters are likely to emerge instead of one 'Common Defense space' on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

- (1) European
- (2) Caucasian

(3) Central Asian

(4) Far-Eastern

In all the four strategic theaters, Russia is likely to play a key role because of non-existence of any long term interests among the republics, Ukraine and Azerbaijan desiring for uncompromising independence in military decisions and all the member states having significant diverging security interests. In such a situation Russia could play an important role of an efficient bargainer among the member states because of its predominance in military, political and economic field over the other member states.<sup>12</sup>

Russia is perceived as the nucleus of the entire CIS security system with its special responsibilities. It incurs the major share of the commonwealth defence expenditure and enjoys special rights in the decisions making at operational level. Russia succeeded in becoming the permanent member of the UN Security Council and its status with regard to NPT is that of a nuclear weapon state party to the treaty. Russia is also one of the three depository states of the NPT (U.K. and U.S.A the other two) and is the member of IAEA as a successor state of the USSR.

Russia effectively retains administrative control over most of the combined Common wealth of Independent States (CIS)

12. For Russia as a nucleus in the four strategic theaters see, Andrei Kortunov, "Relations between Former Soviet Republics", society, March-April 1993. pp. 36-38.

forces, while in theory, political control is exercised by the Council of the Heads of Government of the CIS. The forces of the CIS are those of strategic significance, essentially those with some element of nuclear weaponry. In May 1992 the Russian Federation established its own armed forces, on the basis of former Soviet forces on the territory of the Russian Federation and Former Soviet forces outside its territory not subordinated to other former republics of the USSR.

Following the dissolutions of the USSR in December 1991, the Russian Federation was widely recognised as the successor to the USSR in the international community. Relations with the West were improved further for getting significant Western economic assistance. In March 93, at Vancouver President Clinton agreed for an US economic assistance of \$1,600 m to Russia and in April the countries of the "Group of Seven" industrialised nations agreed to offer Russia economic aid and debt relief to the value of \$43,000 m.

Besides geo-political and economic aspect, the presence of a large number of Russians and Russian speaking people in the former Soviet republics enhances Russia's supremacy over other republics. Until recently this dominance was expressed primarily in terms of Russia's political control over centralised institutions. With the erosion of the centralised control over 25 million (17% of the Russian population of the former SU) now live outside the borders of their home republic. Out of this more

raine, Belarus and Kazakhstan.<sup>13</sup>

In all these republics Russian population is significant enough to resist, though they view nationality policies as discriminatory. They also form the upper strata of the population comprising highly skilled in factories, experts in scientific and defence field and highly educated whose exodus can cause serious threat to the respective economies.<sup>14</sup>

### Developments in Central Asia

On 15th May 1992 in Tashkent, the Treaty on Collective security was signed by only six out of the eleven members. The heads of the state in a single day managed to adopt some thirteen important documents. They reaffirmed their desire to have border troops under a unified command and agreed to fulfill the commitments of the former USSR with respect to the international treaties on chemical weapons and the reductions of armed forces. They also defined their position on the creation of commonwealth peace keeping forces.

The Tashkent summit was significant enough, not only militarily, but to a greater extent had a varied political

13. "Who will fund Russian Refugees Resettlement?", The CDSP VOL. XLV, NO. 33, 1993. p. 8.

14. "Wave of Russian Refugees Discomfits Russia", The CDSP VOL. XLV, NO. 22, June 30, 1993. p. 4.



dimensions. As it was signed by the representatives of six states - Armenia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Politically this meeting says that the CIS will continue to exist possibly for a longer time since all the members have accepted the accord on common problems and new disputes that may emerge in future.

The changes that took place in the commonwealth could be on two grounds; firstly its collective role may inevitably diminish if the common interests become weaker and secondly, following the pattern of accession to the collective security treaty, a bloc of closely allied states will take shape in the CIS while other states will distance themselves even to the point of taking an observer status.

After the Tashkent summit a clearly defined consolidation of the participants around two ideological centres - Russia and Ukraine became quite evident, Russia on the one side is trying hard to unite all the CIS members around itself and on the other side Ukraine appears to be constantly resisting such a union. In such a development Collective Security Treaty has become a litmus test dividing the former Soviet republics into two camps; Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Armenia who had signed it and Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan who did not accede to the document.

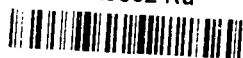
15. " Tashkent Summit Signals CIS Realignment", n 2 p 2.

Though central Asian republics have given their coordinated support to Russia but rapid developments taking place in their domestic field may cause serious threat to their future relations. The storming political processes developing in Tajikistan divert out attention for the support not more than a formality as the document does not have the President's signature.

As a result of the developments of events in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, the neighbouring countries of Uzbekistan has made President Karimov to foresee the Russian Federation as a kind of "guarantor of stability" in his region. The guarantee should be specially for the survival of the administration existing in the Tashkent presently.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and President Yeltsin of Russian have expressed their unreserved support for a powerful CIS. Nazarbayev's initiative to appoint a Supreme Economic Council of the CIS during the Moscow Summit meeting of 6th July 1992 created suspicion among some people of restoring the Council of Ministers of the former Soviet Union. The reason of the Economic Council was to possess executive powers vis-a-vis the member states. Among other states Tadzhikistan falls in this group. Though its representative had signed all CIS documents during the meetings of the heads of state and government in Bishkek on 9th October 1992 and in Moscow on 13th November 1992. Such developments are likely to continue and are highly dependent upon the outcome of the power struggle raging throughout the

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Central Asian Republics.

Russia and Central Asian republics have shown their clear willingness to work together for the strengthening of the CIS. Economically Central Asian republics were always dependent on the large transfer payments from the budget of the former USSR. In the changed situation after disintegration, a comparable substitute is not coming from the neighbouring Islamic Countries in the south. The Tadzhik example had further created fears in the minds of the ruling elite of Central Asian republics, which has made them realise that closer links with Russia could only provide the best possible protection in this transitional phase. The regimes still by and large view Moscow as the guarantor of not only external security but of their internal stability as well.

The treaties on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance between Russia on the one hand and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tadzhikistan on the other mark a trend towards bilateralism.<sup>16</sup> Turkmenistan the only Central Asian republic which had participated in very few CIS agreements and is not willing to venture more than a participation in absolutely essential coordination measures. Turkmenistan has also signed a treaty on friendship and cooperation with Russia.<sup>17</sup> This

16. For bilateral agreements of trade and economic cooperation with republics see SWB/SU/10 Jan 1992.

17. SWB/SU. 17 Jan 1992.

institutionalisation of cooperation and quasi-integration which is developing in a narrower circle forming the core group of CIS is the result of one-to-one relations between Central Asian republics and Russia.

These bilateral relations are going to further sharpen the originally intended multilateral structures. The CIS as an institution can be kept as a provisional framework arrangement, whose content could be concretised though at varying levels in the subsequent bilateral developments among the member states. The important aspect of these developments is that mainly vertical relations are being established between Russia and the Central Asian republics.

A part from Russia, Central Asian republics have gained new weights by securing the support of their Islamic neighbours. These Central Asian republics, while wishing to preserve a military-political alliance with Russia will try to detach themselves economically, which will be very difficult to do. The attractive force operating in Central Asians relations with its Islamic neighbours will only ameliorate conditions and will not change the situation as a whole. The question of dividing up the property of the former USSR and Russia claiming to be the only heir of and legal successor to the former Union includes the question of the inter-republic debt, which will pose a serious calculations for the Central Asian States.

A competition for influence is going on in Central Asia from the neighbouring states Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan and China. The potential of these states to influence future developments cannot be overlooked. Russia, being separated by Kazakh territory still retains a greater influence throughout the region. Its eminent position in CIS and Central Asian States forming the core of CIS with Russia has a significant role to play in the future objectives and prospects of CIS.

## MULTILATERALISM

Multilateralism stands for a long-held but rarely achieved ideal: the voluntary cooperation of nations for peace and development. Today multilateralism is working more effectively than ever in history. Member republics of erstwhile USSR have heaped new responsibilities as centrifugal and centripetal forces are operating strongly within the CIS. The effort of the member republics is to preserve the foundations of the state system and to evolve a workable CIS institution for their geo-political and economic progress.

Geo-politics and economies of the former Soviet republics had evolved for nearly three quarters of a century as an integral part of the Soviet state system. After the disintegration of the USSR, the system was fragmented, in which CIS members inherited fragmented parts of a highly integrated socio-political structure, which had strong and extensive intra and inter social, political and economic linkages. A sudden weakening or break in these linkages as a result of political division was bound to have serious consequences on the reform process in all the newly independent states.

In a very important study: the Commonwealth of Independent States: Developments and prospects published in 1992, the Centre of International Relations, has analysed the main trends in the CIS. The study had identified three main trends in the developments of the CIS. They are (a) multilateral agreements to coordinate economic activities and to establish institutional structures to create common economic space; (b) differentiation; and (c) bilateralization of relations between CIS members.

The differentiation refers to the emergence of two or more groups with different orientations within the CIS. One of the group called as core group, consists of Russia, Armenia and Central Asian republics with the exception of Turkmenistan. This group favours consolidation of the CIS as a common space with appropriate institutional structures.

The map of Central Asia does not at first reveal the relations of power. Russia though separated from the four Central Asian rep;ublics by Kazakh territory still retains greater influence throughout the region. Apart from Russia, other regional states, Iran and Afghanistan have a potential impact on forthcoming developments; powerful neighbours China whose territorial claims on territory in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are in abeyance but their possible revival must

be feared.<sup>1</sup> The attraction of Turkey and Pan-Turkic ideas which have been considerable enough should not be exaggerated but in the foreseeable future, Russia is likely to remain dominant in the region, both in economic and military terms.

