

**SAARC SUMMIT MEETINGS (1985-1995) – AN ANALYSIS
OF DECLARATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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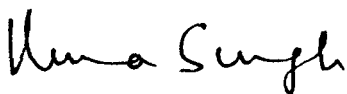
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “**SAARC SUMMIT MEETINGS (1985-1995) – AN ANALYSIS OF DECLARATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION**” submitted by **CHETAN BUNDELA** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University and this is his own work.

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


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Preface

Regionalism has become an important dimension of international relations in the last four decades. Regionalism in South Asia is not new, earlier attempts to regionalism could not achieve much in terms of economic gains. The focus of this study is South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Despite the historical ties in social, economic and cultural fields, the seven members countries of the SAARC had not been able to forge ahead the way it should have been.

This study will tries to find out how regional cooperation in South Asia evolved. With the rapid changes in the global economic environment in the recent years, the imperatives of economic cooperation among the developing countries became increasingly important. Regional cooperation was necessity for countries of South Asia partly due to global changes. Particularly success of regional grouping like ASEAN and European Union has also led to formation of SAARC. But South Asian response to this was slow. The pace of progress in realizing cooperation has been minimal.

Success of regional cooperation in South Asia is very important as all the countries face common problems: rapid population growth, pressure on land, limited natural resources and high levels of poverty intensified by skewed asset and income distribution. In recent years the countries of South Asia have also suffered balance of payments problems because of the fluctuations in the international commodity markets. As a result of this the smaller countries of South Asia have forged alliances with other nations and thereby bringing external involvement in this region.

Regional cooperation in South Asia has been marked by Indo-Pak rivalry and asymmetry of size, population and resources between India and the rest of the countries. In SAARC summit meeting also these problems were visible in the leaders speeches. Member countries have raised bilateral issues in summit meetings. In some instances the leaders achieved success in reaching agreements through informal consultation. This makes us feel that the informal discussions could lead to many such agreements on contentious issues. There is a strong fear that if SAARC allows bilateral discussions in these meetings the regional body would not make any progress. In the ninth Male summit informal political consultations were allowed.

This study will try to identify the barriers in success of regional cooperation in South Asia. If regional cooperation is the key to future progress and prosperity it is imperative that this institution must be strengthened.

A lot of studies had been done on political dimension and economic constraints in SAARC success. This work examines the proceedings of the summit meeting which is the apex body of SAARC and how these summit meetings can contribute to the success of regional cooperation in south Asia.

The retrospective survey of SAARC requires close analysis of summit from 1985 to 1995. During this period eight Summits took place. This study will analyse the summit speeches given by the various heads of government in eight summits and also the subsequent summit declarations. By analysing the summits this study will try to identify the expectation of the various states. It will also critically assess how far these declarations have been implemented by the SAARC. This will further examine the

implementation of some of the programs enshrined in the declaration For instance critical issues of people to people contact, cooperation in social and environmental fronts, in terrorism and drugs will all be analyzed in this study.

✓ In the Summit the leaders of various South Asian countries meet and deliberate on various regional issues. By examining these speeches one finds that what are the trends in various summits. For instance first four summits addressed areas which are non-political in nature. After each summit they a Summit declaration is announced. However, we find huge gaps between what they say in their speeches in the Summit, what they write in the declarations and what they finally implement. It would be of tremendous interest to analyse at least some of the speeches, declarations and the final implementation. ✓

The multiple socio-economic problems of South Asia can be solved only through a regional cooperative effort. In this study, our objective is to identify various institutions, which can promote cooperation. The role of the political will of the governments of the region is critical to the success of this effort. There are several approaches (cultural, functional, political) to the creation of a favourable political will. The contacts at the highest level will not only help to generate the requisite goodwill but they would also contribute to making regionalism a mass movement in South Asia.

However, SAARC has made quite significant progress in number of areas. These include the setting up of regional institutions, signing of various conventions, organisations of a number of regional programs and implementation of preferential trading arrangement. (SAPTA). This study will try to identify which area in SAARC requires urgent attention and how can SAARC increase its effectiveness.

This study is divided into six chapters

Chapter I will deal with theoretical interpretation of regionalism, evolution of regionalism to new regionalism, determinants of regionalism and advantages of regionalism. This also examines institutional structure of regional organizations like European Union and ASEAN. The role of Diplomacy and leadership in regional cooperation is also illustrated in this context.

Chapter II – makes a detailed study of the evolution of SAARC. It will further analyse the international and domestic factors responsible for emergence of SAARC.

Chapter III and IV examines all the speeches delivered by the Heads of the State & Governments in course of five years (1985-1990). This will also examine the various issues addressed by these leaders and examine various aspects of declarations made in the Summit meetings.

Chapter V makes a critical overview of declaration and assesses effectiveness of implementation of various programmes of SAARC ranging from conventions, regional centres and other schemes for improving the quality of life and social upliftment programmes. It highlights the achievement it has made so far. It will also look into how the various institutions, instruments and machinery set up by the regional groupings have helped in implementing cooperative goals.

Conclusion – while making concluding remarks it also raises issues related to future prospects of regional cooperation.

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The completion of this work would have been an unaccomplished task without the support of my supervisor Prof. Mahendra P. Lama. His immense help from checking my chapters to giving every possible input to my work has brought best from me. I sincerely thank my supervisor for giving me the opportunity to work under him. Any shortcomings in my work are entirely mine.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFTA	-	ASEAN Free Trade Area
APEC	-	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	-	Association of South East Asian Nations
CASAC	-	Coalition for Action on South Asian Cooperation
E U	-	European Union
ECLAC	-	Economic Commission for Latin America and Carribean
ECSC	-	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	-	European Economic Community
EPC	-	European Political Cooperation.
ESCAP	-	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
GATT	-	General Agreement on Tariff and Trade
GCC	-	Gulf Cooperation Council
GEP	-	Group of Eminent Persons
IGG	-	Inter Governmental Group
MFN	-	Most Favoured Nation
NACC	-	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NAFTA	-	North American Free Trade Area
NAM	-	Non Align Movement
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAS	-	Organization of American States
OAU	-	Organization of African Unity

OPEC	-	Oil and Petroleum Exporting Countries
PTA	-	Preferential Tariff Agreement
SADF	-	South Asian Development Fund
SAFTA	-	South Asian Free Trade Area
SAPTA	-	South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement
SAVE	-	SAARC Audio Video Exchange Programme
SEATO	-	South East Asia Treaty Organization
UN	-	United Nations
UNCTAD	-	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WTO	-	Warsaw Treaty Organization
WTO	-	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER I

REGIONALISM: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The term regionalism has many meanings in the study of international relation. Regionalism refers to intensifying political and economic process of cooperation among states and other actors in particular geographical region. It refers to a variety of types of institution, organization, movement, and people's identities that center on territorial regions of the world.¹ The force of regionalism merits our attention, given its emergence in 1950s and resurgence in the post cold war years. Since then it has been shaping international relation. The study of regionalism has been marked by two phases. The first phase began under the sub field of international relation in the late 1950s and the second phase emerged in the context of international political economy in 1980s.

In this chapter we will analyse the various theories of regionalism which have evolved over the years. This will further analyze the growth of new regionalism, factors that determine regionalism, advantages of regionalism. We will also look into the institutional structures of other regional groupings like European Union and ASEAN and role of diplomacy and leadership in regional cooperation.

First Phase

The European cooperation began in late 1940s mainly to build war torn economies and removal of trade barriers. The six² founding members felt that combining their resources will make them more competitive internationally. In the 1950s there was a concern of invasion of western countries by Soviet Union and its allies. In addition communist parties had made strong inroads into the domestic policies of some European countries, notably France and Italy. At the same time after the Second World War there was fear of resurgent Germany as it was

¹Raymond Duncan, et al., *World Politics in the 21st Century* (New York, Longman, 2002), p.368.

² *ibid.* , p.256.

responsible for three major wars in Europe. So by integrating Germany economically and militarily into the European cooperation the possibility of another world war was removed. All these factors were responsible for emergence of European Coal and Steel Community.

On 9 may 1950 Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister 1948-52, made his surprise announcement by proposing the pooling of coal and steel production. Following protracted negotiation, the Treaty of Paris was signed, by the six founding members on 19 March, which established the supranational European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). This created a common market for coal, steel, coke, iron ore and scrap between France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg and Italy.³

The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was created to manage the commercially and militarily important coal and steel industries. The ECSC was also important because it created a set of institutions that would later evolve into the institutions of European Union that we know today. Between 1952-62 iron ore production increased from 62 million tones to 92 million tones, new pattern of trade developed and there was greater harmonization of working conditions.⁴ The ECSC operated successfully for 20 years apart from technical difficulties and crisis of 1958, when coal surpluses, unsold stocks and cheap U S coal caused problems. The 1958 crisis in ECSC and its inability to establish a true single market in coal and steel led to signing of Treaty of Rome in 1957 by France, Germany, Italy, and the Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg) which formed three European “communities”: the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the European Defense Community (EDC), and the European Economic Community.

However, ECSC successfully functioned through the 1950s and 1960s when demand and production were expanding, guaranteeing equal French access both to Ruhr coal and German markets. ECSC led France and Germany to renounce their political enmities and to work for

³ Martin J. Dedman, *The Origin and Development of European Union 1945-1995: A History of European Integration* (London, Routledge, 1996), p.57.

⁴ Richard Mc Allister, *From E C to E U: A Historical and Political Survey* (London, Routledge, 1997), p.20.

the integration and reconstruction of their heavy industries by pooling their coal and steel resources.⁵

In first phase of regionalism there was a series of regional pacts on security by great powers and United States took the earliest initiative. In 1947, the inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) established a regional security system for the western hemisphere. These alliances were launched to contain the influence of communist policy. These include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formed in 1949, the ANZUS Pacific Security Pact in 1951. The ANZUS pact was a security treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. It was intended to be the first step towards the development of a comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific, within the framework of the defensive alliance system of the western world.⁶ This system was further developed by the creation of the SEATO under the Manila Treaty of September 1954. The main purpose of the members was to strengthen peace in the pacific and to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity against potential aggressor and coordination of their policies. The weak organizational structure of and the development of SEATO resulted in the decline of its influence. ANZUS pact is no longer in full operation. The South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) of 1954 was disbanded in 1976.

In 1955 the Soviet Union responded to the threat of these military alliances by setting up the Warsaw treaty organization (WTO). All these alliances belong to the first phase of regionalism.

Over a period of time relevance of regionalism for development and conflict prevention was being questioned as old regionalism failed to promote peace and development. The old regionalism was imposed from outside the region for geopolitical reasons, and in such cases there were few incentives for economic cooperation. The economic region had been divided in accordance with the cold war pattern and alliances. The attempts at regional cooperation were based on colonial scheme and such kind of attempts was incompatible with the new status of national independence.⁷

⁵ *ibid.* , p.21

⁶ Giuseppe Schiavone, *International Organization: A Dictionary* (London, Macmillan, 1997), p.28.

⁷ Mordechai E. Kreimin and Micheal G. Plummer, *Economic Integration and Development: Has Regionalism Delivered for Developing Countries* (United Kingdom, Edward Elgar, 2002), p.24.

The old regionalism didn't go beyond trade arrangement between nations where economic relations already had become distorted. Trade was not sufficient for success of regional cooperation as there was lack of complementarities⁸ between neighboring countries. Uneven development along with political tensions led to further conflict. The previous efforts of regionalism failed to reach a balance between function and territory. Thus rather than 'Proventing' unwanted outcomes, the old regionalism created new conflicts.⁹

The eventual emergence of multipolarity in international system led to the rise of new regionalism. The new regionalism is a multidimensional¹⁰ form of integration, which includes economic, political, social and cultural aspects. It goes far beyond the goal of creating region based free trade regimes or security alliances. In this regionalism the establishment of regional coherence and identity are of primary importance.

Why a Transformed Regionalism?

The new regionalism that emerged in 1980s was a result of comprehensive structural transformation of the global system. The structural transformations were indicated by : (i) the move from bi-polarity towards a multipolarity or perhaps tripolar structure, with a new division of power and new division of labour; (ii) the relative decline of American hegemony in combination with a more permissive attitude on the part of USA towards regionalism; (iii) the erosion of Westphalia nation-state system and the growth of interdependence and globalization; and (iv) the changed attitude towards (neo liberal) economic development and political system in the developing countries.¹¹

In 1980's regionalism took new dimensions and concentrated on intensifying political and economic process of cooperation among states and other actors in particular

⁸ Bjorn Hettne and Intoi, (ed.), *Regionalism Implication for Global Development* (London, Macmillan Press, 1999), p.15

⁹ *ibid.*, p.16

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.12.

¹¹ Shaun Breslin, Christopher W and others, (ed.), *New Regionalisms in Global Political Economy* (London, Routledge, 2002), p.33.

geographical regions. The European economic integration and increasing interdependence among three North American countries US, Canada, Mexico under NAFTA and the transformation of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are examples of association, which are based on economic cooperation. The objective of regionalism is the establishment of order in the international system in contrast to cross anarchy as envisaged by the classical realist.¹² New regionalism is about the world order in transformation and the emergence of multilevel patterns of governance.

Why New Regionalism?

The old regionalism failed to promote peace and development as a result new regionalism emerged both as a development policy and means to conflict prevention.

Development regionalism refers to concerted efforts from a group of countries within a geographical region to increase the complementarity and capacity of the total regional economy as well as finding the right balance between function and territory. New regionalism is more political and development oriented. It seeks to take interest of region as a whole. Development regionalism in the context of new regionalism may provide solution to many specific economic and development problems in the South. Development regionalism is an important factor by which conflict generated development process can be eliminated at an early stage.¹³

Policies and events originating in one nation often have large effects on the welfare of citizens and government in other nations. Sometimes these spill over effects are mutually beneficial. If Indian economic policy makers succeed in boosting India's domestic living standards, Indian consumers have more money to spend on goods and services, and Sri Lankan and Pakistan workers who specialize in producing exports for Indian markets enjoy a windfall.

¹² P.V Rao, (ed.), *Regional Cooperation in Indian Ocean: Trends and Perspective* (New Delhi, South Asian Publisher), p.196.

¹³ Bjorn Hettne,(ed.), op.cit., n.8 ,p.15

However, these spill over are unwanted sometimes, as when a currency devaluation in a India reduces the competitiveness of Indian imports from South Asian countries, prompting other neighbouring countries to devalue their own currencies, thereby precipitating a further devaluation by India, and so on.¹⁴

Keohane called nations to coordinate their policies. For instance, if political leaders of India could agree not to pursue policies harmful to Pakistan as long as their political counterparts in Pakistan refrained from undertaking policies harmful to India and vice versa. Cooperation is about reciprocity as Keohane' said "When cooperation takes place, each party changes his or her behaviour contingent on changes in the other's behaviour".¹⁵ The result of this exchange has been explained by Helen Milner "The adjustment of one state policies in return for, or anticipation of, the adjustment of other state policies".¹⁶

Neo liberal theorists have explained this by saying: "The nations today are more interdependent than they used to be and thus the potential for negative externalities is greater and there is prospective benefit of multilateral cooperation".¹⁷ "Regionalism is a prelude to achieving order through which universalism can be realized." Functionalism purports to profess and analyze these tendencies.¹⁸

Determinants of Regionalism

Regionalism is the wave of future in the redistribution of world political and economic power. Regionalism is a political force generated and sustained by a variety of factors, which are as follows:

¹⁴Lloyd Gruber, *Ruling the World-Power Politics and the Rise of Supranational Institutions* (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2000), p.17.

¹⁵ *ibid.*,p.17.

¹⁶ Cited in Lloyd Gruber.,p.17.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁸ P.V Rao, *op.cit.*, n.12, p. 197.

Proximity

Geographical closeness or contiguity makes economic exchanges easier and cheaper. Most regions are predominantly situated in one geographical unit. It has been argued that absence of geographical unity makes administration of region more complex.¹⁹ International regionalism especially since the Second World War, has led to a kind of rough geo-political calculation that regionalism is facilitated by regional contiguity. In South East Asia, contiguity of ASEAN members provides a feedback to regional cooperation. In South Asia also, proximity of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan strengthens the ties of regionalism.

Homogeneity

Social, political and economic homogeneity also lends impetus to regionalism. Social homogeneity lies in measuring similar attitudes and values of the people. Economic homogeneity leads to more and more flow of trade and transaction in communication trade and mobility. Political homogeneity maintains affinities between national political cultures, which develops understanding, trust, and cooperation between neighboring countries. Regionalism can be fostered efficiently if there is similarity amongst the nations concerned regarding structural frame and political behavior or psychology of political elites.²⁰

SAARC represents countries, which chose to separate when their colonial history ended, and stressed on different cultures and religions. South Asian region has different patterns of governance as India and Sri Lanka have democratic framework, which they have sustained. Pakistan could not develop a democratic framework and political stability is always confined with the support of military elites, backed by Muslim fundamentalists. Bangladesh also slipped into the hands of military regime many times. Nepal and Bhutan have limited and absolute monarchies and Maldives have a republican form of government. Perhaps,

¹⁹ Shiela Page, *Regionalism among Developing Countries* (London, Macmillan Press, 2000), p.67.

²⁰ Partha S. Ghosh, *Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia* (New Delhi, Manohar, 1989), p.53

there would have been more cooperation in South Asian countries if they had the same pattern of governance.²¹

Functional Interest

In international relations, functional interest is an integrative factor. The alignment of nations in a war for national survival is an example. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) established for containing Iran-Iraq is also an example. Such alliances are sought not only for facing or preventing war but also for achieving economic advantages as in Western Europe through various communities. Faith in international disarmament agreement and an emphasis on interdependence may help in fostering regional cooperation as in the case of SAARC.²²

Common Threat Perception

Common threat perceptions, internal or external, are of prime importance for regional cooperation. The emergence of SAARC is said to be, to some extent, an instrument of promoting internal security against economic backwardness in the region and external security effort against super powers. In this context it may be pointed out that the South Asian leaders in Dhaka summit (1985) stressed on common threats faced by all the countries in the region which were poverty and underdevelopment and this was vastly aggravated by the deteriorating world economic situation.²³ The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) also began as a security-oriented effort.

Similarity in Foreign Policy Orientation

Foreign policy orientation is based on global balance of power, which in the region means similarity of views on a particular nation or bloc of nations. Pro-Western ASEAN

²¹ Kanesalingam .V, *Political Dimension of South Asian Cooperation* (Colombo, CSCD, 1991), p.32.

²² Vandana Mohla, *SAARC and Super Powers* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publication, 1998), p.1

²³ Muhamad Shamsul Haq, *International Politics a Third World Perspective* (New Delhi, Sterling, 1987), p.51 .

drew closer to each other because of their dependence on the United States. The success of SAARC has been rather impeded due to dissimilar foreign policy orientations between India, Pakistan and other countries of the region. India's foreign policy is oriented toward non-alignment and it has been mainly guided by the consideration of regional issues of socio-economic development and democratic process. but for many years India remained conspicuously tilted towards the Soviet Union in terms of its strategic alliance. India's effort has always been in trying to protect SAARC from drifting closer to any of super powers on strategic issues on the contrary countries like Pakistan show western orientation.²⁴

Pakistan leadership has pursued an exaggerated and unrealistic policy of parity relationship with India. Bureaucratic military leadership primarily framed Pakistan's foreign policy perspectives. Over the last five decades Pakistan has received huge amount of arms from U S A. even in SAARC speeches Pakistan support to west was clearly visible in Islamabad summit.²⁵

All ruling elites in South Asia except Bhutan and Maldives project India as major security concern and have all sought external assistance to counter balance. Sri Lanka sought to limit Indian influence by involving external powers in the sponsorship of a UN resolution to make Indian ocean a nuclear free zone ; Nepal's 'Zone of peace' also arose from anxiety about India; Bangladesh ,has also sought close links with Pakistan, the Islamic states, the USA and China.²⁶

Foreign policy behavior in regional context is influenced by affinities and interdependence with neighbors' economic and military power. Rivalries, antipathies, and antagonism can be felt across short social distance but growing interdependence can moderate hostile feelings among neighbors. Regional foreign policy behavior to a large extent has been conditioned by emergence of trans-regional relations and systems.²⁷

²⁴ Surendra Nath Kaushik , Rajan Mahan,(ed.), *India and South Asia* (New Delhi , South Asian Publisher, 1991),p.111.

²⁵ Speech by Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.162.

²⁶ Gowher Rizvi, *South Asia in International Politics* (New Delhi, Sage, 1993), p.150.

²⁷ Vandana Mohla, op.cit., n. 22, p.9.

Acceptance of Pivotal Power in the Region

A pivotal role of a particular power in the region has to be accepted by other nations in the region and by that nation also. In the GCC for example, other members of the region have accepted Saudi Arabia's predominance. In ASEAN, Indonesia, though not superior economically or in size or technology, overshadows others. Similarly in European Union Germany, which in several aspects dominant country in the EU, and it hardly launches any unilateral initiatives but looks for partner, big or small to join. If that pivotal power is not accepted unanimously by other nations of the region, there will be constant fear of its hegemonic role creating hindrances to regionalism. SAARC vis-à-vis India poses the same problem. India is a core nation in South Asia, and potential great power, the level of disparity between India and other South Asian nations in terms of population, size, economic and military strength and technological development is very high. India's asymmetry has acted as a source of mutual suspicion and distrust for small countries of South Asia.²⁸ Despite this India play a very accommodative role in SAARC but India also fears that such low profile attitude may result in ganging up of small neighbors towards India.

Strategic Harmony

Strategic harmony also affects regionalism. Economic cooperation can take place in an environment where the strategic discord is smoothed and mutual security dilemmas are at least contained, if not resolved. Despite strategic discord and divergence, the United States and the former Soviet Union have never completely snapped their economic ties. If strategic divergence obstructs regional cooperation, it may be due to a direct effect on aid and technical assistance from external powers. Due to external dependence, collective economic strategy may be difficult.²⁹ The strategic disharmony between India and other SAARC

²⁸ Pran Chopra, "SAARC and the Asymmetry issue", in Poona Wignaraja and Akmal Hussain, (ed.), *The Challenge in South Asia: Peace, Regional Cooperation and Development* (New Delhi, Sage, 1989), p.326.

²⁹ David J. Myers, (ed.), *Regional Hegemon: Threat Perception and Strategic Response* (San Francisco, West View Press, 1992), p.183.

countries except Bhutan and Maldives has checkmated the SAARC progress. India and Pakistan are nuclear powers and both of them received arms from superpowers this situation create a strategic disharmony between them. Bangladesh is major beneficiary of foreign aid in South Asia.³⁰

Regional Institutions

The establishment of regional institution to shape and implement regional policies is indispensable. Regional institution can develop cohesiveness and solidarity between national societies and may become more oriented towards integrative activity.³¹In first SAARC summit institutional framework was adopted and it has established a number of regional institutions to shape and implement regional policies. However these institutions in SAARC need action-oriented policies to implement its programmes. We have discussed these issues in detail in following chapters.

Approaches to Regionalism

The Functional Approach

David Mitrany introduced the idea of 'functionalism' to the study of international relations, arguing that the growth of international trade and interdependence weakens the power of the sovereign state. He devoted his working life to bring states closer together to deal with issues that transcend national boundaries. Mitrany suggested that international cooperation should begin by dealing with specific transnational issues such as disease control. This process could begin government to acknowledge their growing responsibility for providing welfare to their citizens.³²

³⁰ Vandana Mohla, op.cit., n. 22,p.10.

³¹ ibid. ,p.11.

³² David Mitrany, *The Functional Theory of Politics* (London, Martin Robson, 1975),p.269-82

The theoretical application of Functionalism has been developed more extensively in Western Europe than elsewhere because that part of the world has developed furthest along the path to integration.³³ Functionalism must be understood in the context of the process of integration among states. Functionalism was the proposed solution to the problem of how to bring states closer together to deal with issues that transcend territorial boundaries. Functional approach was presented as an alternative to political and constitutional forms of integration.³⁴

The functionalist believes that an ever-increasing amount of economic and social cooperation will ultimately build environment conducive for participation of people and a broader base of common values that will “Spill over”³⁵ into the political arena.

“The functionalist believes that wars are the product of crudely organized system, as suspicion and anarchy characterized such system”.³⁶ Ignorance, poverty, hunger, and disease are the root causes of war. Functionalists were however wrong in this perception as First and Second world wars took place in Europe which was not exactly economically and socially less developed areas of globe.³⁷

State Sovereignty is considered to be a barrier for the transfer of loyalties at international level. “Sovereignty, national exclusion and other forms of arbitrary fragmentation of the globe are viewed by the functionalists as an anachronistic and dangerous heritage of pre-industrial age”.³⁸

Functionalism aims at gentle and step-by-step growth of non-political and non-security organizations at the international level that will gradually reduce the strength of nation states.

³³ Martin Griffiths and Terry O Callaghan, *International Relation: The Key Concepts* (London, Routledge, 2002),p.116

³⁴ *ibid.*, p.117.

³⁵ *ibid.*,p.118.

³⁶ P.V Rao ,*op.cit.*,n .12,p.196.

³⁷ Leroy A Bennet, *International Organization: Principal and Issues* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall,1995),p.17.

³⁸ A.P.Rana, “Regionalism an Approach to International Order: A Conceptual Overview”, *International Studies*, New Delhi, Vol.13, 1979, p.491.

In this scenario international organizations and regions will be supranational authority over nations, which will regulate the international society. Functionalism will lead to removal of obstacles for political integration and an environment in which world unity will be achieved. The functionalist theory emphasize on travel, trade, the practical arts, and the interdependence of states.³⁹

However, Earnst Haas criticized functional approach as he thinks that functional regulation cannot proceed in the absence of political coordination among state elites, he examined the political process that promote and impede supranationalism.⁴⁰

The Neo Functional approach

Ernst B.Haas is best known as the founder of Neo-Functionalism in the study of regional integration, particularly in Europe. Haas has explored the role of consensual knowledge among elites in facilitating inter-state cooperation. The neo -functional approach, which developed in Western Europe in the late 1950s, portrays the political impact of groups and the elite and their bargaining power, which is phenomenal to the incremental growth of supranational institutions.⁴¹

Haas developed a model that did not rely on normative assumptions either of altruism or that the growth of economic interdependence would be sufficient to generate demands for closer intergovernmental cooperation. Unlike Mitrany, he acknowledged that it would be difficult either to separate technical from political issues or to avoid conflicts between states if the gains from cooperation were unequally distributed. Consequently it was crucial to establish formal institutions that could impose and uphold agreements made by the nation states. Such bodies need some autonomy from national governments to be effective.⁴²

³⁹Ghulam Umar, *SAARC: A Analytical Survey* (Karachi, Pakistan institute of international affairs,1988),p.5

⁴⁰ Martin Griffiths and Terry O Callaghan, *op.cit.*, n.32,p.119.

⁴¹ Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations* (London, Routledge, 1999), p.180.

⁴² *ibid.*, p.181

Haas was confident that this process would weaken state sovereignty. Integration is an accumulative and expansive process through which the organization will slowly extend its sphere of authority. This is to encompass a wider range of decision-making activities. As more and more actors got involved in integration a form of socialization will take place among elites. They will transfer their loyalty to nation state to broaden areas of cooperation and take interest in whole region.⁴³ The motivating force underlying this expansion of authority is described in terms of “functional spill over”. The relevant elite can increase or decrease the pace of cooperation across the territorial boundaries.

Communication Approach

Karl W.Deutsch is the major exponent of the communication approach. A regional forum can grow through values, sentiments, common perception and transmission of these concepts within the “cybernetic framework of government.”⁴⁴ The qualitative scope of integration can be measured through border crossing communication i.e. mail, flows, communication, student travel, tourism and relative levels of intra regional trade. This exchange will eventually lead to the development of security communities or integrated socio-politico systems. He has identified two major sub categories of security communities viz., amalgamated and pluralist. Both these communities are characterized by the absence of intra community wars.⁴⁵

The United States is a good example of an amalgamated security community as it has a single federal government exercising central political control over continent sized region. Pluralist security communities on the other hand, have no central political authority, but the national units that make up these communities do not expect to fight one another and thus do not fortify their borders. Pluralist security communities are usually large areas, such as North American continent and Western Europe.⁴⁶

⁴³ Ernst B.Haas, *When Knowledge is Power: Three Models of Change in International Organization*, (Berkeley, University Of California Press, 1990), p.212.

⁴⁴ Karl W.Deutsch, *Political Community at the International Level* (New York, Double Day, 1954), p.39.

⁴⁵ Martin Griffiths, op.cit., n.41, p.184.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p.185.

The World Order Approach

Richard A. Falk and Saul Mendlowitz were the main advocates of world order approach. They revealed that the present global structure of the international system is unable to cope with the current problems like nuclear arms race and population explosion. These dangers compel the globalist to take action beyond the national boundaries to bring required structural changes. The proponents of the world order approach emphasized on global governmental mechanism to tackle these problems.⁴⁷ One of the necessary preconditions in this direction is the growth of regionalism.

The world order model builders believe that the diversities of different countries can only be minimized through regional cooperation this approach provides further enrichment to various other theories of regional integration.

Fractured functionalism

These approaches to regionalism suggest that none of them is adequate enough to explain the complex process regional integration taking place in the world today in general and the developing countries in particular. Regional integration in the developing countries is too complex.

In South Asian context the integration among the member countries of SAARC presents a picture of fractured functionalism. Fractured functionalism is a scenario in the international system where attempts for integration – economic, political and cultural are handicapped by the inherent distortions in the domestic societies of the region. Although at the rhetoric level the political elites make efforts in their interactions in the SAARC summits, these efforts in the direction of economic integration are seriously affected because of numerous contradictions in the domestic policies of the national governments South Asia. Lack of

⁴⁷ Vandana Mohla, *op.cit.*, n.22, p.15

political stability and slow process of democratization in the domestic political system of the regions derail and dampen the need for political will for integration.⁴⁸

There is a need for maximizing Intra Regional relations and indeed it has become a worldwide phenomenon. The trends of globalization and liberalization have necessitated the strengthening of regional economic inter-linkages. The decade of 1990's saw the existence of regional and sub regional groupings. These have become a vital aspect of the world order today. The last few decades have witnessed an outburst of international cooperation and institution building primarily due to increasing interdependence.⁴⁹

Regionalism verses Universalism

In the twentieth century a cleavage developed between certain advocates of universalism and regionalism. both sets of antagonists that the international system must eventually be modified from the primacy of the nation state in the direction of a partial surrender of state sovereignty to larger political units. The adversaries emphasized on the goal of world order and stability which is the only feasible alternative to the deficiencies of the present system.⁵⁰

The nature of the problem determines which treatment is best suited either universal or regional. If the consequence of a problem is regional in nature or scope, then regional solution is sufficient. On the other hand, a military security system or a form or a form of economic regionalism that tends to foster antagonisms or discriminatory policies toward other states or blocs of states may be considered for universal solution. Although the claims⁵¹ of universalists and regionalists resulted in a accommodation between them. Both regionalism and universalism need to co-exist in competing and mutually supportive relationships. Compatibility by regional organisations and universal organisations can lead

⁴⁸ P.V.Rao,op.cit.,n.12,p.197

⁴⁹ Norman D Palmer, *The New Regionalism in Asia and Pacific* (Toronto, Lexington Books, 1991),p.5

⁵⁰ Leroy A Bennet, op.cit.,n.37,p.232

⁵¹ ibid., p.233.

to harmonious relationship⁵² between the two. Both regional and global agencies can contribute to the promotion of the general welfare of humanity. A combination of regionalism and universalism serves to promote the national interest of most states.

“Regionalism is a new concept and it is a mid-way between nationalism and universalism, and it is reflected by shared economic, political and ideological interests, experience shows that once process of integration started in a particular region, it serves as feedback and also strengthens its own roots.”⁵³ Thus regionalism seems to be an attractive proposition and collective self-reliance approach will help to restructure the economic order in developing countries.⁵⁴

Varieties of Regionalism

Regionalism is achieved through formation of regional organizations. “A regional organization is a segment of world bound together by a common set of objectives based on geographical, social, cultural, economic, or political ties and possessing a formal structure provide for informal inter governmental agreements.”⁵⁵ A regional organization is intended to appeal only to a specified category of states, less than global in scope.

Regional organization may be classified on the basis of their nature or scope of their functions or membership, or possibly on the degree of a eventual integration that is sought. Regional organization can be divided in three general types. There is also a distinct category of regionalism promoted by United Nations Regional Commissions:

1. **Multipurpose regional organizations** are those whose broad aims and activities reach across the lines that divide political and military matters from those generally classified as economic and social. Multipurpose organizations play a significant role in the conduct of

⁵² *ibid.* , p.234.

⁵³ Krishan Gopal, *Geo-political Relation and Regional Cooperation* (New Delhi, Trans Asia Publication, 1996),p.11.

⁵⁴ *ibid.* ,p.8.

