

**DEFENCE AND SECURITY RELATIONS BETWEEN  
CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS AND RUSSIA**

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**MOHAMMAD MONIR ALAM**

**CENTRE FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067  
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जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067

CENTRE FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES      July 16, 1996  
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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertaion entitled **DEFENCE AND SECURITY RELATIONS BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS AND RUSSIA** Submitted by **MOHAMMAD MONIR ALAM** in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** has not been submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. To the best of our knowledge this is a bonafide work.

We recommend that this dissertation be palced before the examiner for evaluation.

PROF. DEVENDRA KAUSHIK

SUPERVISOR

PROF. R.R.SHARMA

CHAIRPERSON

**TO MY GRAND FATHER**

*Late Hafiz Abdul Ghafoor Ansari*

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## **PREFACE**

Central Asia has been of fundamental importance in the history of Eurasia. It has been exposed to numerous invasions and military campaigns throughout the history. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, this area was a zone of triangular contest between Britain, Russia and China, which has been romanticised as the 'Great Game'. After the October Revolution of 1917, the Central Asia was incorporated into the fold of the Soviet system, and since then, the seven decades of Soviet rule gave Central Asia a strong feeling of security and stability as an integral part of a militarily strong super power. For the price of imperial sub-ordination, the Soviet Union protected Central Asia from external threats and internal instability.

The demise of the Soviet Union resulted in the creation of five independent Central Asian Republics - namely, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan which have drastically changed the balance of power of the region. These young states with weak economics, unstable political systems and no independent defence capability, have become vulnerable to external pressure and penetration.

During the Soviet regime Central Asia was controlled and shaped to the extent that it has developed a psychological feeling of dependency in the erstwhile Soviet Union and its successor, Russia. After the disintegration of Soviet Union, the sheer realisation has been emerged that the security of Russia and Central Asian states are mutually interdependent. Russia, despite its withdrawal from Central Asia could not ignore its strategic concern, geopolitical links, collective security interests for maintaining stability within the region, and ensured that no regional power supplanted Moscow's preferential status. Hence Russia continued and even enhanced

its strategic interests in Central Asia on the plea of protecting the region from external threat and internal instability.

In preparing this dissertation, I set myself the task of investigating the historical legacy of the Soviet rule, and aims of the security policy of Russian Federation in Central Asia, and also to analyse critically several factors, circumstances, which compelled both for establishing defence and security ties.

The proposed study entitled 'Defence and Security Relations Between Central Asian Republics and Russia' has been organised into five chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to the most salient features of Central Asia and its geo-strategic significance, Chapter II addresses concept of security, as well as historical background of Central Asia's security links with Russia. Chapter III looks in detail compulsions, circumstances for forging new defence and security ties between Central Asian republics and Russia. Chapter IV analyses the evolution of new collective defence and security relations among the Commonwealth of Independent States, and bilateral security agreements between Russia and all Central Asian republics. The final chapter provides some conclusions, suggesting that Central Asian republics and Russia should strength ties in near future.

In the preparation of this dissertation, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Devendra Kaushik, I have benefitted a great deal from his incisive analyses, erudite suggestion, unflagging interests and continuous support. My deepest appreciation go to my chairman, Prof. R.R.Sharma, <sup>and</sup> Dr. Ajay Patnaik, Dr. Tulsi Ram for their guidance.

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*Mohd. Monir Alam*

MOHAMMAD MONIR ALAM

## ABBREVIATIONS

CAR.	Central Asian Republics.
CENTO.	Central Treaty Organisation
CIS.	Commonwealth of Independent States.
COSCE.	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EEC.	European Economic Community.
FBIS.	Foreign Broadcast Information Service.
GCC.	Gulf Cooperation Council.
ICBM.	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile.
IRP.	Islamic Revolutionary Party.
NATO.	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
NPT.	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
OIC.	Organisation of Islamic Countries.
PFP.	Partnership For Peace.
SEATO.	South East Asian Treaty Organisation
SLCM.	Sea Launched Cruise Missile.
SLBM.	Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile.
START.	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.
UNDP.	United Nations Development Programme.
UNDCP	United Nations Development Cooperation Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNO.	United Nations Organisation.
USSR.	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
VHF.	Very High Frequency.
VLF.	Very Low Frequency.



# CHAPTER - I

## INTRODUCTION

The disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R) was an unprecedented epoch-making event of the 20th century. The demise of the Soviet Union resulted in creation of a situation of uncertainty in the vast Eurasian space. Several independent republics have sprung up across the huge territory extending over 22.4 million square kilometres comprising one-sixth of the world's total landmass. Five of them are in and around what is geographically known as Central Asia. The five Central Asian Republics are Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Five Soviet republics - Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, occupy a vast territory extending from western Siberia in the north to Afghanistan and Iran in the south, from the banks of the Volga and the Caspian sea in the west to China in the east. They cover an area of 4 million square kilometres or almost one sixth of the territory of the Soviet Union.

The entire region of Central Asia has extremely different varied climatic and natural conditions. The regions in the west and north are having extensive plains, while in the east and south, and considerable part of territory is mountainous. A great mountain chain, from Kopet-dagh in the southwest to the Pamirs and Tien-Shan in the east, divides Central Asia from

the rest of the continent. These areas are full of striking contrast enormous plains with depressions dropping to below sea level, and tall mountains covered with heavy snow, densely populated oasis surrounded by almost uninhabited deserts, arctic frosts in the mountains and tropical heat in the lower lands. Being far from oceans it represent a 'continental climate'<sup>1</sup>.

The two big rivers of Central Asia— Amu Darya and Syr-Darya, having their source in the Pamirs and Tien-Shan respectively. The important lakes of the Central Asian region are the Aral sea, the Lake Balkhast and the Lake Issyk-Kul.

The geographical location of Central Asia and Kazakhstan has been of decisive importance for trade. Before discovery of the sea routes, all the main land trade routes connecting Eastern and Central Asia with Eastern Europe and the countries of the East lay across this territory. The "Great Silk Route" connecting Persia and China with the Roman World, passes through Central Asian region. Present day air and land communications lines connecting modern Russia with Iran, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and China also pass through Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

The Central Asia is regarded one of the oldest centres of civilization. It has witnessed the gradual growth of human civilization from the Palaeolithic age. A large number of relics belonging to early Palaeolithic

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1. Richard A.Pierce, Russia Central Asia : 1867-1917 : A Study in Colonial Rule, (Berkley, University of California Press, 1960). p.8.

age. Neolithic age, and Iron age have been discovered from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, Khorezm, Bactria and Sogdians.

The Central Asian region has been exposed to numerous invasions and military campaigns throughout the history. In the course of his Persian campaign (334-329 BC) Alexander the Great, after crossing the Hindu Kush mountains, marched into Central Asia and occupied Bactria<sup>2</sup>. In his further march towards the Syr-Darya he suppressed the tribal resistance and finally occupied the valley of the Zeravshan. After his death various states including those of Central Asia continuously maintained the political and economic connections with the Greek World. Later, a Greeco-Bactrian Kingdom was formed which annexed Sogdiana, and Bactria. During the first century A.D. a Union of nomadic tribes under the rule of Kushan, extended its powers over eastern Turkestan, Sogdiana, Bactria and Afghanistan<sup>3</sup>. The Kushan period was important for cultural and economic expansion of Central Asia. The prosperity of the region was partly due to its location on the 'Great Silk Route' connecting China with Persia and the Roman World.

At the end of the 3rd century A.D. Kushan power began to decline, and in the middle of the 4th century A.D. a related tribe called the Ephthalites or White Huns subjugated Bactria and put a complete end to

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2. Devendra Kaushik, Central Asia in Modern Times : A History From the early 19th Century. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970) p.15.
  3. Ibid, p.16.

Kushan rule in Central Asia. But during second half of the 6th century, Turks conquered the Ephthalites, and annexed the great Kagnates stretching from Manchuria to the Black-sea.

During the first half of the 7th century, the Arab succeeded in defeating the military forces of Byzantian and of Sassanian Persia, and in 646 A.D. they occupied Merv, and by 651, the whole of Khorasan. Beginning with the seventies of the 7th century, the Arabs marched into the hearts of Central Asia. The Arabs under Ibn Muslim, the Governor of Khorasan, devastated the fertile valleys of the Amu-Darya and looted towns of Bokhara, Ferghana, and other Central Asian territories, and in 713 A.D. seized Samarkand. The acts of vandalism of the Arabs have been described with great indignation by the famous historian Al-Beruni. By the middle of the 8th century A.D. the Arab conquest of Central Asia was completed, and Khorezm, Bokhara, etc. were became part of the Arab caliphate. The Arabs introduced the Islamic religion in Central Asia. Along with Islam, spread of Arabic language, too become the language of administration, letters and science, which played a great force for forging the union of indigenious people with a common outlook<sup>4</sup>.

Trade flourished under the Arabs, and many Central Asian towns became Central points for rich carvanas, but agricultural population were weighed down by heavy taxation, while the landed aristocracy enjoyed

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4. H.A.R. Gible, The Arab conquests in Central Asia, (London, AMS Press, 1923). p.150.

great privileges.

In the course of the 9th and 10th centuries there arose the state of Samanid (874-999) uniting Iran with Central Asia. Ismail-Ibn-Akhmad, founder of the Samanid dynasty, incorporated Wernahr, Khorezm, Syr-Darya region, part of Turkmenia, Iran and Afghanistan, and Bokhara become the capital of all his domains<sup>5</sup>. This Samanid dynasty produced a number of great intellectuals of different fields. Mohammed Ibn-Musa Al-Khorezm, the founder of Arab mathematics, Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, a great philosopher, called the Aristotle of the east, Abu-Ali Ibn-Sina, the distinguished Central Asian scientist, Al-Beruni, a contemporary of Ibn-Sina, in addition to his 'History of India' an excellent historic - ethnographic monograph without parallel in medieval literature, he was also recognised as a great encyclopaedist, geographer, astronomer, minerologist, ethnographer, historian and poet. So, Central Asia, under the rule of the Samanid dynasty witnessed presence of a combination of learned scholars.

The Seldzhuks, a Turkish dynasty who came from the Turkestan steppes reigned over large parts of Asia in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries. Merv formed the capital of the Seldzhuks state and became a flourishing centre.

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5. Devendra Kaushik, Central Asia in Modern Times : A History From the Early 19th Century. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970). p.17.

Early in the 13th century, the Mangols under Changhiz Khan marched on Central Asia. In 1220, Changhiz Khan's army entered Bokhara, Samarkand, Merv, and other towns. In 1370, Timur Lane, proclaimed sovereign of Balkh, formed his own mighty empire with Samarkand as its capital. By the begining of the 16th century Uzbek Khanates, Bokhara, Khiva and Kokand were formed.

All the Central Asian Khanates were heterogeneous in their ethnic composition. Different scores of people of diverse ethnic origins constitute its population strata. However, out of numerous tribal nomads, only a few names stand out as pre-eminent. They are the Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tadjiks, Kirgiz, Kara-Kalpaks and Kazakhs.

The smaller ethnic groups include the kipchaks, Kashgaris, Turki, Taranchis, Arabs, Sart-kal muks, Dungans, kurama etc. The kipchaks lived mainly in the Fergana oblast and in the Tashkent. The Kashgaris said to be a "Turkified" Iranian groups had migrated to this region from Eastern Turkestan. They lived mainly in the Fergana and Semirechcoblats. The Taranchis, an ethnic group of Turkic origin had also migrated from Eastern Turkestan. The Arabs, the descendants of the Arab conquerors of the Central Asia lived in the Samarkand and Kattakurgan areas. The Sart-Kalmuks also know to 'Mangol Muslim" differed from both the Turkic and Persian groups. The Dungans, an ethnic group formed by the fussions of Turks and Chinese were also immigrants from Eastern Turkestan. They lived in the

Semirechic oblast and Syr-Darya oblast. The Kurama, an ethnic group formed as a result of the mixing of the Kazakhs and Uzbeks lived in the Angren river valley of Tashkent<sup>6</sup>.

The pre eminent ethnic groups of Central Asia, on the eve of the Russian conquest were the Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tadjiks, Kirgiz, Karakalpaks and Kazakhs.

The ancient abrogines of the Turkmen territory belonged mostly to the Iranian language group. However, from the sixth century onwards following the penetration of th Turkic tribes, the indigenous people were subjected to an unceasing process of "Turki fication", The formation of the distinct Turkmen group of people, in early stages, was closely connected with the westward migration of the Oghuz tribes, and later, with the establishment of the Seldzhuk dynasty.

On the eve of the Russian conquest, the Turkmen represented three clear-cut political groups<sup>7</sup>.

- I. the Turkmen tribes of Transcaspian, inhabiting from the Caspian sea to the Amu-Darya, from Kara-Kum to the foot-hills of Kopet-Dag mountain and the Paropami seas.
- II. The Turkmen of Khiva, most of them were enrolled in the army of the

6. Demetrius Charles Boulger, England and Russia in Central Asia. (London : Oxford Press, 1879) p.61.
7. Richard. A.Piere, Russian Central Asia : 1867-1917. : A Study Colonial Rule. (Berkley, University of California Press, 1960) p.312.

Uzbek khan of Khiva.

### III. The Turkmens of Bokhara.

Another ethnical group of Central Asia was the Uzbeks. During the early period of its origin (14th century) the term 'Uzbek' referred only to the nomadic tribes, who inhabited the eastern lands of the Golden Horde and were enrolled in the army of Uzbek Khan, (1312-1342). Uzbek tribes - sarts, inhabited the Zerafshan valley, and the Fergana, Tashkent and Khorezm oases, and also constituted the bulk of the region's urban population. Now, the Uzbek constitute modern Uzbekistan.

The other group - the Tadjiks, one of the most cultured people of central Asia, are the descendents of the ancient aborigines of the lands. They are an Iranian language-group, belonging to the Aryan branch of family of Indo-European people. They became prominent under rule of Samanid Sultan. The term 'Tadjik' is employed today only in a very narrow sense to denote the majority nation of the Tadjik republic<sup>8</sup>.