Russia, incurring the major share of the Commonwealth defense expenditure and enjoying special rights in the decision making at the operational level, has succeeded in becoming the permanent member of the UN Security Council. Russia's status with regard to NPT is that of a nuclear weapon state, party to the treaty. Russian becoming the member of IAEA as a successor state of the USSR and one of the three depository states of the NPT (UK and USA the other two) has been perceived as the nucleus of the entire CIS security system with its special responsibilities.

Russia has effectively retained administrative control over most of the combined Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) forces, though in theory, political control is exercised by the Council of Heads of Government of the CIS. The forces of the CIS are of strategic significance, essentially those having some element of nuclear weaponry.

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1. Stanley Toops, "Recent Ughur Leaders in Xinjiang", Central Asian Survey [London, Carfax, June, 1992], Vol.II, No.2.



Russia after becoming the successor state of the atrophying USSR has to secure both the interior and the exterior borders of the CIS. The most important is to have a belt of 'good neighbours' especially along the Southern flank.<sup>2</sup> In this regard Central Asian republics will play a pivotal role as their domestic and international stability remains essential to the overall security of Russia.

Russia's interest in this region could be undermined by the overlapping of the ethno-territorial nationalism, in which local conflicts might jeopardize the Russian minority population, creating the nightmarish trap of intervention by the Russian armed forces. The influence of Islam, or the 'threat of Islamic fundamentalism' has to be dealt seriously by Russia, because a vulnerable 'Southern flank' offers an open invitation to the regional actors such as Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan to effectively interfere in the socio-political dynamics of the Central Asian republics. Thus, a strong and increasingly integrated collective security process within the CIS in which an active role of Russia is essentially required to protect the vulnerable social and political borders of CIS.

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2. International Affairs [Moscow], No.4-5, April-May, 1992, p.82.

The Russian policy towards Central Asian republics since December 1971 was heavily westernoriented which created the short-lived 'Slavic Union' in the absence of Central Asian republics. Russia for sometime atleast gave a message to the Central Asian Estates and other regional actors such as Iran, Pakistan and Turkey that a historical shift in Moscow's strategic perception has taken place and a power vacuum which has been filled by Russia for the past 200 years was not again open to penetration. The regional reaction was two-fold as in Central Asia, ideas of an 'Asian-Turkic-Islamic' gained momentum in the consecutive meetings in Alma Ata, Bishkek and Tashkent. On the other hand, Turkey and Iran responded to the apparent vacuum. The obscure names of Central Asian capitals: Alma Ata, Dushanbe, Bishkek, Askhabad, Tashkent became 'household' names for the media, politicians and analysts of these two countries. A series of diplomatic initiatives led to numerous economic, cultural and political agreements between the new Central Asian States, Iran, and Turkey.

At the Tashkent meeting of the heads of the state and governments of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzistan and Tajikistan, for the first time the viability of the CIS was questioned. It was discussed by all of them that the situation might force the Asian republics of the

former USSR to enter into an independent alliance, which could be a military-political one. The agreement to hold such a regional meeting was reached in October 1992 in Ankara, where the Presidents of the Turkic language states held a meeting.<sup>3</sup> They realised and agreed that not even a single document signed within the framework of CIS had been implemented so far. It was also noticed that the postponement of the Commonwealth summit meetings had been made without obtaining their consent. As a result, a new Turkistan, some kind of confederation of Central Asian States, was emphasised, if the CIS does not succeed in overcoming its inability to function. Such a turn of events would definitely threaten Russia with the loss of strategic allies in Central Asia and the Central Asian States to reorient themselves towards the Asian world once and for all.<sup>4</sup>

A United Turkestan, in the opinion of Central Asian Leaders could be a rather good panacea for regional troubles, which is the result of certain arbitrariness in the geographical structure and territorial unity of each of the Central Asian republics. The instability in the region,

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3. The CDSP, Vol.XLIV, No.44, P.20-27

4. The CDSP, VOL. XLV, No.1 P.1-4.

which ranged from a transfer of power to a diametrically opposed political forces to a territorial split, was not the result of any natural processes, but the national territorial boundaries drawn during the Bolshevik period.

The trend towards a 'prototype Central Asian association' was the reply of the Muslim "sunny" republics of the former USSR to the "Minks Belovezhskaya Pushcha" of Decemer 1991.<sup>5</sup> The most important reason was their absence in December 1991, and without their consent they were left out from the first-Slavic-version of the CIS. Not only this the Central Asian republics were also disappointed with the results of the CIS's activity for the year and a lack of faith in the future. According to Kyrgystan President, A. Akayev, the CIS in its present form "can no longer produce anything that is at all constructive". The ruined economic ties, inability to respond to security threats, and political uncertainty also played an important role in this regard.

#### **THE NEO-EURASIANIST PERSPECTIVE**

The Eurasian doctrine argues that Eurasia, the territory of the former Soviet Union and Russian Empire, is unique in itself as a civilisation, distinct from Europe and

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5. The CDSP, Vol.XLV, No.1, p.5.

Asia, and as such comparable to Europe, china, and India, but not to the nation-states like France, Germany, England and others. Eurasianism as civilisation has evolved over the past 100 years, since the Mongol conquest of Russia in the 13th Century having the cultural constituent of orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, forming the 'symphonic personality of Eurasia'. The Russian ethos or culture is the largest and leading element of this combination.

The Neo-Eurasianist perspective was noticed with the emergence of Russia's 'Security Council' and its enhanced and, perhaps, predominant position in the foreign policy formulation. The dominant centrist/realist make up of the Security Council, both in personal and ideology led to the gradual emergence of a competitive, if not prevailing Neo-Eurasianist perspective on Russian foreign policyh vis-a-vis the Euro-Atlanticist.<sup>6</sup> The combination of the 'Security Council' and the 'Civic Union' reflected a symbiosis of domestic and foreign policy forces which is the foundation of the Neo-Eurasianist perspective.

This trend of thought was supported by former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoy, Russian Khasbulatov, former speaker of the Supreme Soviet and Sergei Stankevich.

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6. IIAR-TASS, 11 September 1992.

Russia's State Counsellor, Yuri Skokov, Secretary of the Russian Security Council, General Shaposhnikov, General Samsanor, the Commander of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, and General Pavel Grachev, the Russian Defence Minister with the powerful Centrist Political forces, who have gathered under the umbrella of the 'Civic Union' had considerable clout in the Russian political establishment.<sup>7</sup> According to them the success of the reform was largely dependent on the reassertion of the Russian statehood, and by the recovery of the lost ground which has resulted from the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Transformation to market economy was accepted in principle but the extent, scope and method of 'marketization' was seriously questioned by them. 'Primitive Capitalism', the 'Shock therapy' of the Chicago School of Economics' and the IMF programmes were severely criticised.<sup>8</sup> The main reason for the criticism was the pressure which was posed on the Russian Foreign policy to become excessively one dimensional, whose primary source of aid and inspiration has been focused only on West. This indifferent attitude

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7. Mohiaddin Mes Bahi, Russian Foreign Policy and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Central Asian Survey, P.185.

8. Pravada, 9 September 1992, p.1-2.

towards all other actors, specifically all the CIS members, Asia and the Middle East was sharply noticed by them. Russia, which was initially following the Western model and was trying to find a proper place in the emerging pan-European home, was mainly supported by Andrei Kozyrev, Yegor Gaydar and also received an overall support of Boris Yeltsin. Western democratic values, respect for the principles enunciated in the UN Charter, the Helsinki declaration [CSCE Charter], the Paris Charter on human rights were to be used as a guide for the formulations of the Russian foreign policy.<sup>9</sup> Their aim was to politely ignore IJUS claims of a unipolar world and to emphasise multipolarity.

A discernible shift in Russian policy towards Central Asia specifically from mid-1992 was due to several reasons. The most important among them was the security implications not only from Russia but also from Central Asian states of realising their mutual interdependence. Ethnic factor in the overall security of the CIS and Russia in particular was another and essential factor in refocussing Russian policy. Protection of the basic rights of the Russian minorities

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9. Yevgenir Gusarov, "Towards a Europe of Democracy and Unity", Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 5 March, 1992, p.70.

'left behind' and the real possibility of military clashes with the republics over this issue demanded very careful and close relations with Central Asian republics, in which CIS and its collective security arrangements were to be taken more seriously. To play an active role was also emphasised by Central Asia itself, in which all of them with varying degree insisted on a substantive collective security system with Russian participation. The Central Asian elites from Kazakhstan to Turkmenistan were not satisfied with the token gesture of the nuclear umbrella of the CIS for their security.

Finally, the growing influence of more centrist conservative political forces in the Russian government, and especially the reassertion of the army's role in defining Russia's general security requirements were important changes which brought new impetus to the formulation of Russian security policy, demanding a renewed and focused attention toward Russia's southern borders. What was perhaps more significant was the fact that this Neo-Eurasianist position was at least partially supported by Yeltsin himself. Rejecting the accusation of Russia's pro-West policy, he, in a major interview, reaffirmed the new



shift in Russian foreign policy..... The time for the Eastward move has arrived.<sup>10</sup> /

This policy shift from the Euro-Atlanticist to a Neo-Eurasianist outlook should not be taken as a complete victory of one view over the other, yet it clearly indicates a serious accommodation of and adjustment to the emerging realities facing Russia and the new Central Asian States. The fact that Yeltsin has elevated himself above the debate, and has given support to both perspectives indicate that a certain synthesis of both views - albeit with the Neo-Eurasianist view increasingly dominating - might be the overall guide to and framework of Russia's foreign policy in the near future.

#### **Treaty on Collective Security: CIS Realignment.**

A serious accommodation of and adjustment to the emerging realities, which were being faced by Russia and the new Central Asian states saw their emancipation in the Treaty on Collective Security signed between Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Armenia, in

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10. Moscow Russian Television, interview with Boris Yeltsin by Izvestiya, Literaturnaya Gazeta, 15 July 1992.