⁵⁵ *ibid.* ,p.230.

world affairs. The Organization of American states (OAS) is in several respects the most significant of the multipurpose regional organization.⁵⁶

The OAS operates through a general assembly, which meets annually and is designated as the supreme organ. A permanent council performs special pacific settlement functions and along with it also serves as preparatory committee for the general assembly. Two other councils, the Inter American Economic and Social Council and the Inter American Council for Education, Science and Culture, supervise extensive programs, draft treaties, and initiate conferences under the guidance of assembly. An Inter American Juridical Committee acts as an advisory body to the OAS and promotes the development and codification of international law within the hemisphere. There are specialized organizations in fields like agriculture, child welfare, women affairs, health and an Inter-American commission on human rights. The OAS operates in part as an alliance for collective defense.⁵⁷

The collective defense features of the OAS have served more as a warning against potential external aggression might threaten states within the hemisphere than as a defense against military attack. In 1950s the organs of OAS, in response to United States efforts, adopted a series of resolution urging the safeguards against communist subversion of individual states.⁵⁸

This significance is established on the basis of the elaborate structure and function of the OAS and its long, continuing history. Strengthening of peace and security of the continent, settlement of disputes among the members, common action against any aggression, solution of Political, Judicial and Economic problems and, cooperative actions are the major aims of OAS. The OAS has provided a cloak of legitimacy for unilateral United States action. The OAS has lost its significance.⁵⁹ ASEAN, Nordic Council, Commonwealth, OAU, League of Arab states and Andean Group also come under multipurpose regional organizations.

⁵⁶ Leroy A Bennet, *op.cit.*, n.37,p.239.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p.239.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.240.

⁵⁹ Giuseppe Schiavone, *op.cit.*, n.6, p.50.

2. **Alliance type organizations** are those whose military and political orientation is intended to provide security against external actors. All these organizations came in response to Cold War. For instance, the largest and most stable military alliance is NATO. As the original postwar organization in this category, it served as a model for the other organizations in this category. NATO was formed in response to the possible threat of Soviet military incursions into Central and Western Europe. NATO was initiated by the United States under the containment policy⁶⁰ directed against communist states in general and Soviet Union in particular. The treaty was signed in Washington, D, C in April 1949, and came into force in August, 1949.

WARSAW Treaty Organization was initiated by Soviet Union and it is often said that entry of West Germany into NATO resulted in the formation of Warsaw Treaty Organization. The Warsaw was identical to NATO, although in practice the organization did not follow patterns of organization. The original members of the Warsaw Pact, which was adopted in the Polish capital on May 14, 1955, were Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the USSR. The break up of Soviet Union and with the restoration of full sovereignty in the former eastern European satellites⁶¹, the Warsaw pact was dissolved and officially declared disbanded in 1991.

The members of military alliances of this type claim that their pacts are compatible with United Nations charter⁶². These military alliances are compatible with the United Nations charter. The provisions of the treaties refer specially to the right of individual or collective self-defense in article 51 of the charter, and thus defend the regional organization. The parties also recognize their primacy of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. In spite of these military alliances compatibility with United Nations charter these alliances are questionable.⁶³

⁶⁰ Gale A. Matox and Arthur R. Rachwald, *Enlarging NATO: the National Debate* (London, Lynne Rienner, 2001) p.15.

⁶¹ Abraham Benzvi and Aharon Kuevan, (ed.), *Global Politics* (London, Frank Cass, 2001) p.56.

⁶² *ibid.*, p.248.

⁶³ Leroy A Bennet, *op.cit.*, no.37, p.248.

For almost forty years the super power rivalry of the Soviet Union and the United States dominated the world political and military scene marked by the competing alliance system. With break up of Soviet Union, questions have been raised concerning the future missions or continued existence of NATO.⁶⁴

NATO has become an expensive anachronism and most missions have shifted to other agencies. The proliferation of nuclear and weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, dominate the defense policies of NATO members. NATO command structure is being streamlined and a rapid reaction corps has been developed. North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) of thirty-eight states⁶⁵ has been formed including states formerly part of the Soviet and their former Eastern European allies.

On the other hand, military alliances merely reflect the hostility and lack of harmony among states. Alliance type organization has built in elements of instability. As changes occur in world relation, the credibility of alliance suffers, and unity of members also faces stresses and strains.⁶⁶

3. **Functional organizations** are those organizations as discussed earlier in the chapter that promote economic, social, or political collaboration, with little or no regard to security factor. Functional regional organizations are formed for attainment of economic goals of the member. As unilateral policies have been unsuccessful in promoting economic advantage. Functional regional organization includes NAFTA, MERCOSUR, EU, APEC, and SAARC. The European Union is unique among regional organizations. It represents the greatest advance towards supra nationalism of any such organization. The activities related to economic sphere, broad national decision-making authority has voluntarily surrendered to collective agencies. Economic integration, which European Union has achieved, is phenomenal and scopes of activities are numerous. The European Union is the world largest

⁶⁴ Geoffrey Stern, *The Structure of International Society: An Introduction to International Relations.* (New York Pinter, 1995), p.57.

⁶⁵ Gale A. Matox and Arthur R. Rachwald, op.cit., n.60, p.50.

⁶⁶ Leroy A Bennet, op.cit., n.37, p.249.

trading bloc and serves as a model of substantial economic integration and may be it's the forerunner of United States of Europe.⁶⁷

4. **United Nations Regional Commissions:** The United Nations has established its own economic commissions to facilitate the achievement of regional goals within a universal framework. Each of these regional commissions is a subsidiary of the Social and Economic Council, to which it submits the report. The major purpose of these commissions is to assist in raising the level of economic well being in the region and to strengthen the economic relations of the countries of the region with each other and with countries outside the area.⁶⁸

The most important activity of regional commission is to provide research, surveys, and planning in order to coordinate economic development. The Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC) has enjoyed extensive popularity among Latin American states and has been credited with major contribution in the establishment of the Latin American Free Trade Association. The economic and social commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has promoted projects for instance, Mekong River Development, the Asian highway, the Asian Development Bank, and the Asian Institute of Economic Development and Planning.⁶⁹

One of the most effective areas of service and coordination engaged in by the regional commissions is in the dissemination of information and the development of needed skills. The specific methods include workshops, seminars, training institutes, information centers, and advisory services, provision of fellowships, research centers, symposia and conferences. They also stimulate governments and other agencies and provide coordination of diverse activities⁷⁰ However, because of their limited resources and influence, and because of their dependence upon the cooperation of governments and numerous agencies, they have never played a significant role in the process of economic development.

⁶⁷ Raymond Duncan, op.cit., n.1, p.240.

⁶⁸ Michel G. Scheter, (ed.), *United Nations Sponsored World Conferences* (New York, United Nation University Press, 2001),

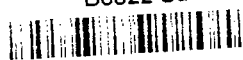
⁶⁹ Leroy A Bennet, op.cit.,n.37, p.242.

⁷⁰ M.S Rajan, *United Nations at Fifty and Beyond* (Delhi, Lancer Books,1996),p.45

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Advantages of Regionalism

Regionalism has gradually undergone changes. In many cases it has emerged as means to conflict management and conflict resolution. Regionalism has been tried as a development policy.⁷¹ Traditionally regionalism was concerned with trade. Over a period of time however relevance of regionalism for development and conflict prevention is being questioned as old regionalism failed to promote peace and development. The previous efforts of regionalism failed to reach a balance between function and territory. Thus rather than 'Proventing' unwanted outcomes, the old regionalism created new conflicts.⁷²

In contrast 'new' regionalism is more political and development oriented. It carefully sees the interest of the region as a whole. The emergence of economic blocs makes it necessary for the excluded countries to stick together in order not to be completely dwarfed. Development regionalism may provide solutions to many specific economic and development problems in the South, as well as in the North that have been accentuated by the process of Globalization. Regionalism will lead to redistribution of world political and economic power in future. Well-structured regional integration arrangements may be helpful for open world economy.⁷³

Bjorn Hettne has identified seven possible advantages of Development regionalism viz.,

Sufficient size

The question of size of national territory and population undoubtedly has become less important in a highly interdependent world. Against this backdrop regional cooperation remains imperative, particularly in the case of micro-states who have to cooperate to solve their common problems.

⁷¹ Bjorn Hettne, Intoi,(ed.,) *Comparing Regionalisms* (London, Macmillan Press,1999),p.15

⁷² *ibid.*,p.16.

⁷³ Sajal Lahiri, (ed.,), *Regionalism and Globalization* (London, Routlegde, 2000), p.5.

Viable Economy

Self-reliance has lost its relevance on the national level due to lack of dynamic linkages. Development from within may be a feasible development strategy at regional level, which requires coordination of production, improvement of infrastructure and making use of complementarities. However, in current global economic integration it has started losing its relevance steadily.

The credibility

Turbulence in the global market place may create a vulnerable situation for economies that do not follow the mainstream orthodoxy. Economic policies are more stable and consistent if there are any regional arrangements. For instance, if a country is locked into a regional arrangement, which implies giving up its independence as far as economic policy is concerned, it will not make sudden and drastic shifts in its economic policy and this will result in more investment in that region. European Monetary Union⁷⁴ can be considered for discussion in this regard.

The effective articulation

Collective bargaining on the level of the region could improve the economic position of the marginalized countries in the world system and make it possible for them to influence raw material prices or protect the structural position and market access of emerging export countries. This argument is relevant for countries that are strongly outward oriented and export driven like ASEAN. It is also relevant in regions where there is little complementarity, i.e. neighbors exporting the same product (e.g. oil).

The social stability

Regionalism can counter the disruptions caused by globalization and uneven development, reinforcing societal viability by including social security issues and an element of redistribution in the regionalist project. Regional organization can provide compensation for the decline of national welfare state by the formation of wider security net that would be

⁷⁴ Jean Gruger and Wil Hout, (ed.), *Regionalism Across the North South Divide* (London, Routledge, 1999), p.11

identical to transnationalization of economies. The process of regionalization must include social security issues and social protection. Regional compensation can be given with the help of developmental funds or specialized banks. This kind of situation is relevant when the degree of regionalism is so advanced as to include an element of redistribution among the constituent states and, most importantly in their sub-national regions. So far only European Union has an explicit social policy in the context of regional integration. The social stability argument can also be extended to political stability by including principles like commitment to democratic principles in the regional arrangements. In this way it brings credibility in wider and deeper sense.

The resource management

Over the years the importance of ecological and political borders has not been taken into consideration. Few serious problems related ecology can be addressed within the framework of the nation state. These problems are bilateral, global and few are regional. The regional ecological issues are often related to water: coastal waters, rivers and ground water, for instance, the South China sea, Barents sea, the South Asian river system, the Mekong river system, the Nile, the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Zambezi river and the uneven exploitation of ground water resources in the areas around Jordan. Regional environmental security can provide imperative for regional cooperation. These regional management programmes exist and persist so there is a need for environmental cooperation.

The peace dividend

During the Cold War a common argument against nuclear armament was that the destructive capacity of military establishment had been a threat to the countries and there should be gradual reduction of such weapons. It should be used for peaceful and development purposes. Countries in East Asia and Europe particularly Japan and West Germany were seen as “free riders” of the security as they devoted more resources to investment and economic growth. In the post cold war years these regions have been encouraged to devote and spend more on security of their country. The ASEAN countries have utilized security benefits from regional cooperation, and that this has been crucial factor behind the dynamism of the organization. As experience of ASEAN shows that successful regional conflict resolution could eliminate

the investment patterns based on military purchase such as weapons of mass destruction into more productive purposes.⁷⁵

STRUTURES AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Regional organizations around the world have different structures and integrating mechanism. Studies have been done scientifically to compare European and Asian models of regional integration.⁷⁶ In this section we will study differences in the organizational structure and integrating mechanism of regional groupings by comparing the development of the E.U to the ASEAN. The E.U is based on French inspired legal and institution integration model, unlike ASEAN which can be characterized as a more network based. There are similarities between the E.U and ASEAN; as both are characterized as regional organization. For instance we can find networks in Europe as well as in Asia.

European Union

The Treaty of Rome outlined the structure of institution for EEC (and now the EU) in a manner reminiscent of the Treaty of Paris. The E.U has, in effect, executive, legislative and, judicial institutions.⁷⁷ The European Court of Justice, which fulfils a role that is somewhat like that of U.S Supreme Court in United States. Although the court is clearly one of the more obscure institutions in the EU, it has acquired supra national powers of some significance. The commission, the council of minister, and the European Council share⁷⁸ the executive functions of the E.U. The European Council was added to the formal EU structure in 1974. The commission is the supra national part of this executive 'branch' within the institutional structure. In December 1985, the leader of the member government had approved the single European act, calling for the establishment of a single European market

⁷⁵ Bjorn Hettne op.cit., n.71, p.17.

⁷⁶ Mario Telo, *EU and New Regionalism* (U.S.A, Ash Gate, 2001), p.113.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*,p.114.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*,p.115.

by 1992. By 1987, the single European market act went into effect providing for majority voting rather than unanimous voting on certain issues.⁷⁹

The European Parliament in formal terms is the legislative body of E.U and it has very limited function. The E.U has advanced so much, it has set example for several organizations. It has even become successful in coming near to functionalist view that economic integration will lead to eventual political integration. The ultimate goals of the community are political, but the intermediate steps are economic. The first step to economic integration process is the creation of free trade area in which tariffs among the members states are eliminated, but free trade areas can be easily infiltrated⁸⁰. An obvious solution to this problem involves the adoption of a common tariff by the states in the organization, to be applied to all imports coming from the outside. Then the organization reaches the states of customs union.

The next important machinery of economic integration is to establish a common market, which will allow the components of production; that is capital and labour to move freely across national boundaries. Entrepreneurs from one member state can invest without restriction in any other member state.

The Treaty of European Union signed at Maastricht on 7th February 1992, that came into force on 1st November 1993, created a new European Union based on the European community marking a new era in closer ties among the people of Europe. The Maastricht Treaty further expanded the scope to include education, culture, the public health, industry and it divided policy areas into three pillars “a common currency, a common foreign and security policy and a common justice and internal policy.”⁸¹

How European Union implement their decisions?

⁷⁹ James Lee Ray, *Global Politics* Seventh Edition (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Compact, 2001),p.371.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p.372.

⁸¹ Andrew Duff and Jon Pinder, (ed.,) *Maastricht and Beyond* (London, Routledge, 1991),p.33.

EEC decision making in the first few decades can be best described as “the Commission proposes and Council of Ministers disposes”. But this role has become complicated by the rise in importance of European parliament in decision making, and by the increasing influence of the rotating presidency. In general we should note that inter-governmental cooperation in the E.U is voluntary neither military nor economic sanctions are employed to force agreement. In fact, most E.U decisions, especially the significant ones take place in a non-coercive atmosphere. So the voting can, if at all possible, be unanimous. Secondly, the environment in which E.U members bargain is relatively information rich. Governments frequently send experts to Brussels who are well equipped to shed necessary light on the matters at hand. For instance they frequently assess technical implications of important proposed policies.⁸²

Negotiations among E U member states reflects not only national societal pressures and the expected magnitude of possible gains (benefits) and loses (costs), but also the interest of powerful non-governmental groups. Hence the prospect agreement depends to a large extent on the configuration of societal preferences in each member states. However, the negotiations usually have little flexibility to make concessions or to propose linkages and consequently they tend to settle on the lowest common denominator to obtain consensus.⁸³

Customs Union and Free Trade areas –

The essential feature of a customs union are:-

- Elimination of tariffs on imports from member countries.
- The adoption of a common external tariff (CET) on imports from rest of the world.
- The appointment of customs revenue according to an agreement.⁸⁴

⁸² Robert.S Jordan, *International Organization: A Comparative Approach to Management of Cooperation*, (London, Preager, 2000), p.190.

⁸³ *ibid.*, p.191.

⁸⁴ Peter Robson, *The Economics of Integration* (London, Routledge, 1993), p.11.

Although most of the basic theory of market integration is framed in terms of customs union, a similar analysis may readily be undertaken for Free trade areas. Two basic features distinguish a free trade area (FTA) from custom union.

- The member countries retain the power to fix their own separate tariff rates on imports from the rest of the world.
- The area is equipped with rules of origin, designed to confine intra Free trade to products originating in, or mainly produced in, that area.⁸⁵

Quick review of European Union

The EU is run by five institutions, each playing a specific role:

- European Parliament (elected by the peoples of the Member States);
- Council of the Union (composed of the governments of the Member States);
- European Commission (driving force and executive body);
- Court of Justice (compliance with the law);
- Court of Auditors (sound and lawful management of the EU budget).

Five further bodies are part of the institutional system:

- European Economic and Social Committee (expresses the opinions of organised civil society on economic and social issues);
- Committee of the Regions (expresses the opinions of regional and local authorities on regional policy, environment, and education);
- European Ombudsman (deals with complaints from citizens concerning maladministration by an EU institution or body);
- European Investment Bank (contributes to EU objectives by financing public and private long-term investments);

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p.12.

- European Central Bank (responsible for monetary policy and foreign exchange operations).

A number of agencies and bodies complete the system.⁸⁶

ASEAN

The ASEAN was founded on 8th August 1967 under the Bangkok declaration, by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, Brunei joined the association in 1984. Vietnam joined in 1995, which was a major step in regionalism in South East Asia. ASEAN at present comprise of ten members states, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The formation of ASEAN was partly due to failure of association of South East Asia (ASA) and Maphilindo. ASA collapsed mainly because of the conflict between Malaya and Philippines over the territorial claim to Sabah. Maphilondo did not survive due to President Sukarno's 'Konfrontasi' (confrontation policy), against Malaysia (1963-1965). The downfall Sukarno after PKI coup was the most crucial factor in the formation of ASEAN.⁸⁷

Economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region develops in its own very distinctive way. In Europe governments have played a key role in framing regional frameworks that have served to shape regional business activity whereas in Asia Pacific region it has been the activity of the business community which have to a great extent forced governments to regularize the regional relations. Economic integration in South East Asia is a result of trade and business operation. The ASEAN nation came together with the aim of promoting the economic, social and cultural development of region through cooperative programme, safeguarding the political and economic stability of the region against big power rivalry, communist expansion of Indo-China and serving as a forum for the resolution of intraregional differences. However, its success on the political and security fronts⁸⁸ is also significant.

⁸⁶ www.europa.com

⁸⁷ Prakash Mani Tripathi, *India and ASEAN 10* (New Delhi, Jnanda Prakashan , 2000),p.38.

⁸⁸ Baladas Ghoshal , (ed.), *ASEAN and South Asia* (New Delhi, Sterling Publisher,1998) ,p 85.

The ASEAN is composed of different committees and bodies. The highest authority in ASEAN is the heads of government of member countries who give direction to ASEAN. The major agreements and cooperations signed during summits⁸⁹ are the declaration of ASEAN concord; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia; the revised basic agreement on Asian joint ventures; Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investment and the ASEAN Free Trade Area.

After the heads of member state, the next institution is ASEAN ministerial meeting (AMM). They meet annually in each of the member countries on rotational basis and discuss the formulation of policy guidelines. The primary role of the AMM is to review all decisions and assign the approved policies and programmes to standing committee. The ASEAN standing committee or ASC consists of a chairman who is the foreign minister of the host country for the ministerial meeting in that particular year.⁹⁰

The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) give direction on the areas attached to economic cooperation. It is being coursed through five committees.⁹¹ The ASEAN is also composed of other ministerial meetings such as: joint ministerial meeting (JMM), which facilitate the cross-sectoral coordination of and consultation on ASEAN activities which include political, economic, inter-sectoral coordination on environment, drugs and civil service matters. Senior officials coordinate these activities.

The ASEAN structure is much more decentralized. Each country has its own national secretariat headed by secretary general, whose responsibility is to act on behalf of his government by coordination of various activities. Such national secretariat thus guarantees equality among all member states. In February 1996 Bali summit central secretariat was approved.

⁸⁹ *ibid.* ,p. 86.

⁹⁰ www.asian.org

⁹¹ *ibid.* ,p 87

In more than three decades of existence, three notable economic cooperation programmes were implemented in ASEAN. These programmes were introduced for the development and growth of ASEAN economies some of them are, The Preferential Tariff Agreement (PTA), ASEAN Industrial Cooperation (AIC) and the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA).

ASEAN in Conflict Management

Acc to members of ASEAN containment of regional conflict among member states will help each state to concentrate more on economic and social development, which was believed to be a major cause for ethnic and revolutionary conflict. Thus dispute management became a major component of regional order. Thus in ASEAN, security was seen in domestic terms and development was seen as the means to cope with the problem of internal security. The ASEAN experience suggests that a high degree of elite cooperation can help in managing conflicts. Such experience is very relevant for South Asia.⁹²

Regionalism in ASEAN has developed by the political will. Its experience shows that all burden of regional cooperation should not be transferred to political leaders. The people of South Asia and socio-politico forces in the region have to share the burden. This approach will develop the concept of community in the region which will be beneficial to all.⁹³

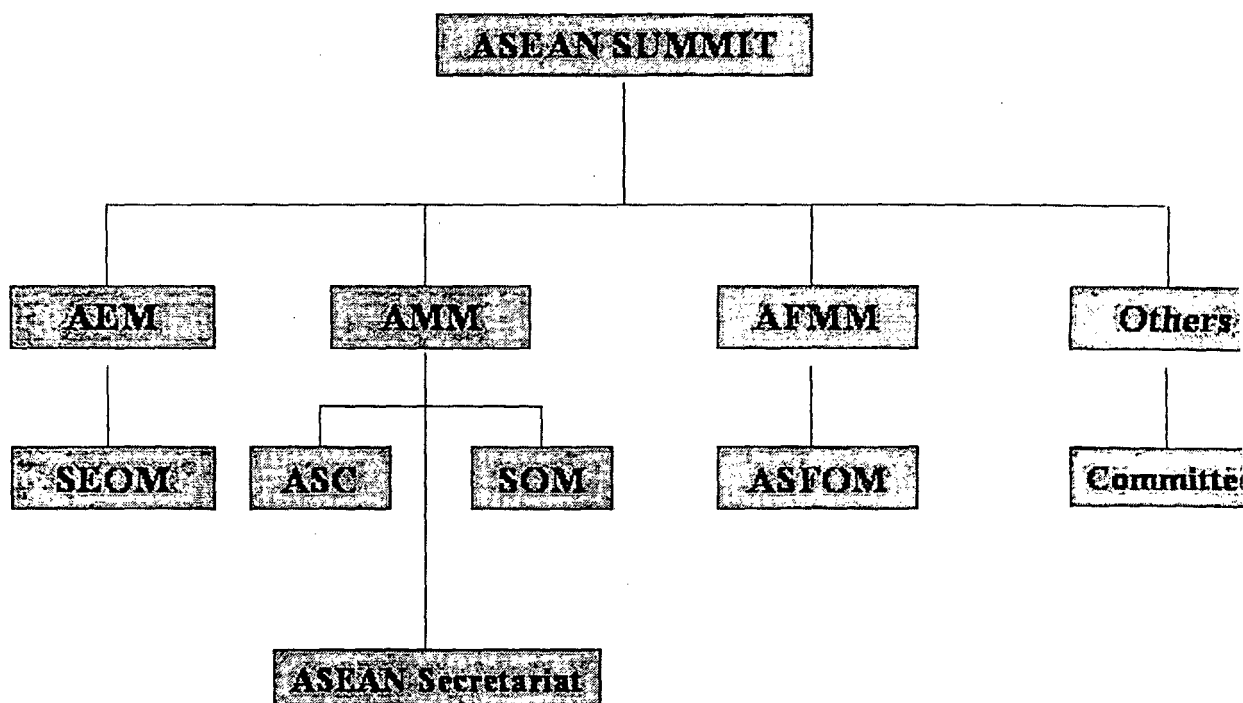
The experiences of the European Union and ASEAN and its perspectives have important lessons for SAARC. Though it may not be desirable for SAARC to follow the costly institutional structure of the European Union. it would, however, be useful for its policy makers to study which practices of the European Union can be adopted or suitably adapted particularly in regard to formulation of proposals which are common benefit to the region, principles on the basis of which the competence of regional bodies may be extended, and how economic integration and political consultation could proceed side-by-side each reinforcing the other. Cooperation can be developed between SAARC and the European Union in agriculture, biotechnology, energy, environment, health, natural disaster, research and technology, rural development, telecommunication and postal services, tourism, transport, and youth. SAARC and European Union can pursue it by through exchange of

⁹² Baladas Ghoshal, *op.cit.*, n. 88, p.53.

⁹³ Norman D Palmer, *op.cit.*, n. 49, p.50.

documents, information and their publications.⁹⁴ SAARC has developed relations with these regional grouping which we discuss in detail in preceding chapters.

ASEAN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



- AEM : ASEAN Economic Ministers
- AMM : ASEAN Ministerial Meeting
- AFMM : ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting
- SEOM : Senior Economic Officials Meeting
- ASC : ASEAN Standing Committee
- SOM : Senior Officials Meeting
- AFDM : ASEAN Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting

Source- www.ASEAN.COM

⁹⁴ K.K Bhargava and Ross Masood Hussain , *SAARC and European Union* (New Delhi, Har Anand Publication, 1994),p.35.

Role of Leadership and Diplomacy in Regional Cooperation

In the huge literature that has been written on the politics of the twentieth century about the relationship between domestic and international elements, there has been little attention devoted to, efficacy of leadership, diplomacy, and summitry. This part will discuss how leadership can play a significant role in improving the task performance of a regional cooperation, the role of diplomacy and summit meetings.

Effectiveness of Leadership

An important element in achieving good task performance is the leadership effectiveness of the executive head or secretary general. There are various constraints for executive head which include bureaucratic inertia⁹⁵, intra-bureaucratic trade offs of benefits or favors, and patterns of conflict and national power alignments among the member states. Constraints like this make situation difficult for the executive head to gain confidence among the members to pursue policies or programs and to increase management efficiency.

In order to improve task performance the executive head can bring the policies of the member states into greater conformity with the decisions and interest of the particular organization. For this the executive heads requires “1) access to domestic groups having influence, 2)adequate intelligence concerning their goals and perceptions ,and 3)ability to manipulate international action so that these groups can perceive an identity of interest” with the organization⁹⁶

This strategy is best suited to pluralistic national political system. However, even in pluralistic politics, this is rather difficult. For instance, few presidents of the EU commission have been successful in persuading the larger EU member states of their identity of interest. Even the dynamic Jacques Delors had this difficulty, as the opposition to the ratification of

⁹⁵ Iriye Akira, *Global Community: The Role of International Organization in The making of Comparative World* (California, University Of California Press, 2002) p. 42.

⁸⁶ Clive Archer, *International Organization* (London,Routledge,1992), p.7

the Maastricht agreement on political and economic union showed. Even the efforts to create European common currency (the EURO) has faced problems.⁹⁷

By 1956 , Secretary –General Dag Hammarskjöld had taken the power of the office to its point up to the time when the General assembly overwhelmingly approved his plan for the U.N. Emergency Force to restore status quo. his manner of handling the crisis was important and came to be what Hammarskjöld termed “preventive diplomacy.” This meant using the United Nations to intervene multilaterally in order to forestall or to preclude an intervention by the major world powers into newly decolonized territories where a fragile national territoriality and sovereign schools being contested. In practical terms Hammarskjöld had delegated to discretionary authority to organize and to administer this international military force. He became a commander in chief of his own army.⁹⁸

The opportunities of executive head in international agencies are very much restricted by the attitudes and policies of governments. A leader with enough vision to recognize the threats and the means to remove these threats is required for the success of international or regional organization. This will diminish the sources of tensions and restore confidence in human capabilities for peacefully resolving all the conflict and problems.⁹⁹

Diplomacy and Developing States

Diplomacy preceded the modern states system and a policy instrument after that it played a central role in the operation of international system. Diplomacy had adopted itself to the demands of the contemporary global system. However, there is a big difference between diplomacy of developed and developing states. Developing states are handicapped as effective international actors by having relatively underdeveloped diplomatic machines and by a restrictive range of policy instruments.¹⁰⁰ These countries have very limited resources

⁹⁷ Robert Jordon and Clive Archer, (ed.), *International Organization* (U S A, Praeger, 2001),p.78.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p.79.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*,p.80.

¹⁰⁰ John Baylis and Steve Smith,(ed.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relation* (New York ,Oxford University Press,2001) ,p.328

available for policy analysis and their system of representation abroad is rather deficient. The limited range of policy instrument for bargaining¹⁰¹ and implementation of decisions made during negotiations has led to further difficulties.

International organization at both regional and global level can provide an opportunity to developing states to undertake various activities for upliftment of their economies. These developing states must take advantage of United Nations where all developing states are represented. Under this forum they can make effort to coordinate their common interest and have say in world politics.¹⁰²

On the other hand the most powerful states are in no longer the only significant international actors in global diplomatic system. But bilateral state to state diplomacy still remains an important structural feature of the global diplomatic system. It has been supplemented by multilateral forms of diplomacy and this kind of diplomacy has a mixture of state and non –state actors.¹⁰³

International organization follows the diplomatic path, which is identical to states. They can communicate their interest and deploy their resources to influence the outcome of negotiations. At a regional level, complex multilateral types of diplomacy have evolved which have reached their most developed form in Europe.¹⁰⁴

External Diplomacy in E U

The European Union is arguably a sole multilateral actor in world politics to the extent that state and non-state actors within the Union combine in different ways to act diplomatically on the international stage. The precise combination of actors and the associated policy processes depend largely upon the nature of the issue. There are three major types of EU foreign policy. Foreign policy 'proper', referred to in Euro jargon as the 'common foreign

¹⁰¹ James Lee Ray, *op.cit.*,n.75, p.144.

¹⁰² *ibid.*,p.328.

¹⁰³ John Baylis ,*op.cit.*,n.100,p.329.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*,p.329.

and security policy'¹⁰⁵ of the Union can be described as an intergovernmental process, largely though not exclusively controlled by the member states. Foreign economic policy or 'external relations', on the other hand, can be described as more of a transnational process with EU institution like the European Commission playing a major role

In trade diplomacy, for example, the commission acts on behalf of the member states though agreements with the third parties need to be agreed by the Council of Ministers representing the member states. All member states pursue their own individual diplomatic activities though over the time their foreign policies have become increasingly 'Europeanized' -adapted to conform to a common EU policy.¹⁰⁶

Diplomacy plays a key role in the foreign policies of states and other international actors. Diplomatic machinery should be highly developed or rudimentary as it performs important functions in the making and implementation of foreign policy. Diplomacy is a communication channel which transmits the use of threat by other parties. Diplomacy has comparative advantage over other instruments in terms of availability and cost. In complex multilateral negotiations, diplomacy has transformed and more emphasis has been given to management process.¹⁰⁷

Diplomacy continues to make an important contribution to cooperation and order in the international system. But diplomacy is no panacea. It cannot guarantee international cooperation but, given goodwill on all sides, it can provide the means to make it happen through dialogue and negotiation. It has become more of a management process in which all actors seeking to reach agreement through a process of adjustment.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Jean Gruger,(ed.), *Regionalism Across North- South Divide* (London ,Routlegde,1999),p.50.

¹⁰⁶ Stephen C. Callaghan, (ed.), *Regionalism in the Post Cold War World* (U S A, Ashgate, 2000) p,23.

¹⁰⁷ Abraham Benzvi, op.cit., n.61,p.25.

¹⁰⁸ ibid.,p.26.

Summitry

Summitry has become an important part of the political interactions of states in the twentieth century. Summitry has become established term and this kind of diplomacy is not new¹⁰⁹. What is unique is that the frequency of these meetings has replaced the traditional forms of diplomacy. Huge periods of time are now being devoted to pre-scheduled meetings of the various international organizations.

The term 'summit' comes from Winston Churchill's constant calls during the 1950s for the meetings at the highest levels of government to resolve international differences. It was a concept linked in its initial phase to both the issues and situation of a world gripped by the affairs of the great powers.¹¹⁰ Initially summitry definition was an idea of meeting of rivals, if not antagonists, to discuss issues of high politics, which have global consequence. These meetings and their purpose increased during the post-war period.

Summitry has re-emerged¹¹¹ in the post war period as significant diplomatic institution for a variety of reasons. The impact of communications technology and the process of democratization and decolonization have been among the most vital influence on the development of summitry. Developments in technology and transport have made meetings easier and safer to arrange. The increased role of foreign affairs and the politicians who need popularity or some legitimation for their rule have found summit as a useful political tool. The activities of summitry have also expanded and foreign ministers or other envoys are excluded in favor chief executives such as heads of governments. Definition for this stage is the meeting of political leaders for official purposes, an activity that constitutes diplomacy at the highest level. The development summit diplomacy in the twentieth century has had a significant impact on the way in which the dialogue between states is conducted.

¹⁰⁹ David H .Dunn ,(ed.), *Diplomacy at the Highest Level: The Evolution of Summitry* (London ,Macmillan Press ,1996) ,p.4.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.* ,p.5

¹¹¹ *ibid.* ,p. 19.