The kirgiz are the ancient people of Central Asia. They were settled in the Tien-Shan region. On the eve of the Russian conquest, it was found that pastoral nomadism was almost the main occupation among the Kirgiz. Now kirgiz constitutes majority population in the modern republic of Kirgyzstan.

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8. M.A. Czaplicka, The Turks of Central Asia in History and the Present Day . (London, Oxford Press, 1918) pp. 66-67.



The ethnic composition of the Kara-Kalpak is rather more complex. It includes the ancient tribes which inhabited the territory of modern Kara-Kalpak region, some of whom were of Saka-Massagatai and Sarmatian-Alani origins<sup>9</sup>. After their arrival in the lower Amu-Darya delta, the Kara-Kalpaks were subjugated by the Uzbek ruler of the Khanate of Khiva. The territories inhabited by them were transformed into three kingdoms of the Khanate Those were Shuman, Kungrad and Kunya-Urgeneh.

The most important ethnic composition of Central Asia on the eve of the Russian conquest were the Kazakhs. The kazakhs, contrary to the popular traditions, do not have a homogeneous social ancestry. Their have mingled racial heritage, and they have many Mangoloid characteristics as well as other clearly European racial features<sup>10</sup>. Non-Kazakhs population have majority in the present Central Asia Republic of Kazakhstan.

The people of Central Asia lived under the rule of the Khans of Uzbeks dynasties for three centuries (16th to mid 19th centuries) until they were incorporated into the Tsarist Russian Empire. Though certain common elements such as language and culture already existed and incipient national consciousness had appeared, conditions prevailing under the rule of the Khans were not conducive to further national consolidation. The Mangol conquest disrupted the progressive development which had started under

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9. Devendra Kaushik, Central Asia in Modern Times : A History From the Early 19th Century. (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1970). p.21.

10. Ibid. 21.

the Centralised state of the Khorezm Shahs and brought with it an era of feudal disintegration. Central Asia, divided into feudal Khanatas, lagged far behind in socio-economic and political development. Its economy was undermined by incessant internecine wars between the Khanates. The low level of development of productive forces, and stagnation in agriculture and crafts also adversely affected the formation of national groups.

Uzbek Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand were heterogeneous in their ethnic composition. In Khiva, there were Uzbeks, Turkmens, Kara-Kalpaks and Kazakhs. The Khans of Khiva oppressed the Turkmens and Kara-Kalpaks. Thus, Central Asia, on the eve of the imperial Tsarist annexation, was having multi-ethnic composition. The nationalities of Central Asia represent a 'complex mixture of various ethnic groups of antiquity'<sup>11</sup>, and the people, were all inter-related through old ethnic ties, which account for a number of common features in their culture, economy and way of life. Their common historical development and joint struggle against foreign invaders strengthened these bonds of unity.

By the middle of nineteenth century despite the unfavourable conditions, the people of Central Asia had developed a common language, way of living, and a distinct culture. But their ethnic development to a higher stage was retarded by their economic, political, and cultural backwardness. The whole region was in a state of decay, isolated from the

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11. Ibid, p.24.

modern world, its population static and its economy depressed. It was only after the merger of Central Asia and Kazakhstan with the Tsarist Russian empire that rudimentary capitalist elements began to appear. The construction of railways, expansion of commerce, exploitation of mineral resources, by applying modern technology, and development of marketable agricultural products such as cotton, brought this remote territory of the Russian empire into the vortex of the world market. On the basis of this new capitalist development, these national groups of Central Asia began to consolidate into 'bourgeois nations'.

But this process of consolidations, modernisation, economic development, industrialization, commercialisation of agriculture of the region etc. could not be completed, and was retarded by the Tsarist regime's policy of military feudal imperialism and colonial oppression. It was completed not on a capitalist but on a socialist basis after the victory of the October Socialist Revolution. Even then, the level of ethnic consolidation had not reached the level claimed by Soviet scholars. Subsequent events after disintegration of USSR have shown the strong survival of remnants of tribalism in the consciousness of the Central Asia national group. The October Revolution opened-up for the people of Central Asia and Kazakhstan the path to independent national development. The Soviet government's delimitation of the national state boundaries in 1924 helped the people of Central Asia in their national consolidation efforts, and speedy cultural and economic advancement.

The 1924 Central Asian delimitation in Central Asia (though it was quite an improvement over the previously existing Bokhara and Khorezm republics and Turkestan autonomous republic having mixed national composition) was however not an ideal one. It left many disputed national territories and dissatisfied national population. The inclusion of the largely Tajik cities of Samarkand and Bokhara in Uzbek republic and the Uzbek populated region of Khojend into the Tajikistan has been source of tension between the two republics. Similarly the Osh valley has been a bone of contention between Kirgyzia and Uzbekistan.

## CHAPTER - II

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CENTRAL ASIA'S SECURITY LINKS WITH RUSSIA

#### I. CONCEPT OF SECURITY

The concept of security, as it relates to the political position of a nation an alliance of nations or the world itself, is both wider and more elusive than that of defence. The traditional concept of security is the protection of a nation-state from external over-throw and aggression. But its multiple character can be deduced from the number of ways in which the term is used. So, leaving aside its applications to the protection of the weaker members of the society by economic means, i.e., "social security" it is common to speak of "national security", a term closely related to military strength, "internal security" implying the protection of the State against the weakening or overthrow of its institutions and values by a minority or by an external power, "collective security" which involves the extension of national security by reciprocal guarantees, assurances between allies; and most elusive of all "international security".<sup>1</sup>.

World War I brought an increased awareness of security systems as a means of protection against military espionage, sabotage, external

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1. Alstair Buchan and John M.Mackintosh, "Security" in C.D.Kerning, ed, Marxism Communism and Western Society : A Comparative Encyclopaedia, Vol.VII, (New York, Herder and Herder) 1974, P.304.

aggression and subversion, and such programmes in effect became part of a country's national security system. After World War II much of these apparatus was retained as a result of international tensions and defence production programmes, and became part of an increasingly professionalised complex of security functions.

### **NATIONAL SECURITY -**

Directly connected with the essential problem of modern times, security building is more important than ever before. 'National security' as a term has been used by politicians and military leaders to describe a theoretical phrase and policy objectives. It has been defined by social scientists<sup>2</sup>, historians<sup>3</sup> and others to meet atleast the basic criteria of a nation for security. Each states exists in its own Webof threats and problems which defines its insecurity and agenda for national security. National security has been defined by a leading Western political scientist as a value:-

"Of which a nation can have more or less and which it can aspire to have in greater or lesser measure. It has much in common, in this respect, with power or wealth, two other values of great importance in international affairs. But while wealth measures the amount of the nation's material possessions, and power its ability to control the actions of others, security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a

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2. Walter Lippman, US Foreign Policy : Shield of the Republic : (Boston, 1943), p.58.
3. Arnold Wolfers, "National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol". Political Science Quarterly. Vol.67, New York, 1952. pp.481-502.

subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attached"<sup>4</sup>.

Most definitions of national security have one common factor-power and national interests override any other factor and have predominance over economic and social issues. Everything points to the existence of two different approaches to the fundamental principles of security : one holds that security can be ensured through deterrence i.e, through use of military pressure, and the other holds the premise that security can only be promoted by political methods, by developing wide ranging political relations, not underestimating the adequate defence potential<sup>5</sup>.

But due to several reasons, it is difficult to make an objective assessment of the degree of security of a nation and to equate national security directly with the defensive or military power of a nation. One state may conclude that the threat to its society, national integrity and geographical unity comes more from internal than from external sources and place its primary emphasis on internal security precautions. Besides due to complex economic and historical reasons, a country judged that its own security is indistinguishable from the protection of a number of interests distant from its own metropolitan territory. This was the position of the United States until the failure of its intervention in Vietnam led in

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4. Michael H.H.Louw, "Towards a Theory of International Security" Political Studies Survey, England, 29(1); 1981, p.102.
  5. Arnold Wolfers. Discard and Collaboration; Essays on International Politics; (Baltimore : Md, 1962), p.150.

1968 to a major consideration of its capabilities. But the United States and the Soviet Union wield such large resources and their judgement to make their own security have a direct bearing not only on each other's security, but also on that of a large number of other powers.

It was a nicely balanced question in the late 1940's as to how much the western countries of Western Europe should invest in defensive military power in the face of the Soviet threat. So, security is in any case a relative and not an absolute concept, as the British philosopher A.D. Lindsay remarked "The search for perfect security - - - defeats its own ends"<sup>6</sup>. The Soviet Union sought in the immediate post-War years to strengthen its own defensive position by exerting stringent control over the whole of Eastern Europe and by adopting a threatening posture towards Berlin and Western Europe. Similarly the United States, by developing a large number of overseas bases around the periphery of the Soviet Union for logical reasons of Americans and allied securities, created a sense of encirclement in the Soviet mind and an aggressive image of American policy certainly not increased the real security of the United States. The Central problem of arm races during the Cold War consists in this ambiguous relationship between national power and national intentions.

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6. Lindsay A.D. 'Introduction to Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan' (New York; Ldn - Press, 1914). P.XXII.



(a) Security as perceived in the Western World — Despite the various ways of tackling the problems of security, a broad consensus of agreement on the requirements of their own national security emerged among the Western nations. Its first principle is that the forces maintained to ensure the security of the Western nations from external aggression or to protect their overseas interests should not be set at a level which will seriously interfere with the economic expansion and well-being of countries concerned. At the end of the Korean War the major NATO allies were spending between 11 and 15% of their GDP on national security, and by 1970 the United States was spending about 8% and its European allies considerably less<sup>7</sup>.

The existence of a large array of nuclear weapons in the hands of the United States encouraged its Western allies, that until a stronger form of international security can be devised to replace systems of national security, nuclear weapons must be retained. During the first ten years of the nuclear age Western governments tended to see in the American nuclear weapons a form of reprisal so devastating as to minimise all threats of aggression against them, the view embodied in the strategy "massive retaliation". This view did not survive the rise of the Soviet Union as a major thermonuclear and missile power, since it became apparent that the implementation of any such threat might lead to a nuclear exchange which would devastate

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7. Buchan and Mackintosh, no 1. p.306.

the United States and Western Europe as much as any potential aggressor. But with the changing situation of the World, the policy of primary dependence on the nuclear weapon has been replaced by a strategy of 'flexible response' which predicated a wide spectrum of military force, including efficient mobile non-nuclear forces, in order to protect the security of the diverse group of countries which lie within the general Western system of security.

(b) Security as Perceived in the Socialist Camp — The Soviet approach to the problem of national security must be viewed against the background of the very special factors which have gone into the make-up of the Russian state. The centuries of conquest and occupation of the large great plain stretches from the Baltic of the Pacific gave the Russian people more fear and suspicion, not only of outsiders but also from rival factions within this vast territory itself. The formation of the Russian state relatively late, and enforced speed to advance as a world power also had an important effect on their approach to national security.<sup>8</sup>

During the pre-revolution days, Russia was rich enough in manpower and in resources and was able to avoid a clash of interests between internal and external security. This psychological factors have been responsible for the characteristic merging of the internal and external aspects of national security in the minds of the leaders of the Soviet Union. During the Russian

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8. Buchan and Mackintosh, no.1, p.308.

Civil War of 1918-22. Opposition to the Bolshevik political system of the centre led quickly to armed rebellion at several places of the outlying regions, some backed by the foreign military support, with rival armies converging on the capital. So, the Soviet authorities draw the conclusion that foreign invasion of the country might be combined with potential subversive activity within the USSR, but they also apparently feared that once disaffection went unchecked, its escalation into sabotage and subversion would be quick and inevitable, and Stalin carried these fears to the verge of obsession. For this reason, Soviet Union kept up its armed forces at a high level and also maintained the secret police and a separate force of border guards under its leadership, internal and convoy troops and a special network of secret police cells within the armed forces known as the 'special sections' (spetsialnye otdeleniia), to check on the reliability of the troops<sup>9</sup>.

With regard to the military threat from abroad as seen from Moscow, the onset of the atomic age compelled the Soviet Union to change its concept of the basic principle covering this aspects of its national security to a greater extent than any other power. Before 1945 the Soviet Union's national security problem had been inherited from pre-revolutionary Russia and was dominated by Russia's geographical position. Russia had an indefensible open western frontier facing the highly industrial power of

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9. Ibid.

Germany before 1914. In the Far East, Russia's frontiers were also opened to the Japanese, and the great distances and low level of transport communications between Eastern Siberia and European Russia made the problem of the organisation and control of defence in this area even greater. The vast area between the Volga and the Amu was, however, immune from attack even air attack, and although in World War II the Soviet Union suffered severely at the hands of the Germans, and the Asians and Siberians hinterland of the Soviet Union was virtually untouched by military operations.

By the time Stalin decided to challenge the non communist World, of which the United States was the strongest military and economic power, the national security problem which faced the Soviet Union had been radically altered. Until 1949, the United States had a monopoly of the atomic bomb, and an overall numerical superiority of delivery vehicles capable of reaching military and industrial targets in the Soviet Union. This situation came to be regarded as the main threat to Soviet security. The Soviet leaders tried to meet it both by direct means, by building up a comprehensive air defence system and laying the foundations of their own strategic strike force and by direct means-by holding Western Europe hostage.

After 1945 the Soviet Union greatly improved the strategic security

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9. Ibid. p.309.

of its western frontier by annexations of territory in East Prussia, Poland Czechoslovakia and Romania, and by establishing communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe which could act as a 'protective buffer' against threats.

In the post War period, no country or group of countries in Western Europe was capable of posing a military threat to the Soviet Union across the Western frontiers. As part of its deterrent policy the Soviet Union maintained forces in eastern and Central Europe capable of overrunning Western Europe.

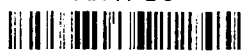
The founding of NATO as a formidable military coalition intensified these Soviet preoccupations in the field of national security. For a period in the mid 1950, American strategic strike powers became so potentially dangerous to the air defences of the Soviet Union before Soviet counter measures had taken effect that the Soviet placed even more reliance on their ability to advance quickly into Western Europe, and draw up a new programme of gradual disarmament.