Tashkent on 15 May 1992. The significance of Tashkent meeting, unlike all the previous "summits", was that its outcome witnessed a clearly defined consolidation of the participants around two ideological centres—Russia and Ukraine. Russia was trying to persuade all the CIS members to get united around itself, while Ukraine was trying to resist such a union. The collective Security Treaty worked as a litmus test which divided the former Soviet republics into two camps, Russia becoming more closer to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Armenia as they were the member republics who signed the treaty. On the other hand, Belarus, however, has obtained the membership in the Treaty on 31 December, 1993, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan showed their reluctance about the formation of Union by not acceding to the document.

This clearly defined consolidation of Russia and Central Asian republics was the result of realisation from both the sides about their security and economic interdependence. Russia could foresee the vulnerable external pressure and penetration from its 'southern flank' since the central Asian states are young states with weak economies, unstable political systems and without any independent defence capability. The 'Islamic threat' was to be contained by protecting the borders of Central Asian

States. The security of Southern borders would not only enhance the physical security of the new Central Asian Republics, but will also show Russia's sensitivity to all the regional actors.

The active role of Russia was not confined to political forces in Moscow, but the demand for this was also coming from Central Asia itself. All Central Asian states without exception, though with varying degrees of emphasis, preferred and in fact insisted on a substantive collective securityh system with active russian participation. The ~~Central~~ Asian states from Kazakhstan to Turkmenistan were not satisfied with the token gesture of the nuclear umbrella of the CIS for their security. They were demanding a more comprehensive, meaningful security system which included practical measures in dealing with conventional defence of their security and their borders. Earlier optimism over the formation of an 'Asian Turkic/Islamic bloc' was fading in the face of the realities of historical interdependence with Russia. Commenting on the competent role of Russia in the security of Central Asia, Askar Akayev, the President of Kyrgystan argued: "The Eurasian entity hinged on Russia would collapse if it [Russia] ceased to be a world power,

with painful implications for Kyrgystan as well. That is why we must make our contribution to Russia's revival.<sup>11</sup>

The consolidation of the member states who signed the treaty, have clearly defined their objectives regarding 'aggression, and entering into any military alliances' was on horizontal lines. It is to say that all the member states will be treated on equal footings in the implementation and abrogation of all the aspects of the collective security agreement. Any state or member of states if abrogate an of the provision of collective security agreement will be jointly acted by all the other member states. The assistance of the other participating states will not only be militarily but in every aspects. Article 1 and 4, which state:

'If one of the participating states is subjected to aggression against all participating states to the treaty. In the event of an act of aggression being committed against any of the participating states, all the other participating states will give it the necessary assistance, including military assistance, and will give support with the means at

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11. Interfax 15 July 1992, in FBIS-SOV 92-138, 17 July, 1992, pp. 18022.

their disposal by way of exercising the right to collective defence in accordance with article 51 of the UN Charter'.<sup>12</sup>

This resulted, with the desire of the member states, to have border troops under a unified command. They agreed to reach an agreement on the joint use of air space and of the Bikonur and Plesetsk space-vehicle launching sites, and to fulfil the commitments of the former USSR with respect to the international treaties on chemical weapons and the reduction of armed forces. They also defined their position on such an important question as the creation of commonwealth peace-keeping forces. Our "blue helmets" will be sent to hot spots only with the consent of the sides involved in a given conflict. These documents were signed by the majority of the meeting's participants. General Leonid Ivashov, head of the working group on defence issues, and one of the key participants in the preparation of the documents for the Tashkent Summit in May argued that the Treaty confirms already established views particularly within the military circles of the commonwealth governments, that the establishment of a system of

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12. Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 23 May 1992, p.2.

collective security, or more accurately, its preservation, is a practical necessity and an objective requirement.<sup>13</sup>

The most important significance of the Treaty on collective security was the continuation of the existence of CIS, even for a longer time. The heads of government were acceptable for far reaching accord on common problems and new disputes that may emerge in the near future. Nevertheless, there is no doubt for the commonwealth to undergo changes. The introduction of national currencies, the protection of the interests of those states which will remain in the ruble zone, and measures to normalise the financial situation in the CIS, are the initiative which were accepted by the leading members of the Central Asian republics. Kazakhstan took the lead on 25th May 1992. Nursultan Nazarbayev, following his trip to the United States, arrived in Moscow to sign the treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance. The two sides signed that the two countries will form a 'united military bases, test sites and other military infrastructure'.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Moscow Central Television, 4 May 1992, Cited in FBIS-SOV 92-099, 27 May 1992, p.14.

14. Moscow ITAR-Tass, 25 May 1992 in FBIS-SOV 92-101, 26 May 1992, P. 14.

Uzbekistan was next to follow the model. On 30 May 1992, Russia and Uzbekistan signed the 'Treaty on the Fundamentals of Interstate Relations, Friendships and Cooperation. The two sides agreed that 'territories of Russia and Uzbekistan will form a common military strategic area'. They also granted the other 'the right to use military facilities situated on their territories in case of necessity on the basis of mutual agreement'.<sup>15</sup> Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan was the next Central Asian leader to go to Moscow for a similar treaty with Russia. The two countries signed the 'Friendship and Cooperation Treaty' on 10 June 1992, a treaty that according to Yeltsin raised the bilateral relation to a new level putting the two states on an absolutely equal footing, and thus signifying the end of Russia's 'imperial ambition'.<sup>16</sup> Russia's role as the guaranter of Kyrgyzstan's security was reaffirmed. Kyrgyzstan's economic difficulties and inability to handle the financial responsibility of taking part in supporting CIS formation in Kyrgyzstan made this bilateral arrangements with Russia more appealing and more of a necessity.

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15. Islam Karimov interview with Pravade 2 June 1992, pp.1-2, FBIS-SOV 92-107, 3 June 1992, p.13.

16. Interfax, 11 June 1992 in FBIS-SOV,92-114, June 1992, p.13

The treaty with Turkmenistan was a unique one that envisioned the formation of a national army for Turkmenistan under joint command. The armed forces will be composed of the two existing divisions [Kushak and Kizylarvat] and other military units of the former Soviet Union still stationed in Turkmenistan. The control of airforce and air defence systems will be entirely with the Russian Armed Forces [with some limited control by Turkmenistan].<sup>17</sup> The political significance of the agreement for Russia was understood by Colonel O. Falichev, military observer of Krasnaya Zvezdaz: Turkmenistan is choosing Russia rather than any of its southern neighbours as guarantor of its security, its prosperity, and stability in the region.<sup>18</sup>

The case of the Russian-Tajikistan security arrangement was more complex. Although Tajikistan was a signatory of the CIS Collective Security Treaty, on the bilateral level, close relations with Moscow remained in the shadow of and at times hostage to, the ongoing political struggle in Dushanbe between the then President Rakhman Nabiyev and the

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17. Interview with Valerity Otchertsov, Member of Turkmenistan Presidential council. Nezavismaya Gazeta, 16 June 1992, p.3 FBIS-SOV 92-117, 17 June 1992, pp. 53-54.

18. Krasnaya Zvezdam 16 June 1992, p.1.



democratic and Islamic opposition. What made the Tajik case especially significant was the collapse of the Afghan regime and victory of Islamic forces in that country. The vulnerability of Tajikistan to Mujaheddin influence and border penetration increasingly captured the attention of both Moscow and especially the Central Asian states. The ensjuring 'civil war' between northern and southern parts of Tajikistan after the victory of the democratic and Islamic coalition in Dushanbe and the collapse of the Tajik border troops formation, made the infiltration of arms and fighting groups from Afghanistan a potentially explosive issue. Uzbekistan with a clear stake in the security of the 'southern flank' took the lead in addressing the issue in both the Tashkent and Moscow summits. In an interview with Nezavisimaya Gazeta on the eve of the Tashkent meeting Islam Karimov, the Uzbek President, gave a frank account of this issue.

It goes without saying that the on going events in Afghanistan, the uncertainty there is an object of close scrutiny on our part. And they can hardly fail to influence the socio-political situation in Uzbekistan and the other republics of Central Asia. When I spoke recently about signing the mutual security document and the fact that Russia ought to be the guarantor of security, it was this

problem that I had in mind. When I was in Ashkhabad I made a statement whose gist was that Tajikistan is an inseparable part of Central Asia and to assert that Tajikistan might suddenly find itself under the sphere of influence or under any protection of Afghanistan's Mujaheddin is absolutely unacceptable.<sup>19</sup>

While concerns over the instability in Tajikistan were usually couched in anxiety over Afghan infiltration, or Iranian influence, the real fear of Uzbekistan, Russia and other Central Asian leaders, was the threat of an anti-status quo political alternative, be it 'Islamic', 'democratic' or other, that might successfully unseat the existing elite and have contagious political ramifications for the adjacent republics, including Uzbekistan. Thus, Tajikistan's domestic stability, meaning the existence of a political model and leadership acceptable to Uzbekistan, Russia and others was an implicit, but important justification for politico-military intervention by Uzbek and Russia in Tajikistan civil war.

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19. Nezeavisimaya Gazeta, 15 May 1992, pp. 1-3, FBIS-SUR, 92-063, 19 MY 1992, P. 86.