European Union summitry

From the early 1970s, events in the international political and economic arena demanded immediate and authoritative reaction which could not be provided by EU institutions. Only heads of state or government had the authority and position to act and given the already prevalent fashion of summits the establishment of EU Summits was obvious. In European Union, which has a federal or inter governmental agenda, the European Council will remain an important *defacto* part of the EU'S institutional machinery. European council has given a boost to EU when it has faced situation of total loss due to internal dissension. it has acted the initiator in all major EU policy developments since summits began in 1969 and has been successful in settlement of disputes related to British budget rebates and the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Promotion of policy coordination of EU member states, economically and politically, and flexibility and inventive response to the problems are also some of the functions that European Council performs. It has been the channel through which the European political cooperation procedure (EPC) has been developed and will take lead in the development of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP).¹¹²

However, it is noticeable that the effectiveness of the European Council has been significantly reduced in areas for which the EU has lesser provision in its treaties. Thus the European Council has been able to engineer significant progress in the economic sphere –for example, the European Monetary System and the Single European Market –which is well covered by EU treaties but it has achieved much less with EPC and (as yet) the CFSP which are covered much more vaguely by the treaties.

Perhaps European union summits are not that different from other summits in some ways and the main lesson they provide for summitry is that 'stand alone' summits are of very

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 30.

limited usefulness; the effectiveness of summits is very closely related to degree of back and follow up, and the extent to which a summit is the apex of a much larger organization.

Diplomacy in South Asia

Some of the most serious foreign policy challenges in recent years have come from domestic instability and conflicts about the right to self-determination. These conflicts were mainly associated with decolonization processes and contests for ethnic power sharing in post-colonial states, they have now become the major problems of politics in the successor states of South Asia and elsewhere and thus increasing the significance of the two way interaction between external and domestic politics.¹¹³

In South Asia there are close linkages between domestic political order and foreign policy. Independence, economic development and political competition are the major determining factors in the formulation of foreign policy. Independence and freedom to choose its own policy and courses of action had been one of the basic motivations behind India's policy of non-alignment. Preservation of independence and autonomy was one side of the policy of non-alignment, the other side being economic development of the country.¹¹⁴

The relationship between foreign and domestic politics is clearly visible in Indo-Pak relations such as Kashmir dispute and the nuclear issues are on the top. The major source of tension between India and Pakistan is dispute over Kashmir. Pakistan has internationalized the Kashmir issue and have called for U N resolution on it. Whenever some leader had tried to improve relations with Pakistan that leader have paid a heavy price for it. for instance in 1990 ,one critical factor leading to Benazir Bhutto's short lived government was because she tried to over step the military's mark in external affairs by giving a dimension to India Pakistan relations. When Nawaz Sharif signed Lahore declaration with Atal Behari Vajpayee he was overthrown by Military coup in 1999. Domestic politics in Pakistan has forced regime to modify its relations with India. These are being influenced by inter service intelligence

¹¹³ Baladas Ghoshal, (ed.), *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics in South Asia* (New Delhi, Konark, 1996), p.3

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*,p.7

agencies. Military regime in Pakistan has always maintained antagonistic posture against India.¹¹⁵

In case of India in early 1980s, many opposition leaders felt that the external threats to India especially from Pakistan were being exaggerated by the government in order to distract attention from its domestic problems. A.B. Vajpayee said that talking of war was a “political necessity” for Mrs. Gandhi, while Morarji Desai insisted that “there was no danger of war” unless she may make it. During the 1989 elections, Rajiv Gandhi also played heavily on the theme of ‘threat to national unity’ by outside forces. Extensive newspaper advertising prior to the election portrayed India as a vulnerable, partly dismembered doll.¹¹⁶

India’s domestic politics have an influence on SAARC meetings as Dhaka summit in 1993 was postponed by India due to Babri Masjid demolition. In The elections of 1999 BJP highlighted Pakistan’s loss in Kargil war and managed to make government at the centre. Even the present NDA Government under BJP has postponed eleventh Kathmandu summit on the basis that Pakistan was under military rule of Pervez Musharaf. India also has expressed reservation in attending twelfth Islamabad summit because the estranged bilateral relations as Pakistan has continued its support to terrorism in Kashmir though now the relations are favorable between two countries as they have resumed Lahore bus service in July 2003.

Success of Regional cooperation in South Asia depends heavily upon the harmonious relationship between the two major actors i.e. India and Pakistan. We will discuss in preceding chapters how these two states have stalled the SAARC process by postponements and their bilateral relations. As India wanted to solve the problem of terrorism and Pakistan wanted UN resolution on Kashmir as it did not accept Kashmir accession to India as legal. Moreover India’s involvement in liberation of Bangladesh has been also major source of tension between two.

¹¹⁵ Navnita Chadha Behara, “Linkages Between Domestic Politics and Diplomacy: Case of India and Pakistan”, in Baladas Ghoshal, (ed.), *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics in South Asia* (New Delhi, Konark, 1996), p.101

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.111

Chapter II

Evolution of SAARC

Regional cooperation is an outcome of a number of complex and mutually incompatible political, strategic and diplomatic initiatives, responses and interests amongst the states and their managers in a given region.¹ A regional framework would minimize tensions within a region. Regional cooperation is only an adjustment for mutual benefit based on national self-interests. Regional cooperation is 'inter- governmentalism' that seeks to harmonize interests.²

In a broader sense, regional cooperation could also mean, "any tendency on the part of any group of nations belonging to some region or adjacent regions to cooperate in the fields of their national and international policies or coordinate their efforts in order to promote an ever increasing mutual relationship, as distinct from the relationship with other parts of the world."³

Regional cooperation in South Asia is not a new concept. Attempts to regionalism in South Asia were marked by two phases. The first phase of regionalism was pursued by India under the leadership of Nehru, in a wider Asian context during late 1940s and continued till 1960s. These were the Asian Relation Conference, in New Delhi in 1947, the Conference of Asian, Australian and Middle Eastern nations on the Indonesian question in New Delhi in 1949, the Afro-Asian conference at Bandung in 1955, the Shimla conference in May 1955 and the first Non-Aligned summit at Belgrade in 1961. This phase still remains relevant today to some extent.⁴ The second phase was initiated by the late President Zia ur Rehman of Bangladesh in December 1980 when he

¹ S.D Muni and Anuradha Muni, *Regional Cooperation in South Asia* (New Delhi, National Publishing, 1984), p. 1

² Rama .S Melkote, (ed.), *Regional Organization* (New Delhi, Sterling Publisher, 1990), p.6

³ *ibid.* , p. 1

⁴ John Chérian, "A Successful Summit", *Frontline*, (Chennai), 28 March 2003, p.61-63.

First Phase (1940 – 1960)

Indian National Congress adopted a resolution for a wider Asian Federation in 1928.⁵ Nehru described this in a more specific manner. He said in August 1945: "I stand for a South Asian Federation of India, Iran, Afghanistan and Burma."⁶ Nehru did not mention countries like Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives, as they were not considered to be viable and effective partners.

Concrete attempts to regionalism began with the advent of independence in Asia from the colonial rule in 1947. Political conferences were one of the principal forms of regional association in which South and South East Asian countries have taken part during that period. There have been number of such conferences on which we take a overview in this part of the chapter.

Asian Relations Conference

The Asian Relations Conference, which was held in New Delhi in March 1947, was the first conference in the efforts towards regionalism in Asia. This conference was a non-official gathering convened under the auspices of the Indian Council of World Affairs for the discussion of common Asian problems and Asia's position in the post war world. Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru played an active role in coordinating and organizing the conference. Delegations from twenty-eight countries⁷ including Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka attended this conference. Critical issues related to colonialism, democracy and economic development were discussed and participants also agreed on these issues.

The Conference agreed to establish the Asian Relations Organizations, with branches in each country, to continue the work of the conference. The provincial general council, with thirty members, was appointed to convene further conferences. The creation of formal Asian

⁵ Muni and Muni op.cit., n. 1, p.10.

⁶ ibid. , p.10.

⁷ Sisir Gupta, *India and Regional Integration in Asia* (Bombay ,National Publishing House ,1964),p.20

Union was not adopted as smaller countries suggested it in some quarters, they were of view that such an organization might end their freedom which they have got recently. They also apprehended that ultimately this freedom will be absorbed by bigger neighbors.⁸ Asian Relation organization was ultimately dissolved in 1957. These bodies could never play a conspicuous role. The second conference at Hangehow, China in 1949 was failed to materialize because of political developments in that country. The provincial general council ceased to function after electing Nehru as its president.

Asian, Australian and Middle Eastern Nations Conference

In December 1948, Netherlands launched its second "Police Action" against the Indonesian republic. Nehru, who had been a consistent and outspoken opponent of Dutch policies, organized an emergency conference of nineteen countries at New Delhi to find a remedy to this crisis. The conference of Asian, Australian and Middle Eastern nations on the Indonesian question⁹ was held in January 1949. This Conference was an official meeting limited to the representative of recognized governments.¹⁰ Bhutan ,Nepal ,Sri Lanka also attended this conference.

In this conference the agreement on Indonesian crisis was quickly passed by delegates. Resolution related to urging the participating governments to maintain close interactions through normal diplomatic channels and at the U N, until the Indonesian dispute had been satisfactorily resolved was also passed. They called the members to explore various ways and means to establish suitable machinery with regard to the relevant and concerned areas, promotion of consultations and cooperation within the framework of the United Nations.¹¹

The conference on the Indonesian question was of tremendous importance as it provided a strong influence on the eventual settlement of the Dutch –Indonesian dispute. However,

⁸ Lalita Prasad Singh, *The Politics of Economic Cooperation in Asia* (Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1966), p.5.

⁹ L. P. Singh, *India and Afro Asian Independence* (New Delhi, National Books, 1993), p.5.

¹⁰ Krishna Gopal , *Geo-Political Relation and Regional Cooperation* (New Delhi, Trans Asia Publication, 1996), p.138.

¹¹ *ibid.*,p.138.

the resolution that was adopted on establishment of regional machinery could not achieve the desired goals.

Colombo Powers Conference

In 1954, Prime Ministers of five Asian countries viz., Ceylon, India, Pakistan, Burma and Indonesia organized Colombo Powers Conference to achieve a consensus among the Asian nations on the issue of world politics. This conference also discussed issue related to Indo-China situation, hydrogen bomb and economic cooperation. Colombo powers were opposed to the polarization of world power into two hostile blocs and its relation with members of Colombo powers. According to them a Neutralist approach to the contemporary power struggle between communism and the West was best suited to Asian countries. Questions like Kashmir dispute, and the position of the Tamils in Ceylon was also discussed in this conference.¹²

However, the participants in Colombo powers meeting were hardly united in their perception on international affairs as Pakistan showed its reluctance to displease the west and Sri Lanka had a distinct anti communist stand. Colombo powers were unsuccessful in establishing any permanent machinery.¹³

The Colombo conferences of 1950 and 1954 were believed to have been supported by the western powers as Colombo powers conference barely avoided a split on the question of threat of communism. The western powers approved most of these conferences. In contrast Soviet Union totally disapproved and criticized these conferences and their outcome.¹⁴

The Afro-Asian Conference

The Afro –Asian Conference at Bandung was one of the most important gatherings of that period. Prime Minister of Indonesia Ali Stroamidjojo, had initiated this idea at the first

¹² Eric Gonsalves, (ed.), *Asian Relations* (New Delhi, Lancer International, 1991),p.45

¹³ Muni and Muni, op.cit., n. 1, p.15

¹⁴ *ibid.* ,p.15

meeting of Colombo Powers in 1954 and was sponsored jointly by Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan.¹⁵ The conference was ultimately held in Bandung, Indonesia in April 1955. The objectives of this conference was (i) the promotion of goodwill and cooperation among the nations of Asia and Africa, (ii) to consider social, economic and cultural problems and relations among the participating countries, (iii) problems related to national sovereignty, racialism and colonialism and the position of Asia and Africa, and (iv) contribution of Asia and Africa in promotion of peace and cooperation in the world. These objectives were mainly based on the concept of five principles of co-existence also known as Panchsheel.¹⁶

In Bandung conference the leaders called the U N Security Council to support admission of new states, which were qualified for admission according to the terms of charter; and to increase the representation of Asian and African states.¹⁷

Bandung Conference represented more than half the population of the globe and this conference received wide media coverage. Bandung conference provided the Asian and African nations the pride and self-esteem to the people who had just emerged from a protracted colonial rule.

Economic problems of the countries represented at Bandung formed an important part of their deliberations. India was actively interested in promotion of intra-regional trade. In this context India was strongly backed by Japan, who emphasized the need for serious efforts to move from bilateral to multilateral trade and payment arrangements. Bandung conference dealt with areas related to cultural cooperation, human rights and self-determination, colonialism, membership in the U N. Disarmament related agreements were also reached in these areas.¹⁸

¹⁵ Yevgeni Rummyantsev, *The Bandung Spirit Today* (New Delhi, Allied, 1990), p.26

¹⁶ *Panchsheel*, or five principles, were respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence.

¹⁷ L.P.Singh, op.cit., n.9, p.15.

¹⁸ Lalita Prasad Singh, op.cit., n.8, p.8

In the final communiqué of the Bandung conference, a full section was devoted to economic cooperation which included recommendations regarding technical cooperation, international finance, commodity trade, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, joint ventures, exchange of information etc. The final communiqué also gave emphasis on the role of inter-regional cooperation in Asia and Africa and suggested establishment of regional banks and international finance corporation to promote equity investment.¹⁹ However, none of the proposals were seriously and sincerely pursued after the conference. The politico-strategic preoccupations of the Afro-Asian countries and cold war impact were the main reason for non-addressal of the proposals given during the conference.

However, Bandung conference became a hot bed of cold war politics as some of the participants in the Conference, the Philippines, Japan, South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Turkey, Ethiopia, and Pakistan were friends of U S A and they resisted anti-American proposals.²⁰ There had been a great deal of hesitation in convening the another conference as the second Afro Asian Conference scheduled first for June, 1965, and then for November, 1965, had to be adjourned because of disagreement on the list of participants and agenda items.²¹

The Shimla Conference

President Eisenhower in April 1955 in a message to the congress of the United States proposed to give 200 million dollars and regular bilateral aid programs, for the creation of the President's fund for Asian economic development and to promote regional economic development and fostering closer relation among the countries of the "arc of Free Asia."²² India issued invitations to Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam(south), Malaya, Singapore, and British Borneo (all Asian members of Colombo plan) to discuss the use of proposed fund at a

¹⁹ Vandana Mohla, *SAARC and Super Powers* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publication, 1998), p.45

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.46.

²¹ Lalita Prasad Singh, *op.cit.*, n.8. p.9.

²² *ibid.*, p.10.

conference at Shimla, in May 1955. The three main items on the agenda of the Shimla conference were: (i) utilization of special allocation for the development of intraregional trade, (ii) the setting up of machinery to provide credit for Asian nations that were in short-term balance of payments difficulties, and (iii) the creation of a small permanent secretariat for the Colombo plan to administer United States aid under the plan.

The level of representation was not very high and the conference failed to reach an agreement on any single important item on the agenda. In the final communiqué, it was forcefully demanded that the aid programs should remain bilateral. The rejection of proposal was due to inability of Asian countries to develop full scale national economic plans. The main reason however, lies in the small nation's fear of domination by India and Japan. The small nations realized that India's large population will take away all share of aid by America and they didn't want third party to receive aid.²³

Non-Aligned Movement Meeting

During and after Bandung conference contacts between many leaders of newly emerged states particularly afro asian states were established. The failure of Afro-Asian movement notwithstanding, India emerged as the leader of Non-Aligned Movement in the postcolonial world.²⁴ Jawahar Lal Nehru of India, Gamel Abdul Nasser of Egypt, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia and Ahmed Sukarno Indonesia initiated Non-aligned movement. The important feature of this conference was that unlike Asian relations conference and Bandung conference it was not limited geographically. The first Non Aligned summit was held in Belgrade 1961 with modest 25 members on Berlin crisis²⁵ and Soviet Union announcement of its decision to resume nuclear test (which was conducted on first September 1961). Third world countries were not interested in the power politics of the supreme powers and they adopted Non-Aligned movement as a potent foreign policy concept.²⁶

²³ *ibid.*, p.11.

²⁴ Vandana Mohla, *op.cit.*, n.19, p.35

²⁵ In 1960 there was spurt increase in the number of East German refugees which were seeking asylum in West Berlin and in order to stop it the East Germans started erecting wall on 13 August, 1961. In August 1961 Berlin wall was the nodal point of all accumulated tension of cold war between east and west.

²⁶ P.K Mishra, *South Asia in International Politics*, (New Delhi, Udh Publishers, 1984), p.21.

In Belgrade summit South Asian countries (India, Nepal, Sri Lanka) called for an amicable settlement of the Berlin crisis by the major contending powers. All South Asian states during six initial Non Aligned summits more or less agreed on major economic problems faced by the developing countries as well as on the proposed solution of regional disputes in West Asia. Differences were there on certain cold war issues like Kampuchean and Afghanistan.²⁷ In New Delhi summit in 1983 the members rose to 101. They resolved to examine the Problems created by new cold war like nuclear weapon and disarmament.

They declared that Great powers should not exert political and economic pressures on smaller states. They asked for settlement of international disputes in NAM especially Iran-Iraq war, and they also appealed to great powers to give up mistrust and engage in forward-looking negotiations. On important issue of establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) all non aligned countries of South Asia have supported.²⁸

NAM did not, by itself, generate regional cooperation in the developing world. It had, however a profound impact on regionalism. For several years, NAM contributed a sort of collective left of the centre leadership to new nations outside the great powers alliance systems. However, Non-aligned Movement did not have an institutional framework. It was spatially too large, spanning three continents and nations as diverse as animals in a big zoo.²⁹ Non- Aligned Movement provided the common binding factor for the organization of African unity, where Non- Alignment was condition for the membership of OAU. NAM provided neutralization³⁰ of South East Asia in late 60's, which resulted in the proposal of ASEAN.

Non-aligned movement occupies a cardinal position in India's foreign policy. Nehru's pursuit of economic development through industrialization and his mission for world peace sought to be achieved by Non-aligned movement provided India with a sound foreign policy

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.23.

²⁸ K.P Mishra, *Non-Alignment in International Relations* (New Delhi, Har Anand Publication,1993),p.49

²⁹ Bhabani Sen Gupta, (ed.), *Regional Cooperation and Development in South Asia* (South Asian Publishers, New Delhi,1986),p.26.

³⁰ Muni and Muni, *op.cit.*, n. 1, p.15.

and a international status.³¹ It is evident that this policy enabled India to balance her external relations between the contending power blocs, and preserve her autonomy of action despite being military and economically weak during the initial years after independence. Over the years, the Non-aligned Movement gained an economic bias, and served as important forum to articulate the dissatisfaction of the developing South with the international economic order dominated by the developed North.³²

On the other hand, Nehru's initial effort towards regionalism failed, as he did not examine the contrast between the western and the Asian situation. Nehru's policy also suffered as India fought two wars one with China in 1962 and with Pakistan in 1965.³³

The security rational that underlined the policy of NAM, however, has been a important and all engrossing issue. Despite a diffusion of power through the international systems and the growth of multi polarity it was adequately recognized that a bipolar structure in the international system continues. The super power nuclear balance is the cardinal relationship at the uppermost hierarchical level on the strategic plan. And their interaction would, most likely, continue to display elements of cooperation and contention depending upon whether their interests are congruent or asymmetric.³⁴

The early attempts to regionalism in Asia were dominated by politico –strategic considerations, these were military alliances and pacts on the one hand and on decolonization and Asian resurgence on the other.³⁵The first phase of regionalism attempts in Asia particularly in South Asia was determined by the diplomatic rivalry between China and India. This was evident as the second Asian Relation Conference in China, Nanking could not be held because of Sino-Indian rivalry. This rivalry was also evident in other conferences held during that phase. India also faced reservations from its South Asian neighbors particularly Pakistan which did not accept India's increasing role in Asia as well

³¹ Jagat S.Mehta, "Introduction", in D D Khanna, (ed.), *Strategic Environment in South Asia During 1980s* (Calcutta, Noya Prakash, ,1979),p.7

³² *ibid.* ,p.8.

³³ *ibid.* ,p.9.

³⁴ *ibid.*,p.9.

³⁵ Ghulam Umar, *SAARC: An Analytical Survey*, (Karachi,Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, 1988), p.25.

as South Asia. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Bandaranaike cautioned India about its behavior towards smaller neighbors. India was opposed to western powers military alliance with Pakistan.³⁶

The first phase of regionalism in Asia and Africa came to an end, as they could not avoid the impact of cold war and the great power designs.³⁷ These Conferences were all an effort towards concretising the idea and advantage of regional cooperation in Asia. These conferences however, were less effective. They could not establish permanent institution or formal association. There was lack of clarity and precision about the concept of regionalism. Those early attempts to regionalism were politically motivated and gave least importance to economic cooperation. All these attempts to regionalism were provided by the extra regional powers and were political and these conferences could not move beyond deliberations.

Second Phase (1967 onwards)

The failures and success of the earlier attempts in regional cooperation which we have discussed in earlier part indicate conditions necessary for emergence of second phase of regionalism, ultimately leading to the emergence of SAARC. Though other attempts to regionalism also occurred during that period for instance on 2 September 1969, Asia Coconut Community was inaugurated in Colombo.³⁸ Regionalism attempts in South Asia in second phase emerged as a result of international and domestic factors. The following section will briefly highlight both international and domestic factors that are responsible for the emergence of SAARC.

³⁶ Charan D.Wadhwa, "Perceptions of South Asian States", in K.K Bhargava, et.al., *South Asia Towards Dynamism and Cooperation* (New Delhi, ICRIER, ,1987), p.65

³⁷ Ghulam Umar, op.cit., n.35,p.28.

³⁸ Muni and Muni, op.cit., n. 1, p.12.

International factors

The second phase of regionalism in Asia continued in South East Asia with the establishment of ASEAN in 1967. ASEAN was having western backing and it served the strategic and economic interest of the western powers. Most of the members of ASEAN are either the members of western sponsored military alliance SEATO or have close bilateral military ties with the western powers.³⁹

In late 1960s the great powers USA and Soviet Union increased their activities in the Indian Ocean region. U S President Nixon visited Indonesia on 27 July 1969 and relations with Thailand and Philippines were also strengthened. This was primarily due to British withdrawal from South East Asia, this was all under Nixon doctrine⁴⁰ which allowed South East Asian countries to share the task of security in the region, and U S involvement with Vietnam and bringing China close to US. In response to the U S activities in the Indian Ocean region, Soviet Union established military ties with Singapore and Malaysia. Soviet President Breznev also proposed collective security, during that period Soviet Union proposed countries of South and Southwest Asia to initiate regional cooperation. Soviet Premier Kosygin visited Afghanistan and Pakistan in May 1969. In Pakistan he said, "we should like to see Pakistan, Afghanistan and India developing relations of friendship and constructive cooperation. The Soviet Union would do all it can on its part to promote this."

41

The period after 1970 further consolidated the rivalry and competition between two Super Powers. This rivalry continued in South Asia as both Super Powers provided support in the form of military alliances to their allies. Indian initiatives during that period were not successful. India tried in 1969 a regional security convention with endorsement of major powers but this could not make headway.⁴²

³⁹ *ibid.*,p.15.

⁴⁰ Pran Chopra, "Regional Cooperation", in M D Dharamdasani, (ed.), *South Asian Regional Cooperation* (Varanasi, Shalimar Publishers, 1985),p.7.

⁴¹ Muni and Muni, *op.cit.*, n. 1, p.19.

⁴² Surjit Mansingh, *India's Search for Power* (New Delhi, Sage, 1984),p.57.

The process of Decolonisation provided the countries of Asia and Africa economic consciousness. U N activities in economic fields through the UNCTAD, which was set up in 1964, provided further boost to the collective conscience of third world countries. UNCTAD found that developed world has not addressed the problems of development in third world.⁴³

The super power rivalry once again got momentum in 1971 in South Asia. In 1971 Soviet Union signed 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship and Cooperation' with India in August 1971.⁴⁴

However, it was disclosed later in 1971 by India's then Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, that talks for Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship that was concluded in August 1971 had been initiated two years earlier, i.e. in the middle of 1969. This Treaty provided India with a countervailing influence and a factor to prevent itself from being subjugated to the joint pressure of Washington –Beijing –Islamabad axis.⁴⁵ This Treaty gave the much needed support to India in diplomatic terms and laid foundation for strong military ties with Soviet Union. India received large quantity of military hardware under this Treaty.

When the third India-Pakistan war began in December 1971, Moscow directed its force to fire against its rivals in the region: Washington and Beijing. India maintained its import of arms from the Soviet Union. During the period 1976-80 Soviet Union arms constituted 62 % of India's total military import. Even today India is the largest purchaser of Soviet arms in the world. On the other hand, Pakistan's withdrawal from SEATO in 1972, its official recognitions to Democratic Republic of Korea, German Democratic Republic and North Vietnam, clearly reflected Pakistan's efforts towards peace and security and cooperation.⁴⁶

The OPEC created a situation, which was not favourable to the already existing deteriorated economic situation in the third world. It also provided a ray of hope for third

⁴³ Muni and Muni, op. cit., n. 1, p. 23

⁴⁴ V.P Dutt, "Indo-Soviet Relations" in Vinod Bhatia (ed.), *The October Revolution and 70 Years of Indo-Soviet Relations* (New Delhi, Panchsheel Publishers, 1987), p.99

⁴⁵ M.S Agwani, I N Mukherjee, (ed.), *South Asia Stability and Regional Cooperation*, (Chandigarh, CRRID, 1983), p. 8.

⁴⁶ Vandana Mohla, op.cit., n. 19, p.55.

world countries that collective economic action by determined group of countries can provide them a platform in which they can increase their bargaining strength in economic matters. By the time New International Economic Order (NIEO) was declared by the UN in May 1974, there had been adequate emphasis on economic issues, including regional cooperation. This was in fact supposed to have led to genuine collective self-reliance in the third world.⁴⁷

Pakistan was admitted as a member of the Non-aligned group at the Havana summit in 1979 with positive support from New Delhi. Pakistan formally withdrew from CENTO in March 1979. Since then, Pakistan has supported the basic principles of NAM like opposition to colonialism, imperialism, hegemonism, and neo-colonialism.⁴⁸

Pakistan's entry into non aligned movement has had various backgrounds.⁴⁹ By joining NAM Pakistan could play an effective role in liaison with Islamic fraternity.

In 1978, when President Carter of U S A and British Prime Minister visited South Asia, they underlined the need for the South Asian countries to forge cooperative linkages⁵⁰ amongst themselves. These leaders also assured that if countries of South Asia took steps to promote South Asian cooperation like harnessing of water resources, their countries will be willing to provide funds for these projects.

They also indicated the desirability of China being involved in these cooperative exercises. These leaders also tried to secure binding commitments from India and Pakistan on nuclear non-proliferation.⁵¹

In 1978, U S was also planning to revive security and strategic relations with countries of South Asia, particularly Pakistan. In July 1978, Lucy Brenson, a State Department official

⁴⁷ Muni and Muni, op.cit., n. 1, p.19.

⁴⁸ Pramod K Mishra, op.cit., n. 26, p.89.

⁴⁹ ibid.,p.90.

⁵⁰ Shelton U. Kodikara, *Strategic Factors in Inter State Relations in South Asia* (New Delhi, Heritage Publishers, 1983),p.23.

⁵¹ ibid.,p.24.

visited Islamabad to work out how best the U S could help in the modernisation of Pakistan's military force. To acquire and also refuelling capacities or rest and recreation facilities for the Indian Ocean fleet at Trincomalee in Sri Lanka was also her prime agenda. All these initiatives were within the U S objective of building and strengthening necessary infrastructure for its power projection in the Indian Ocean region. These efforts of the U S were considered as parallel moves in South Asia both to revive security relationship with Pakistan and to encourage the South Asian countries to strengthen bonds of peace, amity and cooperation in the region.⁵²

The Diego Garcia base in Indian Ocean (the first naval base of a Super Power) was being expanded and it was decided to set up Rapid Deployment force to meet contingency situation in Indian Ocean region. This was part of the offensive strategy of US. The Soviet Union and China have also maintained naval presence in the Indian Ocean.⁵³

However, the increased U S presence in the Indian Ocean is directed not only against great powers but especially against "third world trade unionism"⁵⁴ thus the military balance in Indian Ocean region is clearly in favour of the U S A.

The internal turmoil was on the rise in Iran and the Iranian initiative⁵⁵ suffered major setback. As a result, the shah of Iran abdicated himself in February 1979.

The entry of Soviet troops in Afghanistan in 1979 particularly created a more receptive atmosphere for regional cooperation and initiatives. These initiatives have definite western backing. The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan had an enormous impact on the strategic and security concerns of the countries in the region of South Asia. As a result, Soviet Union and U S got engaged in a massive transfer of sophisticated weaponry to the sub-continent throughout 1980s. U S offered arms to Pakistan to meet this situation. Soviet

⁵² Krishna Gopal ,op.cit., n. 10, p.45

⁵³ ibid.,p.46.

⁵⁴ K Subramanyam, *Indian Security Perspectives* (New Delhi, ABC Publishers, 1982), p.24-26

⁵⁵ Muni and Muni,op.cit., n.1,p.20.

intervention provided U S the opportunity to include security dimension in regional cooperation of South Asia.⁵⁶

The Carter Doctrine of 1980, emphasized on establishing a “Cooperative Regional Security framework”⁵⁷ in South and Southwest Asia. The Carter administration also approached India and other countries in order to evolve a broader strategic consensus in the region keeping the implication of development in Afghanistan in mind. The Bangladesh proposal for regional cooperation was born in this strategic context.

Domestic Factors

Global compulsions, which we have discussed earlier in the chapter along with domestic factors, have contributed to the emergence of regional cooperation attempts in south Asia. Earlier the attempts to regionalism in South Asia was hinted by the Indian Commerce Minister, he gave a statement in December 1968, after coming back from the ECAFE Ministerial Conference at Bangkok saying “modest action programme” for greater economic cooperation in Asia was in the offing.⁵⁸ He called for increased cooperation on agricultural and industrial production and trade and payments arrangements in the region.

Indira Gandhi pursued the goal of regional cooperation in her visits to Burma (March 27-30), Afghanistan (June 5-10) and Indonesia (June 26-july 2), in 1969. The joint communiqué issued to mark Mrs Gandhi’s visit to Indonesia called for the “promotion of economic cooperation between nations of the Asian region. Such cooperation was necessary to further consolidate peace and stability in the region and to give meaningful expression to economic and social progress.”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Selig S Harrison and K Subramanyam, (ed.), *Super Power Rivalry in the Indian Ocean: Indian and American perspectives* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1989),p.56 .

⁵⁷ Barry Buzan and Gowhwer Rizvi, et al., *South Asian Insecurity and The Great Powers* (London,Macmillan,1986)p.78

⁵⁸ Muni and Muni, op.cit., n. 1, p. 17.

⁵⁹ *ibid.* , p. 17

A crucial factor responsible for the movement towards cooperation among South Asian countries was the emergence of Bangladesh. Immediately After the Pakistan army was defeated on the eastern front by Bangladeshi army with the support of India. The emergence of Bangladesh helped Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to emerge as the leader of Pakistan and restoration of democratic system in Pakistan.⁶⁰

After the Shimla agreement was signed in July 1972 between India and Pakistan, their relations improved. New hopes were raised for more people to people contact in the South Asian region. India also signed Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Bangladesh. India and Sri Lanka passed a resolution in 1974 on the long-standing issue of Kachchativu.⁶¹ India and Pakistan restored their trade and communication relation between 1973 and 1976. Two separate treaties of trade and transit were signed between India and Nepal in 1978. India emerged as the principal regional power and was for the first time recognized by the U.S.⁶²

The pressure of international economy and NAM's emphasis on regional cooperation had a severe impact on South Asian regimes. The political changes in South Asian region about regimes that brought were called "like minded regimes."⁶³ The transfer of power in India from Mrs Gandhi to the Morarji Desai's Janata party, from Bhutto to Gen Zia-ul haq in Pakistan, from Mrs Bandaranaike to J.R Jayewardene led United National party (UNP) were all happening at a crucial movement. Similarly in Bangladesh President Zia- Ur-Rehman came in power by 1977 after a series of coups and counter –coups that led to the violent overthrow of Mujib and his Awami League Party in August 1975.⁶⁴ India saw this incident as a major setback for her vision in South Asia. Before the assassination of Mujib India used to maintain a close relationship with the Awami League government in Bangladesh, as India played a major role in liberation of Bangladesh.

⁶⁰ Pakistan's first General Election was held in 1971 because the civil military bureaucracy refused to hand power to the popularly elected leaders.

⁶¹ S D Muni , "Kachchavaitu Settlement: Befriending Neighboring Regimes", *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol . IX, No. 28, July 1974,p.15

⁶² Zillur S Khan, *SAARC and Superpowers* (Bangladesh, Dhaka University Press, 1991), p.34.