However, with the emergence of a strong and well-trained NATO ground, sea and airforce in Western Europe, the significance of the Soviet threat declined, and at the same time, Soviet progress in air defence reduced the threat of an American manned bomber attack. From early 1962 onwards the main security problem of the Soviet Union and the United States was the growing force developed by both sides of nuclear armed long-range ballistic missiles.

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The race to produce a convincingly powerful force of long range ballistic missiles placed the United States in the over all lead, although in 1970 the USSR had deployed more land-based inter continental ballistic missiles than the Americans. The Soviet leaders appear to believe that their security is safeguarded by the effective deterrent capability of their growing strategic missile power, and were steadily progressive towards effective parity with the United States. While relying on their own strength to preserve their security, the Soviet leaders also realised that its validity in American mind and secondly, on the independent or joint measures which both power take to avoid miscalculation of each other's intentions, technical accidents and dangerous commitment to smaller allies.

## **II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SECURITY LINKS**

### **(a) Tsarist annexation of the Central Asia.**

Although Russia had sporadic contacts with Central Asia for several centuries, and fairly regular ones from the seventeenth century, the Russian campaign of conquest in Central Asia did not commence until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It did not for a long time exhibit any particular interest in annexing the Central Asian region. Ignorance of geography and of the economic potential of Central Asia coupled with the remoteness of the region from Europe an Russia resulted in keeping away Russia's interest form Central Asia. However, towards the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Russia not only cast away its indifferent attitude

towards Central Asia, but become alive to its obvious economic, military, strategic and political importance<sup>10</sup>.

The Russian movement into Central Asia in the nineteenth century was aimed at the uniting of the Russian lands, ensuring of security of the empire<sup>11</sup>. The security realisation of the region, stability in these areas was necessary for the overall security of the Russian empire. The southern border of Siberia from the Urals to the Altai was inhabited by the Kazakhs people. Their usual practices to plunder villages, drive off live stock, sell of captive into slavery market in Khiva and Bokhara, frequently raiding the trade carvanas and rich lands, etc. drew the attention of the Tsarist Russia.

But most important, the commercial and political expansionism of Great Britain in the region greatly threatened overall security of the Tzarist Russian regime. By the early nineteenth century, Russian statesman and military personnel had began to feel concern regarding British commercial and political penetration in Afghanistan and Central Asia. So the necessity of containing the commercial and political expansion of Great Britain in the region became as important task to Russia as securing the region's cotton for its textiles industry and opening the Central Asian market for Russian

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10. R. Vaidyanath. The Formation of the Soviet Central Asian Republics: 1917-1936. (New Delhi; People's Publishing House, 1967), p.44.
  11. Ahmad Rashid. The Resurgence of Central Asia : Islam or Nationalism? (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 1994), p.19.

manufactured articles. N.A.Khalfin, believe, that the "economic reasons in themselves were sufficient to warrant Russian penetration" into Central Asia<sup>12</sup>. Besides, the enormous political prestige resulting from the annexation of such a vast region and the possibility of using it as a bargaining counter for wresting concessions on the western front from its traditional rival in European politics - the Great Britain, were not last on Russia.

By and large the neighbouring countries of China, India, and Russia or the powers based there have had a deep impact on the politics of Central Asia. Central Asia was one of the key areas of rivalry for supremacy between Britain and Russia through most of the nineteenth century. Russia's advance towards Turkey and Persia during the early part of the tenth century in 1826-28 brought it into conflict with Britain<sup>13</sup>. In formulating its policy towards Persia and Central Asia. Russia found it necessary to take the British interest into account. Similarly Britain also took due note of the Russian interest in Persia and Central Asia. Both Britain and Russia were thus deeply involved in this game of power rivalry to establish supremacy in the region. Britain and Russia confronted each other from China to Persia in the 1880's and the 1890s. The move made by Britain in Afghanistan and Persia, as well as in Tibet, roused Russia's suspicions of British designs.

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12. N.A.Khalfin. Politika Rossi Srednei Azii (Moscow Progress Publication, 1960), p.62.

13. Devendra Kaushik, "Central Asia in Modern Times : A History from the Early 19th Century (Moscow; Progress Publication, 1970), p.50



Afghanistan became involved in the 'game' of the British and Russia power politics in Central Asia. About the turn of the century, Russia's position in Central Asia conferred on it special advantages vis-a-vis Britain and China.

Jealous of Russian advance beyond the Caspian sea, and their vast possessions in the East, the British feared that the real objective behind the Russian thrust was to deprive them of their possessions in India. They never liked the idea of the Russian government becoming a party to the question of Afghanistan, they wanted Afghanistan to preserve its integrity at all costs. The Russian, on the otherhand, feared that under British influence Afghanistan might become a disturbing factor in the peace and stability of Central Asia. Russia at all costs, wanted to maintain its influence over Central Asia, and for its security, defence, and also for all its southern flank's security, always tried to maintain stability in the region. During Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region, Russia never compromised with Britain, and always realised the geostrategic position of Central Asia, and tried to maintain peace and stability in the region at any cost.

By the Anglo-Russian convention of 31st August 1907, the two powers further defined their respective spheres of influence in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet Britain undertook not to annex or occupy any part of Afghanistan while Russia confirmed that Afghanistan lay outside its sphere of influence<sup>14</sup>. Thus, the negotiations which began with the aim of creating a

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14. G.Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia. (London: Bodley Head Press, 1964), p.26.

buffer state ended up in the carrying-out of sphere of influence.

Britain and Russia, having special interest in Eastern Turkistan, pursued an active forward policy from 1860s onwards. During the decline of the Chinese Empire, British and Russian imperialism competed with each other to gain strategic control over it. Thus due to British rivalry in the region, annexation of Central Asia and establishment of full control over it, was necessary for the over all security of the Russian empire.

The Central Asian campaign, though it began as early as 1839, did not assume any importance until the close of the Crimian War (1853-1856). In an attempt to gain compensation for its losses in that War, and to bolster-up national prestige, the Tsarist government decided to annex the Central Asian region. The city of Aulic-Ata was taken by Tsarist army on 4 June 1864, Turkestan on 12 June and Chimkent on 22 September in the same year. On 17 June 1865, Tashkent, one of the most important cities of the region was in Russia possession<sup>15</sup>.

In the following year, the Russian armies captured Khodzhent, Ura-Tube, Dzhizak and Yangi-Kurgan. On May-2, 1868, the famous city of Samarkand was taken. The Khiva campaign, commenced in 1873, resulted in the humbling of that state and annexation of large tracts of territory

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15. Devendra Kaushik, Central Asia in Modern Times : A History from the Early 19th Century. (Moscow: Progress Publication, 1970), pp. 43-47.

lying on the right bank of Amu Darya. The Transcaspian region passed into Russian hands following the defeat of the Turkmen tribes in the battle of Goek-Tepe (12 January 1881). On 6th May, 1881, this region was formally annexed to the empire. The Russian campaign of conquest in Central Asian region was completed with the capture of Merv (January, 1884) and Kushka (March, 1885)<sup>16</sup>.

The Russian advance in Central Asia which began in 1839, in the course of less than half a century resulted in the reduction of the Emirate of Bokhara and Khanata of Khiva to vassal status and the total annexation of the territories of the Kokand Khanate. The southern frontiers of the U.S.S.R. in the region the limit beyond which Russian advance may cause a risk of major war with Great Britain, which from its base in India, suspiciously viewed every move of Russia southwards as a potential threat to its 'crown's brightest jewel'<sup>17</sup>. In this backdrop, the Anglo-Russian rivalry for strengthening their position around the region of Central Asia, policies of imperial Tsarist Russia for the security of the region from the destabilising forces was necessary for the over all defence and integration of the Russian empire. For the security and defence of the Central Asian region, Tsarist Russia followed the principles of strategic policies, and thwarted the British design of forward policy in the region.

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16. Louis E. Frechtling, "Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Eastern Turkestan 1863-1881". Journal of Royal Central Asian Society, London - 26 July 1939, pp. 472-3.
  17. W.K.Fraser-Tytler, Afghanistan A Study of Political Development in Central and South Asia. (London, Printer Publishers, 1956), p.129.

**(b) October Revolution till the Creation of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).**

Following the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II on 2 March 1917, the imperial regime began to crack-up all over Russia. After the October Revolution of 1917, a process of intensive integration of Central Asia into a single Soviet State system began under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This took place in stages (first stage in 1924) culminating in the year 1936 when the five full-fledged Soviet Socialist Republics of Central Asia come into existence. The seven decades of Soviet rule gave Central Asia a strong feeling of security and stability as an integral part of a militarily strong super power. During this period it remained free from internecine conflicts uprisings, internal ethnic fightings, border threats and felt no threat to its security from its powerful neighbours.

Central Asia was one of the key areas of rivalry for supremacy between Britain and Russia through most of the nineteenth century, and between Japan and Soviet Union in the first half of the twentieth. After, with the coming together of Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey, and the Sovietization of Russian Central Asia in 1920s, were matters of grave concern to the makers of the British policy towards Central Asia. The emergence of Japan in China and Chinese territories bordering the Soviet Union in the 1930s caused much anxiety in the Soviet Union, for the security of the Central Asian region. Japanese supremacy in Manchuria and Soviet supremacy in Sinkiang

was indicative of a kind of balance of power in Central Asia. Japanese expansion in China threatened the Soviet position not only in northern Manchuria, Western Inner Mongolia, but also in the Soviet Far East and Siberia. Now Central Asia become on an arena of struggle for primacy between Japan and Soviet Union<sup>18</sup>.

Britain and Russia, which had both evinced special interest in Eastern Turkestan over since the first half of the nineteenth century, pursued an active forward policy there from the 1860s onwards. After the Russia Revolution, the British concerted their efforts to stop the spread of Soviet influence in Sinkian. In the mid 1930s the Soviet Union followed certain politico-military objectives in Sinkiang, and it become practically an outpost of the Soviet Union. The spread of Soviet influence in Sinkiang had many dimension which the British Government in India could not afford to ignore.

The Soviet Union was forced to divert all its attention and energy to its war with Germany, which began in the summer of 1941. It, therefore entered into an agreement with China towards the end of 1942 which empowered the latter to take over regular control of Sinkiang. The Chinese communists liberated Sinkiang in October 1949, and made it an integral part of their unitary state. On 1 October 1955, the Chinese Government

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18. Ram Rahul, Politics of Central Asia, (New Delhi : Vikas Publications, 1973), p.36

reorganised Sinkiang as the 'Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China'<sup>19</sup>. Yet despite the withdrawal of the Russian from Eastern Turkistan, the long border of Russia with China still remained disputed. Soviet Union always tried to keep China away in the border disputes of Central Asian states, and to secure the stability of the border and security of Central Asia, it always tried to check the growing interference of Chinese government. The Sino-Soviet border conflicts of 1969 was the outcome of the policies of Soviet Russia to maintain the stability in the border territories of Central Asia.

After the Revolution of 1917, the Soviet Union adopted the policies to influence neighbouring Muslim states of Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey through granting federal autonomy to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and finally Tadjikistan. But when it realised in the early 1930s that pan-Turkic and pan-Iranian influences might foster secessionist tendencies, it came down heavily on Islam and Islamic conservatism and reduced the federal autonomy of the Muslim nationalities in Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus to a mere administrative formality. Thus, the Soviet leaders always emphasised for the Soviet security zone. The stability in the Central Asian states, and the protection of the Soviet homeland, was undoubtedly the first priority and of immense importance for the Soviet political and military leadership, as well as for the peace and integration of the Soviet Russia.

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19. Ibid. p.46.

During the post World War II the security implication of the Central Asian region was deepened. The decolonisation process coincided with the Cold War and the polarisation of the North into Western and Socialist camp. In that process, the South had to confront not only the European colonial powers but also the USA, which was increasingly assuming the leadership of the Western Bloc in global politics<sup>20</sup>. During that period, while the USA was the power behind the scene, European colonial powers were retained in the forefront. France and Britain along with the USA were members of the SEATO. In Baghdad Pact, only Britain was the extra regional power involved. Though the USA was the main aid giver, both economic and military it remained in the background as a member of Committees of the Baghdad Pact, and the CENTO subsequently. At that time Indian Ocean was considered to be a British lake. Soviet Union had shown no great awareness of the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean for the security implication at that period of the Cold War. Hence, the Indian Ocean, despite the rivalry and alliances on its littoral, still free from the super power nuclear strategy.

Politics of the Indian Ocean region took a dramatic turn since 1955 following the de-Stalinization process. The new leadership in Moscow for the security and stability of the part of Soviet Central Asia, ignored the earlier ideological formulations and to maintain balance of power came

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20. C.R.Mohan, Indian Ocean and US-Soviet Detente: (New Delhi : Patriot Publishers, 1991), p.31.

forward to support the south against the West<sup>21</sup>. Thus, the Indian Ocean developed into an arena for the naval rivalry between the two super powers in the first half of the sixties with the induction of the nuclear-powered submarines capable of launching long range ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. Their induction in the Indian Ocean added completely a new dimension to the question of superpower rivalry in the Ocean<sup>22</sup>. The rivalry was not confined for a monopoly over trade and trade routes, and over-rich mineral resources of the region, but subsequently it culminated in to occupy the strategic position to save their territories from any kind of aggression. The deployment of SLBM system in the Indian Ocean, which had a profound impact, was a new development. After the following major developments in the subsequent years - formal despatch of the US task force to the Indian Ocean from the Pacific, beginning of construction of the Very Low Frequency (VLF) communication centre at North West Cape on the Indian Ocean. US desire to acquire base facilities in Diego-Garcia, that subsequently by the Anglo-US negotiations in 1965, started operation of base by 1966, British announcements of its withdrawal from the east of Suez by 1971, and closure of the Suez Canal following the June war etc. all these had a tremendous impact over Soviet Russia's security policies of Central Asia states.