Russia's direct participation has mainly taken two forms. Firstly, a gradual abandonment of the position of 'positive neutrality', which had been adopted during the earlier stages of the crisis in favour of active support of 'pro-communist' forces in the later and crucial stages of the conflict. After the downfall of the 'democratic-Islamic' coalition government in Dushanbe, the Russian air borne units took part in a series of anti-gurriela Garm, Navbad and Komsomolabad, while the Russian (CIS) airforce and helicopter, gunships bombed opposition forces in these regions.<sup>20</sup>

The civil war in Tajikistan may not be over. The fight has continued and potential problem for future conflict, not only among the Tajik themselves, but between Uzbeks and Tajiks, have increaed, and the Uzbek-Turks participation in the civil war has given rise to a Tajik version of the 'Armenian Syndrome' for the defeated regions of the republic. Yet the participation of Russia, Uzbekistan and other CIS members in the conflict indicate that any future security challenge in the republic, either from internal or external sources, will have to calculate the politico-military response of Russia and its Central Asian Allies. In the

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20. International Herald Tribune, 22 February, 1993, p.4.

word's of Imanali Rakhmanov, the leader of the new government, Tajikistan's conflict was the first successful test of the collective security arrangements. 21

Russia has been interacting with Central Asia at two levels: one within the framework of CIS and second at multilateral and bilateral levels. As member of the CIS, Russia and Central Asia, except Turkmenistan have been consistently cooperating with each other in various fields. A major step as discussed earlier was achieved at the Tashkent meeting In May 1992 when the Central Asian states signed the Collective Security Treaty. The Collective Security Treaty was futher expanded at the Moscow Summit in July 1992 when it was agreed to set up a 'blue helmet' force for rapid deploymemt in the area of conflict within the CIS.22

Another step in the multilateral developments by Central Asian republics took place when all theCentral Asian republic together with Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan formally joined "The Economic Cooperation

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21. Izvestiva, 12 January, 1993.

22. The Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press, Vol.XLIV, No.19, June 10, 1992, p.1

Organization" in November 1992. The entry into the organization first by Azerbaijan, then by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, opened up broad prospects for it. The ECO's founders which was created in 1985, by a decision of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey, to counter balance the European Economic Community, were of the opinion that first real step has been taken for the realization of a long cherished idea, the creation of a Pan - Asian market.<sup>23</sup>

In Ashkhabad, agreements on the construction of a trans Asian rail road and cooperation in the field of the extraction and use of petroleum and gas were signed, and plans for the restoration of the Great Silk Road were discussed. With this the emergence of Great Central Asia will be achieved which will be facilitated by new technologies, particularly by improving transportation and communication system. This view was put forth by Robert L. Canfield who suggests that new ties are found between Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Central Asian republics. And Greater Central Asia will become strategic to the formation of huge economic trading region. More or less, similar views were expressed by Senator Pressler when

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23. A. Hyman, Central Asian Economies, The Middle East [London, February 1992] pp. 14-16.

he visited India and Pakistan in 1992. The Pakistan leaders and General are hoping to forge closer security links with Central Asia which, they believe, would provide a strategic debt to Pakistan.<sup>24</sup>

But the important factors in this direction has to be seen through the; sharp rivalries between Turkey and Iran, differing goals, orientation and level of development of the Central Asian neighbours. In spite of this, each of the partners pursuing its own advantage and sees an undoubted benefit from cooperation in the framework of that organization, which is especially true of the central Asian republics who have no outlets to the sea but expect to gain them with the help of founder countries.

This insistence desire was evident at the meeting in Istanbul. Two official documents, the Istanbul Declaration (long term prospects for OEC) and the joint communique containing points that reflect the new members urgent requirements. This plan will determine a common network that, at the lowest cost, will link the partner countries essential infrastructure and ensure access to seaports for the OECs continental member states. It was also planned to determine the "beginning and ending points of these routes in

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24. Ibid.

each of the OECs member states and the border points that to be used as terminals".<sup>25</sup>

This wider intra-regional cooperation conceived by ECO's and enlarged regional groupings of the Muslim republics of the former USSR with their neighbours Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan has far reaching implication. The observation to be taken is whether this grouping will distance itself from the CIS or the members state will maintain a distance from Russia in economic field, keeping in view of the plan for a Turkish common market proposed by Turkey and an "Islamic common market" by Tehran. In such a situation, Central Asian Republic will seek their own economic power keeping Islamic wave as an important factor and with Russia only military political alliances will be catered. As far as creation of an enlarged regional grouping is concerned, it has been clearly denied by the President of Uzbekistan in Ashkhabad. He clearly said that a useful process of integration was under way but "we don't intend to create a new geo-political space".

Central Asian republics desire to maintain special relationship with Russia was clearly recognized by the

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25. Sergei Kozlov. Mezavisimaya Gazeta, July, 14,1992, p.3.

President of Kazakhstan, N. Nazarbayev, who welcomed the idea that the OEC is open to any state that wishes to be admitted, as well as by the non political nature of the organization. But he further affirmed his devotion to CIS and its role in cooperation with the OEC.

"Cooperation between the OEC and Russia, Ukraine and the states of Trans Caucasus would be economically advantageous for everyone" he said, "the ground work for this already exists -- our Central Asian State belong to both. The CIS and the OEC. Another option would be for all of us to seprate and live by ourselves, autonomously. Some might find this acceptable, but it not be in keeping our tradition".<sup>26</sup>

President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, was constantly emphasising the trade and economic advantages of cooperationm in the OEC and was smultaneously warning his partners not to isolate themselves within the framework of 'Islamic' or 'Central Asian' solidarity. At the meeting in Ashkhabad, it was unambiguously stated that signed agreements are not directed against any neighbours and are not at variance with accords reached through the CIS.

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26. Ibid.



The pre-eminent position taken, by President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan and President N. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan at the meeting in Ashkhabad was a clear indication that Central Asian Republic 'are ready for strengthening with OEC organization. But it should not be at the expense of CIS. Russia, with which they have clearly mentioned time and again that, they have 'special relations'. This indication of Central Asian Republic towards neighbouring Mujslims countries will post no contradiction if the integrating process will be achieved freely from rigid political dependence. The integrational process should be through economic, informational and cultural cooperation. According to Nazarbayev, these process have already begun, "while the heads of states are arguing over terminalogy the agrarians, industrialists, oil men, ministers of internal affairs and ministers of social welfare are meeting regularly exchanging information and experinc, and consulting. The willingness and desire for integration are present. But, fundamentally new mechanisms are needed. That is the main conclusion I have arrived at in my reflections on the post-Soviet space".<sup>27</sup>

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27. Valery Konovalov, "Nazarbayev on Post-Soviet Integration from below" Izvestia, June 5, 1992, p.5.

He further reaffirmed that the horizontal economic branch ties that were initiated, to a great extent, by Kazakhstan have already gone beyond the CIS... For him, the member states are objectively linked together by their economic level and also by the impossibility of entering the world market as real competitors. Therefore, the new conceptual approach to the prospects for integrating the post-Soviet space should be to establish cooperation from below. The initiation should be taken from the economy and with the individual spheres of activity, without linking it rigidly to politics. For it is essential to learn to live independently but in coordination with one another, then every state, proceeding from its own interests, will fearlessly delegate some of its prerogatives for the sake of a firmer association along the lines of the EC. According to the calculations of the President of Kazakhstan, this will happen in six or seven years.

## MULTILATERAL EFFORT: RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

The concepts of political autonomy and national self-determination are more complex than declarations of sovereignty and majority referendum results may suggest. While political autonomy in Russia and the former Soviet Union was closely related to the ethnic composition of the population, we must pay attention to other issues related social-interdependence and autonomy, such as the importance and nature of boundaries, urban rural distinctions, economic viability, concentration of ethnic settlements, status of minorities and regionalism versus nationalism. Among them, the prospects of the return migration of Russians from the former Soviet republics is an important aspect of social-interdependence which requires a multilateral effort not only for socio-economic structures of Central Asian republics but even for Russia equally to accommodate Russians in their homeland.

The future of 29 millions people were never anticipated by the experts on the fateful day of erstwhile USSR's peaceful demise. These people, comprising 25 million Russians and four million people of other nationalities ethnically associated with Russia had to become fragmented part at the mercy of their respective republics. The problems of Russians and Russian speakers in the former

Soviet Republic was never taken into account and thought thoroughly at the moment of the crash dismantling of the Soviet Union. The presence of a large number of Russians and Russian speakers is the strongest cultural, political and humanitarian factor linking the former Soviet republics. With the exodus of the Russians, this strongest linking factor will be absent and it will post serious problems not only to Russia but also to the respective republics. As a result, Russians and other nationalities in the wake of disintegration has to be dealt more cautiously, so that Russia will not have to face the problem integrating Russians with Russians. Not only this, these very people forming the upper strata of the population of the former Soviet republics can definitely cause a serious dent in their respective economies.

In Central Asian republics, about 3 million slavs had to face the atmosphere of uncertainty with the adoption of new language laws, which prompted a large number of Russians and other European population to leave central Asia in the wake of ethnic riots in Ferghana (1989), in Dushanbe (1990), and in Osh (1990). Outmigration of non-indigenous specialists from Central Asia was estimated to be more than

2,00,000 in 1990.<sup>28</sup> During the first six months of 1990 Russians emigration from Khirghizia was at a rate of 2.6 times that of the previous. From the Osh region 3,200 slavs departed out of the republic in the first month following the riots, according to Aziya International. With the exception of Tajikistan, Khirghizia now has the highest numbner of immigrants in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A total of 77,000 left Tajikistan is the figure for the corresponding period 1991.<sup>29</sup> During the Dushanbe riots in 1990, though the Russian were not singled out for attacks, there were incidents of assault and intimidation at them.<sup>30</sup> Also frightening to the Russian population has been the prospects of success of the Islamic Movement in Tajikistan. After the events of February 1990 in Dushanbe (riot between Uzbeks and Meshkhetion Turks) at least 100 thousand people left Tajikistan in the course of a year. In April and May 1992, there was an outburst of anti-

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28. Robert A. Lewis, "Are Republics becoming Ethnically Homogeneous?", Nationalities Papers, Vol.XIX, No.1, 1991, p.72.