⁶³ Nasir .A Naqsh,, *SAARC Challenges and Opportunities* (New Delhi, Ashish Publishing, 1994),p.15

⁶⁴ R.Jackson, *South Asian Crisis, India –Pakistan-Bangladesh* (London, Chatto and Windus , 1975),p.21.

Many of these regimes in South Asia were pro-western. They displayed new styles in dealing with each other. This created a cordial political atmosphere in the sub-continent and generated considerable enthusiasm for greater regional harmony and cooperation.⁶⁵

In January 1980 when Indira Gandhi again returned to power, the relations with the neighbour's were further strengthened. Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka along with India increasingly seemed to have realised that bilateral and multilateral cooperative framework within South Asia could help in resolving their internal problems also.⁶⁶

The new regimes in South Asia were facing the problems of deepening economic crisis, poverty, unemployment, population explosion and declining growth rate .In 1974-75 the real growth rates touched a new low of 2.2 per cent as against the population growth of 2.4 per cent. Across the region economic inequalities widened in the sub continent as there was huge gap between India and other smaller countries.⁶⁷

Progress made by ASEAN, the Gulf States in the Middle East and the success achieved by the European community, the African Unity Movement and the Organization of American States encouraged the leaders of South Asia in moving towards a more realistic goal of regional cooperation.⁶⁸

A crucial factor behind the launching of the South Asian regional cooperation was the leadership style, character and worldview of Zia-ur-Rehman of Bangladesh. At the ninety six nation's Non Aligned Conference at Havana in September 1979, Zia first raised the question of international cooperation for economic self sufficiency of poor countries through food security plan. He also presented a ten point proposal to the General Assembly, suggesting that rich countries should initiate priority developmental projects in the Least

⁶⁵ E.Sudhakar, *SAARC Origin, Growth and future* (New Delhi, Gyan Publishing, 1994), p.24.

⁶⁶ Poona Wigna Raja and Akmal Hussein, (ed.), *The Challenge in South Asia: Development Democracy and Regional Cooperation* (New Delhi, Sage,1989),p,23

⁶⁷ Ghanshyam Singh,(ed.), *The Economy of SAARC Nations* (New Delhi , Anmol Publishing, 1993),p.20

⁶⁸ K. Satyamurthy, (ed.), *South Asian Regional Cooperation* (Hyderabad, Institute of Asian Studies, .987),p.15.

Developed Countries. He believed that only regional cohesion in South Asia can provide an effective voice to South Asia in international forums.⁶⁹

Zia-ur-Rehman's Proposal

President Zia-Ur-Rehman of Bangladesh conceived the idea of regional cooperation in South Asia as early as 1977. The Bangladeshi President initiated it by visiting various South Asian countries during 1977-79. He visited India which was followed by the visit of Prime minister of India Morarji Desai to Bangladesh on April 15-17, 1979. They are believed to have widely discussed the issues of regional cooperation. When Indira Gandhi came back to power in 1980, Zia also approached her on this subject. In January 1978, during the visit of King of Nepal to Bangladesh, Zia-ur-Rehman acknowledged the call made by King Birendra of Nepal month earlier on sharing of river water.⁷⁰ Zia visited Sri Lanka in November 1979 and discussed regional cooperation with J R Jayewardene.

Zia-ur-Rehman circulated a paper in November 1980 in which he called upon the leaders of South Asian States to “explore the possibilities of establishing a framework for regional cooperation”.⁷¹ This paper spelt out the rationale for regional cooperation and identified eleven areas where beginning could be made. It was his dedication that led to emergence of SAARC.

President Zia –ur –Rehman mentioned that, “Shared perceptions and values are an important factor for the success of any venture for regional cooperation. The countries of South Asia share many common values that are rooted in their social, ethnic, cultural, and historical traditions. Perception about certain specific events or political situation of the world may differ, but such differences do not seem to create a gulf between them that cannot be bridged.”⁷²

⁶⁹ Zillur S. Khan ,op.cit., n. 62, p.34.

⁷⁰ Pramod .K. Mishra, op.cit., n. 26, p.187.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p.146.

⁷² Quoted from *From SARC to SAARC, Milestones in the Evolution of Regional Cooperation in South Asia* ,Volume –I ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu,1988,p.3.

The differing political perception, mentioned by the President may be construed as a reference to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, which only posed a direct security threat to the region. This reference by President was directed towards gaining legitimacy.

In December 1980, a concrete proposal for regional cooperation came from Bangladeshi President in the form of a document titled, “Bangladesh Paper on Regional Cooperation”.⁷³ This paper proposed regional association for the countries of South Asia i.e., Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Pakistan, and India. The paper’s aim was to identify areas of cooperation and explain the rationale of regional cooperation to the heads of states. It suggested an institutional framework for the regional cooperation. The structure envisaged an apex body in the form of heads of government, a council of ministers and a permanent secretariat.

Bangladesh paper had three important features. Firstly, the objectives of regional cooperation were defined in wide terms. The scope of cooperation was not limited to economic matters and it was further expanded to other areas. This Bangladeshi paper underlined “Desirous of promoting active cooperation among the countries of the regions on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific as well as in such other fields that may be agreed upon.”⁷⁴

The other objectives were to “explore all avenues of closer cooperation between the countries of South Asia, and the other regional and international organizations with similar aims and objectives.”⁷⁵

Secondly, this Bangladeshi proposal identified eleven key areas based on mutual trust and understanding. The eleven areas were: agriculture\rural sector, joint ventures, market promotion in selected commodities, scientific and technological cooperation, education and technical cooperation, cultural cooperation, tele-communication, meteorology, transport,

⁷³ *ibid.*, p.5

⁷⁴ *ibid.* , p.7.

⁷⁵ *ibid.* , p.7.

shipping and tourism. The areas it identified were considered as “non political” and “non controversial” items.⁷⁶

Thirdly, the draft suggested various institutional and organizational aspects and emphasis was given to summit meetings of the heads of governments. A draft declaration set out an elaborate machinery for the proposed association to consist of annual summits, a council of foreign ministers, and a secretariat headed by a secretary general. The Bangladesh draft paper formed the basis of discussions for the first meeting of Foreign Secretaries.

This paper suggested holding a preparatory meeting headed by Foreign Secretaries of the concerned countries to prepare ground for a ministerial meeting, which will eventually lead to the summit meeting of the head of state of the seven South Asian nations. The paper also spelt that regionalism can co-exist with existing multilateral and bilateral ties and common heritage should be used in a positive way.⁷⁷

The areas selected in this paper were based on mutual benefit of all the countries irrespective of the economic disparities, as this will strengthen regional cooperation and spirit of mutual trust, and bridge the development gaps exists between these countries of South Asia.

The Bangladesh working paper expressed a note of caution in its concluding remarks: “Bearing in mind the legacies of the past, it would indeed be an historic event. Barriers, both historical and emotional, will have to be removed, and lingering suspicion and distrust will have to yield a place to a spirit of understanding and goodwill.”⁷⁸

Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Maldives were among those who immediately endorsed this paper except India and Pakistan who expressed reservations. Sri Lanka was very enthusiastic about SARC. Its foreign Minister A.C.S Hameed said, “just as Colombo has served as a focal point for different forms of cooperation, successive governments of Sri

⁷⁶ *ibid.* , p.5-6.

⁷⁷ *ibid.* , p.7

⁷⁸ *ibid.* , p.8.

Lanka have strongly endorsed and supported the idea of an integrated regional approach to our common problems, towards our common aspirations”⁷⁹

Nepal’s Foreign Minister K.B Sha. welcomed the first regional meeting of Foreign Secretaries which was to be held in April 1981.he opined that “the proposed South Asian organization should in the beginning, cover economic and social areas as the question of unanimity, or at least consensus was very vital for forming such a forum.” Nepal’s response to the proposal of regional cooperation was very positive as Foreign Minister Shashi said: “if a framework grows for economic cooperation to start with, it will give enough opportunity to understand each other and prove our minds and thus ultimately in gradual process, we shall be able to achieve our ends.”⁸⁰

Indian government accepted the proposal but its cautious approach was necessitated by the possible implications of the proposal. Mrs. Gandhi’s new government accepted the proposal “in principle” but did not want to simultaneously endorse the whole move without proper scrutiny as this proposal had been worked out in consultation with the previous rival regime of the Janata party.⁸¹ Moreover, Indian government stand on important issues like Afghanistan, Kampuchea, and Indian Ocean was not acceptable to its neighbors. India was, therefore, apprehensive of the proposed regional forum as a bargaining counter where the smaller nations could collectively seek to thrust their position on India and attempt to contain its position in South Asia.⁸²

Therefore, India emphasized on groundwork in order initiate regional cooperation. Since there was a western approval behind this move, India viewed US to meet its objective of building up a “cooperative regional security framework” in the South and Southwest

⁷⁹ Quoted from ACS Hameed, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka ,Address at the Second meeting of Foreign Ministers,Male,1984, SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.

⁸⁰ Text of Accord ,p.189-195

⁸¹ Muni and Muni, op.cit., n. 1, p. 33.

⁸² Surjit Mansingh,” Regional Cooperation In South Asia: Imperatives and Obstacles”, in S. Chopra (ed.), *Studies in Indian Foreign Policy* (Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University ,1980),p.395.

Asian regions.⁸³ The visits by the leaders of the west to South Asia, further created doubts in the mind of Indian political set up.

Pakistan on the other hand, was of the view that this move of regional cooperation was prompted by India as this will increase India's economic credibility and control. The scientific and technological capabilities of India could be used to ensure regional market of Indian products.⁸⁴ Pakistan apprehended that the proposed organization would only strengthen India's national interest in the region. This will further strengthen India's economic dominance in the region. Pakistan was afraid of losing political identity in the region by joining this regional cooperation. It viewed that it may lose ground in resolving the bilateral dispute with India especially Kashmir⁸⁵ to its advantage.

Pakistan was also of the view that by joining South Asian regional cooperation, its credibility and mutually profitable relation with South West Asian region will suffer. This was particularly when Pakistan's relations with Saudi Arabia and other traditional regimes in Persian gulf have been cordial and deep in the aftermath of the fall of the shah of Iran. During that period religion started playing a major role in the decision making process of Pakistan. The national leaders of Pakistan deliberately began to use Islam to create the basis of their national identity.⁸⁶

The perceptions of India and Pakistan on national interests and perceived threat apparently came in the way of this proposal of regional cooperation. Therefore, India and Pakistan sought to modify it so as to accommodate their respective apprehensions and requirements. In response to this the South Asian foreign ministers discussed various modifications at the U N Head Quarters in New York during August–September 1980. There was nothing objectionable in the proposal and in essence it called for regional

⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 396.

⁸⁴ Virendra Narain and B C Upreti, (ed.), *SAARC A Study of Perceptions and Policies* (New Delhi, South Asian Publishers, 1991), p. 25.

⁸⁵ For excellent study on Kashmir see Sisir Gupta, *Kashmir- A Study in India Pakistan relations*, (Asia Publishing house, New Delhi, 1966.), p. 140

⁸⁶ Emajuddin Ahamed, *SARC: Seeds of Harmony* (Dhaka, United Publishers, 1985), p. 15.

harmony and cooperation with emphasis on economic development.⁸⁷ Credit must be given to president Zia-Ur-Rehman for his efforts, which brought countries including India and Pakistan to the negotiating table and set the pace for regional cooperation.

While summing up response of South Asian countries on proposed regional cooperation, we can say that it was Pakistan which strongly advocated a cautious road without forcing the pace. India's approach was positive but it suggested a word of caution, whereas Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh were interested in expansion of regional cooperation to regional economic cooperation.⁸⁸

However, some analysts say that smaller states in South Asia were interested in a regional organization from the strategic point of view. They wanted to evolve distinct identities of their own. The dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 in which India was involved largely, the annexation of Sikkim by India in 1975, India's peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974-all these consecutive events altered the strategic environment in South Asia and as a result of this smaller states of South Asia felt more encircled by India. To offset India's growing power and influence in the region the smaller countries supported establishment of SAARC.⁸⁹

The Meetings of Foreign Secretaries

The initiative by Bangladeshi President was further carried on the first meeting of Foreign Secretaries which was held in Colombo in April 1981. This meeting decided substantive proposals, specific areas and framework for regional cooperation. Indian delegation was in favour of avoiding discussion on all bilateral and contentious issues and in ensuring unanimity in decision. It was further agreed that regional cooperation was not intended or expected to be a substitute for bilateral and multilateral cooperation; nor it

⁸⁷ Davinder Kumar Madaan, *SAARC: Origin, Development and Programmes* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications, 1998), p.57.

⁸⁸ Mohan Kashikar, *SAARC: its Genesis, Development and Prospects* (New Delhi, Himalya Publishing, 1999), p.48.

⁸⁹ Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhary, "Small States and Regional Cooperation in South Asia", in B.C. Upreti (ed.), *SAARC :Dynamics of Regional Cooperation in South Asia* (New Delhi, Kalinga, 2000), p.62.

should be inconsistent with bilateral and multilateral obligation”⁹⁰ Pakistan Foreign Secretary, Riaz Pirocha said consultations on higher planes meaning a meeting of foreign ministers and summit conference were premature to think.⁹¹ It was agreed at the end of meeting that as an initial step, five study groups may be set up to determine the potential, and scope for regional cooperation in several fields like agriculture, rural development, telecommunications, meteorology, health and population activities. These five study groups will have coordinator countries.

The Foreign Secretaries met for the second time in Kathmandu in November 1981.the Nepalese Prime Minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa. He emphasized on various regional schemes and called South Asian countries to share their development experience. According to him regional problems in the socio-economic sphere can be solved with the help of regional initiatives without compromising the “principle of peaceful co-existence.”

Pakistan suggested that time has come to establish efficient and reliable telecommunication links among the South Asian countries. Pakistan Foreign Secretary emphasized on constituting standing technical committees to be comprised of representatives of member countries, to monitor their implementation and progress on a regular basis.⁹² In the Joint communiqué signed on November 4 1981, it was agreed to institute additional studies in the field of transport, postal services, scientific and technological cooperation and the existing five study groups will be converted to working groups.⁹³

In the third meeting of Foreign Secretaries held in Islamabad between 7 -9, August, 1982. Pakistani Foreign Minister, Yakub Khan inaugurated the meeting and called upon the South

⁹⁰ Joint communiqué at the conclusion of first meeting of Foreign Secretaries, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1985).

⁹¹ Pramod K Mishra, *op.cit.*, n. 26,p. 5.

⁹² Speech by Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary at Second meeting of Foreign Secretaries held at Kathmandu ,1981, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ,1985),p.56

⁹³ Joint Communiqué at the conclusion of Second meeting of Foreign Secretaries, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1985),p. 60.

Asian countries to join hands in promoting confidence and cooperation among themselves. In this meeting, the member states didn't raise any contentious issues.⁹⁴

The Indian Foreign Secretary, M.K Rasgotra, called for greater cooperation among South Asian nations in the field of trade, negotiations on international matters, tourism, culture, sports and games. According to him regional cooperation is an instrument for the achievement of collective self-reliance.⁹⁵ The joint communiqué emphasized on accelerating the pace of regional cooperation. It was decided to set up a "committee of the whole"⁹⁶, with Sri Lanka as its chairman, to work out a Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) at its next meeting in January 1983. India proposed a regular consultation on matters of common interest related to international economic issues.

The fourth meeting of Foreign Secretaries at Dhaka was very cordial and there was hardly any opposition on the idea of regional cooperation. The Joint Communiqué at the Dhaka meeting emphasized on structure of regional cooperation in South Asia "through a formal forum." Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) was also broadly accepted.⁹⁷ The fifth and final official level meeting was held in New Delhi on July 1983, recommending the First Foreign minister's meeting.

During these meetings, an elaborate structure and set of procedures was developed. A comprehensive scheme of South Asian cooperation was evolved and almost all the areas except tourism and joint ventures were accepted. Telecommunication, postal services and sports were also included. Working groups were formed to undertake the study in various areas of cooperation and conduct their investigation in the areas for instance, rural development, and agriculture. These groups were given the mandate to find the cost benefit and, potential of areas of cooperation.

⁹⁴ Speech by Pakistan's Foreign Minister at Third meeting of Foreign Secretaries held at Islamabad, 1982 *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1985),p.63.

⁹⁵ Speech by Indian Foreign Secretary at Third meeting of Foreign Secretaries held at Islamabad, 1982 *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1985),p.79.

⁹⁶ Joint Communiqué issued at the conclusion of Third meeting of Foreign Secretaries, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1985),p.90.

⁹⁷ Joint Communiqué at the conclusion of Fourth meeting of Foreign Secretaries, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1985),p.136

On the other hand, India and Pakistan did express their reservations in the meetings of Foreign Secretary. For instance India was always willing to include more areas whereas Pakistan was assertive and un-accommodative. As Indian Foreign Secretary said, "we have no obligation to lay a solid and secure foundation on which regional cooperation can be built. If there are delays, one should not become pessimistic."⁹⁸ The Indian Secretary was emphasizing on a slow and steady approach to regional cooperation where arrangements, modalities and programmes should be made through consensus.

The First Foreign Minister's Meeting

The first meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh, Bhutan India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka was held in New Delhi, in August 1983. While addressing the gathering Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi touched on positive factors linking the countries of South Asia, resolution of differences through discussions and in a spirit of goodwill and elimination of tension and promotion of peace and stability in the region.⁹⁹ She also advocated benefits of economic cooperation, as it will lead to stronger friendship and stability. She clearly asserted that regional cooperation of this kind had no military objectives and also emphasized on people to people contact. Being the chairperson of Non-aligned movement she referred to suggestion contained in the economic declaration of the New Delhi Non-aligned Summit held in March 1983.

The declaration on South Asian Regional Cooperation was unanimously adopted in the ministerial meeting. The objectives and principle of the association as well as institutional arrangements for implementation was laid down. It also approved the Integrated Programme of Action, which was a very crucial decision. The programme included nine subject areas: agriculture, rural development, meteorology, telecommunication, scientific and technical

⁹⁸ Speech by Indian Foreign Secretary at Fourth meeting of Foreign Secretaries held at Dhaka, 1983, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ,1985),p.124.

⁹⁹ For text of speech see, *foreign affairs record* Vol. 29, No 8, August 1983, p. 165-167.

cooperation, health and population activities, transport, postal services and sports, and arts and culture.¹⁰⁰

Second Foreign Minister's Meeting

The second foreign minister meeting took place in Male from 10-11 July 1984. The decision to hold first SARC Summit was taken at Male, which was very important for institutional development of SARC.

However, the difference of opinion between the states to fix the venue and date was evident. The SARC Ministers "emphasized the importance of thorough preparations for summit and decide to devote special attention to this matter at their next meetings." An emphasis on preparation of agenda for the summit was also raised, as countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, did not appear to have given sufficient thought to the question of the precise objectives and agenda of the summit. Issue of Secretariat was also discussed, as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka were interested to have it located in Colombo. India was opposed to a permanent Secretariat.¹⁰¹

The second meeting decided to widen its cooperative activity. The Indian Foreign Minister suggested the inclusion of industrial cooperation, tourism, energy that will fully involve the countries of the region.¹⁰² He also talked about undertaking joint promotional activity to get better prices. This Indian proposal was opposed by Pakistan as it was supported by Sri Lanka and Nepal. Bangladesh was the only country, which seemed satisfied.

The smaller South Asian countries saw these suggestions as being advantageous to India in strengthening its regional position at the cost of their own respective identities. It was feared by India's neighbors that free regional cooperation in trade and industrial

¹⁰⁰ Declaration on South Asian Regional Cooperation Issued at First Foreign Ministers Meeting in New Delhi.,1983, *SARC Documents*, Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1985.

¹⁰¹ For text of Speeches see *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ,1985),p.170-185

¹⁰² Speech by Indian Foreign Minister at Second meeting of Foreign Minister held at Male, 1984, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ,1985),p.260.

development would facilitate India's domination in economic activities. This issue was closely linked to serious political consideration of the regimes in the neighboring countries.

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Male meeting adopted a strong position on the "current world economic situation." It also expressed concern over the deteriorating economic condition in the developing countries and blamed international community for not providing supportive measures. On global politics and strategic issues the position of members was not the same as in economic issues.¹⁰⁴

Third Foreign Minister's Meeting

The third meeting of the series was held in Thimpu, Bhutan on May 13-14, 1985. The Foreign Ministers issued a 'joint communiqué' reiterating their firm commitment to the process of regional cooperation and expressed optimum and high expectation of the Dhaka summit. They called for flow of concessional resources to developing countries, with the help of supplementary financing for IDA -VII, increase in the capital of the World Bank and substantial increase in IMF quotas. They opined that success of these meetings will be further dependent on sinking of bilateral differences and narrow perspectives.¹⁰⁵

First Summit Conference

The first summit level meeting, among the leaders of the seven South Asian countries on regional cooperation was held in Dhaka from 7-8 December 1985. The two-day inaugural SAARC Summit in Dhaka was attended by King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India, President Abdul Maumoon Gayoom of the Maldives, King Birendra of Nepal, President Gen. Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan, President Junius Jayewardene of Sri Lanka, besides host President Gen. H.M. Ershad of Bangladesh.

¹⁰³ A.R Bhuyan, "Intra-Regional Trade Expansion in South Asia", *South Asia Journal*, Vol.4, No.1, July-September, 1990, p.25.

¹⁰⁴ Joint Communiqué issued at the Conclusion of Second Meeting of Foreign Ministers, *SARC Documents* (Dhaka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1985), p

¹⁰⁵ Satish Mishra, "Regional Cooperation at Thimpu: Slow but hopeful". *Link*, Vol 27, May.26, 1985, p.30

The summit was preceded by a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the seven countries on December 5 and of the Foreign Secretaries a day earlier, when the agenda for the summit was finalized. In this summit the leaders made pronounced and powerful references to their objectives of improving the quality of life of the peoples of the region.¹⁰⁶

In this meeting the heads of state or government of seven South Asian countries, adopted a Charter¹⁰⁷ converting the South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) into the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). They reiterated the principles of unanimity and avoidance of bilateral and contentious issues in the forum. Also a Council of Ministers, consisting of the seven foreign ministers, was decided upon as the policy-making organ of the Association, the standing Committee comprising the Foreign Secretaries was declared as the body for overall monitoring and coordination of the programmes of cooperation.

Since its establishment in 1985 and till 1995 eight subsequent SAARC Summits had taken place in capitals of South Asia (Dhaka, 1985; Bangalore, 1986; Kathmandu, 1987; Islamabad, 1988; Male, 1990; Colombo, 1991; Dhaka, 1993; and New Delhi, 1995). The eleventh SAARC Summit took place in Kathmandu in January 2002.

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCLPI ES: -

The objectives of South Asian Regional Cooperation have addressed to the needs of better life both at individual and collective levels. These objectives are: --

- a. To promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve the quality of life;
- b. To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region;
- c. To promote and strengthen collective self reliance among the countries of South Asia;

¹⁰⁶ For Speeches see. SAARC Summits (1985-90), SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990.

¹⁰⁷ SAARC Charter, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1985

- d. To contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems;
- e. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields;
- f. To strengthen cooperation with other developing countries;
- g. To strengthen among themselves in international forums on matters of common interest; and
- h. To cooperate with international and regional organization with similar aims and purposes.

To achieve the aims and purposes, the following principles were adopted: -

- 1. "Regional cooperation shall be based on respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in internal affairs of other states and mutual benefit".
- 2. Such "cooperation shall not be substituted for bilateral and multilateral cooperation's but shall complement them".
- 3. Moreover, such "cooperation shall not be inconsistent with bilateral and multilateral obligations".

The mode of decision making was based on two principles:--

- a. Decisions at all levels will be taken on the basis of unanimity.
- b. Bilateral and contentions issues will be excluded from the deliberations.

The Institutional Framework

SAARC charter adopted the institutional framework in which heads of government were the highest authority followed by council of ministers consisting of Foreign Ministers of member states. Standing committees at the third level performs the functions of coordination and monitoring of programmes. A technical committee has been charged with responsibility of implementing, coordinating and monitoring the programmes of cooperation. Action committees comprised of member states is responsible for implementations of projects.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*,p.3

Secretariat

The SAARC Secretariat was set up in Kathmandu on 16th January 1987, which has been performing the functions of coordinator, implementation and monitoring the progress in the identified areas of cooperation. It has also been providing service and information to the member states.

It is evident that SAARC was established with the objectives of achieving regional cooperation with definite economic and cultural goals, which in the process was expected to generate mutual trust and understanding conducive to peace and stability in the region. One of the foremost needs appeared to be the creation of a political environment conducive to regional cooperation for the fullest development of the economic potential of the region through the collective pursuit of the SAARC goals.

SAARC has been in existence for nearly 17 years, and within this short period of time it has achieved some progress in areas which were taken up in charter. It has also addressed areas which are economic in nature. Some of its major achievements are.

- (i) Integrated of programme of action.
- (ii) Poverty eradication programmes.
- (iii) Establishment of four regional centers (viz., on agriculture information, meteorological research, tuberculosis and statistics).
- (iv) Setting up of Food Reserve in 1987.
- (v) Adoption of three regional conventions viz. SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism in 1988, SAARC Convention on Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in 1999 and convention on women and child trafficking.
- (vi) People to People contact programmes like SAARC Audio-Visual Exchange Programme (SAVE) and SAARC Chairs Fellowships and Scholarships.
- (vii) Adoption of South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) at eighth Summit

Chapter III

SAARC: An Analysis of Summits Speeches and Declaration during 1985-1988

SAARC was established with the objectives of achieving through regional cooperation certain economic and cultural goals, and in the process it also wanted to develop mutual trust and understanding which is conducive to peace and stability in the region. Therefore, one of the most important needs was the creation of a political environment conducive to regional cooperation for the fullest development of the economic potential of the region.

SAARC was formally launched at the First SAARC Summit at Dhaka in December 1985. It was a historic event and signified the culmination of the process that began as early as 1978. Since then eleven SAARC Summits have taken place in different capital of South Asian countries. These Summits have deliberated on large number of critical issues and have a range of declaration containing many issues of regional interest.

In this and the following chapter an attempt has been made to examine the trends and contents of the speeches and declaration made by the heads of state and government in the summit meeting from 1985 to 1995. During this period eight Summit's took place. This study will analyze the summit speeches delivered by heads of government and the state in eight summits and summit declarations therein. By analyzing the summit speeches this study will try to identify the expectation of the member states and various issues raised by the heads of the government. In the following section a summit wise analysis of speeches delivered by the heads of the government and state has been done as per the varieties of issues raised by them in the course of eight summits.

FIRST SAARC SUMMIT

DHAKA, BANGLADESH

1985

In the first South Asian summit held in Dhaka on 8 December 1985 SAARC Charter and Dhaka declaration were adopted. The charter formally launched South Asian Association of Regional cooperation (SAARC) and its institutional structure. The Dhaka declaration spelt out the basis, rationale, and necessity of regional cooperation. In this summit heads of the government raised various issues of regional importance.

Economic Issues

Bangladesh - In his inaugural speech President Ershad said “Our statesmen, our peoples recognize that promise of economic independence is yet to be fulfilled.”¹ He also stated that, “The global economic compulsions that confront us require a joint and increasingly sophisticated response.”² He called SAARC to initiate indepth study of South Asian economies. Ershad’s this remarkable knowledge of economic issues, was evident in the speech.

Bhutan- The King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuck called for the establishment of the New International Economic Order. He said “what is now required is harmonization of our policies on the internal economic front through our regional organization.”³ He also said that economic gains can bring a climate of trust and it will further expand the economic cooperation, which will be mutually beneficial to the region of South Asia.

India- The Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi while raising issues related to international economy mentioned that, “The world economy remains immersed in deep

¹ Speech by Gen H.M Ershad, President of Bangladesh delivered in the first SAARC Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p .6.

² *ibid.*, p.6

³ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.13.

crisis international economic institutions are in disarray.”⁴ He called upon the member states for strengthening multilateralism and worldwide cooperation.

Maldives-The President of Maldives Maumoon Abdul Gayoom didn't raise any specific economic issue, while he said, “we are confident that regional cooperation can play a major role in the social and economic development of the people of the region.”⁵

Nepal –King Birendra of Nepal while appealing for cooperation in matters of common interest and economic issues stated that, “the weakening of the global economic interdependence and the disillusionment with the continuing deadlock in restructuring the international economic order have thrust upon us greater responsibilities for collective self reliance and South South cooperation on a much larger scale.”⁶ The issues identified by him was of tremendous importance and helpful for success of regional cooperation in south Asia.

Pakistan –President Zia –ul- Haq raised major economic issues in South Asia and said “we have a stake in an early resolution of the current impasse of the problem of world economy, especially in reversing protectionist trade barriers, restoring monetary stability, resolving the debt crisis.”⁷ It was evident that he was well informed about the happening in the world economy.

Sri Lanka–President of Sri Lanka J. Jayewardene called for cooperation in all fields and participation of all members. He specifically mentioned that, “in the spheres of investment and aid; trade between our countries; wherever we can exchange and train experts, there

⁴ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister of India delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.16.

⁵ Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Katmandu, 1990,p.19.

⁶ Speech by Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev King of Nepal delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Katmandu, 1990,p.22

⁷ Speech by Zia ul Haq President of Pakistan delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Katmandu, 1990, p.24.

should be cooperation and help.”⁸ He addressed major economic issues in South Asian regional cooperation and he also laid emphasis on developmental programmes. He also called for removal of all kinds of barrier such as geo political factors, levels of development and strategic perception.

Social Issues

Bangladesh – President Ershad expressed his gratitude to the leaders of the South Asian region for their visit to Urir char and said “what happened in Urir char is no doubt nature at play in its pristine fury, but in essence, it is the result of the extreme deprivation, poverty and under-development that characterize many a part of our region.”⁹ He has called for mobilization of scientific and technological skills for the elimination of the common problems of poverty and under- development.

Bhutan - In his speech King Wangchuck called for collective self-reliance as a development strategy to deal with problems of poverty and said, “While the rate of economic growth is low against a high rate of population increase, nearly half of our peoples live in absolute poverty.”¹⁰ He also said that per capita income of South Asia is one tenth of world average. According to him independence through interdependence under the framework of regional cooperation is most viable alternative.

India –Rajiv Gandhi also called for collective self- reliance and said, “all seven of us continue to be confronted with the formidable problems of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and disease. We have to overcome these problems in a highly adverse external environment.”¹¹ The issues raised by him directly ? upon improving the quality of life of the people of South Asia. This could finally lead to successful regional cooperation.

⁸ Speech by Junius Jayewardene President of Sri Lanka delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Katmandu, 1990, p.26.

⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n.1, p.5.

¹⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.3, p.13.

¹¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .4, p.16.

Maldives - President Gayoom has appreciated the efforts towards regional cooperation and said “we are confident that regional cooperation can play a major role in the social and economic development of the peoples of the region and in the preservation of peace and security among member states.”¹² He didn’t raise any specific social issues.

Nepal - According to King Birendra people of South Asia face many common challenges and people are still facing the problem of basic needs. He stated that, “the world never has had in its recorded history such technological resources as it has today to cope with poverty and hunger on a global scale.”¹³ He calls for collective spirit, which has eroded and resulted in sharp rise of problems. According to him regional cooperation through initiatives and interaction can solve many problems of South Asia.

Pakistan – President Zia –ul –Haq showed his concern about the people of South Asia who face common problems and similar challenges. He mentioned that, “practically all of us in South Asia need to eradicate poverty and hunger, disease and illiteracy.”¹⁴ He appreciated the progress in the efforts of the people and said, “through cooperation, we can accelerate this process” and called for sharing each other experience in devising new methods to resolve the problems related to poverty, illiteracy and diseases.

Sri Lanka– President Jayewardene raised the issue of human rights violation and said “socially all our countries protect our citizens and there is no violation of human rights willingly, and as state policy, by anyone of our governments.”¹⁵ He called for collective effort in finding the remedy of the human rights problem.

People to People Contact and Quality of Life

Bangladesh - President Ershad referred to the idea of late President Zia ur Rahman in which he talked of a regional forum based on exchange of views, pooling of expectation

¹² SAARC Secretariat, n .5, p.18.

¹³ SAARC Secretariat, n .6,p.22

¹⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .7,p.24

¹⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .8,p.27

and discussions. According to him the summit should respond to the basic needs of our people. He further said that, “the framework of the SAARC summit as the key to regional cooperation for the interaction of the national leaderships is bound to broaden into the interaction of our people.”¹⁶ He also said psychological barriers like misunderstanding, suspicion; fear and anxiety need to be removed with the help of regional cooperation.

Bhutan – The King of Bhutan didn’t raise any issue related to people to people contact.

India – Rajiv Gandhi said, “This summit has given rise to great expectation among our people and in outside world. We have taken decisive step forward in establishing the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Its success will depend on the involvement of our people in their hundred millions.”¹⁷ According to him involvement of people is of primary importance and necessary for the South Asian regional cooperation.

Maldives – According to Abdul Gayoom upliftment of people should be the top priority of SAARC. He opined that said, “it will, above all, be a framework for the promotion of the welfare and prosperity of our people and the improvement of their quality of life”.¹⁸ He also said cooperation efforts should be applied with proper will and consistent effort which will give great dividends to our people.