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21. *Ibid.* p.32

22. Devendra Kaushik. The Indian Ocean : Towards a Peace Zone (New Delhi : Vikas Publication, 1971), p.34.



Militarist circles in the Western countries, particularly in the United States, now, mere making wide use of the scientific and technical achievements in exploring the world oceans for aggressive purposes. The West was developing the most upto date types of weaponry, modernising its navies, developing special means to make it possible to conduct military operations under water, and on the seabed and ocean floor, and reconstructing old naval bases and building new ones<sup>23</sup>. The extension of US submarine operations to the Indian Ocean had led to the appearance of a new seat of tension in that area and had evoked justified alarm in the Soviet Union. The appearance in the Indian Ocean, of American nuclear submarines equipped with missile constituted a threat both for the European part of the USSR and for the Soviet Central Asia and Eastern Siberia<sup>24</sup>.

The events of 1978-79 gave a new impetus to the super power rivalry. In the aftermath of the fall of the Shah of Iran in February 1979, and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the year 1980, witnessed a formidable build-up of naval forces in the Indian Ocean. This period also witnessed hectic efforts by the United States to acquire military facilities in the litoral region to support its naval deployment and future military plans for the Gulf region,<sup>25</sup> which was considered by Soviet Union a threat for the over

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23. P.K.S. Namboodri, Intervention in the Indian Ocean (New Delhi : A.B.C. Publishing House, 1982). pp.138-39.
  24. Saral Patra (ed). Indian Ocean and Great Powers (New Delhi : Sterling Publishers, 1979), pp.52-53.
  25. K.S. Namboodri, Intervention in the Indian Ocean (New Delhi : A.B.C. Publishing House, 1982), p.175.

all security of the Central Asian parts of its territories.

In Iran, with the fall of the rule of Shah, a fundamentalist regime came to power which was not only hostile to the USA, and other neighbouring Arab states in the Gulf, but also to the USSR. It was feared by the Soviet leaders that the so called, Islamic fundamentalism would have a domino effect in the Gulf, it might export conservative fundamentalist forces to the border region of the Soviet Central Asia, where a sizeable population of Muslims were still hostile to the imposition of the Soviet rule. It was also feared by the Soviet leaders that once, the Islamic forces entered into the hostile region of Central Asia, it might destabilise the security of the Soviet Central Asian.

The same period also saw the overthrow of the Daud regime in Kabul, an coming into power of the left regime. In December 1979, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in support of the Kabul regime. The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan aimed with the historical Russian dream to get a foothold in the warm waters of the Arabian Sea, as well as to salvage their crumbling supported regime in Kabul against the rising power of Islamic nationalist forces. Thus, to check the growing emergence of Islamic nationalists in Iran and in Afghanistan as well as around the periphery of the Soviet Central Asia, was necessary for the maintenance of stability and overall security of the Central Asian region.

These two developments in Iran and Afghanistan, taken together, were

considered as a serious threat to the Western interests in the Indian Ocean region, but Soviet policies were necessary for the security and stability on the borders.

President Carter, in his State of the Union Address on 21 January, 1980, highlighted the new threats to the Gulf due to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and said that any attempts by any "outsider force" to gain control of the Persian Gulf region would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America and such assault would be repelled by any means including military force.

The USA was also gradually equating its naval presence in the Indian Ocean with Soviet presence, as a land power in Central Asia. With the politico-military developments, the peace zone idea of Indian Ocean gradually get eroded, the world witnessed the growing legitimisation of the US (and NATO) presence in Indian Ocean especially in the eighties<sup>26</sup>. Now the USSR was the alleged target of the CENTCOM. The presence and role of NATO in the Gulf, headed by USA, during the Iran-Iraq war, and subsequently during the Gulf crisis coincided with the new detente which put serious constraints on the Soviet diplomatic move vis-a-vis the west in the region. Thus the increasing legitimisation of the NATO presence in the Indian Ocean and its Gulf part dealt a serious blow to the defence, and stability and security of the Soviet Central Asia.

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26. Devendra Kaushik. The Indian Ocean : Towards a Peace Zone. (New Delhi : Vikas Publication, 1971), pp. 44-45.

Since the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia, the Soviet leadership always demonstrated its adequate concern for the security and stability of its southern territories which formed its soft belly.

## CHAPTER - III

### COMPULSIONS FOR FORGING NEW DEFENCE AND SECURITY TIES BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS AND RUSSIA

The seven decades of Soviet rule gave Central Asia a strong feeling of security and stability as an integral part of a militarily strong super power. During this period it remained free from internecine conflicts and felt no threat to its security from its neighbours. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the sheer realisation emerged that the security of Russia and the newly independent Central Asian States is mutually interdependent, as these young states with weak economies, unstable political system and no independent defence capability, have become vulnerable to external pressure and penetration. The newly independent states of Central Asia also harbour no military ambition, nor does Russia need to take confrontational posture when close and cordial relationships with its erstwhile components is a strong guarantee for regional stability. Russia, despite its withdrawal from Central Asia could not ignore its strategic concern, geopolitical links, collective security interests for maintaining stability within the region and ensured that no regional power supplanted Moscow's preferential status.

The first alarm for security concern of Central Asia states was raised in early 1992 when the ruling elites there warned Moscow that its

Eurocentric-orientation-dominated policy could pave the way for the predatory designs of West Asian muslim fundamentalist forces in their lands. They spoke forcefully of the fear of loss of strategic installations in Central Asia and of the eruption of inter-ethnic conflicts, like those witnessed in the Caucasus. Powerful economic lobbies also insistingly subscribed to the view of Russian's continued and even enhanced strategic interests in Central Asia taking into account the need of protecting the Central Asia states<sup>1</sup>.

Russia's comprehensive and long standing relations with Central Asia clearly indicate that protection of newly Central Asian states from external threats and internal instability had been the responsibility of the federal government. The emergence of independent states in Central Asia has led to the significant enlargement of the perceived 'Islamic threat'. The sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, and the demise of communism as a competing ideology have given rise to the potential emergence of Islam and Islamic World as a replacement, a new challenge facing the Western World in the post cold war era<sup>2</sup>.

The other situations ranging around the periphery of Central Asia, like the potential overspill of the anarchy raging in Afghanistan,

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1. Ronald Dannreuther, "Creating New States in Central Asia" Adelphi Papers, no. 288, March 1994, p.4.
  2. John L. Esposito. The Islamic Threat : Myth or Reality. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992), p.46

compounded by Iran's avowed policy of exporting the Islamic revolution, the 'black hole' of Central Asia now constitutes an expanded part of the 'new Middle East' etc forced federal government of Russia to protect Central Asian republics from external threats and penetration. Geoculturally, few other regions entail a nation-states border systems of such potential transparency, where common and cross border religious, ethnic, linguistic and collective memories could act individually or jointly as destabilising or integrating factors. From Kazakhstan to Egypt, a dynamics of anti-colonial feeling, economic underdevelopment, religious revivalism, arms proliferation, artificial border, ethno territorially driven conflicts, intense western security and economic interests and concerns in the region, and ex-communist apparatus surviving in the region, etc. are major destabilising factors of the Central Asian states. Thus, ethnic and religious dynamics of the region in the context of the increasing tension between rural and urban areas for political control, the role of religion in voicing political dissent, the tension between Islamic forces, the dominant ethnicity of each republics, the tension between the majority sunni and non-sunni population etc. continue to complicate the task of Islam as a stabilising force and present a considerable challenge before these Muslim states as well for the Russians<sup>3</sup>.

Historically Islam has been a dominant factor in Central Asia.

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3. Eden Naby. "Ethnicity and Islam in Central Asia" Central Asian Survey, Vol.12, 1993, pp. 153-154.

Samarkand and Bokhara were traditionally great centres of theological studies and the region had never remained isolated from the Islamic mainstream. However, the over six decades of communist rule did impose measures to curb religious practices. Now there is a sudden resurgence of Islam in all the republics. With the collapse of communism, the fear of emergence of Islamic countries as a bloc has preoccupied the Russian as well as Western mind. The struggle for influence in Central Asia by the Islamic countries, particularly a fundamentalist state like Iran's effort bring these new states into its own ideological fold, and sudden appearance of Kazakhstan as a nuclear power, as well as other Muslim states possessing enriched uranium, have all spurred apprehension about a rapid growth of Islamic resurgence.

It is this form of Islamic reassertion, fuelled by ideological dogma, translated in conflictual terms that is perceived as emerging threat to the Russia and Western World. NATO is especially concerned about the region and has based its strategy of being prepared to deal with contingencies outside NATO through rapid reaction forces of around 100,000 soldiers. Its Secretary General, Manfred Warner, expressed his anxiety and said, "Islamic fundamentalists are getting increasingly strong in Central Asia" and that this development "does not meet the interests of NATO"<sup>5</sup>. So, besides Russia, NATO countries are also alarmed by the emerging threat of resurgence of Islam in the Central Asian states.

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5. Mushahid Hussain, FEER, 2 July, 1992, p.22.



In terms of security concerns in Central Asia, after initial hiccups of the disintegrating Soviet states, Russia gradually realised that the Gulf countries were trying to capitalise on the security vacuum in Central Asia to promote their own influence and ideological preferences. Russia made it clear to Iran that the development of closer Russo-Iranian relations depended on the nature of Iran's Central Asian policy. Only good behaviour of Teheran would permit the continuation of the \$ 5 billion Russo-Iranian arms agreements initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989. Though unhappy about the suppression of Tajik Islamic fundamentalists during 1992-93 Civil uprisings, Iran promised to remain neutral in the internal affairs of Tajikistan.

Geopolitical significance of Russia security policy in the Central Asia is necessary for overall stability of the region. The concept of modern power with modern, 'neo-colonial' character, allocated to Russia the role of an enlightened big-brother. The common threat perception posed by rising tide of political Islamic forces around the neighbouring countries has been realised by leaders of both Russia and Central Asia states. But Russia can never tolerate emerging threat of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asian states. It only desires that all Central Asian states should retain their secular character. Russian leaders fear that Islamic fundamentalist forces once succeeded in penetrating into Central Asia might as well enter Russia where a sizeable number of muslim population are living. Hence Russia continued and even enhanced its strategic interests in Central Asia on the plea of

protecting the region from external threat and internal instability. Besides this, protection of the external borders of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) especially Central Asia along the 'Southern Flank' from the rising Islamic radical forces sponsored by powerful volatile neighbouring Islamic states of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, is only the responsibility of Russia. The peace keeping efforts by Russia and security of Southern borders especially Tajikistan-Afghanistan borders from the Islamic radical forces have enhanced the security of the new Central Asia states. The presence of Pakistan and Afghan guerillas in the Chechnian conflicts adds a new dimension to Central Asian states internal security.

The collapse of the Soviet Union does not mean the end of Russia's importance both in its continuous impact on the domestic and regional evolution of Central Asia, but equally important in shaping its geopolitics. Not only will the legacy of the Soviet period both domestic and external remain, but both in intention and practice, Russia displays a clear tendency to protect its historical interests, a tendency which has survived with the passage of time the changes in regimes and collapse of the ideologies<sup>6</sup>.

The major regional contenders in international rivalry to influence and control Central Asia's destiny, market, trade and resources, especially Kazakhstan's and Turkmenistan's oil and gas, described as economic

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6. Boris Yeltsin interviews in Izvestiya, 15 July 1992 and Litraturnaya Gazeta, 15 July, 1992.

warfare, are Russia, Iran, Turkey, China, U.S.A. India and Pakistan. Israel is not direct competitor in the region, but it has sought to prevent pro-Iranian fundamentalism from gaining a foothold there, to prove its credentials in the Muslim World, and crucially prevent nuclear proliferation from Kazakhstan to other Muslim states. But despite facing enormous domestic difficulties, Russia intends, both in theory and practice to remain the major actor and dominant player in Central Asia<sup>7</sup>.

For the moment and the foreseeable future, Central Asia's military dependence on Russia is unavoidable and facilitates Russia's belief that its real border is that of Central Asia with China, Iran and Afghanistan. This dependence upon intrusive Russia presence also means that Russia can not cut these republics off and must spend its scarce resources to protect them. Just as Russia evinces of great fear of Islamic assertiveness, so too these states also either share that fear or seek to exploit it and intensively prospects for self assertion. While Russia is clearly the main foreign player here, other states involvement is growing and revolving around strategic goals similar to those inspiring Russian policy. The fundamental issues that drive Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, China, India and United States policies in Central Asia are energy, Islamism or Turkic solidarity, and the broader relationship with Russia.

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7. Boris Yeltsin interviews with correspondent of Izvestiya, and Litraturnaya Gazeta, and Moscow Russia Television in FBIS. 'Central Eurasia', 16 July, 1992. pp.18-22.

Turkey's approach to the region since 1991 invoked Islamic and Turkic solidarity as well as real politik to restrain Russian influence. The Turkish policy outlined by the Late Premier, and then President, Turgat Ozal, sought Turkey presence in world politics from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China, wherever Turkic peoples are involved. Though criticised as neo-Ottomonism or reborn Pan-Turkism, it was mere a policy of economic penetration, especially in the Black Sea and Central Asia and of cultural diffusion, a kind of civilising mission to younger brothers. It reflected both the sense of European ambivalence about including Turkey in the post - 'Cold War' West as well as the exuberance following the Gulf-War and fall of Soviet power. Backed by the Bush administration and subsequently by the Clinton administration, Turkey's expansion policy meant a greater economic presence around its borders to stabilise those areas, generate a new rationale for inclusion in the West, its 'civilising mission' to Central Asia and to present a counter model of a secular, democratic westernising Muslim states that would check Iran ideologically<sup>8</sup> and Iran and Russia politically<sup>9</sup>.

Iran's role in this changing order in Central Asia has been aggressive and assuming crucial importance. Iran needs Russia to establish relation with all five republics of Central Asia, to gain entry into Trans Caucasian,

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8. Thomas L.Friedman, "US to Counter Iran in Central Asia". The New York Times, 6 February, 1992, p.A3.