29. Central Asia Newsfile, No.5, March, 1993, p.10

30. Mauriel Atkin, "Tajikistan: Ancient Heritage, New Politics, in Lan Bremmer and Ray Taras (ed), p. 372.

Russian feeling, after which 20,000 people left Dushanbe.<sup>31</sup>  
By the end of 1992, Interfax reports that nearly 150,000  
Russian speakers (which includes Ukrainians, Germans and  
Koreans) have left the war ravage republic of Tajikistan.<sup>32</sup>

The economic aspects of exodus of Russian speaking persons from Central Asia was explained by Yurikhokhlov, head of Uzbek Airlines, Shipping Service: "The Meshkhetion Turks, who were engaged in agriculture, have left; the Crimean Tatars, who were workers and vegetable growers, have left; and the jews have left-news stands and tailor shops have closed. The Russians - who are the working class, the engineers, and designers - are living, and then industry will stop."<sup>33</sup>

Tajik authorities have been making efforts to persuade the Russians to stay back. Davlat Khudonazarov, a member of the special commission on normalizing the situation in Kurgan-tyube province, met with the representatives of the local Russian minority and briefed them on the work that the Commission is doing and assured them that it will do

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31. Rossiskiye, Vesti, Sept. 22, 1992, p. 2.

32. Central Asia Newsfile, No.4 February, 1993, p.1.

33. Gregory Gleason, "Uzbekistan from Statehood to Nationhood" in Lan Bremmer and Ray Taras (ed), p. 346.

everything it can to stabilize the situation in the southern part of Tajikistan.<sup>34</sup>

The exodus of the Russians on a large scale has aroused concern among Kirghiz elite, who are worried about the republic losing brains and skills. Russians make up half of the population of capital Bishkek, and a quarter of the country's. Although, many have been leaving, President Akayev is keen to keep them and has been reported to have said: "I am against emigrations, I just want to keep the Russians, Jews, and other minorities. We have just set up two national cultural autonomous districts for the Germans."<sup>35</sup>

The Chairman of the opposition republican party of the Kazakhstan, S. Akatayev, said during the rally of the national democratic parties and movements in front of the Parliament building in mid-June 1992, that his party was not advancing any anti-Russian slogans, and what is more, the party is asking the Russian population of Kazakhstan for help and support.<sup>36</sup>

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34. The CDSP, Vol. XLIX, No.25, 1992, p.10.

35. The CDPS, Vol.XLIV, No.30, 1992, p. 19.

36. Bess Brown, "Central Asia Emerges on the World Stage", The Guardian, March 1992.

Considering the population of 1990, the percentage of Russian in different Central Asian republics, the distribution is, 10 percent in Turkmenistan, 8 percent in Uzbekistan, 8 percent in Uzbekistan, 22 percent in Khirghistan, 38 percent in Kazakhstan. Observing the percentage wise distribution it can be said that in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, though the percentage of Russian population was just 8 percent, but the Ferghana's riots, the Osh tragedy and, finally, the bloody Tajik disturbances have left a mark on the Russian speaking population of not only Tajikistan and Uzbekistan but of the whole of Central Asian republics. These events played the major role for mass exodus from the two republics. On the other hand, Khirghistan having 22 per cent of Russian has a different story. It is only in this republic that a significant portion of the Russian speaking population works in agriculture and the Khirghis have traditionally lived in the mountains. Owing to historical reality a paradoxical situation had been developed in which the people who gave their names to the republic are in the minority in the most fertile and 'prestigious' regions, and as a consequence of this, they have the lowest standard of living in their own state. The danger here is rather great that the attempts by the Khirghis to change the existing situation can cause



massive inter ethnic clashes.<sup>37</sup> In all the three republic percentage being different of Russian population had different reasons for ethnnc clashes.

Kazakhstan having the highest percentage of Russians about 38%, witnessed hatred for Russians especially by the younger generation of Kazakhs, despite high sounding slogans of President Nazarbayev that, Kazakhstan have 'special relations' with Russia.<sup>38</sup> In August 1989 when the draft law of language was promulgated, for the first time, Russians and other people whose origins are in Russia were called non-titular. So Russian, which had enjoyed the status of a state language on a part with Kazakhs since 1924 no longer had that status. August 1989 was the date when for the first time, a rift was driven into society at the state level that divided it according to the ethnic principles. The division of society, which used to be based on the party elite and the people it controlled, is now built on a national elite. This resulted in a two fold

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37. The CDSP, Vol. XLV, No.22, June-30, 1993, p.2.

38. "Kazakhstan: Russians Dig in as Kazakhs seek Dominnce", The CDSP, Vol. XLV, No.22, 1993,p.4.

alienation of the non-Kazakh population, which tends to use the Russian language.<sup>39</sup>

Russians in Kazakhstan were treated as foreigners who have been representing an imperial nation. The people call them colonizers. According to data compiled by sociologists in Almaty, 55% of the Russians in a whole sample have encountered nationality-based hostility on the public transport, while 40% have had similar experience in everyday contacts. Today 30% of all Kazakhs-one third-believe that the cause of their difficulties is the presence in the republic of citizens of another nationality. For Kazakhstan, where Kazakhs make up less than half the population these are in fact horrifying figures.

Going through the internal dynamics of the Central Asian republics, the exodus of Russian from Central Asian republic is related to a host of factors - ethno-culture, psychological alienation, insecure future prospects and a derogatory treatment on the part of Russians in Central Asian Republic has been a major driving force in this direction. The exodus of Russians in different republics have been at different pace due to different reasons as discussed before. The only point to be kept in the mind is

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39. Ibid.

that Central Asian republics at a transitional stage has a fragile internal state of affairs. Russians, though comprise a very small percentage of population in these republics, are not feeling secured culturally, political and psychologically. All the Russians are looking forward, if possible, to return back to their homeland despite their many years of living in these republics.

Though it has been well accepted by not only the ruling members of Central Asian republics, but even by opposition as well that the exodus of these Russians will cause a serious dent in their socio-economic structure. Russia, on its part, will have to face a series of problems to accommodate these russians and it seems an impossible task for it. Realizing the problems of exodus and its interdependence for both Russia and Central Asian republics what is required is a multilateral effort for Russian in Central Asian Republic. It is quite understandable that republics will have to face this challenge very cautiously. But if these republics fail to do so, it can cause detrimental consequences for Russia itself.

The first and foremost serious problems for emigrants coming from Tajikistan to Russia would be financial and material difficulties in principle. Today the price of one room apartment in Dushanbe is about 150,000 rubles, while

comparable living space in Moscow cost about 25,000 dollars. Moreover, both pay and the general cost of living are considerably lower in Tajikistan than in the former mother country.<sup>40</sup>

All the emigrants after reaching in the new location, virtually wind up without money to live on to get themselves settled in their ancestral homeland. It has been also accepted by the Russia's leadership that they are simply unable to create acceptable living conditions for these people. Larisa Kabluka, Deputy-Director of the Federal Migration Service's Administration for implementing migration programmes, say "at best we can offer a family of refugees from Tajikistan a room in a dormatory. We simply do not have enough money for anything more."<sup>41</sup>

Apart from financial and material difficulties, there is a significant difference between the psychology and the very way of life of Central Asian Russians and those of their kinsmen in Russia. The slavs in Central Asia are more inclined and are more receptive to the traditions and customs of the people around them. As a result, the mutual irritation between the local residents and new comers is

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40. The CDSP, n.37, p.1.

41. Ibid. p.2.

growing after the arrival of immigrants. The noteworthy point here is the persistence of mutual irritation, in the Central Asian Republics between slavs and Central Asians and in Russia between local residents and the new comers. The leadership of the Russian Federal Migration Services after analysing the experience in the concentrated settlements are convinced with the idea that accommodation of Russians is inadvisable.

Tantgana Regent, Director of the Federal Migration Service maintains in an interview with Komsomolka, "it cannot be ruled out that in the next few years Russia will have to take in 6 million refugees:<sup>42</sup> According to him the minimum option is that 800,000 people will return to Russia the medium option is 2 million to 3 million and the maximum option is 4 million to 6 million. The worst part of this is that every second person who comes is interested to live only in Moscow despite different options are given to them. The resettlement of these people not only poses a problem on the ground of geography alone, but has other aspects too. Russia still does not have a special purpose programme for taking in members of the technical elite who left the member

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42. "What is the place of Russians in Russia, CIS?", The CDSP, Vol. XLV, No. 17, 1993, p. 17.

republics. As a result, thousands of top grade specialists are being scattered through various regions who are loosing their skills as they cannot find jobs in their specialities.

However, whether the migration society's programme utopian or not, many slavic refugees have linked their hopes on the part of an active role played by Russia. Its failure, under conditions in which Russia is unable to accommodate its kinsmen from hot spots in the collapsed empire is depriving the other Russians of their last hope. The Russians who were still waiting for their betterment in Central Asian republics. This sense insecurity on the part of Russians living in Central Asia can cause serious implications for Russia and Central Asian republics which definitely need for all of them to sit together and come out with some multilateral solutions accepted by all without infringing their independence.

## BILATERALISM: CHALLENGES FOR CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

Unlike most other post-colonial nation-states in Asia and Africa, Central Asian Republics did not have to fight anti-colonial wars of liberation to gain their freedom. Independence was thrust upon them, suddenly and unexpectedly due to internal collapse of the colonising Soviet Russian empire. No credible opposition movements in any of the five republics called for political independence from the former USSR. The only squabbles mentioned by outside observers were those of the highly russified Central Asian bureaucratic elite who competed with their Russian masters over gaining greater personal access to the higher sanctum of power within the communist party, and/or asking for larger collective access to greater shares of the union's economic pie.(1)

Relationship between the Central Asian urban native elites and their Russian overlords remained tense and guarded for a variety of reasons. For example, although the Soviet Russians conferred position of power to members of the native elite in the governance of their own republics, those in Moscow never trusted Central Asian leadership and gave Central Asian little voice in planning for their own national republics. Because of this refusal by the slaves to acknowledge and recognise the common humanity of Central

Asian, even those of their elite who were willingly serving the Soviet system, Central Asian harboured considerable resentment towards Russians, other slavs and Europeans. Powerless to alter the political and military situation favouring the Soviet state, the native elite continued to cooperate with the Russian in order to reap some personal benefits from their association.