Nepal – King Birendra while calling for interaction in various fields mentioned that, “it is our firm conviction that regional cooperation can strengthen the building of a lasting edifice of peaceful co-existence through initiatives and interaction in the fields like the cultural scientific, technological and economic spheres.”¹⁹ He suggested SAARC to follow the principle of agreeable harmony for the betterment of the people of South Asia.

Pakistan – President Zia –ul – Haq called for interaction of people in South Asia and said, “more and more contacts, through regional cooperation, will inevitably lead to greater

¹⁶SAARC Secretariat, n .1, p.6.

¹⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .4, p.15.

¹⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .5, p.19.

¹⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .6, p.21.

understanding.”²⁰ According to him mistrust can be removed through greater interaction, which will further generate goodwill, and proper utilization of resources. He also suggested that process of more and more contacts need to be assisted and accelerated by concurrent actions in political field.

Sri Lanka– President Jayewardene was of view that human development should be given priority in regional cooperation and it is the only way to improve the life of people. He stated that, “all the countries in South Asia speak English; therefore, there is a link language and this medium should be developed to ensure an uninterrupted programme of information exchanges.”²¹ He called upon the member states for sharing of knowledge as it will lead to greater understanding and would help in realizing our common goals. According to him success of regional cooperation depends on two factors, mutual confidence and mutual trust. He also laid emphasis on institutional linkages.

Suggestions by the Member Countries

There were a number of suggestions and note of caution expressed by the leaders. Some of them are summarized below.

Bangladesh –President Ershad remarked that, “SARC stipulates that it shall not stand in the way of bilateral and multilateral commitments and obligation”²² and wanted the SARC strategy to be based on clear understanding and cooperation, which should in no way limit each member’s freedom of judgment. He wanted SARC to create new dimension of creative hope and expectation in South Asia.

Bhutan – According to King Wangchuck political environment is the determinant of the shape and scope of regional cooperation as he said “the main obstacle is not only to overcome the psychological and emotional barriers of the past, but the fears, anxieties,

²⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .7, p.25.

²¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .8, p.27.

²²SAARC Secretariat, n .1, p.7.

and apprehensions of the present.”²³ The people of South Asia have to move away from the attitude of suspicion to better understanding and trust. He also said “we must transcend the narrow nationalism that prevails in our region”²⁴ and create good relation among ourselves in which the magnanimity of the larger states would be matched by the genuine friendship of the smaller states. He specifically mentioned that, “it will be the personal and unwavering commitment of the leaders themselves that will determine the outcome of this summit and the future course of regional cooperation.”²⁵ Thus he addressed the real problem that continues to the progress in SAARC today in the very first summit itself.

India – Rajiv Gandhi appreciated the members for adopting a model of cooperation, which is best suited to this region, and he said, “we have not sought to melt our bilateral relationships into a common regional identity, but rather to fit South Asian cooperation into our respective foreign policies as an additional dimension. We have evolved modalities, which do not allow bilateral stresses and stains to impinge on regional cooperation.”²⁶ He hopes that the practice of regional cooperation will have a beneficial impact on bilateral relationships. He has called for pragmatism, enthusiasm and initiatives with consensus in South Asian regional cooperation.

Maldives – Abdul Gayoom expressed that principles and ideals that shall guide the collective work of regional cooperation and strict adherence must be given to these principles. He stated that “if we have the will and the resolve to confront collectively, and in the spirit of those principles and ideals the wide ranging challenges that faces us, it will certainly be possible for us to overcome those challenges and to demonstrate that with unity of purpose all things are possible, but nothing without it.”²⁷ According to him will and determination are very important for the success of SAARC.

Nepal – King Birendra emphasized on the spirit of give and take, “after a long winter of mistrust, coldness and suspicion this region of South Asia certainly looks forward to a

²³ SAARC Secretariat, n.3, p.14.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.14.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.15.

²⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .4, p.17.

²⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .5, p.19.

new spring giving birth as it were to a new era of enlightened self interest based on common desire to replace conflict with cooperation, to substitute discord with harmony, and finally, move from an attitude of self centeredness to a widening horizon of contacts in the region in a spirit of reciprocity ,give and take ,live and let live.”²⁸ The view expressed here has been of tremendous importance for association like SAARC. The two bigger states like India and Pakistan need to take this view seriously.

Pakistan – Zia-ul-Haq suggested for consultations on matters of common concern both at the level of experts and intellectuals and called for strengthening of mutual trust and cooperation in order to accelerate the pace of progress towards the common goal of prosperity for our region. He also expressed his willingness to create goodwill and harmony and said, “actuated by a deep sense of solidarity, South Asian countries, acting in concert, could exercise a collective influence for greater than the sum of their individual contribution.”²⁹ He gave the example of ASEAN.

Sri Lanka– Jayewardene raised the issue of Indo centricity and said “firstly we must trust each other, India is the largest in every way; larger than all the rest of us combined, can by deeds and words create the confidence among us so necessary to make a beginning.”³⁰ He expressed his full confidence in Rajiv Gandhi and said it is our duty to help him. On the contrary, one of the principles of SAARC says that sovereign equality of the participating member must be maintained. According to him historical and geo-political factors have militated against regional closeness. So the task of regional cooperation must be approached with hope and optimism. In his speech the President has said that responsibility lies on us and we must grasp this opportunity. He also said that no person or nation would stand in way of SAARC. He also assured the chairman for full cooperation in guiding deliberation of SAARC to successful conclusion.³¹

International Developments

²⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .6, p.22.

²⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .7, p.25.

³⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .8, p.28.

³¹ *ibid.*, p.29.

Bangladesh - President Ershad in his speech said, "The emphasis laid by the non-aligned summit in New Delhi on South -South cooperation has become an overpowering necessity."³² According to him the international economic environment is very harsh and in order to solve the problems of poverty and human misery South Asia need to cooperate.

Bhutan - According to King Wangchuck development of regional cooperation is not only desirable but would be imperative in the face of present global realities. He also emphasized on South-South cooperation. In his speech, he raised issues related to international economy and North-South relations.³³

India - Rajiv Gandhi emphasized on non-aligned Movement and said "the nonaligned movement, to which all of us belong, has made the pursuit of peace, progress, prosperity and the establishment of a new world order the center piece of its efforts. SARC gives practical form in the declaration on collective self-reliance adopted at the New Delhi summit."³⁴ According to him South Asian cooperation is an important step towards realizing the larger Asian consciousness.

Maldives - Abdul Gayoom emphasized on the role of interdependence in all parts of the globe as it has become a reality and said "The EEC and ASEAN, to name just two, are regional organizations which have in recent years illustrated what interdependence can achieve in terms of political stability and social and economic development."³⁵

Nepal - King Birendra emphasized on South-South cooperation and strengthening cooperation among ourselves in international fora on matters of common interest. He also said that great powers have played on division in South Asia and even Non-Alignment, which South Asia has adhered to. This has shaken the stability of the region. He wanted SAARC to follow a course action based on high ideals and hard realism.³⁶

³² SAARC Secretariat, n .1, p.6.

³³ SAARC Secretariat, n. 3,p.14.

³⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .4, p.17.

³⁵SAARC Secretariat, n .5, p.20.

³⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .6,p.22

Pakistan – According to Zia-ul-Haq the success of regional cooperation could serve to inhibit great power rivalry and restrain their action in South Asia and adjacent regions of the world. He also said “Our common commitment to the United Nation charter and the Non- aligned Movement provides a sound basis for the consolidation of good neighborly relations. Action in conformity with these principles will dispel doubts and remove suspicions.”³⁷ Pakistan was very much committed to United Nations. According to him the present problems of the South Asian nations both external and internal can be solved through the summits.

Sri Lanka–Sri Lankan President didn’t raise any issue related to international politics and made no reference to United Nations and Non-aligned Movement in his speech.

Security Issues

Bangladesh - General Ershad didn’t raise any security issue in his speech and emphasized on Non-alignment as we have discussed earlier.

Bhutan - King Wangchuck supported gradual nuclear disarmament and said, “in our region it is regrettable to note that the arms race has intensified and assumed new dimensions with increasing possibility of the development of nuclear weapons.”³⁸ He was also concerned about global military expenditure and the escalating arms race, and said, we are heartened and encouraged by the recent summit in Geneva between the leaders of the two super powers.”³⁹ He wanted nuclear disarmament to gain momentum all over the world.

India – Rajiv Gandhi said, “the developing countries seek peace and stability to pursue their development prevailing tensions and the continuing nuclear arms race pose a serious threat to our progress and prosperity. We must make a conscious effort to remain outside

⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .7, p.25.

⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .3,p.13

⁹ ibid. ,p.13.

the vortex of these tensions and conflicts.”⁴⁰ He wanted SAARC in true spirit to follow non-alignment and set example for other regional groupings.

Maldives- Abdul Gayoom didn’t raise any security issue like arms race and nuclear weapons but he said “The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation can. Mr. Chairman, be our instrument for the promotion of peace and stability in this part of the world.”⁴¹ According to him SAARC can also enhance sovereignty and foster peace, freedom and social justice among member states.

Nepal - King Birendra said “While it is our common concern to preserve the independence and security of each country in the region, we have also a common commitment to promote the cause of peace and development for our people.”⁴² He was concerned about the escalation of arms race and its effect on the world precious resources. He also said “the world and, above all, our region urgently needs a new wisdom capable of striking a balance between the claims of security and those of basic needs.”⁴³ The issue of balance is very important as during that time South Asia was facing problems like poverty, disease and over population and these problems require immediate action by the member states as contrives like India and Pakistan were spending large amount of resources on arms.

Pakistan – Zia-ul-Haq said “I am convinced that it will be beneficial for us to make a collective pledge, renouncing the threat, or use of force, against one another. We could take steps to banish nuclear weapons.”⁴⁴ The word “could” used by Pakistan create some confusion as he didn’t oppose these weapons as other did. He wanted establishment of peace and stability in each country of South Asia which is fundamentally important as it, will create better conditions for the lives of the people. He also said “the search for peace,

⁴⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .4, p.14.

⁴¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .5, p.20.

⁴² SAARC Secretariat, n .6, p.22.

⁴³ *ibid.* , p.22.

⁴⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .7, p.25.

stability and progress in South Asia, in this way, make a vital contribution to international peace and security.”⁴⁵

Sri Lanka- J. Jayewardene was the first leader who raised the issue of terrorism as his country was also a victim of terrorism. He stated, “All our countries need stability to develop and safeguard the freedoms they have. Terrorist movement have raised their among several of our country’s, heads of state and government have been assassinated and violence preached and practiced.”⁴⁶ He was against any kind of violence. He criticized the terrorist leaders as they take shelter under the name of racial and minority discrimination. He called for non-violence and support from all members against terrorism or any kind of violence. On the contrary India didn’t raise the issue of terrorism, as it was a contentious issue and against the provision of SAARC.

New Areas

Bangladesh – Ershad suggested by saying “in our painstaking efforts there has been unanimous recognition that the leaders and peoples of the seven countries must forge new institutions and new modalities based on individual national experience and inspirations”⁴⁷ and “our specialists and our experts, within the outside governments, must examine and recommend concrete way to broaden regional economic cooperation and exchange.”⁴⁸

Bhutan - King Wangchuck suggested establishing cooperative linkages in some areas as the progress in that area was rather slow and he was confident that this Dhaka summit will provide a boost to cooperation in these areas.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ *ibid.* , p.25.

⁴⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .8, p.28.

⁴⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .1, p.7.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* ,p.7.

⁴⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .3, p.13.

Maldives - Abdul Gayoom appreciated the progress achieved in the implementation of the Integrated Plan of Action and he said, "it is our sincere hope that as a result of this meeting progress will be accelerated in attaining the goals of the plan and that areas of cooperation will be further expanded to include other important aspects that are vital to our development."⁵⁰ He wanted SAARC to expand its area of cooperation. He appreciated the studies conducted before the formal launching.

Nepal – King Birendra said "From the side with the high Himalayas as one of our assets and a vast reservoir of yet untapped water resource that can give to the millions of our people a means to fulfill their basic needs, I wish to draw the attention to the fact that there exist this priceless resource waiting to be harnessed for the benefit of our people."⁵¹ He wanted water resources of Nepal to be used in generation of electricity and provide water for purposes like irrigation, drinking etc

Pakistan - President Zia-ul-Haq suggested that in order to achieve confidence building, serious consideration should be given to evolving agreements at regional level. He said this because of doubts and suspicion that exists in the minds of member states. He also suggested a system of consultations at the level of experts and, at the level of intellectuals. According to him South Asian states could exercise a collective influence rather than individual contribution and gave example of ASEAN. This suggestion of Pakistan was based on cooperative endeavor and of tremendous importance. Pakistan has been calling for a collective influence all through his speech.⁵²

⁵⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.5, p.20.

⁵¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .6, p.22.

⁵² SAARC Secretariat,n.7,p.26

First Dhaka Summit Declaration - 1985

Economic and Social Issues

The heads of states or government reaffirmed that their fundamental goal was to accelerate the process of economic and social development in their respective countries through the optimum utilization of their human and material resources.⁵³

The heads of state or government acknowledged that countries of South Asia were faced with the formidable challenges posed by poverty, underdevelopment, low levels of production, unemployment and pressure of population.⁵⁴

The heads of state or government called for participation of women in activities at regional level and their participation in development must be maintained. They directed the standing committee to identify the areas of activities and plan a programme of action.⁵⁵

People to People Contact

The heads of state emphasized on strengthening involvement of their peoples, which will ultimately strengthen regional cooperation. They agreed to increase interaction at various as demanded by member states and called to take steps in creating public opinion⁵⁶

International Economic Issues

They decided that the member governments should concern their views on the ongoing discussion on new international economic order and the improvement of the world trading system through GATT taking particularly into account the interest of the least developed

⁵³ *Dhaka Declaration*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, p.46

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p.46

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p.47

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p.47.

among the developing countries. They called for urgent resumption of the North- South dialogue.⁵⁷

Peace and Security

The leaders decided that maintenance of peace and security can only guarantee the goals of improvement of quality of life and expressed their concern at the arms race. The leaders called on nuclear weapon state for urgent negotiation for a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT).The issue of terrorism was also addressed and approved that the standing committee should set up a study group to examine the problem of terrorism as it affects the security and stability of the SAARC member states. They also approved that a similar exercise to be carried out with regard to the problem of drug trafficking and abuse.⁵⁸

Critical Views

The suggestion of Nepal to utilize the Himalayan resources, cooperation in prevention of natural disaster by Bangladesh and Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh proposal for collective influence rather than individual contribution in international forums were not addressed in Dhaka declaration.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p.47

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.47.

SECOND SAARC SUMMIT

Bangalore, India

1986

The Bangalore summit (16-18 November 1986) was a landmark event in the history of regional Cooperation in South Asia. Several new issues were explored along with new avenues and possibilities for regional cooperation. It also created a conducive environment for peace, development, and security. The issues and their newer dimensions were as follows:

Economic Issues

Bangladesh - In the second summit meeting held in Bangalore in November 1986, President Ershad called for cooperation in core areas of economic activity, he said, "Conventional wisdom and theory propound that a regional arrangement to be most effective and fruitful should gradually expand to cover some core areas of economic activity. A carefully planned expansion of our cooperation to encompass such core areas should contribute to the realization of the collective objectives that we have set ourselves."⁵⁹

Bhutan – King Wangchuck of Bhutan expressed concern over international economic situation and keeping in mind this situation. He suggested that, "We must intensify cooperation among member countries and harness the full potential of our region to emerge as a new area of economic growth."⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Speech by Gen H.M Ershad President of Bangladesh delivered in the Second SAARC Summit held in Bangalore, 1986, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.58.

⁶⁰ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in Second Summit held in Bangalore, 1986,quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.63.

India –Rajiv Gandhi wanted to strengthen cooperation in core economic areas like trade. He appreciated Ministerial meeting of Islamabad on the new round of trade negotiations. He called member states to evolve joint positions in trade negotiations.⁶¹

Maldives –President Gayoom was of view that the international economic situation was not favorable to South Asia. President Gayoom raised the issue of debt and said, “The debt problem facing many third world nations has become an enormous obstacle to their economic growth.”⁶²

Nepal – According to King Birendra, “uninterrupted peace and stability in other parts of South Asia especially small countries like Nepal, Maldives can lead to industrial development.”⁶³

Pakistan – Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo suggested a joint action on international economic issues and appreciated the Ministerial meeting held in of Islamabad. In this regard he mentioned that, “It identifies the large grounds we share. It outlined an elaborate agenda for joint action in international forums. As a result, our united voice will command greater attention and respect. Together we can hope to better safeguard our common interests on vital issues of trade and monetary reforms. We may hope to realize a more just international order sooner.”⁶⁴

People to People Contact

Bangladesh – General Ershad raised the issue of people to people contact and he said, “to be truly effective and dynamic it should transcend the confines of government, and extend beyond to the levels of peoples. Toward this objective we could perhaps provide at a

⁶¹ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister of India delivered in Second Summit held in Bangalore, 1986, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, p.56.

⁶² Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in Second Summit held in Bangalore, 1986, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.66.

⁶³ Speech by Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev King of Nepal delivered in Second Summit held in Bangalore, 1986, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.69.

⁶⁴ Speech by Mohammad Khan Junejo Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in Second SAARC Summit held in Bangalore, 1986, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.72.

minimum forum or platform for scholars, the private sector and even professional associations to meet and consult with one another.”⁶⁵ He suggested interactions among higher academicians and higher institutions of learning and research should be promoted to reinforce the intellectual base of South Asian regional cooperation. He also raised the importance of cultural exchanges in enhancing regional awareness

Bhutan – Bhutanese King addressed the issue of people to people contact in his speech, he said, “we must encourage people to people contacts at all levels in order to bring about a greater awareness of each other and to generate a spirit of friendship and understanding in the region.”⁶⁶ He emphasized on the development of mutual trust and confidence at people’s level which will overcome past inhibitions and emergence of peace and development in South Asia. By past inhibitions the King of Bhutan was referring to psychological barriers.

India – Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi in his speech called for interaction among people of South Asia. He said “Our engineers and doctors, our farmers and weathermen, our pilots and master –mariners, our intellectuals and artists, have had so little knowledge of each other, so little opportunity to meet, so little familiarity with each capacities and capabilities, that first step in regional cooperation has necessarily had to be just getting to know each other.”⁶⁷ According to him contact at all levels can further expand regional cooperation.

Pakistan – Pakistan’s Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo in his speech appraised SAARC and said, “Interaction is promoting meaningful contacts. Greater mutual knowledge is leading to better mutual understanding. A firm foundation has already been laid. Gradually we are seeing the rise of majestic edifice.”⁶⁸ According to Junejo SAARC provided the opportunity for the development of its people.

⁶⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .59,p.59.

⁶⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .60,p.64.

⁶⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .61,p.56.

⁶⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .64,p.72.

Sri Lanka– Sri Lanka’s President Jayewardene in his speech raised the issue of people to people contact. He said, “It is important that the message of SAARC should be taken to the people because in final analysis our peoples must only accept this process but must also be involved in it.”⁶⁹ He recalled the decision taken at Dhaka summit regarding people to people contact and appreciated seminars, meetings and exchanges at various levels.

New Areas

Bangladesh – President Ershad identified a number of new areas where there can be cooperation. He suggested improvement of communication among member countries and air linking of South Asian capitals that will provide impetus to regional cooperation in South Asia. He said “Development of common natural resources, Himalayan resources and resources of the sea, could also be areas of mutually beneficial cooperation. This could include preservation of the eco-system and utilization of land, water, hydro power, mineral, forest as well as living and non living resources of the sea.”⁷⁰ President Ershad was the first to raise the issue of environmental preservation.

Bhutan – King of Bhutan also suggested new areas of cooperation like water, mineral resources, skilled and unskilled manpower. In his speech he emphasized on economic field and said “We must give priority to the economic field as it is an area of vital concern to our peoples. We should particularly concentrate on the promotion of trade and joint economic ventures within our region. The establishment of air links and telecommunication among our seven countries would, also, enhance regional cooperation.”⁷¹

India - Rajiv Gandhi emphasized on new areas of cooperation and said “Agriculture is the mainstay of our economies, meteorology the basis of decisions on agriculture. With the

⁶⁹Speech by Junius Jayewardene President of Sri Lanka delivered in Second SAARC Summit held in Bangalore, 1985, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.76.

⁷⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .59, p.60.

⁷¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .60, p.65.

vast majority of our people living in villages, rural development is a crucial common concern. The strengthening of postal, telecommunication and transport links is both an integral aspect of regional and the essential precursor of intensifying such cooperation.”⁷²

Maldives – President Gayoom in his speech appraised the South Asian region and identified new areas of cooperation. President Gayoom said “The hydro electrical potential of our mountainous region, there is no doubt that we have all the makings of a regional industrial revolution”⁷³ According to President Gayoom South Asian countries can collectively play a important role in the world.

Pakistan – Prime Minister Junejo stated that, “Our association has also evoked interest outside our region. Already, each one of us has no doubt experienced the glow of international respect for the regional cooperation that South Asian countries have launched. Many other countries and regional groups have extended goodwill. Offers of assistance have been received, exchanges of experience proposed.”⁷⁴ He wanted SAARC to exchange information and take necessary experience from other regional groupings.

Social Issues

Bangladesh – President Ershad raised the issue of children and appreciated the ongoing activities related to children of South Asia. He said “Whatever we do today for the well being and development of our children is an investment in the future of the peoples of our nations. We in South Asia should engage our best efforts to create for our children an environment in which they can grow a sour future citizens to the farthest limits of their potential.”⁷⁵

India – Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi raised the issue of women and said “women who constitute disadvantaged sections of our people in each of our countries, have

⁷² SAARC Secretariat, n .61, p.57.

⁷³ SAARC Secretariat, n .62, p.68.

⁷⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .64, p.73.

⁷⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .59, p.60.

particular problems and specific needs, which must be integrated into the development process.”⁷⁶ He also raised the issue of drugs and suggested regional initiatives to control the menace of drugs.

Pakistan - Mohammad Khan Junejo said “the menace of drugs should never be allowed to take roots in our midst. There is no place amongst us for those engaged in the illicit production and trafficking of drugs.”⁷⁷ He wanted to make life free from poverty.

Security Issues

Bhutan - King Wangchuck of Bhutan in his speech raised various security issues like disarmament and nuclear weapons. King Jigme was in favour of a firm and united stand on the issue of global disarmament and support to various conferences of international bodies on the issue of disarmament. He said “In our own region, it has become necessary to take note of the increasing possibility of the development of nuclear weapons. We must take every effort to reverse this ominous trend.”⁷⁸ According to him forum like SAARC can play a decisive role on the issue of disarmament and nuclear weapons.

India – Rajiv Gandhi expressed concern over the menace of terrorism in the South Asian region and urged leaders of the member countries not to allow their territories to be used as launching pad for terrorists. He mentioned that development hinges on peace and arms race distorts economies. He was in favour of reduction of nuclear weapons and said “All SAARC countries belong to the non-aligned family, and we are unanimous in our opposition to any escalation of the nuclear arms race, I hope that our summit will be unanimous in demanding a stoppage to all nuclear weapons tests.”⁷⁹

Maldives – President Gayoom in his speech emphasized on security and disarmament. He related security with economic recovery and stated, “it has become quite evident that no

⁷⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .61, p.57.

⁷⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n. 64, p.73.

⁷⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .60, p.64.

⁷⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .61,p.56.

significant economic recovery can be achieved anywhere in the world without drastic cuts in the military spending of major powers.”⁸⁰ He was against nuclear weapons and said “humanity does not need nuclear missiles or weapons of mass destruction; it needs to feed its peoples; it needs to save them from ignorance and disease; and, above all, it needs peace.”⁸¹ President Gayoom also raised the security issue of Indian Ocean and called for early implementation of the U N resolution declaring the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

Nepal – King Birendra said, “Each of us can be prone to instability. It was perhaps this fact prompted us to follow the policy of non –alignment”⁸² He said SAARC can provide a framework to deal with these instabilities.

Pakistan – Mohammad Khan Junejo also expressed his views on security and nuclear weapons. He said, “The global tension casts a shadow on the security of each of our countries. Nuclear arsenals imperil the future of entire humanity.”⁸³ He suggested, “We can speak with the strength of conviction. All of us favour arms limitation. We are opposed to nuclear weapons. We should reinvigorate and solemnize this resolve in our own region.”⁸⁴

Mohammad Khan Junejo expressed, “terrorism is another problem which warrants cooperative action. Pakistan condemns all acts of violence against innocent people. No cause, however high and noble, can justify them.”⁸⁵ He took a firm standing on the issue of terrorism and declared, “we are open to cooperation in any form and at any level among the SAARC countries to eliminate the threat of terrorism. In time there may be a binding agreement amongst us to meet this challenge collectively.”⁸⁶

⁸⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .62,p.68.

⁸¹ *ibid.* , p.68.

⁸² , SAARC Secretariat, n.63, p.70.

⁸³ SAARC Secretariat, n .64,p.72

⁸⁴ *ibid.* ,p.72 .

⁸⁵ *ibid.* .p.73.

⁸⁶ *ibid.* .p.73.

Sri Lanka– The speech of President Jayewardene was oriented towards non-violence. He gave an account of terrorism, which his country is facing, and also the measures taken by his government to suppress terrorism. He said “the use of violence to achieve political goals is totally against the ideals of preached by the great sons of India, particularly Gautama the Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi.” A large portion of Jayewardene’s address was devoted to the defense of Sri Lanka well known stand on the Tamil problem, though he emphasized that he was follower of India’s two great sons – Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi.⁸⁷ He also referred to the Christian gospels and Islam’s Koran. Jayewardene said violence is a common problem for the nations of South Asia.

SUGGESTIONS

Bangladesh – President Ershad suggested measures to improve efficiency in SAARC, he said, “ our needs and goals may need to be harmonized, especially so in medium and long term perspective. It might thus be useful to have periodic consultations among our planning agencies, perhaps under the umbrella of programming and standing committees meetings.”⁸⁸ He also called for participation of the representatives of planning agencies in the meetings, as it would be helpful in discussions. The suggestion by Bangladeshi President reflects his vast knowledge on administration and keeps track of all activities of SAARC. He called for collective and unanimous decisions on all issues and policies on all new areas of collaboration.

Bhutan - King Wangchuck of Bhutan said “it would be unrealistic of us to overlook the influence that would be exerted on the effectiveness of SAARC by the political climate of our region. Keeping this in mind, the potential of our association to create a congenial political climate in South Asia must be fully utilized.”⁸⁹ He also made suggestions to improve the efficiency of SAARC, he said, “We should devote less time to workshops and seminars and concentrate more on concrete regional projects. The selection of such

⁸⁷ Pramod K Mishra, *South Asia: Conflicts and Cooperation*, (New Delhi, Kalinga Publications, 1997) p.215.

⁸⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .59, p.61.

⁸⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .60, p.65.

projects must be carried out carefully in order to ensure that benefits will accrue to all members' state."⁹⁰ These projects will make SAARC a result oriented body. He also called for review of past achievements.

India – Rajiv Gandhi was not in favour of discussions on bilateral problems in SAARC meetings. He said “We have consciously decided not to burden SAARC with our bilateral concerns. Yet, by providing a frame work for forging a cooperative set of relations among our countries, SAARC can help us positively in growing out of these problems.”⁹¹

Maldives – President Gayoom suggested ways to improve efficiency of SAARC, when he mentioned that, “we have to put forward vigorously to formulate strategies and programs that will make regional cooperation an effective vehicle for shared progress and prosperity”⁹²

Nepal- King Birendra of Nepal as usual emphasized on genuine respect for integrity, observance of principles of sovereign equality and a spirit of give and take⁹³.

Pakistan – Mohammad Khan Junejo further said, “Our statesmen cannot and must not evade the responsibility of translating the image of SAARC as a permanent peace keeper into reality. We have to weave this commitment to peace into our bilateral relationships. We have to make it the bedrock of our multilateral cooperation.”⁹⁴ He suggested, “We may still have different perspectives on certain issues. But let these differences be subordinate to the dictates of common good. Let our diversity not stands in way of a higher unity to which we are beckoned by destiny.”⁹⁵

⁹⁰ *ibid.* , p. 65.

⁹¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .61, p.57.

⁹² SAARC Secretariat, n .62, p.68.

⁹³ SAARC Secretariat, n .63,p.71

⁹⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .64, p.72.

⁹⁵ *ibid.* , p.73.

Mohammad Khan Junejo declared, "Pakistan is willing to join in a meaningful dialogue. We are ready not only to talk but also to act and make a positive and constructive contribution."

Sri Lanka— President Jaywardene identified two barriers in SAARC success. Development of political will and settlement of bilateral issues was necessary for the success of SAARC. President Jaywardene in his speech expressed "I believe a day would soon come when we would be able to bring bilateral and contentious issues before this forum. To do so, we will have to build greater understanding and trust among us."⁹⁶ This expression of Mr. Jayewardene was against the two well known basic principles of SAARC.

Other Issues

Maldives – President Gayoom also raised issue related to international politics and, "We are assembled today in the aftermath of world wide disappointment following the east–west summit in Reykjavik"⁹⁷ Gayoom was expecting a resolution from this SAARC summit i.e. gradual reduction of arms between two superpowers.

Nepal – King Birendra appreciated the activities of SAARC in areas related to women, drug abuse, terrorism and children and also appreciated the efforts of India and Bangladesh to utilize the water resources of Nepal.

India – Rajiv Gandhi appreciated the working of SAARC especially workshops, seminars and courses and said "the surveys undertaken on regional capacities and regional resources are not only an invaluable compendium of information not available otherwise, but also an insurance against each of us wasting time and resources reinventing the wheel."⁹⁸

⁹⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .69, p.75.

⁹⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .62, p.67.

⁹⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n.61, p.58.

Bangalore Declaration-1986

The Bangalore summit laid down two documents, the Bangalore Declaration and memorandum of understanding (MOU). The 23-point Bangalore declaration addressed almost all issues raised by the heads of government. Bangalore declaration had the following outlines:

The heads of government decided to work together in accordance to the principles of SAARC charter and devise common policies and approaches for finding common solutions to the shared problems which South Asian countries face.⁹⁹

The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to promote the welfare of peoples, to improve their quality of life, economic growth, social programmes and cultural development.¹⁰⁰

The leaders called for the optimum utilization of resources in South Asia and they also emphasized on promoting interaction among the peoples of region.¹⁰¹

The heads of state emphasized on expanding cooperation in new areas and called for more action oriented programmes and projects. Technical committee on women in development and prevention of drug trafficking was also formalized during Bangalore Declaration.¹⁰²

The heads of state addressed the issue of children and called for an early conclusion and adoption of UN convention on the rights of the child. They also subscribed to the goals of universal immunization, universal primary education, maternal and child nutrition, provision of safe drinking water and adequate shelter before 2000.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Bangalore Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmndu, p.94

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*,p.94

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*,p.94

¹⁰² *ibid.*,p.95

¹⁰³ *ibid.*,p.95

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed by the foreign ministers of SAARC countries for the establishment of Secretariat at Kathmandu, Nepal headed by a Secretary General and assisted by seven directors, one each from member states.¹⁰⁴

The leaders emphasized on the danger posed to the integrity and vitality of the region by the growing menace of terrorism .The leaders unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and deplored their impact on life, property, socio-economic development, political stability, regional and international peace and cooperation. The leaders also recognized the principles laid down in UN resolution 2625.¹⁰⁵

The leaders wanted the governments to be committed to coming round of multilateral trade negotiations so that they can derive maximum benefits. The leaders also appreciated the meetings of SAARC ministers on international economic issues and the priority objectives which include, enlarged concessional assistance, the doubling of financial flows ,trade liberalization especially in textiles and agriculture ,commodity price stabilization ,transfer of technology and amelioration of official debts. They also addressed issues like protectionism, global recession, lower export earnings, debt crisis and outflow of financial resources from developing countries. The leaders urged for the revival of north South dialogue.¹⁰⁶

The leaders expressed concern over the growing global insecurity as a result of proliferation of nuclear arms taken together with failure of the Reykjavik summit. It called upon global powers to stop their policies of confrontation, intervention and domination.¹⁰⁷

In the Bangalore summit, five new fields for future cooperation was adopted namely –broadcasting, documentation, tourism, establishment of SAARC chairs and scholarships and the initiation of SAARC youth programme.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*,p.95

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*,p.95.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*,p.97.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*,p.96

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*,p.96

An important outcome of Bangalore summit was the decision to resume the stalled process of normalization of Indo Pakistan relations. A step by step approach was agreed upon during President Zia stopover in New Delhi on his way home from Dhaka in December 1985. The Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President of Sri Lanka J.R Jayewardene utilized the opportunity provided by the summit to extend the process of a negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka.