9. John.E.Yang "US, Turkey Pledge aid to New States". The Washington Post. 12 February, 1992, p. A 30.

reassure its neighbours in the Gulf, and depends upon Russia as a major arms supplier. It also suspects Russia aims in Tajikistan Civil War, where Russia troops are keeping a Soviet type regime in power, ostensibly against Iranian type of fundamentalists. Teheran is not eager for Russia troops to dominate Tajikistan. The internal confrontations, political crisis, rioting spreading at home etc. threaten Iran's stability and in fact that Iranian Islam might be a weapon of terror abroad. If these negative developments are not checked and suppressed, the Iranian Islamic terrorism will be welcome by conservative forces in Central Asian states.

Turkmenia, the poorest state in Central Asia has long borders with Iran and Afghanistan. Its vulnerability to fundamentalist influence across the border, and Iran's competition for economic gains at there, have alerted Russia and Turkey. The other Central Asian states, Tajikistan is the most fertile ground for Iranian influence. Tajik being Persian speakers, constitute around 65 per cent of the total population of 5.3 million in Tajikistan. The political turmoil in Tajikistan, mobilised on Islamic - hues against the government, are also influenced by the Iran's historical legacy. Uzbekistan is another state which is strongly inclined towards asserting the Islamic character influenced by Iran<sup>10</sup>.

The other threat posture of the interaction of the Islamic states, particularly Iran, in the nuclear field with the Muslim Central Asia states.

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10. P.Stobdan, "Islamic Reawakening in Central Asia : Towards stability or conflict"? Strategic Analysis, Vol XV no.6. 1992, pp. 507-510.

Although it has been strongly denied by the Iran the allegation of the World community that Iran is in the final stage of assembling at least three nuclear weapons from disassembled parts acquired from the Islamic states of the former Soviet Union. The Iranian leadership perhaps sees the time as ripe for the realisation of the vision of a pan-Islamic bloc, dominated by Iran. As Yossef Bodansky says, "Teheran's sense of urgency is based on the anticipation of a major crisis resulting from an attempt by the US to prevent the realisation of the revival of Islam"<sup>11</sup>.

It is reported that the visit of Iranian intelligence delegations to Central Asian Muslim republics began in the spring of 1991. Chambiz, an Iranian official and also an expert in weapons of mass destruction, met several officials from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaizan, who pledged support for the Iranian quest for an Islamic bomb. The next deal was carried out by Chamron, a nuclear physicist, who was assigned the task to make recruitment of Soviet experts for working in Iran. In a deal reached between Iran and Kazakhstan, Iran agreed to pay 130-150 million U.S. dollars for three nuclear weapons<sup>12</sup>. Iran is also reported to have recruited 50 experts and 200 senior technicians mostly from the Kurchatov Institute (Semiplatinisk - 21) to build a nuclear weapon in Iran. The Iranian recruitment list included Vladimir Kubar and Philip Gurkhanian from the

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11. Yossef Bodansky, "Iran acquires nuclear weapons and moves to provide cover to syria" Defence and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy, February 1992, p.1.

12. Ibid, p.3

Kurchatov Institute in Moscow, Arsen Hamidadeh from Kazakhstan and Aleksander Ahmediadeh from Turkmenistan<sup>13</sup>.

Apart from nuclear weapons, the enriched uranium stockpile in Central Asia is also becoming accessible to external buyers. Kazakhstan and Tajikistan holds 30 per cent of the uranium reserve of the former Soviet Union, but the recent CIA studies show a wider significant distribution of uranium reserves in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kirgizstan. As all these newly emerged Islamic states are faced with severe economic problems, the possibility of sales of uranium to raise hard currency is high and is causing serious concern to the Russia as well as to the Western countries. The concern in Washington resulted in an arrangement between the US and Tajikistan to limit the exports of Central Asian uranium, the agreement was signed during Baker's visit to the region in February 1992. Meanwhile Kazakhstan is already talking about upgrading its arms industry to enter the world arms market.

The other powerful neighbour, Pakistan, too is wooing the Central Asian republics. Earlier, the extension of the Islamic World order into this territory was also the plank of General Ziaul Haque's Afghan policy. This policy in subsequent stages, was also followed by the ex-prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Nawaz Sharif and currently by Ms. Benazir Bhutto. Central Asian leaders, after realising the motto of Pakistan policies and intentions

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13. Ibid, p.p. 3,4.

strictly warned Islamabad in 1992, that any effort to sponsor fundamentalist regimes in Afghanistan would provoke Tajik there, lead to a further break-up of that state, generate violence, massive refugee flows, and will trigger an unacceptable possible domino effect.

Ideologically, Pakistan has a greater stake in getting the Central Asian states into Islamic fold. It has its own set of designs in Central Asia. The idea to set up an "Islamic crescent" in its north stretching from the Caspian to the Arabian sea, revival of Islam and the idea of Islamic bomb has alerted both Russia and Western countries. Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Federal Russia, while expressing fear over the Islamic bomb, referred to Pakistan as a probable centre of new geo-strategic Islamic bloc, involving Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and the Central Asia states. The Russia leaders are also well aware of Pakistani official line since 1980, when Soviet Union troops were deployed in Afghanistan to help democratically elected the President Nazibullah government, against the powerful rising tide of fundamentalist forces. At that time, Pakistan openly supported Afghan Islamic militia (Mujahedin) with arms and ammunitions against the Soviet troops, and carried out a holy war against the communist beyond Afghanistan and Central Asia. Recent developments in Afghanistan have, however, offered fresh opportunities for Pakistan to implement its design. In that situation, it is the responsibility of Russia to check every intention of Pakistan for the sake and security of its, erstwhile Islamic segments to prevent from possible Islamisation for the restoration of the stability in the region.



China, the most powerful border country, is the most likely and strongest competitor with Russia for future influence in Central Asia. Compared to the United States, the policy of China towards Central Asia is oriented along important national concerns. One of them is the strategic interest to preserve the stability of Russia and its help in preventing the final establishment of an unipolarity in international relations.<sup>14</sup> For the foreseeable future, China's objectives are to prevent an upsurge of Islamic or of nationalist agitation among its Muslim people (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uighar) in Xinjiang and its Western provinces that border Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. China has good reasons to fear Islamic unrest, and that's why it could not afford an unstable situation along its three thousand kilometre long border with Central Asia, especially at the border with the Xinjiang - Uighur autonomous region, where the majority population are non-Chinese ethnics. The stability of Dogu (Eastern) Turkestan or Xinjiang, where the separatist movement is going on and has been restive since 1989, is of much concern to China. Xinjiang Daily, the official newspaper, frequently issues stern warnings against Muslim militancy and Turkic nationalism, asserting that "seperatists will be seen as traitors and prosecuted"<sup>15</sup>.

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14. Tabassum Firdaus, "Central Asia, Security Stakes and Strategies"? World Focus, June 1995, p.56.

15. Paul Goble, "The Soviet Threat Revisited : Ethnicity and National Conflicts in Soviet Politics". Rand Paper, 1992, p.32.

The stability of East Turkistan or Xinjiang province of China will equally come into the fold of this changing geo-political orientation and regional political relations. Ethnic Kazakhs, and Uighur nationalities overlapping into the Kazakhstan-Xinjing frontiers, may create potential border conflicts between Kazakhstan and China in the Pamir sector.

Thus, China and Russia are both vulnerable to Islamic based threats. This common threat perception is part of the larger basic harmony in views and strategic interests, that led to a Sino-Russia alliance. But despite all these developments, one can not ignore the fact of Beijing intentions towards Central Asian states. On the one hand rise of China as an eco-military power in the Asian region, expresses its unhappiness over the Uighur separatists of Xinjiang-Kazakhstan border, and on the otherhand, it makes experimental nuclear blasts in Lop Nor, barely 200 kilometres away from the Kazakh border.

So, keeping all these developments around the periphery of Central Asian states and the international rivalry to penetrate influence ideologically, culturally and economically to the newly emerging Central Asian states, Russia, for all purposes will be real guarantor of peace, and security and stability of the region, and it would be only fulfilled by rapid incorporation of its junior partners into its security and defence fold.

Another dangerous phenomenon emerged in the Central Asian states, is inter ethnic conflicts in the region, which might geoparadise the security

of 9 million Russian living in Central Asian states, is a source of great concern for Russian. With the break-up of the Soviet Union, the long suppressed feelings have found expression through anti-Russian agitation in the newly independent states of Central Asia. In all Muslims republics of Central Asia, Russians are in substantive numbers, and are employed in strategic and important industrial units. With the deliberate policy of Islamisation, economic deterioration, external interference and support to majority ethnic groups lead anti-Russia feelings and violent ethnic clashes in Central Asia. These inter-ethnic problems and rise of radical ethnic nationalism of an-anti-Russian orientation, which is taking strong base in Central Asia, will be checked by the rapid incorporation of the Central Asian states into the fold of Russia's defence and security system. Thus Russia would like to protect large Russian speaking communities in all the republics of the region.

Nuclear weapons and enriched uranium materials scattered in the Central Asian states are also a matter of great concern for Russia's strategic policy towards the newly republics of its southern flank. Among the CIS, and five Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan is the second largest state, and Asian nuclear successor state to the USSR. Out of the massive nuclear arsenal of roughly 27,000 weapons that the former Soviet Union accumulated, Kazakhstan possessed 7 per cent of 1800 on its soil as of September 1991. The position of Central Asian states in regard to tactical nuclear weapon deployment regime was as given below.

**Nuclear Weapon Deployment, as of September 1991.**

<b>States</b>	<b>Strategic offensive Forces</b>	<b>Ground Forces</b>	<b>Air Defence Forces</b>	<b>Air Forces</b>	<b>Naval Forces</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	1,150	450	125	75	0	1800
<b>Turkmenistan,</b>	0	30	75	20	0	125,
<b>Uzbekistan,</b>	0	30	75	0	0	105'
<b>Kirgizstan,</b>	0	0	75	0	0	75,
<b>Tajikistan,</b>	0	0	75	0	0	75,
<b>Total,</b>	1,150	510	425	95	0	2180

**Source** - The table appeared in the Rand Paper, p.7762, "The Decline of the Soviet Military : Downsizing, Fragmentation and Possible Disintegration", Appendix A, p.29. by Edward L.Warner III, based on Nuclear Weapon Databook, Vol.IV, Soviet Military power, 1990, Defence Intelligence Agency, Force Structure Summary.

There was considerable speculation as to what would happen to these weapons ever since the overall responsibility of the Soviet Union ceased. According to the National Resources Defence council 104 of the former Soviet Unions 308-3S-18 missiles are deployed at two bases in Kazakhstan along with 40 Bear. H bombers capable of carrying AS-15 air launched cruise missiles. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, by January 1992,

the command and control systems for the 108 silo-based SS-18 ICBMs CBMs in Kazakhstan were modified to preclude rapid launch.<sup>16</sup>

In the aftermath of the Soviet collapse, Kazakhstan was a party to the agreement signed by 11 CIS members which committed themselves to "preserve and support common military and strategic space under a united command, including unified control over nuclear armaments regulated by special agreements". Kazakhstan together with Ukraine turned down Yeltsin's offer, shortly after the independence to redeploy all nuclear weapons located on their territory back to Russia.

In a major policy statement in October 1992, President Nursultan Nazarbayev, said that his country did not become a nuclear state of its own accord. However, he had overcome the problem by signing the London Protocol on May 23, 1992, and had assumed all the obligations of the former USSR under the START I Treaty. The US administration continued its pressures on the Kazakh President to give up strategic weapons deployed on Kazakh soil. So Kazakhstan decided to sign the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a nuclear free state, following the signing of a collective security pact at the CIS summit in Tashkent. Apart from the US agreement to consider Kazakhstan as a party to the START treaty, it was given a written assurance by the US Secretary of States, James Baker, that the US would make every effort to ensure that the international

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16. P.Stobdan, "Central Asian Regional Security" Strategic Analysis, Vol.XV, no.5, 1992, p.470.

community defended Kazakhstan in the event of an external nuclear attack or threatened attack.<sup>17</sup> Thus shortly before signing the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with Russia on May 25, 1992, President Sultan Nazarbayev, in the words of Stobdan "surrendered all his nuclear weapons to the Americans by signing the NPT".<sup>18</sup> During the summer of 1994, 2000 nuclear bombs were transported from Kazakhstan to some unknown place in the US in a secret operation.

Kazakhstan, a giant state of Central Asia, possessing nuclear warheads, where Russian officers are still employed to control the nuclear plants and arsenals. Kazakhstan, along with other four republics lacks facilities for large defence industries, standing army and technological advancement in arms production. In defence production in Kazakhstan, only 3 per cent local people are employed. So, the non-Slavic successor states suffer the legacy of Russian policy of concentrating defence production in the Slavic heartlands, which leaves them little military industry.

The growing influence of more centrist conservative political forces in the Russian government, and the growing concern over the ethnic factor in the overall security of the CIS and Russia in particular brought new impetus to the formulation of Russia security policy towards its southern

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17. The Economists, London, March 7, 1992, p.52. Bangkok Post, 25 May, 1992.

18. P.Stobdan, "Central Asian Regional Security", Strategic Analysis, Vol.XV, no.5, 1992, p.477.

border. The demand for Russian activism was not confined to political forces in Moscow, but was 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 security system with active 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. They were demanding a more comprehensive, meaningful security systems which included practical measures in dealing with the conventional defence of their security and their borders. Early 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 pivotal role of Russia in the security of Central Asia, Askar Akayar, the President of Kyrgyzstan, argued, 'The Eurasian entity hinged on Russia would collapse if it (Russia) ceased to be a world power, with painful implications for Kyrgyzstan as well. That's why we must make our contribution to Russia's revival'.<sup>19</sup>

The concern over the 'Islamic threat' while all along present in Russia and Central Asia, now demanded some practical measures. A long term view of problems meant that although the domestic dimension of the threat was driven by internal instabilities, a containment of its external dimension meant the protection of the exterior borders of the CIS and especially

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19. Interfax 15 July 1992, in FBIS. Sov 92-138, 17 July 1992, p.59.