As a result, the post independent governing elites have little credibility in the eyes of their own people, as they were servants of the former Soviet power, especially in the predominantly rural areas. As Rakowska-Harmstone points out, these leaders have never been allowed a real share in the Soviet model, yet find themselves connected to it by a network of dependency ties. They seem unable and unwilling to break.(2) This is particularly true in light of the fact that "the central Asian Muslim leaders have yet to articulate a blue print for their sovereign future.(3) As the unfolding events of early May 1992 in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, show, the position of those in power at this time at the Central Asian republics seems highly precarious indeed. At the same time, a well organized alternative political structure with a clearly formulated vision of a post-independence social and political system to replace the ruling communist power structure in the Central



Asian nations remains conspicuously. What is required at this juncture in the processes of state formation in Central Asian Republics is the reestablishment of an organic relationship between the long bifurcated russified bureaucratic elite and the reluctant rural masses in Central Asia. Without closing this gap, the prospects for the future socio economic and political development of this critical region will remain uncertain.

The condition for gaining true political and thus economic independence, however, seem more problematic in view of the heightened nationalism within each republic as well as between and among the new states. Although Moscow has unilaterally broken the cord of political dependency leaving Central Asians in charge of their own republics, the question remains: Are the leaders of the independent titular republics willing to allow their minority citizens as a real share of the power and resources in their domain? The promise of earning real sovereignty and independence for the people of these multi ethnic nations rests in large measure upon the answer their leaders give to this question. Reiteration and imitation of Russian practices of ethnic inequality in the former USSR but the leader of its successor states in Central Asia could wreak havoc in the region. In this age of highly politicised ethnicity, the

need, and the power of struggles for recognition and equity by each and everyone of the multitude of nationalities invented and nurtured to maturity by the former Soviet System cannot and should not be underestimated. (4) Only freedom from potentially destabilising internal communal strife and sustain peace, popular participation in governance within each state as well as among various muslim nations in Central Asia and contiguous regions could afford the people the opportunity to strive for economic, technological and cultural freedom and independence. The challenge of diversifying agricultural production from the super specialization of cotton mono-culture, reclaiming land, water, energy and mineral resources for a balanced and internally and interregionally sustainable system of economic extraction production, processing, manufacturing and distribution is immense, but so are the opportunities for success. Over 7 decades of isolation - spatial, social, cultural, generational, intellectual, and ideological - from the muslim societies of South Western Asia and the middle east has taken its toll on both communities, giving rise to feeling of mutual doubt and suspicion. Central Asian and neighbouring muslim societies need to make concerted effort through educational reforms, and ideological and moral reorientation to promote a healthy environment of mutual

understanding and respect amongst the muslim peoples and nations of Central Asia and surrounding areas.

Overcoming these powerful legacies of the successful Soviet developmental policies will be only part of the future challenge for Central Asian Republics. The real challenge will be the formulation and implementation of a culturally appropriate alternative model for future development which would ensure economic growth, political freedom, social justice, for the long oppressed peoples of the region.

These new nations progeny of the sudden demise of a once powerful revolutionary Soviet empire, are by no means homogeneous political entities. Diverse in population natural and human resources and potential for economic growth, each is capable of charting distinct strategies for its own national development. They have the opportunity to choose from a wide array of alternative development model, approaches, ideologies and strategies, tested and untested. And course of each these republics will be determined by the performance of those involved in politics and not by the preferences of those who analyse it.

#### INTER-REPUBLICAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The Soviet conventional wisdom on the provinces maintained that economic specialization of regions-referred to in the lexicon of central planners as "regionalization" - took advantage of unique local factor endowments. The specialized economies of the border land republics were said to be integrated into the all union economy in a way that maximised both local and central interests. From the earliest days of Soviet power, leaders announced and reiterated the goal of equalization among republics and nationalities. Once Brezhnev announced that as a feature of "Developed socialism" inter republican equalization had been achieved, but he was never intended to call for "more equalization". Despite such proclamations there is a little doubt among the Soviet scholars that some republics fared worse than others. In terms generally accepted measures of development, the republics of Central Asia lagged furthest behind.

Glasnost put an end to the ideological posturing on inter-regional equality. Observing the living standards of the people, a clear divergence rather than convergence among republics is clearly manifested. Despite textbook description of rational administrative direction, recent disclosures have provided evidence that previous policies

failed to produce intended results. In Central Asia, as Gorbachev notices regional policies was in such disarray that "whole areas were simply outside government control".<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps the most extensively discussed and controversial explanation of the dynamics of North-South relations, which could be applied here to Russia and Central Asian republics is "dependency" theory. Dependency theory asserts that development differentials can be explained as the product of interacting and reinforcing political and economic structures between the countries of a dominant 'centre' and the countries of subservient periphery. These course act as hubs for communications, commerce and industry. From the earliest days of civilization cores have attracted the agricultural products raw materials and human talent of concentration and proximity tended to remain in the fore, the cores acquired a progressively improved position relative to the periphery and as a result of it, regional inequalities tended to increase overtime. Gunnar Myrdal, for instance, argued that "change does not call for contradictory forces" as equalization would suggest, but instead introduced changes" which move the system in the same

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43. Pravda, January 13, 1988, p.1.

direction as the first change, but much further".<sup>44</sup> Once growth started in a favoured location in a market economy, labour, skills, capital, and commodities flowed naturally into this area. This process perpetuated growth in prosperous regions at the expense of growth elsewhere. Thus, relative to the periphery, core fared better in good times and fared not as poorly in hard times. In the long haul, core areas had an accelerating advantage in development.

One of the major assertion of dependence theory is that the vulnerable position of the dependent region flows from an extreme specializaion of the economy. Initially the independent region is maneuvered into a specialization on a particular primary commodity of agricultural product. As in Central Asia the term 'plantation' is widely used for its cotton producing areas. Secondly, since the product is destined for export, the local economy is bifurcated between sectors devoted to the export commodity and those related to goods and services for local consumption. The Central Asian local economy has long been cultivated with cotton as an export craft. When the area came under the influence of the

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44. Gunnar Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Underdevelopment of Regions* (London: Duckworth, 1957), p.13.

Tsarist government in the 19th century, the production and export of cotton grew rapidly. The crop structure was drastically changed during the years of World War II when more attention was devoted to food crops. Shortly after the war, however, the role of cotton was reestablished.

The leading role of cotton within agricultural is illustrated by the largest and most populous republics of Soviet Asia, the Uzbek Republic. Given its specialization to cotton production, the economy of Uzbekistan clearly qualifies as a "monocultural economy" in the sense described by the dependency theorists. Apart from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan is also heavily specialized to cotton production. During the decade of the 1980s, when overall Soviet cotton production declined through the USSR as a whole, Turkmenistan was the only Soviet republic to increase its cotton output.<sup>45</sup> The Tajik Republic is the third largest cotton producer, though its economy is more diversified.

Since both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan produce only small amount of cotton, it would seem that they properly should both be considered as outside the "cotton production complex". But there are good reasons for considering the

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45. Gregory Gleason, "Marketization and Migration: The Politics of Cotton Production in Central Asia", *Journal of Soviet Nationalities*, Vol.I, No.2, 1990, pp.64-96.

economy of Kyrgyzstan and at least a part of Kazakhstan as closely linked to the cotton complex. Much of the industry in these republics geared to such things as fertilizer, and agricultural machinery production. Though most of Central Asian Republics by any reasonable standard of comparative judgement have variation within republics, but the agricultural economies of these republics are basically "monocultural".

The price of the cotton was critical for the republics as the Uzbek Party First Secretary observed, "There is not one person in the republic of Uzbekistan who is not anxious about the price of cotton". The price of cotton "determines literally everything" from the fiscal solvency of the farms to the "social well-being of millions of people".<sup>46</sup> These peripheral republics were to depend on Centre for their agricultural products as in mid-1980s in the campaign against corruption, cotton prices were lowered. In the process, many Central Asian farms were driven into arrears. The inability of many Kolkhozes to pay their workers and finance infrastructural improvements - agricultural technology, construction, schools, health care and so on -

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46. I.Karimov, "Orientry Obnovlenia", Pravda, Vostoka, September 27, 1989, p.1.



precipitated serious Central Asian farm crisis. After insistent lobbying by the Central Asians, the USSR Council of Ministers agreed in 1989 to increase the cotton prices.<sup>47</sup>

The dependence of the agricultural products were to the extent that great bulk of cotton produced in the Central Asian republic was destined for use outside the region. Despite the leading role of cotton in the economy, roughly 95% of the cotton is processed into textile outside the Central Asian Republics. About 30% of Soviet Cotton is exported.<sup>48</sup> When cotton does return to the Central Asian Republics in the form of consumer goods, it comes at the prices that reflect the higher labour costs of the more advanced industrial area where the textile processing facilities are located.

Satisfaction of the former USSR's cotton needs has resulted in what has been termed as "super specialization in cotton" production in Central Asia. Supported by the region's favourable climate, a very heavy investment in a specialize extractive infrastructure in cotton production

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47. The Decree provided for a net transfer of 1250 million rubles to the UzSSR during the years 1989 and 1990. Ibid, p.2.

48. Bulletin of International Cotton Advisory Committee, Vol.43, No.2, April 1990, p. 128.

has proved extremely successful. Central Asian republics who produce about 95% of the Soviet Union's raw cotton and cotton fibre, 15% of its vegetable oil, 100% of its machinery and equipment for cotton growing, more than 90% of its cotton gins, and a large quantity of looms and equipment needed for irrigation.<sup>49</sup> Approximately, 96% of the raw cotton produced in Uzbekistan is shipped out for processing and manufacturing to the former RSFR, the Ukraine, Belorus and other republic, to Eastern Europe and elsewhere. In effect, Central Asia has been excluded from textile manufacturing and are dependent on Russia even for cloth manufacture for its own cotton as discussed before.