Critical Views

The Bangalore summit addressed major issue in South Asia .However the areas like telecommunication, air linking, environment preservation are some of the areas which are not addressed the Bangalore summit. The problems like visa restrictions and convertibility of currencies, and boosting up tourism in South Asia need to be addressed with anew mechanism .the long-term frame for achieving the goals under the aegis of SAARC was rather doubtful. No new area of study was taken up in this summit.

Third SAARC Summit

Kathmandu, Nepal

1987

The third SAARC Summit was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 2-4 November 1987. It was another milestone for the world's youngest grouping of states. Kathmandu summit provided another opportunity to the heads of state and government to review ongoing cooperation, to consolidate the progress made over the years and decide the future direction. The issues addressed in Kathmandu summit were as follow:

Economic Issues

Bangladesh- In the third summit meeting which was held in Kathmandu in 1987, President Ershad suggested to develop a long term strategy to face issue like protectionism and decline in official development assistance. He again called for core areas of economic activity as emphasis on such activities would make the benefits of regional cooperation more accessible to the common people. He said "For optimum benefits from such efforts we should gradually expand cooperation to cover some of the core areas of economic activities. It might be worth-while to examine how interaction in the core areas within SAARC would yield visible and equitable benefit to all member countries."¹⁰⁹ He also suggested conducting studies in these areas.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck raised economic issue related to international economic order and South South cooperation. He called for greater support to new international economic order. King Wangchuck also wanted SAARC to expand its area of activity. He said "in our efforts to achieve collective reliance, we must intensify cooperation in the core economic sectors of energy, trade, industry, money, and finance."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Speech by Gen .H.M Ershad President of Bangladesh in the Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.111.

¹¹⁰ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu , 1987,quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.115.

India – Rajiv Gandhi emphasized on cooperation in key economic areas of agriculture and rural development, transport and communication, health and education, youth and sports. Rajiv Gandhi also suggested studies on the scope and modalities of cooperation in trade and industry.¹¹¹

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom while raising issues related to economic condition in third world countries said, “The debt service burden of many third world countries is already onerous and likely to get worse.”¹¹² He called members states to accelerate our economic growth in order to manage the twin threats of inflation and recession.

Sri Lanka – President Jayewardene was concerned about economic problems and said “We have not been able to promote trade among countries of our region, and it is ironic that each of our countries the volume of our trade with other member countries does not exceed 5 percent of our trade.”¹¹³ Jayewardene said trust and confidence are important for economic cooperation.

People to People Contact

Bangladesh – President Ershad didn’t raise the issue of people to people to that extent he raised in Bangalore summit. When he stated that, “for, we are gathered here to talk essentially about our strategies to improve the quality of life of our people in the SAARC countries in a spirit of warm and togetherness against all odds of gigantic proportion”¹¹⁴

India – Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi again raised the issue of people to people contact, He said “the significance of our cooperation lies in the bringing together of our peoples. What matters is the people, their creative interaction, their growing awareness of the

¹¹¹ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister of India delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990 p.118.

¹¹² Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.121.

¹¹³ Speech by Junius Jayewardene President of Sri Lanka delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.128.

¹¹⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .109, p.112.

possibilities and potential of working together.”¹¹⁵ He suggested the leaders of South Asia to organize South Asia festival in which people from all parts of the region will take part and display their arts and crafts, poetry and songs, dance and drama, and traditional sports. This suggestion was very important to achieve success in interaction among the common people in South Asia.

Sri Lanka – Jayewardene appreciated the efforts taken by SAARC to increase people to people contact in South Asia.

Social Issues

Bangladesh – In Kathmandu summit President Ershad gave an account of activities going in Bangladesh for the upliftment of children and women. He called for adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and said “may I propose that in our Kathmandu declaration we incorporate an appeal to the community for adoption of the Convention by 1989”¹¹⁶ According to him children is the most invaluable investment for the future and called for greater public awareness and consensus on the rights of children.

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom while highlighting the issue of AIDS and relating it to drug addicts mentioned that, “drug addicts constitute a majority of AIDS carriers. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we control drug abuse in our countries, as well as contribute to all regional and international efforts aimed at fighting the spread of AIDS in order to safeguard our future generations.”¹¹⁷

Nepal – King Birendra expressed concerns on the issue of poverty and population growth, he said “the problems of poverty and population growth cry out for solutions that are far more complex, difficult and time consuming than we would imagine at first.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵, SAARC Secretariat, n.111, p.118.

¹¹⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .109, p.112.

¹¹⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .112, p.122.

¹¹⁸ Speech by Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev King of Nepal delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.107.

Pakistan – Pakistani Prime Minister raised the issue of drug abuse and said, “The highest priority must be attached to the eradication of drug abuse and drug trafficking.”¹¹⁹ As there was large-scale illegal production of opium in Pakistan and Junejo wanted to eliminate illegal production and wipe out trafficking.

Cooperation in New Areas

Bangladesh - In Kathmandu summit he raised the issue of disaster management and appreciated the seminar on disaster management and called for action plan on disaster management, he said “if the scenes of death and suffering, appearing with monotonous regularity as in recent years to stop, attention has to be focussed on more and more comprehensive and long term responses to these deep rooted problems themselves”¹²⁰ He again called for a multipurpose plan for harnessing Himalayan water resources and included areas like flood control, irrigation, navigation, fish and wild life protection.

India – Rajiv Gandhi said, “The environment is an area where cooperation is indicated. Development and the environment are inter-linked.”¹²¹ According to him regional cooperation in environment is very necessary. He also emphasized on cooperation in sectors related to heritage, art, culture, archaeology and archives. Rajiv Gandhi emphasized on development and said “people should be kept at the core of the developmental process, It is not merely our economies which grow but our people who develop.”¹²² He called for multifaceted cooperation in SAARC.

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom raised the issue of abnormal weather conditions and effects of floods and cyclones on lives of people. Maldives also suffered due to unusual tides, which destroyed country shorelines and extensive damage to infrastructure and international airport. He appreciated the efforts taken on disaster management and said, “I

¹¹⁹ Speech by Mohammad Khan Junejo Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.120.

¹²⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .109,p.113

¹²¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .111,p.119

¹²² *ibid.* ,p.119.

think it is high time that we develop within SAARC a mechanism through which we are able to monitor and assess the effects of such natural disaster.”¹²³ He also addressed issues related to rehabilitation and reconstruction. President Gayoom felt threatened by the global crisis of environmental degradation and said, “It is therefore, essential that we in SAARC also give the matter our immediate attention and join struggle for environmental protection and conservation.”¹²⁴

Nepal – King Birendra called for cooperation in new areas and expressed concerns for floods and droughts in South Asia. King Birendra called for utilization of water resources of Nepal and said “For years, we in Nepal have been consistently stressing the need for a comprehensive plan to tackle the problem through a common endeavor, maximizing the benefits through the optimal use of this, the most important of our natural resources in this part of our region. The time has therefore come for us to see the light of reality and think in terms of broader interest.”¹²⁵ He said, “it is their proper use that will help our land to grow rich in farming and fishing, in industries enabling our people to move forward to fulfill their basic needs and find dignity that is their due.”¹²⁶

Pakistan – Prime Minister Junejo suggested that we should authorize SAARC Secretariat to establish contact with ASEAN Secretariat so that two associations can take benefit from each other’s experience.¹²⁷

Security Issues

Bangladesh – The President of Bangladesh did not raise any issues related to terrorism and drugs.

¹²³ SAARC Secretariat, n .112,p.123

¹²⁴ ibid . ,p.113.

¹²⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .118,p.108

¹²⁶ ibid . ,p.108.

¹²⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .119, p.122.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck in his speech was deeply concerned about global disarmament and was encouraged by the U S–Soviet agreement on renewal of dialogue on arms reduction. He said “I must also express serious concern at the prospects of nuclear weapons development in South Asia. We must take a united stand against this ominous trend.”¹²⁸ In his view SAARC can provide a forum to conduct a meaningful dialogue among its members on this vital issue.

India - Rajiv Gandhi in his speech appreciated Non-aligned Movement and the endorsement Non-aligned Movement has received that time. He said “Powers that few decades ago scornfully rejected the Non- aligned view of the world are now coming around to seeing that there is much virtue in the fundamental principles of peaceful co-existence.”¹²⁹ Rajiv Gandhi was in favour of dismantling of nuclear weapon system of super powers.

Maldives –President Abdul Gayoom appreciated the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on the elimination of the medium and short-range missiles. According to President this step will give further impetus to the maintenance of peace and security in the world.¹³⁰

Nepal – King Birendra also addressed the problem of terrorism and said, “Indeed even now as we gather here to talk of peace and concord, terrorists may be gunning down victims. Conscious that terrorism can pose a danger to peace and stability in the region, we must actively ensure that it receives no support or sanctuary within or without.”¹³¹ Nepal was firmly against the idea of Balkanization of states.

Pakistan – Prime Minister Junejo appreciated the SAARC convention on suppression of terrorism. Junejo have expressed his firm commitment to phase out terrorism. Pakistani Prime Minister also said that Pakistan is determined to extirpate terrorism, which is

¹²⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .110, p.116

¹²⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .111, p.119.

¹³⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .112, p.125.

¹³¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .118, p.108.

illustrated by the laws, and special courts set up for punishing those who found guilty of terrorists acts. Prime Minister Junejo raised the issue of nuclear weapons; Junejo said, "Manifestly we share a common interest in keeping our densely populated region free from nuclear weapons."¹³² Junejo emphasized on a regional agreement in order to place a comprehensive ban on nuclear explosion tests.

Sri Lanka – Jayewardene raised the issue of terrorism and presented the views of Buddha.

SUGESSTIONS

Bhutan – King Wangchuck in his address raised the issue of bilateral relations and said, "let us now recognize the influence that bilateral relations will exert on the effectiveness of regional cooperation. We must keep in mind that the condition of our bilateral relations will affect the political environment of our region and determine the future well being of SAARC."¹³³ King Wangchuck was in favour of informal exchanges of views on all issues including those of bilateral nature. King Wangchuck also said "as leaders of South Asia, we must exercise political will and ensure a political environment in the region that is conducive to the growth of our young association."¹³⁴

India – Rajiv Gandhi also acknowledged the importance of informal sessions, and stated that, "The summits also provide annual opportunities for meeting outside the conference premises. These are by no means confined to questions of regional cooperation, but range freely over bilateral and international issues."¹³⁵ According to Rajiv Gandhi SAARC Summits have become an important forum for discussions on bilateral issues and free exchange of ideas.

Nepal – King Birendra of Nepal suggested ways to remove barriers in SAARC and said, "I feel that there is a danger here to move along with a piecemeal approach only taking up one issue today and adding another tomorrow. I fear such a diverse approach may lead us

¹³² SAARC Secretariat, n .119,p.126

¹³³ SAARC Secretariat, n .110, p.116.

¹³⁴ *ibid.* , p.116

¹³⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .111,p.119.

nowhere near our goal.”¹³⁶ According to King Birendra it is important for SAARC members to have common vision with clarity of thought and a distinct perception of the goals we set for our people.

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom in his speech raised the issue of rising sea level, President Gayoom said, “Since two member countries of SAARC –Bangladesh and the Maldives – are likely to be two of the worst affected nations of the world if the present trend in sea level rise continued for next few decades, I believe it vitally important that we in SAARC give a very high priority to this looming threat to our survival.”¹³⁷

Pakistan – Prime Minister Junejo in his speech appreciated the establishment of South Asian Food Security Reserve and suggested that member states to consider additional voluntary contribution to the regional food reserve. As this help will represent a convincing demonstration of the benefits of our cooperation.¹³⁸

He also called for strict adherence to the principles of territorial integrity, sovereign equality and non –interference and non-use of force and said, “we should behave towards neighbors as we would like to behave towards us, refrain from actions that we want them to eschew.”¹³⁹

Sri Lanka – According to Jayewardene SAARC success depend on how South Asian countries solve their bilateral problems. Jayewardene said “We have also to recognize the fact that our internal problems sometimes have an external dimension, for instance by causing spillover effect in a neighboring country.”¹⁴⁰ He also said that bilateral problems determine the relations between South Asian states. President Jayewardene in his speech appreciated the peace agreement between India and Sri Lanka and mentioned that, “it has to be recognized that consultations on bilateral and common problems, even if only at an

¹³⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .118,p.108.

¹³⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .112,p.123

¹³⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .119,p.126

¹³⁹ *ibid.* ,p.126.

¹⁴⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .113,p.130.

informal level are of crucial importance for the long term future of SAARC.”¹⁴¹ Jayewardene was in favour of discussions on bilateral and common problems.

Other Issues

Pakistan – Junejo in his speech said faith in our association could lead the SAARC to a greater height and called for constructive initiatives to strengthen peace and cooperation in our region. Junejo said “the harvest that awaits our collaborative effort would be so rich and abundant as to eclipse the narrow national gains and benefits that might look attractive today.”¹⁴²

Kathmandu Declaration 1987

Economic Issue

The heads of states supported multilateralism and the UN system, with special stress on the principles of Non-aligned Movement. The heads of states emphasized on UNCTAD VII and to speed up tangible assistance including increased resource flows to these countries under substantial new programme of action .The declaration also supported multilateral trade system (GATT).¹⁴³

Terrorism

Kathmandu declaration adopted regional convention on Suppression on Terrorism. This document defined the concept of terrorism and specified obligations of the member countries and especially their pledge not to permit preparations for terrorist acts in other SAARC countries.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ *ibid.* ,p.130.

¹⁴² SAARC Secretariat, n .119, p.127.

¹⁴³ Kathmandu Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, p.149.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*,p.151.

Food Security

Agreement on South Asian Food Security Reserve was signed at Kathmandu. In this reserve India contributed 1,53,000 tonnes. Indeed this was a statesman like move by the summit leaders.¹⁴⁵

People to People Contact

Kathmandu declaration laid emphasis on inclusion of audio visual exchange, SAARC fellowships and chairs, organized tourism etc. Heads of states also directed that the schemes for the SAARC Documentation Center and the SAARC youth volunteer programme be implemented soon.¹⁴⁶

Environment and Disaster Management

The heads of states decide to intensify regional cooperation with a view to develop disaster management capabilities. They also decided to commission a study for the protection and preservation of environment and the causes and consequence of natural disaster. They also expressed concern over rising sea level.¹⁴⁷

Critical View

The establishment of South Asian Food Security Reserve and contribution by the member states except India was rather small and 2, 00,000 tonnes was not enough for the poverty ridden region. The SAARC Convention on terrorism which provides for the extradition of alleged terrorist was to be ratified in six months. Till 2002 there was no extradition treaty signed between countries of South Asia except Nepal who have bilateral treaty with India. Besides, the categorization of six possible offences by terrorist without any political consideration by member states seems to be a difficult exercise. The SAARC Fellowships and Chairs Programme did not directly affect the people as this was limited to handful of educated elite or well-to-do strata of society. The summit could not include subjects related to economic and social upliftment of the common man. The Kathmandu summit discussed core areas including trade and industry, but it could not achieve breakthrough.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.151

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p.150.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p.150.

Fourth SAARC SUMMIT

Islamabad, Pakistan

1988

The fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad from 29-31 December 1988, marked a turning point in the history of the world's largest regional cooperation. At this summit all leaders addressed the problem of wide gap between promise and reality. All members addressed the issue, which are common in South Asia. However, other issues were also raised.

Economic Issues

Bangladesh- In the fourth Summit meeting, President Ershad in his speech raised issues related to world economy. He said, "the world economy continues to cause concern. Reluctance to negotiate on the critical issues of trade, finance, debt and development still persist. We remain prisoners to a system where external market, terms of trade and interest rates continue to undermine our economic prospects."¹⁴⁸ In this speech, he called for the revival of the process of North-South dialogue.

Bhutan –King Wangchuck stated that South Asian economic progress was biggest challenge. Therefore he was in favour of cooperation in core economic areas like, trade, industry, energy, money, finance. He believed that cooperation in these core areas will produce real benefits to the people of South Asia.¹⁴⁹

India – According to Rajiv Gandhi economic cooperation must lie at the heart of regional cooperation. He said, "there has to be a degree of harmonization to ensure that complementarities in our economies are matched to give strength to our respective

¹⁴⁸ Speech by Gen .H.M Ershad President of Bangladesh in the Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.166.

¹⁴⁹ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.170

economies and strength to our voice and influence in world forums.”¹⁵⁰ He expressed his dissatisfaction towards the slow pace in finalizing the core areas of cooperation i.e. trade and industry. He also suggested utilizing the forums of the United Nations for promoting the new international economic order.

Pakistan - Benazir Bhutto in her speech raised the issue related global economic environments and said, “the existing international economic system and structures are inequitable and have an inherent tendency to perpetuate and widen the gap between the rich and poor countries.”¹⁵¹ She was concerned about debt burden, which was due to large structural imbalance between developed and developing countries. She called for renewing discussions on international economic situation. Bhutto was expecting a responsive attitude from President George Bush of US.

Social Issues

Bangladesh- President Ershad appreciated the efforts taken during Bangalore and Kathmandu summit and said “for a purposeful cooperation in this sector there is, I believe, a need to undertake wider exchange of information, experience and expertise.”¹⁵² He called for more purposeful international cooperation for children and proposed a summit of world leaders on the issue of children, which will give further impetus to the action programme for the children of south Asia.

India – According to Rajiv Gandhi the primary problem of South Asian countries was removal of poverty and South Asian countries should give poverty top priority. He called for development at grassroots. He also raised a number of development issues.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.174

¹⁵¹ Speech by Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.162

¹⁵² SAARC Secretariat, n .148, p.168.

¹⁵³ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.174

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom raised the issue of children as global recession and debt burden of the third world have forced many developing nations to reduce their spending on health and education which will have a severe impact on children. He called for intensifying cooperation in this field.

Nepal – King Birendra was concerned about the population explosion and malnutrition. He mentioned that population explosion leads to further problems like malnutrition, illiteracy and unemployment. As a result of this, pressure on land grows, forest resources get dwindled, and encroachment increases droughts, floods, erosions and landslides. Population explosion has spillover effects. King Birendra expressed his concerns about poverty and mentioned steps taken by him in Nepal. He said people of South Asia are starving and it is the responsibility of member countries to fulfill these basic needs within the framework of SAARC.¹⁵⁴

Pakistan – Benazir Bhutto said, “hunger, unemployment, malnutrition, slums stalk the lives of a large number of our people and are reflection of the society that poverty, high infant mortality create! Our population growth limits, if not negate, our efforts at rapid social and economic development.”¹⁵⁵ According to Bhutto these problems if addressed can make South Asia a great center of economic power.

Sri Lanka – President Jayewardene appreciated SAARC Food Security Reserve and said, “This is a notable achievement, but the mechanisms for action must be sufficiently flexible and effective so that the reserve can be speedily utilized when needed in a time of calamity.”¹⁵⁶ He called for immediate assistance in case of emergencies.

¹⁵⁴ Speech by Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev King of Nepal delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.183

¹⁵⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n.151, p.163

¹⁵⁶ Speech by Junius Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.184.

People to People Contact and Quality of Life

Bangladesh- President Ershad while emphasizing on improving the quality of life of the people stated that, “a second priority arises out of our avowed determination to improve tangibly the quality life of our people.”¹⁵⁷ In his speech, it is evident that he keeps track of every activity going in SAARC as he said “more than a hundred events and programmes have taken place during 1988 that underscore the confidence that the member –states are reposing in SAARC as an instrument of economic and social change in South Asia.”¹⁵⁸ He also suggested some measures by giving reference of Bangladesh “in Bangladesh, we have carried out far reaching reforms in decentralizing administration to ensure effective participation of the people in national reconstruction and development”.¹⁵⁹ He wanted SAARC to focus on basic needs and human resource development.

India – Rajiv Gandhi wanted to make SAARC a people’s movement. In order to make it a people’s movement he called for mutual exchange of ideas and thoughts. Rajiv Gandhi said, “I would hope that such a free flow of information will lead to the dismantling of all the restrictions that stand in the way of our people getting to know each other, meeting each other, interacting with each other.”¹⁶⁰ Rajiv Gandhi was of the view that people of the South Asian region should be allowed to travel around the region and suggested two important areas for greater people interaction in South Asia i.e. sports and culture.

Pakistan – Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in her speech referred to the political stability in Pakistan and her government’s commitment to democratic principles.

Sri Lanka– President Jayewardene in his speech recalled the Dhaka charter in which the promotion of welfare of people and improving the quality of life was embodied. He said this because SAARC was not addressing the objectives of charter. He also raised issue of

¹⁵⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .148, p.169.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.* ,p.169.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.* , p.169.

¹⁶⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.150,p.174

people to people contact and said countries should identify more areas where momentum could be achieved in people to people contacts.¹⁶¹

New Areas

Bangladesh- President Ershad reiterated his stand on environmental issues. This time natural disasters like floods, drought, earthquakes, landslides and cyclones were his prime agenda, He called for not only management of disaster but also for their prevention. He appreciated the measures taken by member states, by saying “I am convinced that identification of measures at the regional level as envisaged by the group of experts with the problem of natural disaster and continuing degradation of environment”¹⁶² and called for completing the study and action plan for meaningful cooperation among the member states. He also gave reference of the recent floods in Bangladesh and called for a collective action in the common interest.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck suggested that increasing the areas of cooperation will not ultimately lead to success and said, “a deliberate and realistic study of their necessity and feasibility must always be carried out before selecting any new areas of cooperation.”¹⁶³ These studies will ultimately produce fruitful results and credibility to SAARC.

India- Rajiv Gandhi suggested cooperation in the area of environmental conservation, as this was a global problem. Rajiv Gandhi said, “Environmental degradation is a fundamental cause and sometimes a consequence of poverty. We have learned through bitter experience that the cost of conservation is an inescapable cost of development.”¹⁶⁴ He also included the other issue related to environment like, greenhouse effect, sea-level rise, changing weather patterns, and the monsoons. He called for cooperation in sustainable development.

¹⁶¹ Speech by Junius Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.184

¹⁶² SAARC Secretariat, n .148, p.169.

¹⁶³ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.170.

¹⁶⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .150, p.176.

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom raised the issue of environment preservation and protection. As countries like Maldives and Bangladesh are facing the critical problem of sea level rise. He called the leaders to take immediate attention to this area.¹⁶⁵

Nepal – King Birendra expressed again his willingness to cooperate any venture for the multipurpose development of water resources bilaterally, trilaterally or multilaterally for the mutual benefit of the region. He also added that Nepal is willing to cooperate in tackling rising sea level.¹⁶⁶

Pakistan – Benazir Bhutto in his speech raised the issue of drought and floods and said, “we need to evolve a common strategy to forestall and prepare for natural disaster, be ready to take appropriate measures to minimize death and destruction, and cooperate to provide relief assistance when disaster strikes.”¹⁶⁷ Bhutto called for greater effort and more concrete actions from the Association and from member states.

Sri Lanka– President Jayewardene was of view that regional cooperation can be meaningful only if it addresses cooperation in core areas, trade and industry. He also suggested leaders to set up a ministerial committee to examine issues such as promotion intra- regional trade, preferential tariffs, and joint marketing mechanisms for the export of selected commodities.¹⁶⁸

Security Issues

Bangladesh – President Ershad mentioned that, “We are witness to a resurgence of support for the United Nations in its central role as peace-maker and peace keeper. He said that peace is indivisible prosperity cannot be gained selfishly”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.179

¹⁶⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n.154, p.184.

¹⁶⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .151, p.164.

¹⁶⁸ SAARC Secretariat,n .161, p.185.

¹⁶⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .148, p.167.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck was of the view that disarmament has vital effect on economic progress. King Jigme was concerned about nuclear arms proliferation in South Asia, he said, “such a development will now pose a constant threat to the security and stability of South Asia but it can also bring in the involvement of outside powers in our region.”¹⁷⁰

India – Rajiv Gandhi in his speech highlighted the role of non-align Movement and According to him Non-aligned worldview looks to a world beyond nuclear weapons. He said, “non aligned world replaces fear with confidence, hatred with goodwill, and violence with peace and peaceful coexistence.”¹⁷¹

Maldives - President Abdul Gayoom raised the issue of security as Maldives was attacked by mercenaries and with timely action by India helped to uphold democracy. Gayoom said, “I strongly feel that the newly emerging regional dimensions of terrorism and mercenary activity not only endanger the security, political independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of our nations but also threaten the peace and stability of the whole region.”¹⁷² He appreciated SAARC Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and expected early completion of U N convention against the recruitment, financing and training of mercenaries.

Nepal – King Birendra in his speech suggested a mechanism within the framework of convention of suppression of terrorism, which is capable of dealing with situation that arose in Maldives. King Birendra said, “as for Nepal once we refuse to aid, abet, shelter or recognize terrorist and terrorism in any form or manifestation, this scourge of our times can at least be rendered ineffective in our region.”¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n .163, p.171.

¹⁷¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .150, p.177.

¹⁷² Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.179.

¹⁷³ Speech by Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal delivered in Fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, 1988, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.183.

Pakistan - Benazir Bhutto expressed concern toward military spending. Benazir said, "it is therefore time that we should consider ways of limiting our arms expenditure and seek regional solutions for curbing arms race and the danger of nuclear proliferation and war."¹⁷⁴ She expressed the need for peace and prosperity in the region.

International Issues

Bhutan – King Wangchuck in his speech said, "the tensions which marked super power relations in the past are now being replaced by a more positive attitude that gives increasing emphasis on dialogues and discussions."¹⁷⁵ King Wangchuck in this context called for renewal of North South dialogue and establishment of new international economic order.

India – Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in his speech referred to the international scenario at that time. Rajiv Gandhi referred to the treaty between US and Soviet Union that provided dismantling of nuclear weapons, the Geneva Accord in Afghanistan and expressed that all the parties concerned respect the Accord. He also referred to India's support to Palestine, Kampuchean conflict, easing of tensions between Soviet Union and China. He also made reference to revival of India -China relations and said that these relations were based on Panchseel.¹⁷⁶

Pakistan – Benazir in her speech referred to Afghanistan situation and was hopeful that Soviet forces will withdraw from Afghanistan in accordance with Geneva Accord. Benazir said, "the end of war will also open new possibilities for cooperation and strengthen peace in the region as a whole."¹⁷⁷ Benazir referred to significant development in relations between two superpowers and Chinese and Soviet rapprochement. She said these developments are bound to have an important and salutary impact on South Asian region.

¹⁷⁴ SAARC Secretariat, n .151, p.164.

¹⁷⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n .163, p.116.

¹⁷⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n .153, p.175.

¹⁷⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n .1151, p.164

Other Issues

Bhutan – King Wangchuck viewed political environment and bilateral relations as the important determinants in success of regional cooperation. King Jigme said “while it is true that ultimately it will require bold and farsighted bilateral initiatives to build lasting peace and stability in our region, SAARC too, can play a more positive and effective role in improving the political climate of South Asia.”¹⁷⁸ This suggestion of King Jigme is rather bold than practical. He stated that political will and personal commitment are also crucial factors in SAARC viability.

Pakistan – Benazir Bhutto in her address showed her commitment to crack down the narcotics trade and called for cooperation among South Asian countries to curb drug trade. Bhutto proposed the year 1989 as the year of a war against narcotics.¹⁷⁹

Islamabad Declaration 1988

The Islamabad declaration came out with new strategies. It suggested a regional plan called “SAARC 2000 –integrated plan to provide basic needs such as shelter, education and literacy to over one billion population of the region by the turn of the century”¹⁸⁰

The member states ratified the SAARC convention on Suppression of Terrorism and launched South Asia Volunteer Programme among SAARC countries.

The leaders decided to include education as an agreed area of cooperation. Expressing concern at the high incidence of drug production and trafficking and abuse, the leaders decided to declare 1989 as the ‘SAARC Year Against Drug Abuse.’¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n .163, p.116.

¹⁷⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n.153, p.169.

¹⁸⁰ Islamabad Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathamndu,p.211.

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*,p.210

The leaders also reiterated their commitment to the needs of children in national development plans and incorporated U N Declaration of making 1990 as the year of the girl child.¹⁸²

The leaders urged the expert group on natural disaster and protection of environment to complete their study in the shortest possible time. The leaders (at the behest of India) decided to initiate a joint project to study “green house effect” and its impact on the region.¹⁸³

The leaders, while lamenting on the slow progress of the movement of the people within the region, decided that Supreme Court judges and members of the national legislatures would be entitled to a special travel document to freely visit any SAARC country without any visa restriction.¹⁸⁴

The Islamabad declaration called for action-oriented programmes, which would improve the quality of life of the peoples of South Asia. SAARC members realized the need to reorient their foreign policies in order to inject positive bilaterism.¹⁸⁵

Islamabad summit provided Indo- Pak relation a new high as three agreements were signed. These were, non-attack on each other’s nuclear facilities, double taxation avoidance and cultural cooperation, between India and Pakistan.

Critical Views

The Islamabad summit did march a step ahead to include economic issues, but modalities to implement them were not concretized at all. There was huge gap between the promise and reality of accomplishment. SAARC has already devoted too much of its time in making studies holding conferences and seminars and exploring grounds. Relaxation of visa for judges and parliamentarians was not sufficient as large number of people would like to visit each other countries with minimum formalities and restrictions.

¹⁸² *ibid.*,p.210

¹⁸³ *ibid.*,p.210

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*,p.211.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p.209.

Chapter - IV

SAARC 1985-1995: An Analysis of Summit Speeches and Declaration during 1990-95

The first summit at Dhaka was a major landmark in the history of regionalism in South Asia as it formalized the effort of late Zia ur Rehman and adopted Dhaka declaration and SAARC Charter. The second summit at Bangalore stressed on raising South Asian consciousness and launched various programmes to promote people to people contact. The third summit held in Kathmandu addressed concrete areas like terrorism, food security and cooperation in core areas of trade and industry. Signing of Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and Agreement to establish South Asian Food Security Reserve were the major achievements of third summit. The fourth summit held in Islamabad was responsible for inclusion of core areas in the working of SAARC. Visa relaxation was also provided to judges and parliamentarians in order to promote people to people contact.

However, the inclusion of core areas of trade, transport, industry, finance and technology in SAARC still remains a distinct possibility. Though leaders in first four summits commissioned studies related to core areas. Despite the slow growth of SAARC it is the only forum that brings together the South Asian leaders four times in span of six years. Given the climate of mutual suspicion and antagonism, this is no mean achievement. The summit meetings provide opportunities to the leaders of South Asia to remove their mistrust and antagonism.

Apart from summit meetings there have been number of meetings of foreign ministers, the standing committee and technical committees and all these meetings have largely contributed to agreements and various schemes. However, we see these meetings remained confined to exchange of information therefore action and implementation of the recommendation of these meetings in SAARC is very important.

Fifth SAARC SUMMIT

Male, Maldives

1990

The fifth SAARC Summit was held at Male on 21-23 November 1990. The annual summit could not take place in 1989 due to Sri Lanka's flat refusal for holding the summit till the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) from its soil. Ultimately this matter was solved when Colombo voluntarily agreed that Male might hold summit in 1990, the year of silver jubilee celebrations of its independence. Male summit emphasized on objectives and principles. One of the most important outcomes was suggestions on result oriented programmes and business like approach in summits.

Economic Issues

Bhutan – King Wangchuck while expressing satisfaction on the proposed SAARC Regional Fund, he stated “this would greatly facilitate the mobilization of funds for SAARC activities both from member and donor countries and also from multilateral agencies.”¹ According to King Wangchuck external resources can play an important role in achieving collective self-reliance. He was of view that establishment of European communities and murgence of new groupings in the world has highlighted the role of regional organization like SAARC.

India – Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar in his speech expressed his concern about the continuing trade and current account deficits, rising external debt and debt service burden. He also said that economic integration around the world provides South Asia a lesson and a challenge, as increasing regional integration would make it more difficult for

¹ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuck ,King of Bhutan delivered in fifth SAARC Summit held in Male 1990,quoted from *SAARC Summits* ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.,1995,p.10-11.

countries of South Asia to compete in the markets of developed countries. He also emphasized on cooperation in core areas of trade, industry, finance and energy.²

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom in his address stressed on renewing new international economic order which will bridge the gap between rich and poor countries. He was in favour of equal opportunities to developing countries in the field of trade, and scientific and technological advancement. He also raised the economic issue like mounting debt crisis, unfavorable terms of trade, the crisis in the primary commodities markets, and major cut in aid flows from the industrialized countries.³

Nepal – Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai was of view that “political and economic consequences around the world will hardly affect South Asia if we stand collectively and can change these consequences into opportunities.”⁴

Pakistan – Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was concerned about the widening gap between rich and the poor countries. He said “the negative financial flows, the tariff and non-tariff barriers erected by the industrialized countries against the developing nations, the serious external debt problem faced by the third world, the high interest rates and, lately the soaring oil prices continue to debilitate the economy of the developing nations.”⁵ According to him South Asia will have to depend on their own resources and skills and in this context South–South collaboration assume immense importance to overcome economic problems.