Central Asia along the 'southern flanks'. If Islam were to penetrate the CIS, the main direction of its external route would be the south west Asia/ Persian Gulf region, particularly Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The security of southern borders would not only have enhanced the physical security of the new Central Asian republics, but it was loaded with a clear political message of Russian sensitivity to all regional actors towards this issue.

The policy shift away from the Euro-Atlanticist to a Neo Eurasianist outlook clearly indicates a serious accommodation of and adjustment to the emerging realities facing Russia and the new Central Asia states. The security policy of Russia towards Central Asia, is also to maintain a buffer zone around the region, and between itself and explosive Middle East, and South Asian region and also to preserve there a balance of power. The strong motivation for the Central Asian states to ensure a framework for multilateral military links and to retain bilateral military relationship with Russia is the heavy concentration of the former Soviet defence production and research and development (R & D) in the Russia Federation.

Besides these factors, Russia views the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as a potential adversary. At the same time 'China is emerging as powerful, militarily and economically strong country, and there is an objective danger to Russia of a renewed conflict with China in the future. The emerging regional power of China and its growing ambitions can only be checked by unified security programme of both Russia and Central Asian states.



These factors (Russia, still formally a great power, its historical responsibilities granted to her by the possession of nuclear weapons, occupation of permanent seat in the United Nation's Security Council, United State's claim of dominating the unipolar world, end of Cold War and demise of communism from East Europe etc.) have forced Russia to continue its efforts towards forging a collective security system reinforced by bilateral security treaties with all Central Asian states.

In all bilateral treaties, disarmament, global collective security system for C/S, Russia for all practical purposes remained as sole guarantor and dominant player. All Central Asian states without exception preferred and infact insisted on a substantive collective security system with active Russian participation. In near future Russian will give priority to develop its military relationship with the Central Asian states, which are central to its geopolitical interests. This would create a security buffer around much of the Russian perimeter. Protection of Central Asian states from external threats and internal instabilities is the responsibilities of the Russian Federal Government. In keeping all these factors and circumstances Russia has concluded a series of bilateral treaties on security military assistance with all its southern Central Asian Islamic states.

## CHAPTER - IV

### EVOLUTION OF NEW DEFENCE AND SECURITY RELATIONS IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD

The Soviet Union was replaced by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) grouping 11 of the former constituent republics of the Union in a loose alliance, on December 21, 1991, at Alma-Ata.<sup>1</sup> However, the decision for the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and to disband USSR was taken on December-8, when the leaders of three Slavic Soviet Republics-Russia, Ukraine and Belarus met at Minsk, and decided to constitute the CIS.<sup>2</sup> The leaders of Kazakhstan, and the Central Asian republics (Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) just after four days of Minsk declaration, met in Ashgabat in Turkmenistan on December 12, and unanimously decided to become members of the newly constituted the Commonwealth of Independent States.<sup>3</sup> At Alma Ata, the participant members of the eleven independent republics of the former Soviet Union assembled, where the formal declaration of the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States was taken on December 21, 1991,<sup>4</sup> and just after four days of formation of the CIS, with the resignation

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1. Summary of World Broadcasts (B.B.C) (London), Part 1, (Former USSR), no. SU/1262, December 23, 1993, p.C1/6.
  2. SWB, no. SU/1251. December.10, 1991, p.C1/1.
  3. SWB. no. SU/1255. December.14, 1991, p.B1/6.
  4. SWB. no. SU.1262. Dec.23, 1991 p. C1/6.

of the Soviet President, Mikhael Gorbachev, on Dec.25, 1991, the Soviet Union finally ceased to exist<sup>5</sup>.

The formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States by the erstwhile components of the Soviet Union, and their collective declaration on the various issues of socio-economic, strategic, defence and security co-operation etc. was a landmark event towards their peaceful existence during the post-Soviet era. It was assumed by all members of the CIS that Russia, the real successor of the Soviet Union, and having special as well as advantageous position, will play pivotal role during the transitional phase of independence in the overall security of the newly emerged the Commonwealth of Independent States. Hence, all five Central Asian Republics, although having some differences with Russian Federation, but mutually dependent on each other, greatly realised their security apprehensions. The leaders of CAR emphasised that Russia, for all practical purposes within the institutional context of CIS, will be sole guarantor of peace and security in the region, and hence all Central Asian states pursued a large number of collective as well as separate bilateral security agreements with Russia.

After the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the most significant dynamics within the CIS with far-reaching security implications of Central Asian republics was the Treaty on Collective Security signed between Kazakhstan, Russia, Kirgizstan,

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5. SWB. no. SU.1264. December 28, 1991, p. C 1/1.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Armenia, in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) on May - 15, 1992<sup>6</sup>. The only Central Asian republic - Turkmenistan was not the signatory of the treaty.

The Tashkent summit, attended by the heads of the government of all the participant members, was chaired by Kazakh President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, negotiated a five year collective security agreements providing for a collective response to aggression against any of its signatories. Other agreements signed by all participants at the summit included (i) reducing armed forces of the former Soviet Union, (ii) reducing chemical weapons in accordance with international agreements, (iii) creating a single air space, a single information space, and in principle, a CIS television and radio company, (iv) agreement on border troops, and (v) social provision for servicemen. Article 1, and 4 of Treaty of Collective Security of Tashkent summit clearly states : -

“If one of the participating states is subjected to aggression by any state or group of states, this will be perceived as an 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 also give support with the means at their disposal by way of exercising the right to collective defence in accordance with article 51 of the UN charter”.<sup>7</sup>

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6. SWB. no. SU.1383, May,18, 1992, p. C 2/1.

7. Rossiyskaya Gazeta, May 23, 1992, p.2 also - Kazakhstan Kaya Pravda, May-23, 1992, p.2.

Article 4 and 1 of the collective security prohibited the participating states from 'entering into any military alliances' or taking part in 'any groupings of states or actions directed against another participating state'. General Leonid Ivashov, head of working group on defence issues, and one of the key participants in 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 collective security, or more accurately, its preservation, is a practical necessity and an objective requirement<sup>8</sup>. General V.Samsonov, chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces General Staff, pointed to the political significance of the Treaty : 'The Treaty on collective security' is the basis for forming a defence alliance' and '- - - the first and probably the most complex step towards creating an effective military and political structure capable of being a guarantee of security for the successful political and economic development of the subjects that form the CIS'.<sup>9</sup>

The Tashkent Summit of the collective security provided the main security dimension of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The significance of the agreement did not primarily lie in its internal provisions, more importantly it provided an essential precondition and backdrop for the more detailed and substantive bilateral military agreements which

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8. Moscow Central Television, 4 May 1992, cited in 'FBIS - Sov (92-099, May, 21. 1992) p.31.

9. Krasnaya Zvezda - 3 July 1992, pp.1-2.

Russia subsequently signed with all the Central Asian states including Turkmenistan. Thus the formation of a security alliance between Russia and its Islamic segments of Central Asian states (Tashkent bloc) compelled all Central Asia states not to pursue a path of separate and independent military development but to fully depend upon Russia's military support, active participation and under shadow of its security umbrella.

After the Tashkent summit, immediately two agreements, equally but not more significant, reached among the participant states in Moscow (July-6, 1992) and Tashkent (July 16, 1992) which provided more substantive to the previous collective security agreement. The two meetings especially addressed the twin significant issues of the creation of a CIS 'blue helmet' force (Moscow summit) for rapid deployment in the areas of regional conflict within the CIS, and the issue of security of the southern border of the CIS (Tashkent summit). The main result of the Moscow Summit was an agreement to establish joint peacekeeping forces to intervene in CIS conflicts. A proposal by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev to establish a consultative economic co-ordination council with its headquarters in Kiev, and a military co-ordinating council, were also approved. A second group of issues, on which a protocol was signed, concerned collective security, including missile early warning systems, space control, anti-aircraft defence, a collective security council, the composition of CIS strategic forces, operational principal of supreme

command of CIS joint armed forces and be protecting of state borders.<sup>10</sup> The four states of the CIS with nuclear weapons on their territory (Bylerus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine) also agreed to meet separately to discuss the removal of nuclear weapons to Russia.

The Moscow summit also defined the exterior border of the participant states as the border of the CIS and its defence within the jurisdiction of CIS armed forces. Both Marshal Shaposhnikov, the Commander-in-Chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, and General V.Samsanov, CIS Chief of the General Staff, reaffirmed that the quick reaction to the threat posed against the 'outside borders of the Commonwealth' is one of the key tasks of the CIS collective security arrangement.<sup>11</sup>

After the Moscow summit, immediately within a fortnight, representatives of foreign, defence and border-guard ministers of CIS member states met in Tashkent on July 16 to discuss the establishment of a CIS peacekeeping force. They signed a protocol on interim measures to establish peacekeeping forces and military observers. In this summit Russia also announced the allocation of additional military force to protect the border with Iran and Afghanistan, and also suggested that Central Asian states should supplement border troops with national formations.<sup>12</sup> So, the

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10. SWB. no. SU/1427. July-8, 1992, p. C1/1.

11. FBIS-SOv. 93-131. July-8, 1992., pp. 12-14.

12. SWB. no. SU/1436. July 18, 1993, p. B/1.

Tashkent summit of CIS come to the general agreement on the mechanism of creation of the CIS peacekeeping force 'bleu helmet' and more importantly, the necessity of reinforcing the security of the Southern border, especially the border of Tajikistan with Afghanistan.

Subsequently, the CIS Defence Ministers on September, 3-4 in Moscow, successfully negotiated an agreement on the transfer of servicemen from the former Soviet armed forces to the armed forces of individual CIS member states. It was also decided that the High Command of the CIS joint armed forces will manage ex-Soviet strategic force, co-ordinate CIS collective security and oversee peacekeeping efforts in internal CIS conflicts.<sup>13</sup>

Another very important CIS summit was held at Bishek (Kirgizstan) on October 9, where leaders of CIS signed several economic as well as military agreements. Major military matters discussed at the summit included CIS concern over the deteriorating situation in Tajikistan, the general concept of military security in the CIS, and the status of strategic and nuclear weapons in CIS members states.<sup>14</sup> Agreement was reached on sending humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan, and on reinforcing military units present in the republic. A statute of the CIS joint armed forces high command was also signed; which according to the Commander-in Chief of

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13. SWB. no. SU.1478. September, 5. 1992, p. C1/1. also SWB no. SU/1479. September, 7. 1992, p. C4/1.

14. SWB. no. SU.1509. October, 10, 1992, p. C1/1.



the CIS armed forces Marshal Shaposnikov, would “allow the basis of military policy and the collective defence of CIS states to be determined and” put an end to uncertainty.<sup>15</sup>

After the Bishek summit, another summit of leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States with far reaching of security implication was held in the Byelarus capital, Minsk, on January 22, 1993.<sup>16</sup> After prolong debate, charter for closer political, economic integration, and defence alliance was prepared. The charter was signed by seven of the 10 former Soviet republics represented at the Meeting (Russia, Byelarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan). Ukraine, Moldova and Turkmenistan refused to sign. This summit rejected Russia’s proposal to take control of nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Byelarus and Kazakhstan. A commitment was made within the CIS framework that Russia will be ready to guarantee the security and territorial integrity of Central Asian states and to defend it against external attack and internal instability.

An extraordinary meeting of the heads of government of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was held in Minsk on April 16. The meeting was called to discuss an appeal made in mid-March to CIS heads of state by Russia President Boris Yeltsin to strengthen the CIS through the creation of non mechanism of co-ordination among its

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15. Keesing’s Records of World Events Vol.38. no. 10. October 1992, p.39153.

16. SWB. no. SU/1594. January, 23, 1993, p. C1/2.

constituent members.<sup>17</sup> The Summit was attended by all CIS heads of state except Turkmenistan President and Kirgizastan President. Both Yeltsin and the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, emphasised for the security cooperation and to check growing intrigues of anti-government forces in Tajikistan.

In another meeting of CIS Defence Ministers on June 15, 1993, at Moscow, a significant development took place, where Ministers agreed that CIS joint military command be abolished, and that efforts to hold together a unified defence structure for the CIS would be abandoned.<sup>18</sup> The existing CIS command would be replaced by the “Joint staff for coordinating military co-operation between the states of the Commonwealth”. Although there were reports that Russia had encouraged the decision to abolish the joint command. The administration of Boris Yelstin balked at the projected cost of a CIS joint military structure, while the Russian military increasingly favoured bilateral military agreements with Russia's neighbours.

After the June Summit of the heads of Commonwealth of Independent States, the basic idea of formation of CIS and periodical meeting to discuss various issues of former Soviet republics and to provide collective response within the framework of CIS, gradually eroded. All members of the CIS,

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17. SWB. no. SU.1665. April-17, 1993 p. B/5.

18. SWB. no. SU/1716. June-16, 1993, p. C1/4

subsequently on the basis of historical legacy, ethnicity and regionalism signed separate agreements among themselves. Although, the first organisation, after neglecting other members, particularly Central Asian states, was the initial CIS agreement of December 1991, when the Russian, Ukrainian and Bylurussian leaders ignored their Central Asian colleagues, and formed a purely Slavic Union. Since then, the greater priority the post-Soviet Russian government has given to its European-Slavic as against its Central Asian-Muslim neighbours. No doubt, in all summit of CIS, all Central Asian states, within CIS framework participated and along with other members signed a number of collective agreements on security and defence alliances.

But subsequently, like the other regional groupings between the former Soviet republics, the central Asian States are also moving towards for the formation of regional groupings for their collective socio-economic and security alliances among themselves. Leaders of all Central Asian States have discussed, and collectively signed a number of agreements of mutual cooperation in different fields. Hence, the regional grouping and alliances on purely ethnical lines by the members of the CIS, now has greatly eroded the relevance of the Commonwealth of Independent States as collective organisation to look after unitedly collective security as well as various issues of the Commonwealth republics.

### **Russia and Central Asian Republics. : Bilateral Security Agreements**

While the Treaty on Collective Security provided the security umbrella for the Central Asian republics and must be considered as a significant

step in forming 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 collective security for 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 real substance to the 'collective level' security.