With more than 70% of Central Asia's best arable lands (in principal cotton growing areas of the region) under cotton, dependency on Russia for staple food has been another major effect of cotton monoculture. By the late 1980s, the overwhelming success of the Soviet agrarian colonial approach to development to Central Asia and its tragic consequences for the environment and people's Turkmenistan reached embarrassing proportions, even by the former Soviet standards, a statement ; published by the

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49. I. Rumer, "Central Asia's Cotton Economy", Journal of Soviet nationalities vol. II, No.4, 1990, p.63.

Moscow Weekly, Literaturnaya Gazeta, shows the magnitude of the super 'specialization' problem in the Republic of Uzbekistan. It says:

specialization should be reasonable. In Uzbekistan, it has degenerated into a dictatorship of a single crop, ... cotton. It first became a monoculture in a psychological sense, when it drove all other needs of the region from the minds of certain leaders (in Moscow). Then it crowded the normal ~~crop-rotation~~ from the fields and pushed everything else out of the plan. By being transformed into virtually one great cotton plantation. Uzbekistan embarked on a long, tragic experiment - to determine the capacity of a monoculture to corrode not only agriculture, but also industry, education, health and finally public morality (i.e., charges of official deception, corruption and bribery).<sup>50</sup>

Industrialization whether extractive or productive has been another important means for the former Soviet Russians to create and perpetuate Central Asian dependency. All modern industrial development in Central Asia remains virtually unchanged after the seven decades of Soviet rule. The full extent of the economic dependency of the newly

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50. Ibid, p.80

independent Central Asian Republic upon Russia, and challenges it presents for future of the people of this region can be dealt through inter-republication in the form of bilateralism.

To preserve inter-republican ties republic government resorted to a device familiar to trade officials under Soviet Centre planning - the bilateral agreement. By the end of 1991, all of the 15 former Soviet republics signed the agreements with most of the other newly independent states. Some of the agreements are quite general, signifying an intent to develop economic and other relations of the two republics involved. For example, Azerbaijan-Uzbekistan Treaty declared that the states, "will develop equal and mutually beneficial cooperation between their peoples and states in the sphere of politics, economy, trade, culture, science, technology, ecology and health care and in the humanitarian and other spheres and conclude corresponding agreements on these issues."<sup>51</sup>

In March 1992, CIS members discussed a draft agreement on principles for regulating prices for raw materials, energy, and good stuff, and all except Turkmenistan decided to set up a commonwealth working group to fashion and

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51. Bakinsky Rabochiy, October 24, 1991, p.1.

agreement concerning price formation and monetary and fiscal policy. In particular, the protocol discussion charged the working group with finding a comprehensive settlement of matters of price formation for products of inter-state exchange, taking into consideration the possibilities of joint financing of the development of the fuel and energy complex of the CIS member states.<sup>52</sup> Russia and Kazakhstan which were the primary suppliers of raw materials and energy, were interested in raising the prices in Inter-republican trade to world level in 1992, whereas Belarus, Ukrain and Maldova argued for a transition extending over 3-5 years.<sup>53</sup> Central Asian Republics though at varying level has considerable faith in the capacity of bilateral agreements to sustain inter republican ties. The Tajikistan and Lithunia agreed to guarantee first quarter 1992 deliveries at first quarter 1991 levels, and to make settlements rubles according to agreed fixed prices.<sup>54</sup> Even, Kyrgyzstan's President Akayev observed in November 1991 that his republic had stable links with various

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52. Moscow Tass International Service, 1655. GMT, March 23, 1992.

53. Moscow Interfax 1543, GMT, April 20, 1992.

54. Radio Russia Network, 1300, GMT, November 26, 1991.

republics on bilateral agreements and this is what makes confident that we can manage on our own (i.e., without a union agreement). He further added that new inter republican structures would be more useful in helping Kyrgyzstan's integration into the world economy.<sup>55</sup>

In the beginning however, bilateral agreements seem to be ineffective in support of trade for several reasons. For example, prices to be charged in inter republican trade remained the subject of difficult negotiations between and among individual republic leaders. Republic negotiators tried to exploit the newly founded commonwealth, while continued to seek separate bilateral deals with each other. For example, when Ukrain and Tajikistan agreed to ship in November 1991, 10,000 tons of cotton. But Ukrain wanted to pay 9,000 rubles per ton. And Tajikistan was asking 30,000 rubles. Noting the failure to establish a price, Ukraine's Prime Minister, Fokins admitted there is no point to the treaty without this.<sup>56</sup>

Many agreements were not honoured in 1991 because both the centre and the republic governments had lost their power to direct enterprises to make deliveries that they did not

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55. Moscow Interfax, 1348 GMT, November 15, 1991.

56. Rabochaya Gazeta, November 27, 1991, p.3.

want to fulfil. To find the supplies they needed and to obtain the food and consumer goods necessary to retain their workers enterprises increasingly evaded state orders in favour of bartering their output for that of other enterprises. This happened because in 1991, most of the Ministries were abolished and as a result of a governmental power over enterprises became weaker in 1992. Not only this the value of rouble as a medium of exchange was also diminished with the acceleration of inflation since the third quarter of 1991.<sup>57</sup>

Because of the absence of custom services or other reporting mechanism along the internal border of the CIS, the interrepublican trade was not fulfilling the objectives to comply with inter republican governmental agreements on mutual deliveries of goods. Shipments of Russian oil to CIS and Baltik states for example, reportedly decline by 18 millions. In a review of its trade position Kazakhstan specified a number of unfulfilled Russian export commitments and said it had received no sugar from Ukraine in the first quarter of 1992. In the absence of solid information it might be possible to infer that inter republican trade

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57. Radio Kiev Network in Ukraine, 1930, GMT, December 8, 1991.

declined by at least as much as CIS foreign trade in the first four months of 1992 - that it, by almost 25%.<sup>58</sup>

Considering the foreign trade or the internal trade of the former republics, economic linkages developed over decades were strained or broken in 1991 and 1992. Clearly the difficulty of maintaining of supply lines across new state borders accounts for some of the decline in production of all the former Soviet republics. Indeed, to revitalise these broken linkages all the members have gained a new impetus specially after the mid of 1992. The period has the significance as Russia turned its attention towards the Central Asian republics after being realised that the military, political and economical development is interdependent. The Central Asian republics were having bilateral agreements even before 1991, but with the disintegration of the USSR. They all have to be retained. For this bilateral agreements can definitely concretize the intended purpose of the multilateral agreements.

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58. Moscow ITAR Tass, 0918 GMT, July 13, 1992.



## BILATERALISM:

The broken inter republican ties as a result of disintegration can be restored by the mutual cooperation of the member republics. Though, the Central Asian Republics were highly dependent upon Russia and as a result a vertical relations were anticipated. The poor economic conditions in the Central Asian Republics and Russia even after the disintegration was due to fall in production and consumption. The failure of the multilateral efforts to restore political, defense and economic situation have driven the member states increasingly to bilateralize their relations. Initially, bilateral relations were developing virtually between Russia and other members of the CIS, but later on, they were developing horizontally among all members. A series of bilateral friendship treaties that Russia has signed with all the Central Asian Republics has greatly enhanced the survival and endurance of collective security arrangements. Thus, the bilateralism has provided the additional and perhaps real substance to the aims and objectives of the intended multilateralism efforts. The important example in this regard was the unsuccessful insistence of Russia for the bulk of the former Soviet armed forces, to remain as the common military instruments of

member states. Since March 1992, when all the CIS states resolved to set up their own armed forces, Russia was obliged to a compromise solution, as the continuation of common military structures were based solely on national armed forces.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly the subordination of the troops to a joint command can only be decided by the individual states.

Among the central Asian republics, Kazakhstan took the lead on 25th May 1992 following his trip to the United States. N. Nazarbayev arrived in Moscow to sign the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and mutual assistance. The two sides agreed that the two countries will form a united military and strategic zone and will jointly use the military bases, test sites and other military infrastructure.<sup>60</sup>

The bilateral agreement within the CIS also had an additional regional significance, as it was taking place after the Ashkhabad Summit in which Central Asian Leaders as well as the leaders of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan contemplated an "Asian Bloc" formation - a Summit that

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59. Andrei Zagorski, "Developments in the CIS: Challenges, for Russia" Aussen Politic 11/93. p.150.

60. Moscow ITAR-Tass, May 25, 1992, in FBIS SOV-92-101, 26 May 1992, P.14.

signifies the height of Russia's indifference or passivity on the geo-politics of the southern republics. The treaty with Kazakhstan was the beginning of Russia's 'Eurasianism' shift, and of the regaining of some of the lost ground in the region.

The communique issued after Yelstin and Nazarbayev's Summit on 26 February 1993, reiterated the commitment of both states to the implementation of the bilateral treaty signed in May 1992, and the enhancement of the treaty on collective security by Kazakh-Russian decision to sign a treaty on military cooperation in order to set up a united defense space and make joint use of military capabilities.<sup>61</sup>

After Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan signed the treaty on fundamentals of inter-state relations, friendship and cooperation on 30th May, 1992 with Russia. The two sides agreed that "territories of Russia and Uzbekistan will form a common military strategic area". They also agreed that the other "the right to use military facilities situated on their territories in case of necessity on the basis of mutual agreement."<sup>62</sup>

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61. ITAR-Tass, 26-27 February 1993, SWB, 3 March 1993, pp.B/1 and B/2.

62. Islam Karimov, Interview with Pravda, 2 June 1992, pp.1-2

In subsequent agreements the two states have gradually moved towards planning and implementing the bilateral treaty. In February 1993, a Russian military delegation headed by Pavel Grachev, Minister of Defence, met with President Islam Karimov and discussed the integration of the two states, position in the sphere positions of military technical cooperation, joint utilization of strategic facilities such as anti-aircraft, intelligence, gathering and space monitoring facilities and joint plans for combat, mobilization, training and military exercises of the Russian and Uzbek Armed Forces. This in addition to the continuous presence of Russian Officers who constitute more than 80% of the officers corpse of Uzbekistan armed force, also indicated the intended purpose of the multi lateralism devised in the form of security in Central Asia.