Sri Lanka – Prime Minister Wijetunga appreciated the efforts of non-governmental organization and said “non governmental organization approach might help to overcome official diffidence” as Sri Lanka’s industrialists proposed a joint SAARC business council

² Speech by Chandra Shekhar Prime Minister of India delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.13-16

³ Speech by Abdul Gayoom President of Maldives delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.1-3

⁴ Speech by Krishna Prasad Bhattarai Prime Minister of Nepal delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male 1990, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.18-20.

⁵ Speech by Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.22-24

to explore avenues for joint cooperation. He was hopeful that opening of commercial avenues would further lead to dialogue in other spheres. He called the member states to be more outward looking and welcomed the setting up of the regional fund.⁶

Social Issues

India – Chandra Shekhar was concerned about food security reserve, as no member countries have so far utilized this reserve. He called for reviving the level and quality of the food reserve and its mode of operation.⁷

Maldives – President Gayoom raised the issue of children, he said “children hold the key to our common future and that our ultimate goal should be to improve their standard of well being and to ensure them their basic rights, freedom and self respect.”⁸ He called for new thrust to the programmes aimed at children. He suggested 1990s to be declared as the decade for the girl child so that member state can focus on this important area.

Pakistan – Nawaz Sharif appreciated the Regional Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and said this convention will greatly strengthen our hands to eliminate drug abuse and drug trafficking in our region. He also raised the issue of children and women in development and appreciated the programs.⁹

Sri Lanka – Wijetunga raised the issue of human development and involvement of youth in development purpose.¹⁰

⁶ Speech by D B Wijetunga Prime Minister of Sri Lanka delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990., SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.26-28

⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n.2, p.15.

⁸ Speech by Abdul Gayoom President of Maldives delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.1-3

⁹ Speech by Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.22-24

¹⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.6, p.16.

Security Issues

Bangladesh - President Ershad raised the issue of security and suggested collective security with the back up of regional arrangements based on the U N charter. He also raised the issue of security of small states.¹¹

Bhutan – King Wangchuck called the member countries to ratify the SAARC convention on suppression of terrorism to make it effective.

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom called for preservation of sovereign and independent status of member countries. Gayoom said “the challenge of putting an end to all outside intervention and interference and of ensuring that our countries do not become hot beds of conflict engineered from outside.”¹² He also expressed satisfaction in the field of disarmament, the role of United Nations and recognition of environmental issue globally. He stated that the U.N. convention against the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries which was adopted last year along with SAARC convention on suppression of terrorism if properly implemented will serve as an effective instruments to eliminate or somewhat reduce the growing threat of terrorism.

Nepal – Prime Minister Bhattarai expressed concern over the nuclear arms.¹³

Pakistan – Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif raised the issue of disarmament and said, “We need to cut down non productive expenditures and direct our energies to improve the quality of life of our people.”¹⁴ He called SAARC member states to contribute to the process of disarmament by jointly renouncing nuclear weapons through a binding agreement. He also raised the issue of security of small states.

¹¹ Speech by Gen .H.M Ershad President of Bangladesh delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male 1990, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.5-8

¹² SAARC Secretariat, n .8 ,p.2

¹³ Speech by Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, Prime Minister of Nepal delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male 1990, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.18-20.

¹⁴.SAARC Secretariat, n.5,p.22.

Sri Lanka – Wijetunga called for closer cooperation, greater coordination and more exchanges of information among the member countries for the prevention of terrorism. He also supported and sponsored the Maldivian initiative at the United Nations, on the security of small states. He suggested exchanges of information and experiences among the security agencies.¹⁵

International Issues

Bangladesh – President Ershad was concerned about Gulf Crisis and called the leaders of South Asia to discuss Gulf issue formally in the SAARC forum, as this will be SAARC's modest achievement to international community.¹⁶

Maldives – President Gayoom called for peaceful solution under the Security Council and Arab league decisions of Gulf Crisis.¹⁷

Environmental Issues

India - Chandra Shekhar said, "problems related to environmental degradation deserve immediate attention and corrective measures should be taken promptly."¹⁸ He called for urgent completion of studies. He also requested Nepal to devote more energies in saving environment as it affects Indian environment.

Maldives – President Gayoom expressed dissatisfaction with on going programmes on environmental issues. He suggested, "Regional bodies as well as individual nations cease all current practices that are harmful to the environment, and that they contribute to the

¹⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n.6, p.28

¹⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n.11, p.8

¹⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n.3, p.2.

¹⁸ Speech by Chandra Shekhar Prime Minister of India delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male, 1990, quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.13-16.

transition towards environmentally sound development strategies.”¹⁹ He also proposed 1992 as the “SAARC year of the Environment”.

Pakistan – Nawaz Sharif expressed his concern on the degradation of the environment. He called SAARC member states to complete the studies related to environment.

Sri Lanka – Prime Minister Wijetunga expressed concern on the assessment²⁰ made by the food and agriculture organization on the rice production. He also endorsed the call by the minister for negotiations on framework convention on climate change.

New Areas

Bangladesh – President Ershad suggested close linkages with non-governmental organization and the formation of a variety of associations under the aegis of SAARC to promote contact, cooperation and interaction.

India – Chandra Shekhar was of view that manpower which is abundant in South Asia should be used to exploit natural resources. He expressed dissatisfaction over the limited infrastructural cooperation, as he wanted to change the freight rates²¹, which was quite high. He also requested the President of Bangladesh and Prime Minister of Pakistan to bring better understanding and intimate cooperation in freight rates.

Chandra Shekhar stressed on cooperation in new areas particularly bio-technology, he said, “with the onset of the biotechnology revolution, genetic resources are becoming high-premium, crucial developmental resources.”²² As access to genetic resources is essential for agricultural research and plant breeding programmes he proposed an exchange of expertise in genetic conservation and maintenance of germplasm banks. He

¹⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n.8,p.1

²⁰ Speech by D B Wijetunga Prime Minister of Sri Lanka delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male,1990., quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.26-28.

²¹ SAARC Secretariat, n .2,p.16.

²² ibid . ,p.14.

supported the ministerial level meeting in order to develop common perceptions and strategy in international forums.

Nepal – Prime Minister Bhattarai appreciated participation at the non-governmental level, but he said “though there is a danger of such participations lapsing into mere exercises if they only proliferate and fall out of step with political commitment.”²³

Pakistan – Nawaz Sharif raised the issue of securing better life for disabled persons. He proposed the year 1993 to be declared as the “SAARC year of disabled person”. He called for greater awareness among the people to render assistance to disabled persons.²⁴

SUGGESTIONS

Bangladesh – President Ershad appreciated the launching of SAARC 2000 a basic needs perspective and said, “Despite these advances a substantial gap remained between rising expectations and visible progress.”²⁵ Ershad said “we must also take a new hard look at updating and strengthening our existing institutional arrangements to make them more responsive to change.”²⁶ He called for qualitative improvement in SAARC programmes. According to him SAARC should address major economic, social, technical and scientific problems in the region. He further stated that progress in several areas needs to be firmed up through national legislation and actual implementation.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck in his speech suggested a business like approach in summit meetings and to reduce ceremonies and formalities. He said “more time and attention should be devoted to informal meetings and discussions with adequate time also provided for bilateral talks.”²⁷ According to him bilateral talks will provide frank exchange of views between the member states, which will further lead to mutual understanding and

²³ SAARC Secretariat,n.4,p.18

²⁴ SAARC Secretariat,n.9,p.24.

²⁵ Speech by Gen .H.M Ershad President of Bangladesh delivered in the Fifth SAARC Summit held in Male 1990, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.5-8.

²⁶ *ibid.* , p.5.

²⁷ SAARC Secretariat ,n,1,p.10

dispel misunderstanding and apprehensions. He was of view that state of bilateral relations can determine effectiveness of SAARC. He also emphasized on implementation of programmes and more careful selection of activities in SAARC. He called the members to exercise political will, which is necessary for the growth and effectiveness of SAARC. He also suggested considering issues purely on their merit.

India – Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar in his speech suggested that SAARC meeting should address to the problems of people, as mere diplomatic meetings are not going to bring hope and trust among the people of South Asia. He called the chairman to introduce a new method of function and a new modality in dealing with the problems.²⁸

Nepal – Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai raised the demands made by Indian Prime Minister on action-oriented programmes instead of indulging so much in formalities. He emphasized on programmes, which deals with economic problems. He called for inter sectoral coordination of all SAARC activities as it will also strengthen the trend towards policy coordination. He was of view that decisions which have already been made and which are likely to induce cooperation at the policy level should receive priority over new and disparate projects.²⁹

Pakistan – According to Nawaz Sharif success of SAARC depends upon peaceful resolution of the disputes and differences between the member states, Nawaz Sharif said “it is therefore necessary that we should harness the requisite political will to eliminate the root causes of suspicion and tension in our region.”³⁰ He also appreciated “SAARC 2000- a Basic Needs Perspective ” and suggested attempts to be made to coordinate the various aspects of the National plans of the member states so as to put together the composite picture of the of basic needs of the South Asian region.

²⁸ SAARC Secretariat ,n.2,p.16.

²⁹ . SAARC Secretariat,n.13,p.19.

³⁰SAARC Secretariat ,n.5,p.23

Other Issues

India – Chandra Shekhar appreciated the fund for regional projects and said “the fund could make available credit on easy terms for the identification and development of projects and even for investment in the startup of the projects in small scale sector.”³¹ He suggested an expert level meeting to identify precise modalities about the source of funds.

People to People Contact Issues

Bangladesh – Ershad was of view that issue of people to people contact should be discussed at multilateral and bilateral level which will ultimately lead to political decision of allowing visa restrictions and more effective communication. According to him political will is required to promote people to people contact.³²

Sri Lanka – Prime Minister D B Wijetunga was of view that people to people contact is the most important ingredient for promoting regional cooperation. He supported the SAARC studies on contemporary development in various universities as knowledge and education play a key role in promoting people to people contacts in the South Asian region.³³

Male Declaration 1990

The leaders of the SAARC called for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the restoration of its legitimate government. The leaders also urged the early conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.³⁴

The leaders expanded the scope of SAARC activities to the core areas, like environmental issues, mass media, biotechnology and tourism. They also declared 1990's as the “Decade of Girl Child”, establishment of a Centre for Human Resource Development.³⁵

³¹SAARC Secretariat ,n.18, p.14

³²SAARC Secretariat, n.11, p.8.

³³ SAARC Secretariat, n.6, p.28.

³⁴ Male Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu,p.53.

³⁵ *ibid.*,p.52.

The leaders also lay an agreement on exploring the modalities of setting up: Regional Fund for Financing Joint Venture Projects, establishment of a Cottage Industrial handicraft Centre, Regional Tuberculosis Centre and Regional Documentation Centre.³⁶

The summit deliberations resulted in the signing of the SAARC Convention in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. A SAARC travel document was launched for promotion of organized tourism.³⁷

Sixth SAARC Summit

Colombo, Sri Lanka

1991

The Sixth summit of the SAARC heads of states of government was held at Colombo on 21 December, 1991. The sixth summit was originally scheduled to be held on 7 November 1991, but could not be held because of Bhutanese King's inability to attend owing to the domestic problems.³⁸ The Indian government pointed that the summit required the personal presence of all the heads of states and government to secure unanimity on all decisions as per charter of SAARC.

Economic Issues

India – Prime Minister Narasimha Rao said collective economic security could assure benefits. He said, “Freight costs and energy consumption can be reduced. Wider access to consumers would break the shackles of small markets and open up avenues for economies of scale. Joint ventures would help promote trade liberalization and encourage more detailed forms of economic cooperation. Adoption of increasingly outward oriented

³⁶ *ibid.*, p.54.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p.52.

³⁸ The main problem was that the migrants from Nepal in Southern Bhutan were reportedly trying to uproot the natives and are even spearheading a movement against the monarchy. Thus it causes threat to Bhutan's integrity.

trading regimes would lead to greater competitiveness of our economies.”³⁹ Narasimha Rao was in favour of removal of internal barriers and the free movements of goods, services, and peoples.

Maldives – President Gayoom was concerned about the economic gap between the poor developing countries of the South and the prosperous nations of the north. According to him development and trade finance require establishment of a South Asian fund that will effectively complement the resources. He also said “we must not shy away from venturing into meaningful cooperation with those developed countries and international agencies who have shown interest in extending their support to us in our development programmes.”⁴⁰

Nepal – Girja Prasad Koirala called the members to address the economic problems of the peoples and alleviate their miseries. He said, “Today’s international order is becoming more cooperative with the resolution of deep rooted conflicts, and reliance on greater independence.”⁴¹ He wanted South Asia to take advantage of regional cooperation. He also suggested institutionalization of intra-SAARC cooperation in core economic areas. He also recommended trade liberalization policy with appropriate safeguards for weaker countries like Nepal and Bhutan.

Sri Lanka – Premadasa raised the issue of economic cooperation and said, “We are certain that tangible economic cooperation of benefit to our people can be promoted through an increase in trade within the region.”⁴² He supported South Asian Preferential Trade Area (SAPTA) and South Asian Economic Community (SAEC).

³⁹ Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo, 1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.70-71

⁴⁰ Speech by Abdul Gayoom President of Maldives delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo 1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.73-75.

⁴¹ Speech by Girija Prasad Koirala Prime Minister of Nepal delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo, 1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.77-79

⁴² Speech by Ranasinghe Premadasa President of Sri Lanka delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo, 1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.63-65.

Social Issues

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia emphasized on providing food to the hungry people of South Asia and she said “raising the productivity of the poor must receive the highest priority in our developmental efforts.”⁴³ She also offered support in this context and called for careful examination of the experience of Bangladesh and to adopt a regional approach to poverty alleviation. She wanted to bring women to the center stage of development process and said “they must be mobilized as a powerful engine of social development for the disadvantaged to break out of the poverty trap.”⁴⁴ She wanted women to play an effective role in sustainable development.

India – Prime Minister Narasimha Rao said, “Poverty must be eradicated, and if that is to be, population growth must be limited. Literacy must empower citizens to share the development processes as full participants and not merely as witnesses or beneficiaries”⁴⁵ He also raised the issue disease prevention. He emphasized on development that touch the lives of people.

Maldives- President Abdul Gayoom said “children are our future, and we need to make adequate investment in them .we have to ensure their survival, their development and protection of their rights.”⁴⁶ He also raised the issue of girl child. President Gayoom proposed anew approach to development, which will bring a major social transformation with emphasis on human development. This approach will address poverty alleviation programme and a broad fronted conservation programme.

Sri Lanka - President Ranasinghe Premadasa condemned poverty and said, “Deprivation anywhere in South Asia means insecurity everywhere in South Asia.”⁴⁷ He recommended

⁴³ Speech by Begum Khaleda Zia Prime Minister of Bangladesh delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo,1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.63-65.

⁴⁴ *ibid* .,p.6

⁴⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n.39,p.71.

⁴⁶ SAARC Secretariat,n.40, p.74.

⁴⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n. 42, p.63.

the appointment of an independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation. He also referred to the poverty alleviation programme of Sri Lanka.

Security Issues

Bhutan – King Wangchuck in his speech referred to the terrorist violence in Bhutan and said “we must now work together to eradicate this menace before it engulfs our societies and tears apart. The very foundation of regional cooperation stands threaten today by the growing cult of terrorism in South Asia.”⁴⁸

Maldives - President Gayoom appreciated the support given by member countries on resolution on security of small states and SAARC convention on suppression of terrorism. He suggested exploring a legal and practical mechanism to enforce the provision of convention.

Sri Lanka - President Ranasinghe Premadasa appreciated the efforts taken to eliminate terrorism and drugs. He also appreciated the SAARC regional convention on terrorism and said, “therefore pending the enactment of enabling legislation by all member- states under the convention, practical measures of cooperation must continue to be vigorously pursued.”⁴⁹ President Premadasa in his speech also raised the issue of human rights.

International Issues

India – Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao has expressed commitment to the democratic principles of United Nations. He said the formation of regional blocs among developed countries could be discriminatory, particularly in short and medium term. He said, “developing countries need an effective safeguard, and the means for furthering their

⁴⁸ Speech by Wangchuck Singye Wangchuck ,King of Bhutan delivered in Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo 1991,quoted from *SAARC Summits* ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.,1995,p.67-68.

⁴⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n. 42, p.63

development and strengthening their economies.”⁵⁰ According to him South Asian cooperation is of great importance in fulfilling this need.

Environmental Issues

Bangladesh – Prime Minister Khaleda Zia called for early implementation of the action plan on natural disaster and protection and preservation of environment. According to her environment is closely related to poverty, as alleviation of poverty will reduce the stress on land, air, water, forest and other life support systems. She called for sustainable development and suggested to approach global community to fund sustainable development in South Asia.⁵¹

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom appreciated the efforts taken on environmental degradation, greenhouse effect, rising sea level and natural disasters. According to him South Asian countries need broad international consensus for action and to arrest and reverse the environmental trends. He called for greater awareness among the people about environmental problems and their active participation in national efforts to combat the adverse effects of the changing environment.⁵²

Nepal – Prime Minister Koirala related environment with poverty he said, “While it is poverty which causes degradation of the environment in the developing countries. It is unchecked affluence which is largely responsible for ecological problems.”⁵³ Koirala emphasized on concrete and coordinated programames of poverty alleviation.

⁵⁰ SAARC Secretariat,n.39 ,p.71

⁵¹ Speech by Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo,1991, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.64

⁵²Speech by Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo 1991, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.,1995,p.75

⁵³ SAARC Secretariat ,n. 41, p.79.

New Areas

India – Narasimha Rao called for togetherness, as he wanted cooperation in areas like post harvest technologies, transformation of agricultural wastes into energy, research, development and implementation of new sources of energy particularly solar energy. He also proposed traditional medicine therapy and called for sharing experience between SAARC countries in traditional medicines.⁵⁴

Sri Lanka- President Ranasinghe Premadasa moreover suggested “in other areas, SAARC needs now to move from principle to practice. We must now move from the peripheral to the central development issues. We must give priority to issues that acutely affect the lives of our people: SAARC will be of relevance to our people only to the extent that we succeed in resolving such issues.”⁵⁵ Premadasa also raised the issue of human rights.

SUGGESTIONS

Bangladesh – Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said, “We can now think of long term goals for improving the living standards. We can now aim at harmonizing our complementarities.”⁵⁶ Khaleda Zia also suggested institutional adjustments in SAARC as both Bangladesh and Maldives have formulated the proposal on a business like and functional approach within SAARC. She also suggested single document at the end of summit. Rationalization of SAARC activities, greater direction from political bodies, result oriented activities are the major proposals which Khaleda Zia made in her speech.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck called for bold and farsighted initiatives.

Nepal – Koirala was concerned about the expanding economic interaction of some big member countries and said “SAARC as a group can work on this agenda for mutual

⁵⁴ Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo, 1991, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.70

⁵⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n.42, p.63

⁵⁶ SAARC Secretariat, n.43, p.64

benefits.”⁵⁷ According to him success of SAARC depends on courage and political will of member states.

Pakistan - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif expressed “deep regret” that summit could not be held on schedule. He said “we need to avoid such disruptive postponements in future which can prove detrimental to the effectiveness of the organization.”⁵⁸ He also emphasized on the introspection of the SAARC charter in order to avert any attempt to postpone the summit.

People to People Contact issues

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia in his speech stressed on raising the level of South Asian consciousness. She said “we are yet to imbibe in ourselves the sense of common identity that we have aspired for.”⁵⁹ She called for cooperation in certain selective areas to promote people to people contact.

Sri Lanka – President Premadasa called for cultural interaction and said, “let us endeavor to promote more cultural interaction which will touch the hearts of our peoples. We will then prove that culture has no national boundaries and that it makes friends out of strangers.”⁶⁰

Colombo Declaration 1991

The summit leaders directed the standing committee to study all proposals and comments regarding adoption of a more business like approach in the SAARC meetings

The leaders called for the establishment of a South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation. They also welcomed the setting up of the SAARC Fund for Regional Projects.

⁵⁷ SAARC Secretariat, n.18, p.78

⁵⁸ Speech by Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in the Sixth SAARC Summit held in Colombo, 1991, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p. 82.

⁵⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n.43, p.66.

⁶⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.42, p.63

The leaders agreed that in order to derive maximum benefit, the scientific and technological cooperation should transcend national frontiers.

They also welcomed the proposal for the establishment of a network of arrangement between research and development centers in the field of biotechnology. The leaders also agreed to study the prospects of lowering the tariff barriers in the region to facilitate trade and commercial exchange among member states. SAPTA was also put forward by Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka also proposed South Asian economic community (SAEC).⁶¹

Seventh SAARC Summit

Dhaka, Bangladesh

1993

The seventh Summit meeting of the SAARC heads of state or government was held at Dhaka from 10-11 April, 1993. This summit was postponed twice. The summit was postponed due to Indian Prime Minister's inability to attend the summit as a result of Babri Masjid demolition and the arising threat of anti India demonstration at Dhaka, Pakistan and Bangladesh were also waiting to raise Ayodhya issue in the summit.⁶² The seventh summit was also delayed due to lack of unanimity of member states and apprehension of bilateral issues being raised.

Economic Issues

Bangladesh – Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia emphasized on cooperation in core economic areas and supported South Asian preferential trade agreement (SAPTA). She called for urgent decision on SAPTA and promotion greater complementarities.⁶³

⁶¹ Colombo Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1991.

⁶³ Speech by Begum Khaleda Zia Prime Minister of Bangladesh delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka, 1993, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.95

Bhutan – King Wangchuck said trading blocs of major economies pose new challenges and as a result of this South Asia may become marginalized. He wanted SAARC to enhance cooperation in core economic areas and that can be possible only by adopting SAPTA.⁶⁴

India- Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao called the member states to adopt a meaningful approach to deal with the worldwide trends in regional cooperation. Rao said, “Hence, the new beginning we must make in the coming years is to focus our energies –political and social –on economic development. Contemporary history tells us that economic development in all its aspects is among the best cures for socio-political ills. He emphasized on removing trade barriers and capitalizing regional interdependence in South Asia. He also suggested to have balanced relationship with industrially advanced countries in a manner in which collective interest of South Asian countries must be protected. Rao supported SAPTA and said “India would join in the collective endeavor to implement the decisions in this regard within time frame stipulated.”⁶⁵

Nepal – Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala emphasized on regional trade, he appreciated SAPTA and said “expedious adoption and ratification of this draft by member states would initiate a new era of greater regional engagement on this important subject.”⁶⁶He also said SAARC Regional Fund should be given priority.

Sri Lanka- President Ranasinghe Premadasa appreciated SAPTA and proposed member states to allow free flow of certain imports from South Asia. He called member states to identify products which should be allowed preferred access to all markets. He said, “Member states should achieve closer economic collaboration in South Asia through joint

⁶⁴ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuck ,King of Bhutan delivered in Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka 1993,quoted from *SAARC Summits* ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.,1995,p.99.

⁶⁵ Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka,1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.102

⁶⁶ Speech by Girija Prasad Koirala Prime Minister of Nepal delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka,1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.112.

ventures, investments flows, technology exchanges, common market arrangement, and buy back arrangement should be promoted⁶⁷.”

Social Issues

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia called member countries to form a strong coalition against the complex and difficult challenge of poverty. She also proposed comprehensive action programmes on poverty alleviation.

India – Narasimha Rao raised the issue of poverty, literacy, and health care. He appreciated the South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation and called for action programmes and policies. He also emphasized on effective social mobilization for poverty alleviation programmes. Rao also called to promote human development with a multidimensional approach covering education, women and development.⁶⁸

Nepal – Koirala linked poverty alleviation with the use of regional resources. He called member states to share their ideas, experiences and techniques used by them in poverty alleviation measures. He also addressed issue related to children.

Sri Lanka – He called for immediate action in poverty eradication and referred to programs initiated by Sri Lanka.

Security Issues

Bhutan – King Wangchuck referred to the growing menace of terrorism in Bhutan and called the member states to strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as it is an evil scourge sweeping across our region.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Speech by Ranasinghe Premadasa President of Sri Lanka delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka,1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.118.

⁶⁸ Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka,1993, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.103.

⁶⁹ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuck ,King of Bhutan delivered in Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka 1993, *SAARC Summits* ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.,1995,p.99

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom referred to the ethnic tension in Maldives and called for urgent steps to diffuse it. As this ethnic tension has spill over effects in the stability and security of neighboring countries.⁷⁰

Pakistan – Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif called for the establishment of a structure of global security, which will be capable of ensuring security of all states, big and small, powerful and weak. Nawaz Sharif said, “Freedom and self –determination of oppressed and subjugated peoples must be accepted as the collective responsibility of the entire international community.”⁷¹ This statement by him was related to Kashmir issue. He supported principles of U N charter for maintenance of peace and security.

Sri Lanka – President Premadasa called member states to discharge their obligations which they have taken in various conventions on terrorism and drug trafficking. He wanted full cooperation from member states in eliminating terrorism and drug trafficking.

Environmental Issues

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia addressed the issue of environment and called for efforts at regional level. She said, “A strong partnership must now be forged among our governments and people to go ahead with concrete actions in these areas. We must examine the recommendations of the various studies completed in these areas and seek the most appropriate and practical form of cooperation.”⁷²

⁷⁰ Speech by Abdul Gayoom President of Maldives delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka 1993, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.114

⁷¹ Speech by Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka, 1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.115.

⁷² Speech by Begum Khaleda Zia Prime Minister of Bangladesh delivered in the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka, 1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu., 1995, p.97.

uyBhutan – King Wangchuck remarked, “combination of high population density and abject poverty has resulted in a serious degradation of the natural environment.”⁷³ Moreover he emphasized on environmental conservation. In this regard he suggested, “environmental conservation should extend across national boundaries, particularly as South Asia constitutes a single eco system.”⁷⁴

Maldives – Gayoom called member states to act on the decisions of Earth Summit and the action programme contained in Agenda 21-without further delays. He emphasized on collective basis to deal with this problem. He remarked, “we should formulate a long term strategy to promote sustainable development in our region.”⁷⁵

Nepal – Koirala expressed firm commitment to United Nations conference on environment and development and decisions made in that conference.

New areas

Bangladesh - Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia referred to the conferences around the world on rights of children, narcotic drugs environment and development, human rights, population, women and said “at he core of this global agenda is the dominant theme to comprehensively deal with economic, social, environmental and political dimensions of human development.”⁷⁶

Khaleda Zia emphasized on collective efforts in education, science and technology. According to her cultural activities can animate regional cooperation. She said, “We must ensure that we are not bypassed by the going educational and technological revolution now transforming the world.”⁷⁷

⁷³ SAARC Secretariat,n.64, p.99

⁷⁴ *ibid.* , p.99.

⁷⁵ SAARC Secretariat, n.70 ,p.115.

⁷⁶ SAARC Secretariat,n.63, p.95

⁷⁷ *ibid.* , p.98

India – Narasimha Rao suggested the member states to harness unconventional sources of energy, utilization of natural resources and cooperation in projects and vocational training in agricultural productivity and high technology.⁷⁸

Maldives - President Abdul Gayoom in his speech referred to global pattern of manufacturing and trade as new economic forces have posed threat to established economies of world. He suggested member states to accelerate economic growth and appreciated SAPTA. He also raised the issue of enlistment of the status of youth. He called member states to mobilize the creative energies of young people and proposed 1994 as “the SAARC Year of Youth” and urged the member states to take action to stop the spread of AIDS and called for greater coordination among South Asia.⁷⁹

Pakistan –Nawaz Sharif suggested SAARC to cooperate with other regional and international groupings that are willing to cooperate with it. He said, “SAARC needs to conduct its business efficiently.”⁸⁰ He also proposed ministerial conference on population planning and regional position for the international conference on population planning.

SUGGESTIONS

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia suggested action-oriented programmes, efficient execution of programmes. She said, “we should not allow any gap to develop between our bilateral relations and our many initiatives to promote regional cooperation.”⁸¹

Bhutan – King Wangchuck said, “the fact remains that SAARC has yet to produce tangible results. We should, therefore adopt a realistic approach in accessing the problems facing our regional body.”⁸²

⁷⁸ SAARC Secretariat, n.68, p.104.

⁷⁹ SAARC Secretariat, n .70, p.113.

⁸⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.71, p.115.

⁸¹ SAARC Secretariat, n.63, p.97

⁸² SAARC Secretariat, n.64, p.99-100

King Wangchuck pointed towards the serious regional constraints faced by SAARC for implementing its programmes and projects. He said, “our efforts in alleviating poverty, ensuring the survival and development of children, protecting the environment, expanding intra-regional trade and implementing the Integrated Programme of Action will not succeed without substantial capital inputs.”⁸³ In this regard he suggested instead of further expanding SAARC programmes and projects, the highest priority should be given to the early establishment of the South Asian Development Fund.

Pakistan – Nawaz Sharif in his speech-raised issue related to fundamental human rights, religious, fanaticism, intolerance, supremacy of rule of law and the principles of justice. He said, “we must respect the principles of sovereign equality, non interference in each others internal affairs, avoidance of the threat of the use of force in settling inter state disputes.”⁸⁴ He supported SAARC Regional Fund as it will help to identify suitable projects for cooperation. He also endorsed SAPTA and called for urgent signatures by member states.

Sri Lanka – President Premadasa emphasized on building trust and confidence among member states along with practical interaction in various fields for instance exchange of doctors, engineers, scientists, intellectuals, and academicians.⁸⁵

People to People Contacts

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia expressed on welfare of people, she said, “we must rededicate ourselves to work for the welfare of our people. We must harness the positive inner impulses of our region to fulfill our shared aspirations.”⁸⁶

⁸³ibid., p.-100

⁸⁴SAARC Secretariat,n.71,p. 115-116

⁸⁵ SAARC Secretariat,n.67,p.119.

⁸⁶ SAARC Secretariat,n.63,p.-97.

Dhaka Declaration 1993

The summit leaders decided to eradicate poverty in South Asia, preferably by the year 2000 A.D through an agreed area of action.

The leaders called to take steps for the beginning of first round of trade negotiations to exchange trade preferences among the member states under the agreement on SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA).⁸⁷

The leaders called for practice of intra SAARC consultations on matters of common concern. They also called for cooperation among member states through sharing of experiences and to deal with population problem.⁸⁸

The leaders also endorsed the “Colombo Resolution on Children”. And also designated 1994 as the “SAARC year of the youth” to address the problems of the youth and focusing on broad theme of youth development. A regional plan of action for disabled persons was also adopted.⁸⁹

The leaders also endorsed the recommendation of the Council of Ministers for the establishment of an inter-governmental group (IGG) on South Asian Development Fund (SADF).⁹⁰

The greatest achievement of this summit is that it took all rational decisions to exhibit to an expectant international community that regional cooperation in South Asia was a reality and not a mere myth.⁹¹

The signing of the framework agreement on South Asian Preferential Trading, Arrangement (SAPTA) at seventh SAARC summit was a major step towards expanding trade among member nations. The general emphasis was on economic problems, however, the leaders did discuss other times.⁹²

⁸⁷ Dhaka Declaration, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, p.126.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p.126

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p.126.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p.127.

⁹¹ Vandana Mohla, *SAARC and Super Powers*, (Deep&Deep Publication, New New New Delhi, 1998) ,p.159

⁹² *ibid.*, p.160.

Eighth SAARC Summit

New Delhi, India

1995

The eighth SAARC Summit was held in New Delhi from 2-3 May, 1995. The trend of postponement of the summits still continued in Delhi summit. The reason for the postponement of summit as quoted was Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir's state visit to the United States during that period. Probably this was a deliberate attempt to perpetuate its allergy to regional cooperation.⁹³

During the summit besides reaffirmation of the earlier economic, social and political issues, emphasis was given on concrete action on the existing issues.

Economic Issues

Bangladesh – Prime Minister Khaleda Zia called for exploring new areas of cooperation and her emphasis was on energy. She said “energy is perhaps an area which deserves our attention .the ember states of SAARC are big consumers of energy. Some of us have big reservoirs of energy, both renewable and non renewable. However they have not been profitably tapped.”⁹⁴ She called member states to consider hydro electricity project in Himalayan range.

Bhutan – King Wangchuck was not satisfied by the financial commitment made by the developing countries. He suggested the member states to adopt a common stand internationally to gain access to surplus external resources to implement poverty eradication programmes in South Asia. He raised the issue of tariff preferences and

⁹³ *ibid*, p.164

⁹⁴ Speech by Begum Khaieda Zia Prime Minister of Bangladesh delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi, 1995, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu., 1995, p.139.

member states should work towards promotion of intra regional free trade, which is important for economic growth. He called for urgent ratification of SAPTA.⁹⁵

India –Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao referred to the various international economic issues. He mentioned that the establishment of WTO and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations pose challenge for South Asia but some opportunities as well. He said “we can respond effectively to these global factors regionally, if we make preferential trading arrangement among ourselves and enhance our collective strength internationally.”⁹⁶ He called member states to provide political impetus that will make SAPTA effective. He also wanted SAARC to work practically towards a free market, which will ultimately integrate South Asian economies and enhance their dynamism and collective strength in the global trading community.