### **Kazakhstan**

The republic of Kazakhstan (until December, 1991, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic) is the second largest of the former Soviet Republics. On December 16, 1991, together with the other Central Asian Republics, Kazakhstan agreed to join the newly formed Commonwealth, and on December, 16, it became the last of the Republics to declare its independence from the USSR.

Kazakhstan, as the largest and most influenced, prosperous of five Central Asian republics of the former USSR, its unique geopolitical strategic position by the possession of former Soviet nuclear warheads approximately 1410, regarded as the fourth largest nuclear power in the world, have greatly attracted Russia. That's why, after the formation of CIS, Russia has given special status to Kazakhstan and showed keen interest in forging bilateral defence and security agreements with Kazakhstan.

Among the Islamic segments of the Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan took the lead on May 25, 1992, for the bilateral security agreements. Following his trip to the United States, Kazakh President, Nursultan Nazarbayev arrived in Moscow to sign the 'Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance'. Both the leaders, Nursultan Nazarbayev and Boris Yeltsin, signed a 25 years Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, Russian assistance in establishing Kazakh armed forces, joint use of space and military bases, test sites and other military infrastructures.<sup>19</sup>

The treaty was characterised by Yeltsin's press office as 'a kind of political test site and verifying philosophy' of relations between newly independent states.<sup>20</sup> Yeltsin and Nazarbayev expressed hopes that other CIS states will take the treaty as a model to be followed. This first experiment in bilateral security 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 Paksitan contemplated an 'Asian bloc' formation - a summit that signifies the height of Russia's indifference or passivity on the geopolitics of the southern republics. The treaty with Kazakhstan was the beginning of Russia's 'Eurasian/Eastern' shift and of the regaining of the some of the lost ground in the region.

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19. FBIS-SOV 92-101, May 26, 1992, p.14.

20. Ibid,

After the May- bilateral agreement, at President's, level, a delegation headed by the Russian Armed Forces of General staff, Colonel General Viktor Dubynin and Kazakhstan's Defence Minister Colonel General Sagadat Nurmogombetov, at Alma-Ata on August-19, 1992, signed a famous accord on military agreements and assistance covering the transfer of personnel between two armed forces training and military co-operation.<sup>21</sup> President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his counter part President Boris Yeltsin issued a joint declaration and emphasised the importance of full scale economic co-operation, and co-ordinated security arms control and science policy regarding the former Soviet installation in space station at Baikanur and nuclear testing area at Semipolatinsk.

Kazakhstan is the only Central Asian republic which has strategic nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union, Although the Russian President's demand to control over all nuclear weapons, that there should be only one nuclear successor state to the Soviet Union, was rejected by Kazakhstan along with two nuclear having states of Ukraine and Bybrussia.

The communique issued after Boris Yeltsin 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 of collective security by a Kazakh Russian decision to 'sign a treaty on military co-operation in order to set-up a united

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21. Keesing's Record of World Events. Vol.38. No.7-8. August, 1992. p.39054.

defence space and make joint use of military capabilities.<sup>22</sup>

After the February summit, Kazakhstan President, Nursultan Nazarbayev made official visit to Russia on March 28-30, 1994. It was marked by the signature of 23 bilateral co-operation agreements notably on the creation of transnational firms, military co-operation, the dismantling of Kazakhstan's nuclear weapons, and Russian leasing of the Baikonur space station, and also exchanged the idea of formulation of co-ordinate economic, foreign and military policy of both countries.<sup>23</sup>

Another a landmark bilateral military agreement was signed between President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin in Moscow on January, 20, 1995 under which both leader agreed to establish joint armed forces by the end of 1995.<sup>24</sup> The agreement provided for the establishment of a joint command for military planning and training, and a Kazakh-Russian borderguards. It was regarded a major step forward in strengthening bilateral security relations between Kazakhstan and Russia.

Thus, Kazakhstan in comparison with other colleagues of the Central Asia, has concluded largest number of bilateral defence and security agreements with Russia. In all bilateral agreements, both leaders-Nursultan Nazarbayev and Boris Yeltsin affirmed their faith and full confidence, and

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22. SWB. (B.B.C) March 3, 1993, pp. B/1 and B/2.

23. Keesing's Record of World Events. Vol.40. no.3. March, 1994, pp. 39913-14.

24. Keesing's Record of World Events. Vol.41.no.1. January, 1995. p.40362

since always tried to implement as well as to fulfill all doctrines of the agreements in the spirit of mutual cooperation and co-ordination.

### Uzbekistan

The Republic of Uzbekistan (formerly the Uzbek Soviet socialist Republic) is the next largest republic of Central Asia. On December 13, 1991 Uzbekistan together with four Central Asian republics agreed to join CIS. After its declaration of independence, Uzbekistan sought to develop relations with other former Soviet republics, in particular the Russian federation, and since then both have concluded a large number of bilateral agreements in security and defence cooperation.

Uzbekistan was the next to follow the model of Kazakhstan, for bilateral security agreements with Russia. On May, 30, 1992, Russia and Uzbekistan signed the 'Treaty on the Fundamentals of Interstate Relations, Friendship and cooperation'. Both the Presidents, Islam Karimov and Boris Yeltsin agreed that 'territories of Russia and Uzbekistan will form a common military strategic area'. They also granted to each the other the right to use military facilities situated on their territories in case of necessity on the basis of mutual agreement.<sup>25</sup>

In subsequent agreements the two states have gradually moved towards planning and implementing the bilateral treaty. In February 1993, a Russian

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25. FBIS-SOV 92-107, June.3, 1992, p.21.



military delegation headed by Pavel Grachev, Minister of Defence, met with President Islam Karimov and discussed the integration of the two state's positions in the sphere of military technical cooperation, joint utilisation of strategic facilities such as anti-air craft, intelligence gathering and space monitoring facilities and joint plans for combat, mobilisation, training and military exercises of the Russian and Uzbek armed forces. This in addition to the continues presence of Russian officers who constitute more than 80% of the officer corps of Uzbekistan;s armed forces, also point to the close military relationship between Russia and its possible development into one of the pillars of security in Central Asia. This, especially in view of Uzbekistan willingness to perform an activist role in dealing regional ethnic conflicts, as in the case of Tajikistan, might provide the military arm of a Russian Uzbek political consensus in the region.<sup>26</sup>

But despite bilateral security relations concluded with Russia, Uzbekistan, in mid 1994, moved forward for the closer relations with the NATO, members. To became member of NATO, Uzgekistan, in July joined NATO 'Partnership For Peace' (PFP) programme for military cooperation. In September, Uzbekistan with NATO countries conducted joint military exercises.

### Kyrgizstan

The Kyrgiz Republic (formely the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic) is a small, land locked state situated in eastern Central Asia. After

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26. SWB. February, 5, 1993, p. C 3/2.26.

independent, Kyrgyzstan joined the defence structures of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and along with other five member states signed the collective security treaty in May 1992, and till now it has strongly defended the preservation of the CIS, recognising its dependence on the Commonwealth for military co-operation and economic survival.

Askar Akayev, the President of Kyrgyzstan, has tried to maintain close relations with the most influential CIS member, the Russian Federation, and hence, besides economic assistance, it has concluded a number of bilateral defence and security agreements with Russia.

So, Askar Akayev was the next Central Asian leader to go to Moscow for a similar treaty with Russia. The two countries signed the 'Friendship and co-operation and mutual assistance Treaty' on 10 June 1992, a treaty that according to Yeltsin raised the bilateral relations to a new level putting the two states 'on an absolutely equal footing', and thus signifying the end to Russia's imperial ambitions.<sup>27</sup> Russian's role as the guarantor of Kyrgyzstan's security was reaffirmed. Kyrgyzstan's economic difficulties and inabilities to handle the financial responsibility of taking part in supporting CIS formations in Kyrgyzstan made this bilateral arrangement with Russia more appealing and more of a necessity.

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27. FBIS-SOV 92-114, June 11, 1992. p.13

Subsequently, an agreement with Russia on bilateral military cooperation and the utilization of military facilities was initialled in Moscow on April-8, 1993.<sup>28</sup> After this agreement, subsequently another Russo-Kirgyz military agreement was signed on July 5, 1993 to extent military cooperation, following a meeting between the Russian Defence Miniter, Marshal Pavel Grochev, and Major General Dzhanybek Umataliyev, Chairman of Kirgyzstan State Committee for Defence.<sup>29</sup> It was also decided that CIS (mainly Russian) troops were to remain in Kyrgizstan for the immediate future to protect the country's border with the people's Republic of China.

### **Turkmenistan**

The Republic of Turkmenistan, (formely the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic) is situated in the south west of Central Asia. It is bordered to the north by Uzbekistan, to the north-west by Kazakhstan, to the west by the Caspian sea, to the south by Iran and to the South-east by Afghanistan.

Although, Turkmenistan not signed the CIS's collective security Treaty of May 1992, but it remained within the collective security of CIS. It has established cordial relations with Russia, and since independence, has signed a number of bilateral agreements in defence and security cooperation.

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28. Keesing's Record of World Events. Vol.39. No.4. April.1993. p.39414.

29. Rossiskaya Gazeta. July.7, 1993.

Russia's bilateral security treaties with Turkmenistan was the most significant of all, as they directly dealt with the future security of the southern borders of the CIS. The significance of the treaty with Turkmenistan was underscored by the intimate involvement of General Pavel Grachev, the Russian Defence Minister, who personally negotiated the agreement with Turkman defence officials and Saparmurad Niazov, the President of the republic. The treaty signed between Saparmurad Niazov and Russian Defence Minister General Pavel Grachev on June 8, 1992, in Ashgabat was a unique one that envisioned the formation of a national army for Turkmenistan under joint command. The armed forces, formed out of two existing former Soviet Units (Kushka and Kizylarvat) and other military units still stationed in Turkmenistan. The control of air force and air defence systems of Turkmenistan became entirely with the Russian Armed Forces (with some limited control by Turkmenistan).<sup>30</sup> It was also decided that while logistics training and exercise will be in Russia's hands the Turkmen will share the costs and will contribute in manpower. The approximate strength of the army will be around 42,000.<sup>31</sup>

Another military agreement with Russia, signed on Sept. 2, 1993, allowed Russian citizen for military service in Turkmenistan, while enabling Turkmen officers to receive training at Russian military institutes. Turkmenistan also agreed to bear the cost of maintaining Russia forces on

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30. FBIS-SOV 92-117, June 17, 1992. pp.53-54.

31. FBIS-SOV 92-114, June 12, 1992. pp.82-83.

its territories after Jan.1, 1994, in return it would preserve some strategic bases in Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistan formally became a full member of the CIS on December 24, 1993 at a summit meeting of CIS leaders held in Ashkhabad. In this summit, Turkmen President Saparmurad Niazov and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed famous accord which allowed Turkmenistan's 400000 ethnic Russians to hold joint Turkmen and Russian nationality. The accord which was formulated to ease ethnic tensions, was the part of security relation and was first such agreement between Russia and another former Soviet state.<sup>32</sup> After becoming member of the CIS, at Ashkhabad summit May 1994, Turkmenistan became the first Central Asian republic of the former USSR to join NATO's 'partnership for peace' programme.

Thus, the June accord was an important geopolitical agreement for both Russia and Turkmenistan. In the opinion of V.Otchertsov, member of the Turkmenistan Presidential council for small Turkmenia surrounded on all sides by larger neighbours, the creation of its own armed forces guaranteeing the reliable defence of its sovereignty from outside aggression would be highly dubious.<sup>33</sup> Turkmenistan Vice Premier, Nazar Souonov, pointed to the significance of the treaty for Russia, that it strengthened Russia's southern flank by maintaining her defensive flank and strength of

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32. Keesing's Record of World Events, Vol.39, no. 12, p.39778

33. Nezavisimaya Gazeta. June 16, 1992, p.3

its armed forces unchanged, and allowed Russia 'not to build its defence lines in the south of the Urals.<sup>34</sup> Colonel O.Falichev, military observer of Krasnaya Zvezda - pointed that Turkmenistan is choosing Russia rather than any of its southern neighbours as guarantee of its security, its prosperity, and stability in the region.<sup>35</sup>

Obviously, among Turkmenistan's neighbours, Iran will be most concerned about the nature and the thrust of the treaty as it will continue to affect Iran's overall geostrategic position. In order to neutralize Iranian concerns, Turkmenistan during earlier phase tried to maintain a posture of neutrality towards the CIS by raising doubts on its viability as a military bloc and emphasizing its role as a political and economic structure and forum, rather than a military alliance.

Turkmenistan's politico- military posture will continue to reflect the two key realities and preoccupations of its post Soviet positions. First, continuous and direct dependency on Russia for security of the new state vis-a-vis its neighbours. Second, the political desire and commitment to remain as independent as possible from Moscow and to avoid meaningful commitment in any regional politico-military bloc (i.e. CIS). Turkmenistan's continuous effort 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 persistent reluctant policy within

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34. Ibid..

35. Krasnaya Zvezda, June-10, 1992. p.1.

the CIS - rejecting any notion of creating a 'supera state' structure of the Commonwealth - are reflective of Turkmenista's dual predicament. Russia's forward politico military position in Turkmenistan will thus continue to be effected by the inherent tension between Russian security designs and Turkmenistan's independent regional posutre.<sup>36</sup>

### Tajikistan

The Republic of Tajikistan (formely the Tajik Soviet socialist Republic) is situated in the south east of Central Asia. To the north and west it borders Uzbekistan, to the north east Kyrgyzstan, to the east the people's Republic of China and to the south Afghanistan.

After the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, like the other colleagues of Central Asia, Tajikistan also came forward and has concluded a number of defence and security agreements with Russia.

Russia's bilateral security agreements with Tajikistan were the most significant but more complex, because these directly dealt with the future security of the southern flank of the CIS. Although Tajikistan was a signatory of the CIS collective security treaty, on bilateral level, close relations with Moscow remained in the shadows due to the ongoing political struggle in Dushanbe between President Rakhman Nabiyeu and the democratic and Islamic opposition.

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36. FBIS - Central Eurasia. Jan-23, 1993. pp. 5-14.