Kyrgyzstan's President observed in 1991 that his republic had "stable links with various republics based on bilateral agreements". He added that new inter republican structures would be most useful in helping Kyrgyzstan's integration into the world economy. On 10 June 1992, Kyrgyzstan with Russia signed "Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation", a treaty that according to Yelstin raised the

bilateral relations to a new level. Putting the two states "on an absolutely equally footing", and thus signifying the end of Russia's ambitions.<sup>63</sup>

Russia's bilateral treaties with Turkmenistan and Tajikistan were the most significant of all the bilateral treaties, as these two treaties directly deal with the future security of the Southern borders of the CIS. The significance of the treaty with Turkmenistan was a unique one, as it envisaged the formation of a national army for Turkmenistan under joint command. The armed forces which will be composed of the two existing divisions and other military units of the former Soviet Union are still stationed in Turkmenistan.<sup>64</sup>

Turkmenistan's continuous efforts to enhance the political weight of its position in the command structure and decision making mechanisms of the joint command of the army and its persistence reluctant policy within the CIS rejecting any notion of creating a supra state structure for the commonwealth are reflective of Turkmenistan's dual

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63. Noren and Watson, "Inter Republican Relations, Soviet Economy 1992, pp.115-117.

64. Nezavismaya Gazeta, 16 June 1992, p.3, FBIS-SOV, 92-117, 17 June 1992, pp. 53-54.

predicament. Russia's forward politico-military position in Turkmenistan will thus continue to be affected by the inherent tension between Russian security design and Turkmenistan's independent neutralist regional posture.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, the bilateral treaties signed between Russia and Central Asian republics on the one hand, were trying to revitalise the broken inter-republican ties by signing multifarious treaties on trade and mutual cooperation. These bilateral agreements were not confined only with the CIS member republic, but were also extended in the neighbouring Muslim countries such as Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. An inclination towards these republics were seen during the Ashkhabad Summit when Muslim countries joined under the umbrella of OEC. But in the mid of 1992 with the Tashkent summit a closely knit states were emerged and the relations between Russia and Central Asian republics became more closer not only for security implications but also for trade, commerce and other fields.

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65. FBIS Central Euracia, 22 January 1992, pp. 5-14.

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## CONCLUSION

The interstate developments within Russia and Central Asian republics after the disintegration of Soviet Union emerged on two grounds: multilateralism and bilateralism. As the centripetal and centrifugal tendencies were prevalent it became essential for the member republics to sit together for the voluntary cooperation for security and development. The efforts of the member republics was to nurture their newly independence and also evolve a workable CIS institutions for their geo-political and economic progress. The very basis of the discussion to be held among member states was to be established on consensus. Every state was free to opt out of participation in agreements it regarded as undesired by declaring its disinterest, without obstructing the consensus and consensus dependent decisions of the others. On 30 December 1991 at Minsk the consensus to be basis was declared and on 15 May 1992 opting out of participation in agreements was emphasised which clearly indicates the trend towards multilateralism. Apart from treaties that member republics have signed it indicates without loosing their independence they can work jointly for the better prospects of CIS in which all of them will have a good share.

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Russia on its part adopted a mild approach towards central Asian republics on the ground that these newly emergent nations were independent and subjects of international law. Especially in mid of 1992 with the ascendancy of the Neo-Eurasians thinking and policy in Moscow shows Russian attention towards Central Asia. A clear Russian desire and willingness to protect its historical politico-strategic interest in Central Asia. Russia was capable enough to recover the apparent strategic vacuum through measures such as the Treaty on Collective Security and bilateral security arrangements with Central Asia. As a result the entire border of the former Soviet Union with the states of the traditional Southern flank (i.e., Iran, Afghanistan Turkey) remained within the realm of Russian and CIS strategic reach. Among them the most important was the treaty-bound presence of Russian troops in the border republics for the strategic continuity in the midst of incredible changes in the region.

Though after the disintegration, Russia itself was in the midst of its own deep political and economic crisis but has successfully preserved its historical interests and influence in Central Asia through multilateral and bilateral agreements. Apart from agreements, Russia on all the three levels - military, economic and political outweighs the



Central Asian Republic. The enduring military and political legacies of the Soviet Union has given rise to structural dependency or in other words, interdependence between Russia and Central Asian Republics. Economically, this interdependence in which Russia working as 'Centre' and Central Asian Republics as 'periphery' has a well established history which cannot be overcome overnight.

The 'Inter-State Developments' of Central Asian Republics and Russia on the basis of their mutual interdependence saw a realignment at the Tashkent Summit. The significance of the treaty was not so much military, but political as their representatives sign the accord. The heads of the states agreed unilaterally on multilateral agreements on the joint use of air space, border troops under unified command and to fulfill the commitments of the former USSR with respect to the international treaties. Multilateralism went to the extent of introducing national currencies, protection of the states under rouble zone and measures to normalise the financial situation in the CIS.

Keeping aside military and economic aspects of this multilateral development, the political aspect was the CIS will continue its existence for a longer time due to the inherent interdependence of Russia and Central Asian Republics in military and economic fields. Secondly, a bloc

of closely allied states will take shape in the CIS comprising: Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Armenia on the one hand, and Ukraine Belarus, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan on the other. The interdependence was further sought by Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Moscow when they agreed to form Customs Union. The alliance was formed as a necessary condition for the preservation and normal functioning of old economic ties. They emphasised to have common customs and rules in the absence of internal customs barrier.

Apart from all the three levels mentioned before, a multilateral effort is essentially required for the problem of exodus of slavs from Central Asian Republics. Compared to all other Republics, those in Central Asia are perhaps least characterized by anti-Russian sentiments, and also the percentage population in these republics of Russians is comparatively lower. But the civil war in Tajikistan was dealt through multilateral efforts though it has a very less percentage of Russian population. The outcome was mass exodus of Russians to Russia. The reason for this exodus was the internal disturbances occurring in the republic and are in no way related to the percentage population of Russians.

Central Asian republics being underdeveloped and at the transitional stage are more prone to disturbances due to their ethnical structure. The introduction of nationality laws and national language are creating a sense of insecurity among Russians which could lead to an exodus even to the more tolerant republics. The problem here emerges for both Russia and Central Asian republics. In Central Asian republics, the Russians form the backbone of their economies and their exodus would be detrimental for them. And for Russia, it would be literally impossible to accommodate Russians in Russia due to financial and material problems. The other aspect of it would be the Russians in their homeland would be of a different sort as they have spent their life in Central Asia. Thus, the best part for these states would be to sit together and come out with some multilateral solution so that the socio-cultural and economic structure of these states should not lead to any detrimental stage.

While the Treaty on Collective Security provided the security umbrella for the Central Asian republics and must be considered as a significant step in sculpting the ultimate shape of the region. It has still to face major political, economic and operational challenges in the implementation phase. The chances of this multilateral development for

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survival and endurance have, however, been greatly enhanced by the series of bilateral 'friendship treaties' that Russia has signed with all the Central Asian republics. It is this 'bilateral level' that provides the additional and perhaps the real substance to the multilateralism.

The trend towards bilateralism was followed by all the Central Asian Republics among themselves and with Russia. Kazakhstan was the first to sign the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance. This was then followed by Uzbekistan, Kyrgystan and Tajikistan. Among the member states, the agreements were signed mainly for trade and cooperation. The important among them were the Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan trade and cooperation agreement signed on 13 December 1991. The basis of the treaty was to follow the principles of equal partnership and mutual benefit in the trade and commerce for the year 1992. Turkmenistan also signed a trade agreement with Russia. And similarly, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan followed the similar pattern on 8 January 1992.

This trend which started in the year 1991 before the peaceful demise of the Soviet Union was mainly to preserve the inter-republican ties. By the end of 1991, all of the 15 republics signed agreements with most of the other newly independent states which signify an intent to develop

economic (and other) relations of the two parties involved. Leaders in the various republics profess considerable faith in the capacity of these agreements to sustain inter-republican ties. They were of the view that economic relations could be supported by bilateral agreements and can establish future links for mutual prospects.

Bilateral agreements though initially failed to give satisfactory results because of several reasons. Among them the important were the failure to establish the terms of trade and the issue of pricing though agreeing on general terms to reciprocal deliveries. Even if the prices and quantities in inter-republican trade could be agreed upon on a state-to-state basis, the ability of the republic government to ensure the implementation of bilateral agreements is largely dependent upon.

The trend towards bilaterality resulted of the fact that some of the intended purpose of the multilateral agreements were not implemented in their actual form. Though bilateral agreements signed after the disintegration were based mainly on inter-republican trade and security implications. The members saw some of their objectives fulfilling in multilateral agreements too. Thus, the bilateral agreements between the member-states were in a way relativising the original intended multilateral structures.

And the multilateral agreements, despite being partially implemented have become, by and large, the provisional framework arrangements of these agreements.

The important aspect of the bilateral processes is that initially vertical relations were being established between Russia and Central Asian Republics. The reason for this trend was the dependency theory of centre and periphery. The legacy, Central Asian republics becoming the fragmented parts in the form periphery and Russia as center after the disintegration.

The Central Asian republics whose economies were characterised by 'super specialization' and were highly dependent upon Russia for absorbing raw materials and getting finished products have improved. With the development of sheer realization among the member states that their geopolitical and economic situation is interdependent as all of them are newly independent. So the days of vertical relations have taken the shape of horizontal developments. The one-to-one relations whose manifestation became possible through bilateralism, <sup>while</sup> keeping the multilateral structures as a provisional framework.

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