After the collapse of the Afghan regime and victory of Islamic forces in that country, Tajikistan became the vulnerable to the Mijaheedin influence, and border penetration increasingly captured the attention of both Moscow and especially all the Central Asia States. The ensuing '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 potentially explosive issues. Islam Karimov, the Uzbek President, with a clear stake in the security of the 'southern flank' took the lead in addressing the issue in both the Tashkant and Moscow summits.

Tajikistan's security problem was raised again in the foreign and defence ministers meeting in Tashkent in mid July 1992, and an important decision was made to immediately enhance the strength of the troops on the border with Afghanistan. The Commander-in-Chief of the CIS forces announced the dispatch of 1200 additional troops to the broarder of Afghanistan.<sup>37</sup> Now the stage was set for a broader security agreement with Russia.

A draft treaty with principles of bilateral relations between Russia and Tajikistan was initiated on July-21, 1992 in Dushanbe. Russia Vice-Premier, Alexander Shokin, the head of the Russian delegation, announced

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37. FBIS-SOV 92-138, July-17, 1992, pp.9-10



after the meeting with President Nabiyeu, that given the inability of Tajikistan to maintain its border security, Russia will take the border troops of the CIS under its jurisdiction.<sup>38</sup>

Tajikistan's further incorporation into the security agreements was under scored by the request of President Nabiyeu for deployment of CIS 'blue helmets' in Tajikistan's 'conflict zones' to dismantle the so called 'popular front' and to take over the task of ensuring the activities of the national economy's facilities and protection of the population.<sup>39</sup> Russia security relations with Tajikistan, however, remained subject to complicated domestic presence generated by opposition forces in Tajikistan. Democratic and Islamic groups continued to be suspicious of Russian intentions and policies in the republic and feared that the Russian military presence, disguised as 'peacekeeping forces' would in reality be used to tip the balance of political power in the republic toward pro-Moscow, i.e. the supporters of Rakhman Nabiyeu. The Committee for National Salvation, strongly protested against the presence of the 'foreign military contingent'.<sup>40</sup>

The ensuing Civil War in Tajikistan, especially after the forced resignation of Nabiyeu in September of 1992, highlighted the complicated

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38. FBIS-SOV 92-141, July-22, 1992, p.72.

39. FBIS-SOV 92-139, July-20, 1992, pp.60-61.

40. FBIS-SOV 92-150, August 4. 1992, p.73.

Russian political security role in defining both its internal political dynamics both its internal political dynamics and its external security. There have been numerous accusations in Tajikistan that the Russian military, and especially the 201st Motorized Rifle Division, provided support to the opposition groups and to the supporters of the deposed President Nabiyeu.

Thus Moscow's aggressive interventionist policy further confirmed the existence of a 'structural dependency' between Tajikistan and most of the Central Asian republics and Russia. Davlat Usman, Tajikistan's Vice Premier and Deputy Chairman of the Islamic Party of Revival, indicated that stability in Tajikistan without the help of Russia and the CIS will be 'rather problematic'.<sup>41</sup> The invocation of a collective security agreement in the case of Tajikistan by the Alma-Ata meeting on November 4, 1992, was a clear indication that Russia and the Central Asian partners-regardless of their intra-CIS differences will continue to hold the former Soviet Union's southern borders as the borders of the CIS and of Russia's sphere of influence. More significantly, it also indicated that the maintenance of the domestic stability of the republic has been considered a legitimate security concern of the member states, which falls within the jurisdiction of the collective security agreements. This was a clear message to all regional actors, including Iran, that inspite of the collapse of the Soviet Union, its geopolitical legacy will remain largely unchanged. Sergei, Yastrzhemsky, head of the Foreign Ministry Press and Information

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41. FBIS-SOV November-4, 1992, p.60.

Department, characterised Moscow's position rather frankly : -

"The Russian Ministry proceeds from the premise that interference in the internal affairs of Tajikistan that is located in the area of the Russian Federation's important and versatile interest, can not be justified no matter from where it comes and what is motivated by----- . Russia is ready to take all necessary measures to provide assistance to the fraternal Tajik people in stabilising the situation in the country, to help it share up its sovereignty and territorial integrity and ensure the security of the CIS's southern borders".<sup>42</sup>

The downfall of the 'Democratic-Islamic' coalition government in December 1992, and the consolidation of 'pro communist' forces in Tajikistan headed by Imamali Rakhmanov, was a watershed not only in the Tajikistan Civil War but also signalled a qualitatively new stage in the involvement of Russia and its primary regional ally, Uzbekistan's in shaping the political and security dynamics of the region. Uzbekistan direct involvement in providing political, logistical, and military backing for the 'pro-communist' forces, namely, the 'People's Front' was a critical in changing the balance of power among the contending parties to the conflict.

Subsequently Russian President Boris Yeltsin, at a Press Conference held during the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) summit in Minsk, on Jan.22, 1993 urged the members of the CIS to send a 500 strong battalion to Tajikistan to reinforce Russia units patrolling the Afghan border

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42. FBIS-SOV September-9, 1992, p.11.

to check further incursion border violation by anti-government groups and to protect the borders from attacks by Tajik Islamic based in Afghanistan. Imamali Rakhmanov, the President and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan and Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, met at Moscow, on May 25. The two leaders signed a 'friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance treaty, and Yeltsin stated Russia's continuing commitment to 'assist peacekeeping efforts on the part of the leadership of the Republic of Tajikistan'.<sup>43</sup>

During the subsequent period, Russia by its 'forward policy' has tried to maintain internal stability by its military intervention in the strife torn republic of Tajikistan. Despite military intervention, Russia along with the other members of the Commonwealth is still busy in organising peace talks among the concerned parties for the amicable final solution of the on going civil war of Tajikistan. In June 1994 a further round of peace negotiations between representatives of the Tajik Government and opposition took place in the Iranian capital, Tehran, but the cease-fire accord was not implemented, and the conflict along the Tajik-Afghan border continued. In early February 1995, a fourth round of peace talks between government and opposition representatives opened in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, but little progress was achieved. In mid-May 1995 President Rehmonov and Syed Abdullo Nuri, the leader of the IRP, started bilateral talks in Kabul,

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43. Keesings's Record of World Events Vol. 39, no.5, 1993, p.39465.

Afghanistan, for complete cease-fire, but regarding the deployment of peacekeeping forces in limited numbers in Gorny- Badakshan, the peace talk failed to achieve any meaningful goals. The Civil War is going in Tajikistan, but Russia, along with other members of CIS, by deploying 12000 strong forces in Tajikistan. is determined to stop the ongoing civil war in the strife torn state. The entire efforts on the part of Russia is as a part to maintain stability in the region and to secure borders of CIS from the intrigues of the Islamic fundamentalist, forces trained and exported by Afghanistan and other powerful neighbouring Islamic countries.

Thus the collective participation of Russia Uzbekistan and other CIS members to control the ongoing conflicts in Tajikistan, clearly 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 words of Imamali Rakhmanov, the leader of the new government in Dushanbe, "Russia involvement in Tajikistan's conflict was the first successful test of the collective security agreements".<sup>44</sup>

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44. Izvestiya, January 12, 1993.

# CHAPTER - V

## CONCLUSION

The disintegration of USSR was an unprecedented event of the 20th century. On December 25, 1991, with the resignation of the President, Mikhael Gorbachev, the Soviet Union finally ceased to exist. The demise of the Soviet Union resulted in the creation of five independent sovereign Central Asian Republics - namely, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

The region of Central Asia has been of fundamental importance in the socio-politico-economic history of Eurasia. The geographical location of Central Asia and Kazakhstan has been of decisive importance for trade. Before discovery of sea routes, all the main land trade routes connecting Eastern and Central Asia with Eastern Europe and the countries of the East lay across this territory. The 'Great Silk Route' connecting Persia and China with the Roman World, passes through Central Asian region. This region has been also exposed to numerous invasions and military campaigns throughout the history. The Greek invader, Alexander the Great, the Kushanas, the Huns, the Greco-Bactrians, the Turks, the Arabs, the Seldzuks, Mangols etc. attacked again and again and devastated the whole Central Asian region.

Later on, this area was a zone of triangular contest between Britain, Russia and China during the 19th and 20th centuries, which has been

romanticised as the 'Great Game'. In this 'Great Game' Tsarist Russia was quite successful in consolidation of its power over this region. But it was only after the October Revolution of 1917 that a process of intensive socio-economic and military integration of Central Asia into a single Soviet State system began under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The seven decades of Soviet rule gave Central Asia a strong feeling of security and stability as an integral part of a militarily strong super power. During this period, it remained free from internecine conflicts and felt no threat to its security from its neighbours. For the price of imperial sub-ordination, the Soviet Union protected Central Asia from external threats and internal instability.

During the Soviet regime, Central Asia was controlled and shaped to the extent that it has developed a psychological feeling of dependency in the erstwhile Soviet Union and its successor, Russia. After the disintegration of Soviet Union, the sheer realisation has also emerged that the security of Russia and Central Asian states are mutually interdependent. Russia, despite its withdrawal from Central Asia could not ignore its strategic concern, geopolitical links, collective security interests for maintaining stability within the region, and ensured that no regional power supplanted Moscow's preferential status.

The sudden demise of Socialism has given rise to the potential emergence of Islam and Islamic world, as a replacement. The common threat perception

posed by the rising tide of political Islamic forces around the neighbouring countries has been realised by leaders of both Russia and Central Asian states. Hence Russia continued and even enhanced its strategic interests in Central Asia on the plea of protecting the region from external threat and internal instability. Besides this, protection of the exterior borders of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and especially Central Asia along the 'southern flank' from the rising Islamic radical forces sponsored by powerful volatile neighbouring Islamic States of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi-Arabia, is only responsibility of Russia. The peacekeeping efforts by Russia and security of southern borders especially Tajikistan - Afghanistan borders from the Islamic radical forces have enhanced the security of the new Central Asian States.

Furthermore, these factors (inter-ethnic conflicts in the region, and question of security of 9 million Russian minorities in Central Asia , Kazakhstan strategic importance because of its possession of nuclear warheads, expansion of NATO, emergence of China as an adversary of Russia, historical responsibilities of Russia granted to her by the possession of nuclear weapons, occupation of permanent seat in the United Nation's Security Council, United States claim of dominating the unipolar World, the end of Cold War and demise of socialism from East Europe etc.) have forced Russia to continue its efforts towards forging a collective security system reinforced by bilateral security treaties with all Central Asian states.



After the formation of Commonwealth of Independent States, Russia has concluded a series of bilateral treaties on security and military assistance with all its southern Central Asia Islamic states. But the most significant dynamics within the CIS with far reaching security implications was "the Treaty on Collective Security" signed between Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russia and Armenia, at Tashkent Summit on May 15, 1992. This Treaty provided the main security dimension of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The significance of the Treaty did not primarily lie in its internal provisions, more importantly it provided an essential precondition and backdrop for the more detailed and substantive bilateral military agreements, which Russia subsequently signed with all the Central Asian states including Turkmenistan.

For the Central Asian leadership the arrangement of Collective Security gave a formal Russian commitment to provide security guarantees against external threats and implicit reassurances against internal instability of the type which had emerged in Tajikistan. On a more practical level, the Russian involvement provided support for the development of their own national armies which due to Soviet personnel practice, continued to be dominated by ethnic Russian officers and technical specialists.

During the subsequent period, for their part, the Russian military has jealously protected its independence of actions, vigorously opposing any institutional strengthening of the CIS joint command, such as along the North

Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) lines promoted by most of the Central Asian government. The dismantlement of the CIS Joint Command in June 1993, and the establishment of a jointly financed, unified Russia-Kazakh-Uzbek-Kyrgyz-Tajik peace keeping force under Russian operational control to police the Tajik-Afghan border in late 1993 demonstrates that the Tashkent agreement is being implemented on Russian terms.

Although the Treaty on Collective security provided the security umbrella for all Central Asian republics within the CIS framework and bilateral agreements with Russia further guaranteed additional security of each of the republics, but when the NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs, in the meeting December 1993, adopted the strategy of 'Partnership For Peace' (PFP) in a draft agreement to strengthen NATO's relationship with countries of the former eastern bloc and republics of former Soviet Union, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzia joined NATO's partnership for peace programme for military cooperation.

Furthermore, to diversify and to strengthen the scope of the defence and security of the region, leaders of all the Central Asian States, have advocated for the cooperation with different international organisations. The leaders of the Central Asian States gathered in Tashkent on September 15-16, 1995, and expressed their full determination to promote in strengthening for peace and security in Central Asia. For the maintenance of the stable regional security, stability and cooperation, the participants

leaders affirmed their adherence to the principles and goals of the UN Charter, and CSCE. For the solution of the existing problems of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and integrity of the regional security, the leaders called more effective use of the existing structures of UN and its organs like as UNDP, UNDCP, UNICEF as well as CSCE, OIC, CIS.

The leaders welcomed the dialogue under the auspices of UN, and the participation of the observing states of the protocol on the main principles for establishing peace and national understanding in Tajikistan and implementation of the agreement of cease fire. The leaders of the Central Asian States highly appreciated the role of UNO as one of the leading instruments in the process of formation of the new world order and confident that the UN potentials and experience accumulated will help to overcome successfully the current problems in the region.

However, Russia and all Central Asian republics, within the framework of CIS, have signed a number of bilateral and multi-lateral security agreements, and undoubtedly, Russia is also determined to provide full guarantee of external as well as internal security to its junior partners of Central Asian Islamic segments. But the inherent tensions in the Russian Central Asian Security arrangements are grounded on the conflicting centrifugal and centripetal pressures at the heart of their post-Soviet relationship. On the Central Asian side, this involves the conflict between the need to assert national sovereignty and the practical requirements of

protecting the security of the state. On the Russian side, the conflict is between the desire to preserve its strategic interests in Central Asia and the need to minimise the financial and political costs of such involvement. Like the US experience in Vietnam, the ghost of Afghanistan remains ever present in the minds of the Russians ruling elites, and limits how far the Russians are willing to guarantee the security of Central Asia in near future.

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