Nepal - Prime Minister Man Mohan Adhikari raised the issue of globalization and said “but even at his time of globalization we find the utmost necessity of regional cooperation. We take regional cooperation as complementary and inter-dependent rather than contradictory to globalization.”⁹⁷ According to him regional cooperation can play a role in global peace and development. He had shown his firm commitment to SAPTA and liberalization of trade.

Pakistan – President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari said, “Self reliance, free enterprise and market force are increasingly recognized as essential for economic growth of developing countries.”⁹⁸ He also appreciated SAPTA. According to Leghari economic and social progress can be achieved through peace and stability. He raised the Kashmir issue

⁹⁵ Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuck ,King of Bhutan delivered in Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi 1993, *SAARC Summits* ,SAARC Secretariat ,Kathmandu.,1995,p.141.

⁹⁶ Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi,1995, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.133.

⁹⁷ Speech by Man Mohan Adhikari Prime Minister of Nepal delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi,1995, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.148.

⁹⁸ Speech by Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, President of Pakistan delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi,1995, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.152.

indirectly when he said “we cannot wash our troubles by simply turning a blind eye to our disputes.”⁹⁹ He also raised issue like freedom of self-determination and human rights.

Sri Lanka- President Chandrika Kumaratunga called for early operationalization of SAPTA. She also proposed that free trade as the future goal of SAARC. She suggested reduction in tariffs to an acceptable percentage within a specified period of time, across board tariff reduction and elimination of non-tariff barriers. She highlighted the role of government in facilitating economic development and called for meeting between industrial houses of SAARC countries to forge new areas of economic development.¹⁰⁰

Social Issues

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia called for action-oriented programmes on poverty alleviation. She also referred to “Daal-Bhaat” programme of Bangladesh and wanted it to extend to South Asia. She raised the issue of children and emphasized on their education and food. She particularly emphasized on education. Khaleda Zia also proposed SAARC convention against trafficking in women and children.¹⁰¹

India – Prime Minister Narasimha Rao explained the problems related to human development like poverty, education, food, clean drinking water and health. He endorsed the report of the independent South Asian commission on poverty alleviation. Rao raised the issue of girl child and assured equality of status with special opportunities for the growth and development of girl child. He also emphasized on intensifying efforts for the survival, protection and development of children.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ *ibid*,p.151-153.

¹⁰⁰ Speech by Chandrika Kumaratunga President of Sri Lanka delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi,1995, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.157

¹⁰¹ SAARC Secretariat , n.94, p.139.

¹⁰² Speech by P V Narasimha Rao Prime Minister of India delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi,1995, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat , Kathmandu.,1995,p.134

He also raised the issue related to drug abuse these were law enforcement, rehabilitation, medical assistance, combating violence and criminality and particularly on the youth of the region. He called member countries to intensify cooperation in drug related issues.

Maldives - President Gayoom suggested developing a mechanism for implementing poverty eradication measures. He also raised the issue of women their economic marginalisation and social vulnerability and called member states to address these issue.¹⁰³

Pakistan – Leghari said, “Pakistan is firmly committed to the alleviation of poverty.¹⁰⁴” He also endorsed the idea of exchange of information and sharing of experience in poverty related programmes in various South Asian countries.

Security Issues

Pakistan – Leghari raised the issue of nuclear disarmament and said, “we are willing to enter into any international, regional or bilateral commitment in this regard provided it is equitable and does not discriminate against us.”¹⁰⁵ He called South Asian leadership to banish nuclear weapons from South Asia permanently.

Environmental Issues

Maldives - President Gayoom was of view that all member states should implement the recommendations contained in the studies on environment done by SAARC.

Pakistan - Leghari called member states to carefully weigh the imperative of economic development against the needs of the environment. He also referred to natural disaster and said “we must give consideration to setting up a disaster relief mechanism under the

¹⁰³ Speech by Abdul Gayoom President of Maldives delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi 1995, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.,1995,p.145.

¹⁰⁴ SAARC Secretariat,n.98,p.152.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.* , p.152.

aegis of SAARC which can come in action promptly when a member country faces a natural calamity.”¹⁰⁶

New Areas

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia suggested that member states must harmonize their individual positions on common and vital issues. She appreciated the collective position of SAARC on poverty alleviation at the world social summit in Copenhagen. She said, “we must now harmonise our individual positions as much as possible on this very vital issue.”¹⁰⁷

Maldives - President Gayoom as in earlier summit again raised the issue of youth creativity and productivity. He recommended that the finding of the meeting of ministers on youth should be operationalized. He also raised the issue related to disabled persons and emphasized on their development and effective participation in the social and economic activities.¹⁰⁸

Nepal – Prime Minister Adhikari called member states to maintain good relationship and frequent interactions with regional institutions like E U, NAFTA, and ASEAN, as these institutions will provide their positive experiences to SAARC. He also emphasized on measures for development of communication system, transport infrastructure and transit facilities. Prime Minister Adhikari suggested member states to exploit Nepal’s vast water resources and contribute to the development of South Asia.¹⁰⁹

Sri Lanka – President Chandrika Kumaratunga referred to South Asian Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP) as this inter-governmental organization paved the way for the establishment of SAARC. She called for urgent resumption of SACEP and bringing it together with SAARC. She also emphasized on close cooperation with

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p.153

¹⁰⁷ SAARC Secretariat,n.94,p.139.

¹⁰⁸ SAARC Secretariat,n.103,p.146.

¹⁰⁹ SAARC Secretariat,n.97,p. 149.

ASEAN and other UN bodies. She suggested that summit meetings should give clear direction for developing relation with these regional organizations.¹¹⁰

Suggestions

Bangladesh – Khaleda Zia raised the important issue of empowering SAARC Secretariat where she said “we should make it leaner, stronger and more functional. We must invest it with greater capacity to respond to the increasing demands put upon it.”¹¹¹

Bhutan – According to King Wangchuck political climate continues to cast a dark shadow over all our activities. He said “the whole structure of SAARC needs careful re-examination if it is to become effective and result oriented.”¹¹² He emphasized on implementation of the existing activities under the Integrated Programme of Action particularly in areas related to poverty alleviation.

He called member states to utilize summits and frequent meetings to exchange their views on bilateral matters and all existing problems. He remarked that generation of political will is very important for success of regional cooperation in South Asia. He said “let us, therefore, resolve to exercise the necessary political will and impart SAARC with renewed sense of direction and purpose to promote peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia.”¹¹³

India - Rao endorsed the recommendations of the conference and the Islamabad resolution on disabled persons.

Maldives – According to Gayoom the strength of SAARC lies in the mechanism of seeking consensus through consultation and sharing of experiences. He also said that regional cooperation is the best way to keep up with the changing world.

¹¹⁰ SAARC Secretariat, n.100, p.157.

¹¹¹ SAARC Secretariat, n.94, p.139.

¹¹² Speech by Wangchuck Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan delivered in Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi 1993, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1995, p.141.

¹¹³ *ibid.*, p.142.

Nepal –Adhikari suggested discussions on bilateral and political issues in SAARC meetings.

Pakistan – Leghari called member states to settle their political disputes in SAARC forums. This suggestion was against charter and Leghari defended himself by saying “progress in this world can only be achieved through innovation and through bold and decisive initiatives.”¹¹⁴ He expressed his dissatisfaction as the progress made in areas like agriculture, science and technology and proposal of SAARC Development Fund.

People to People Contacts

India – Narasimha Rao emphasized on exchanges of experts and creation of an integrated network for exchanging information and ideas.¹¹⁵

Maldives – President Abdul Gayoom called for cooperation in tourism among SAARC countries. He said “we also believe that people to people contact and peace through tourism is perhaps no less important than the immediate economic benefits generated by the industry.”¹¹⁶

Delhi Declaration 1995

The leaders called for an international convention for prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and strongly condemned terrorism.

The leaders called upon countries to refrain from erecting trade barriers in the guise of promotion and protection of worker’s rights. The declaration deplored the tendency to impose any conditionalities on international trade, whether as “social clause” or as the “environmental clause”.

¹¹⁴ SAARC Secretariat ,n.98, p.152

¹¹⁵ SAARC Secretariat,n.96, p.134

¹¹⁶ Speech by Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi 1995, quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.,1995,p.3.

The leaders underlined the need of external finance for the implementation of economic reforms program in SAARC countries.¹¹⁷

The leaders also called for reviewing the membership of the U N Security Council. They also directed member states to ratify SAPTA by the end of 1995. The declaration also emphasized on broadening and deepening of cooperation with specific time frame in the core areas. They also welcomed World Trade Organization and called member countries to refrain from any unilateral measures, which create obstacles to trade relations.

The leaders declared 1995 as the SAARC Year of Poverty Eradication, and reiterated their commitment to eradicate poverty in South Asia by 2002 A D.¹¹⁸

On security the draft reiterated that protection of small and weaker states should be firmly rooted in rule of law.

The leaders expressed commitment to all international, national, and bilateral and regional programmes for the preservation of environment. The declaration endorsed the establishment of a three-window South Asian Development Fund with the merger of SAARC Fund for Regional Projects.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ New Delhi Declaration , SAARC Secretariat,1995.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*,p.146

¹¹⁹*ibid.*,p.149.

Chapter V

SAARC Summits: Critical Overview of Declarations

The launching of SAARC on December 8, 1985 in Dhaka was the culmination of five years of arduous efforts to formalize regional cooperation in South Asia. The adoption of the charter of the SAARC at the first summit institutionalized regional cooperation. The Dhaka summit was the testimony of will and desire of the South Asian countries to embark on the path of cooperation and collective development. The declaration issued at the end of summit spelt out basis, rationale, and necessity for regional cooperation. The Dhaka summit set the pattern for the procedures to be followed by future summits.¹

In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyze how far the objectives of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have been achieved. Let us recall SAARC was set up to fulfill the following objectives,

- (i) To promote the welfare of the people of South Asia and to uplift their quality of life;
- (ii) To accelerate economic growth social progress, and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realize their potential;
- (iii) To promote and strengthen collective self reliance among the countries of South Asia;
- (iv) To contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems;
- (v) To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, socio, cultural technical and scientific fields; to foster cooperation with other developing countries, to

¹ Ehsanul Haque, "SAARC: From Inception to Male", in B.C. Upreti, (ed.), *SAARC: Dynamics of Regional Cooperation in South Asia*, (New Delhi, Kalinga, 2000), p.173.

strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interest ;

(vi) and to cooperate with international and regional organization with similar aims and objectives.

In order to achieve these objectives the Dhaka summit defined the administrative and operational machinery of association, viz., the SAARC Charter.² The hierarchical structure of the SAARC machinery starts with the summit at the apex level supported by the Council of Ministers and then Standing Committee, and Technical Committee. Technical Committee is responsible for formulation of programmes and preparation of projects, and their implementation, coordination and monitoring in the respective fields under Integrated Programme of Action (IPA). Initially there were eleven agreed areas of cooperation within Integrated Programme of Action, each being responsibility of technical committees and later women in development was added making its strength to twelve.

Agriculture (TC 01)

Communications (TC 02)

Education and Culture (TC 03)

Environment (TC 04)

Health and Population (TC 05)

Meteorology (TC 06)

Prevention of Drug trafficking and Drug abuse (TC 07)

Rural Development (TC 08)

Science and Technology (TC 09)

Tourism (TC10)

Transport (TC11)

Women in development (TC12)

However with the merger of technical committee on environment and meteorology, beginning from first January 1996 the total number of technical committees was reduced

² *Charter of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1985.

to eleven again. The eleven technical committees have been restructured under the SAARC Integrated Programme of Action (SIPA) with effect from 1 January 2000.³ The seven new technical committees under SIPA include: (1) Agriculture and Rural development, (2) Social Development, (3) Transport and Communication, (4) Science and Technology, (5) Environment, Meteorology and Forestry, (6) Human Resource Development, and (7) Energy. The group of eminent persons (GEP)⁴ has also suggested reducing the number of technical committees to two. The seven technical committees have several problems. At present there are only five new committees.

Recently an Inter-Governmental Committee was constituted by the Secretary-General to review the functioning of the SAARC Integrated Programme of Action (SIPA). It decided to bring in the Information and Communications Technology, and Biotechnology as new areas of cooperation under the domain of the SIPA.⁵

In this chapter an analysis of Summit Declarations (1985-1995) and various programmes and activities of SAARC related to economic political, social, people to people contact has been attempted. Further we have made an effort to examine the constraints including political, economic and institutional. This study also tries to identify the areas that require immediate attention for progress in otherwise a stagnated body of regional cooperation.

Since its establishment in 1985 eleven SAARC Summits have taken place in different capitals of South Asian countries. In this study an analysis of first eight summits Dhaka,1985; Bangalore,1986; Kathmandu,1987; Islamabad,1988; Male,1990; Colombo,1991; Dhaka,1993; New Delhi,1995 has been done. These Summits have deliberated on large number of critical issues and have made a range of declarations.

³ www.SouthAsiaFoundation.com/SAS/charter.htm

⁴ Coalition for Action on South Asian Cooperation (CASAC) proposed The SAARC Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) which was set up at the Ninth Summit at Male in 1997. The GEP was mandated to undertake a comprehensive appraisal of SAARC, and to identify measures and mechanism to further vitalize and enhance effectiveness of the association in achieving its objectives.

⁵ *SAARC Newsletter*, January- March 2003, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.

SAARC has made quite significant progress in a number of areas. These include the setting up of regional institutions, signing of various conventions, organizations of a number of regional programs and implementation of South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA).⁶

However, despite the fact that SAARC has immense potentiality, it has not been able to forge ahead in development cooperation the way it promised. There are several hurdles that include politico-historical reasons, geographical and demographic features, military-strategic dimensions and economic interactions.⁷

During the summits as we have analyzed in preceding two chapters South Asian leaders have expressed keen interest in regional cooperation. They have addressed key issues in South Asia. In all summits leaders have identified the major barriers in South Asian cooperation like political, economic, administration, asymmetry issues, security etc. With each successive summit, the SAARC activities expanded, horizons were broadened, new dimensions were explored, and self confidence was generated. In summit speeches leaders also made ample suggestions for various programmes and expanding cooperation in other areas.

The main emphasis of SAARC has been on non political areas like economic growth, collective self reliance, and development of social and cultural heritage, environment, people to people contact and mutual dependence among the member countries. The declaration of summits clearly reflects that SAARC has taken significant steps in identifying areas of regional cooperation, which are non political in nature. Various agreements and conventions among South Asian countries have raised lot of hopes on the minds of people. However due, to constraints like economic, political, security, and asymmetry the implementation of the programmes and various activities has been

⁶ *South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA)*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1996.

⁷ Gamini Corea, "Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Perspective and Prospects", *South Asia Journal*, Vol.1, July-September 1987, p.11.

neglected.⁸

The first four SAARC summits did address the core areas of economic activity like trade and industry, but the leaders of the states could not take any concrete steps in core areas. They recommended studies⁹ to identify benefits and mechanisms for cooperation in core areas. These summits emphasized on issues related to social development, security, people to people contact and organizing seminars and workshops.

Summit Postponements

From Male summit postponement of summits became common phenomena as after Male summit all three SAARC summits were postponed due to various reasons. The fifth summit was supposed to be held in Colombo in 1989 but because of the consternation caused by continued presence of Indian peace keeping force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka, but it was finally held in Male on November 1990. Colombo was to host the sixth summit in November 1991 but because of serious political problems in Bhutan caused by the massive expulsion of Nepali speaking Bhutanese (Lhotsampas) from southern Bhutan, it was postponed to December 1991. The seventh summit was postponed as there was apprehension of security risk for the Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. This was essentially created by the surcharged atmosphere after the demolition of Babri Masjid by the Hindu fundamentalists in December 1992.¹⁰

In the past years summits have been postponed mainly for political reasons resulting from the strained bilateral and political relations between member states. This is a serious contradiction as it violates the basic general provision of the charter that bilateral or contentious issues should not be discussed. It also violates Article III of SAARC Charter which mentions that annual cycle of summit meetings should be maintained. Postponement of summits upsets the entire schedule of related meetings, particularly meetings of the council of ministers, standing committee, and sectoral meetings, etc.

⁸ Rasul B.Rais, "Politics of Regional Cooperation in South Asia", *Asian Survey*, Vol, 30, No.8, August 1990, p.59.

⁹ *Regional Study on Trade and Manufacturers and Services*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1991.

¹⁰ Mahendra .P Lama , "SAARC: Shallow Regionalism ,Political Absistence and Economic Advocacy", *BISS Journal*, Vol 21, No.1, 2000, p.6

People to People Contact

In the Dhaka summit itself the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi suggested turning SAARC into people's movement. He stressed on the importance of involving the people in every facet of SAARC activity.¹¹ In order to promote people to people contact in the SAARC region the summits took following initiatives;

(i) SAARC Audio Visual Exchange (SAVE) program: SAVE was established for joint production of regular TV and radio programmes among member counters. SAVE is operational since 1987 and the programme has been singularly successful. At the same time it was noted that there was a gap in newspaper coverage of problems and activities of SAARC in SAARC countries. The technical committees in fact reported that the media in South Asia have not been able to play fully its part in promoting a propitious climate of cooperation among member states. So far SAARC activities have not encompassed cooperation in the field of mass communication and mass media.¹² The committee recommended a course of action which included convening meeting of a competent representative and editors of important newspaper of member states to address their minds to this question.¹³

In SAVE programmes lot of emphasis was given on the cultural heritage programme. Development projects and problems related programmes were in second priority. There were problems like, joint production was not promoted, communication gap between the participating countries and lack of thematic coordination, and relevant material. It is said that SAVE programmes are often slotted at odd hours of night when most of people have already gone to bed. In SAVE programmes there is a need of long term policy planning and greater coordination with regard to themes and censorship laws.¹⁴

¹¹ Speech by Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.15.

¹² V.L.B. Mendis, *SAARC: Origins, Organisation and Prospects* (Western Australia, I.O.C.P.S, 1991), p.62

¹³ *ibid.*, p.63.

¹⁴ Regina Mulay Parakh, *S.A.V.E Communication for Cooperation*, (New Delhi, Mudrit , 1998), p.55.

Recently the SAARC Audio-Visual Exchange Committee meeting in Thimphu in January 2003 agreed on a list of programmes for telecast and broadcast during the year. Likewise, the Heads of National TV and Radio Organizations in the region meeting in Islamabad in January deliberated on the need to air SAARC News Programmes by the member countries on a regular basis.¹⁵

(ii) SAARC Schemes for Promotion of Organized Tourism (SSPOT): This scheme provided inter-alia concessional air fare to the tourists traveling in South Asian states. The member states have also agreed on a travel voucher scheme which will help in the promotion of intra-SAARC tourism without outflow of foreign exchange. SAARC travel voucher scheme yielded good results and world tourism organization decide to observe 1993 as the year of tourism for South Asia and indeed this was a great opportunity for the countries to collectively and individually exploit the advantage.

A regional tourism body for marketing, product development and programming should be set up. There is need to develop tourist circuits among South Asian countries like wildlife, heritage, natural beauty, adventure, pilgrimage like Buddhist circuit and eco - tourism. These circuits will attract domestic as well as international tourists. In South Asia there are lots of tourist destinations which can be developed into different tourist circuits. South Asian countries need to promote South Asian tourism jointly as ASEAN is promoting. A regional tourism promotion centers need to be established within and outside the region to promote and market the destinations in the region. SSPOT which is supposed to carry out this task has not launched these programmes.¹⁶

Pursuant to a decision of the Twenty-third Session of the Council of Ministers in Kathmandu in August 2002, the Government of India hosted the SAARC Tourism Senior Officials' Meeting in New Delhi on 25-26 February with a view to coordinating promotion of tourism in the region. The Meeting also considered the proposal on

¹⁵ www.SAARC-SEC.org

¹⁶ Mahendra P.Lama, *Integrated Programme of Action in SAARC: Genesis, Evaluation, Constraints and Rationale for Revamping* R I S Occasional Paper, New Delhi, 1999, p.33.

developing the website on behalf of the SAARC Member States including web marketing of tourism attractions. SAARC Member States were called upon to promote cooperation with regional and international tourism organizations. The meeting also recommended the role of private sector as a pertinent factor for promotion of tourism in the region and their participation at the proposed meetings of the Technical Committees in the future.¹⁷

(iii) SAARC Chairs, Fellowships and Scholarships Scheme (SCFSS): This scheme was introduced in order to promote greater interaction among students, scholars and academicians in the SAARC region. The scheme on the institution of SAARC chairs and grant of fellowships and scholarships, which is now operational, was monitored by the technical committee on education.

The SCFSS has failed to yield results so far the standing committee, which had laid guidelines observed in its report that progress of implementation in this area was not satisfactory. This was primarily due to poor coordination among member the implementing agencies and unattractive offers by the members countries, both in terms of identified areas of studies and financial allocations.¹⁸ Some relevant statistics are that of 30 fellowships only five have been utilized and of 50 scholarships only two have been utilized. The SAARC fellowships and chairs programme did not directly affect the people as this was limited to handful of educated elite or well-to-do strata of society.

A Regional Workshop in Kathmandu in October, 2002 revised the SAARC Chairs, Fellowships and Scholarships Scheme to make it more effective. A Meeting of the Vice Chancellors of Open Universities of South Asia in New Delhi in December recommended establishing a rotational Secretariat of SAARC Consortium of Distance Learning (SACODiL).¹⁹

¹⁷ SAARC Secretariat, op.cit., n. 5, p.6.

¹⁸ SAARC, *Various Reports of the Meeting of the Technical Committee on Education, Culture and Sports, 1983-1997*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.

¹⁹ SAARC Secretariat, op.cit., n. 5, p.3.

(iv) SAARC Youth Volunteer Interaction Programme (SYVOP): This scheme provided youth of South Asia to work in other member countries in the field of agriculture, forestry, and extension work. The SYVOP constituted an integral part of the working of the technical committee on rural development. The youth volunteer programme was rather slow as it could not do anything on rural development. However there was absence of action oriented programmes.²⁰

(v) SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES) for Specified Categories. This scheme exempts visa requirements to specified categories of persons to travel within the region. The SVES became operational from 1992. However this scheme was initiated in Islamabad summit in 1988. In this scheme only 650 members of parliament and judges of Supreme Court have availed the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme. Relaxation of visa for judges and parliamentarians was not sufficient as large amount of people in South Asia are illiterate.²¹ This scheme has been extended to other sections of professionals.

These activities aim at promoting people to people contact, and reflect the importance that SAARC leaders attach to increase the interactions among different sections of people in South Asia. The success of SAARC's people to people programmes depends on the execution for which bureaucracy has to be strengthened. In order to promote people to people contact an idealistic vision and wide ranging follow up action at the non governmental level is required.²²

SAARC Regional Centers

(i) SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC), Dhaka for exchanging technical information in order to strengthen agricultural research and development activities in the SAARC region. It serves as central information institution for exchange of regionally

²⁰ Mahendra P. Lama, op.cit., n. 16, p.27.

²¹ Vandana Mohla, *SAARC and Super Powers* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep, 1998), p.65

²² Victor Gunavardene and Navnita Chadha Behara, *People to People Contact in South Asia* (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2000), p.57.

generated technical information. SAIC was the first regional institution and it was established in Dhaka in 1988.

(ii) SAARC Tuberculosis centre (STC) located at Bhaktapur Nepal, became operational in mid July 1992. The centre's main objective is to work towards the prevention and control of tuberculosis in the SAARC region through better coordination of efforts of the member states, especially their tuberculosis programs. The centre has organized number training programs for tuberculosis in the region.

The Governing Board of the SAARC Tuberculosis Center (STC) at a meeting in Kathmandu in November, 2002 proposed to designate the year 2004 as the SAARC Year on TB and HIV/AIDS to strengthen regional efforts to combat the threats posed by Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

(iii) SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC) was also set up in New Delhi in 1994 for providing ready access to reliable and up-to-date information on technical, scientific and development matters. The SDC on which high hopes were raised failed to get financial support from member countries. As a result, of this the documentation has been very limited.

(iv) SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC) was established in Dhaka and was inaugurated on 2 January 1995. The centre concentrates primarily on research aspects of weather forecasting and monitoring rather than the operational aspects of the medium and long range forecasting. The centre also undertakes research relevant to weather prediction and compilation of climatological information.²³

(v) SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) has been established in Islamabad. The centre aims at developing human resource in member countries, inter-alia, in social, economic, educational and environmental fields. The first meeting of governing board was convened on 17-18 February 1999, Islamabad. The second meeting of

²³ *SAARC in Brief*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1997.

governing board was held on 29-27 September, 2001 and this meeting finalized the terms of reference, budget, program of activity, administrative and finance rules and other functional aspects of centre.

The Governing Boards of the Regional Centers held at least one meeting each during the year. None of these centers have emerged as recognized centers of excellence in the region due to lack of financial help. They have not conducted their routine activities and hardly distinguishable from the national centers. The institutional structure of the regional centers is not autonomous in terms of their affiliation with the national centers of the host countries of the regional centers. These centers should be brought under the overall supervision and guidance of the secretary general who should personally monitor their output.²⁴

SAARC Recognized Regional Apex Bodies

SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) was established in February 1994 with its Secretariat in Karachi. The SCCI's main functions are to raise the level of awareness about the policy initiatives of SAARC and to provide strong thrust to the movement of SAARC by providing necessary information and services to the business community. It launched an on-line computerized information network called SAARC – Net in January 1996. Recently the Sixth Economic Cooperation Conference was organized by the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), in Kolkata on 28 March.

SAARCLAW – An association for persons of the legal communities of the SAARC countries was established on July 1994.

Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians - After the adoption of its charter in November 1992, the Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians was

²⁴ Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "SAARC in the Twenty-First Century: Time to Re-examine", in Dipankar Banerjee, (ed.), *SAARC in the Twenty-First Century: Toward a Cooperative Future*, (New Delhi, India Research Press, 2002), p.271.

formally launched in 1992 by legislatures of the region; It was added another important dimension to progress of regional cooperation. In addition to the people to people programmes encouraged by SAARC, it is hoped that new association will not only generate interest among the legislatures for their regional activities, but also offer further encouragement for the growth of regionalism in South Asia.²⁵ The apex bodies such as SCCI and SAARCLAW have been very active in organizing their activities by bringing together the peoples across the region.

Social Issues

All South Asian countries face the problems of poverty, health, unemployment, Human Development, education, and population explosion. Adressal of social issues in South Asia require improvement of institutional environment and resource availability for the attainment of the goals related to sustained growth in income and employment generation and poverty eradication. Social mobilization and community participatiopn is also important for the success of these programmes. These Common problems require joint efforts from leaders of South Asia. SAARC has taken various steps in this direction that vary from establishing institution to signing conventions. They also launched various programmes to deal with problems of women and children.

Food Security

In Kathmandu summit leaders signed an agreement to establish the SAARC Food Security Reserve (SFSR).²⁶ This was primarily aimed at providing a reserve of food grains to member countries for meeting emergencies. The food security scheme was aimed at development of collective self –reliance as a means of combating the adverse effects of natural and man –made calamities. each member contrives is required to maintain its

²⁵ K.K Bhargava ,Heinz Bongartz and Farooq Sobhan (ed.),*Shaping South Asia's Future: Role of Regional Cooperation* (New Delhi ,Vikas,1995),p.122.

²⁶ *Agreement on SAARC Food Security Reserve*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu,1987.

reserve of food grains as specified in the schedule of agreement ,and make it available on request by others subject to direct negotiations of prices ,terms and conditions.²⁷

The SAARC food security reserve has not been utilized by the South Asian countries as there are lots of difficulties in obtaining reserve from the member countries and moreover the share given by other South Asian states was not sufficient. Pakistan promised to give double share to this reservé. Prime Minister of Pakistan Junejo said “in reiteration of our commitment to this common objective, I pledge Pakistan’s readiness to double our contribution to the regional food reserve.”²⁸

Some observers have noted that such an agreement on food security reserve needs to be looked at non on a static basis, but as matter which needs to be updated particularly in view of the past experience and the dire prediction by FAO about he impending food shortages in the region in the near future.²⁹

SAARC Group of Eminent Persons(GEP) has recommended amendment of SAARC Food Security Reserve (SFSR) to facilitate the appropriate utilization of food reserve in emergencies through measures as: (i) notification of food stock under the scheme, including details of composition and location of such stocks; (ii) notification of reserves maintained by member states; (iii) transparency in procurement of food grains for SFSR; (iv) possible offer of food grains as grants or soft loans; and (iv)adequate enhancing of the stock of SFSR to ensure proper composition and requirements of the region.³⁰

However, the Governing Board Meeting of the SAARC Food Security Reserve was held in Islamabad on December 2002 decided on measures to make the Reserve more dynamic and effective.

²⁷ *ibid.* ,p.5.

²⁸ Speech by Mohammad Khan Junejo, Prime Minister of Pakistan delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, 1987, quoted from *SAARC Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.125.

²³ K.K. Bhargava and Heinz Bongartz, *op.cit.*, n. 25 ,p.119.

³⁰ The Report of the SAARC Group of Eminent Persons in K.K Bhargava, Sridhar K. Khatri ,(ed.), *South Asia 2010 Challenges and Opportunities* (New Delhi, Konark Publishers,2001),p.23.

Basic Needs Perspective

The Islamabad summit launched a regional plan known as 'SAARC 2000 A Basic Needs Perspective'³¹, which set specific targets for accomplishment by the end of the century in key areas of day to day life such as food, clothing, and shelter. This proposal was a particularly striking example of SAARC earnestness in promoting national development activity through long term, action oriented schemes which in time was expected to provide substantial benefits to member states. This scheme called member states to identify areas of core interest in the social sectors of their national development plans and then consolidate these plans in a regional scheme which will have specific targets to be met by the year 2000 and South Asia's huge pool of human resources.

Women and Children

In order to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups like women and children, number of measures has been initiated through SAARC. Two ministerial conferences (1986 and 1990) have taken place on "Women and Development."³² A regional plan of action for the development of woman in the region was also formulated. Islamabad summit also declared 1990 as the SAARC Year of Girl Child and called for specific activities to highlight the problems of female children in the South Asian region. The leaders also decided to include education as an agreed area of cooperation. The SAARC Ministerial Conference on children, held in Colombo in September 1992, has set illustrative goals and a time frame for the achievement of several measures to alleviate the problems faced by children.

This TC on WID has also focused on the gender issues in terms of critical areas pertaining to the region, such as the girl child and the situation of the 'Girl Child in Especially Difficult Circumstances' (GCEDC), and drafting a Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children which was accepted in the tenth

³¹ *Islamabad Declaration*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990.

³² For details of recommendations, see SAARC Secretariat publication *SAARC and Women in Development*, 1990.

SAARC summit of 1998 in Colombo³³ and it was finally signed in eleventh Kathmandu summit of 2002. A regional arrangement for the promotion of child's welfare was also signed during this summit.

South Asia needs to address this issue of women. For this it has to follow three-pronged approaches – at the individual level to empower women , at the national to guarantee them equality and equity , and at the regional level to bring about highest common denominator of women's rights and their equality of status with men. SAARC should establish its own monitoring mechanism and be authorized by its member states to react critically to the reports on women. States need to monitor progress in this area by setting up gender focal points in their administration and a mechanism for coordinating them both for the purpose of engendering national legislation, policies and programmes as well as for fulfilling obligations to SAARC and U.N. National and regional NGOs should be permitted to present shadow reports on the gender issue to SAARC. ³⁴

Poverty Alleviation

A report focusing on the theme of poverty alleviation in South Asia was commissioned by leaders during the fifth summit in 1991, which set up the independent South Asian commission on poverty alleviation (ISACPA). This report which was submitted in 1992 has recommended a concrete and practical “Agenda for Action” for eradication of poverty in the member countries within a ten year frame, i.e., by the year 2002. The Commission called for two parallel strategic thrusts for poverty alleviation in the region. The first part of the strategy called for eradication of poverty in South Asia preferably by the year 2002 through mobilization of savings of the poor and the net transfer of resources to the poor. The second part involved making use of labour intensive industries which would absorb the unemployed and the underemployed poor, including youth into productive activities.³⁵

³³ Manel Abeysekere, “The Gender Issue in South Asia”, in K.K Bhargava, Sridhar K. Khatri ,(ed.), *South Asia 2010 Challenges and Opportunities*,(New Delhi, Konark Publishers,2001),p.415.

³⁴ *ibid.*, p.417.

³⁵ *Report of the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation: Meeting the Challenge*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu,1992.

Colombo summit pledged to ensure shelter for all by 2000, promotion of well being of children, and poverty alleviation. The leaders appreciated Bangladeshi efforts in providing food to its poor especially 'Daal Bhaat' programme and called for square meal a day for the poor people in order to achieve the objective of the basic needs. Sri Lanka also proposed regional commission to probe into the problem of endemic poverty in South Asia and suggested remedial measures.

In New Delhi summit the leaders called for eradicating poverty and illiteracy in the region by 2002 A.D, eliminating gender disparity and empowerment of women. In summit leaders also said that half of the existing one billion population of SAARC is below poverty line, the summit declared 1995 as the SAARC year of poverty eradication. It also agreed to observe 1996 as SAARC year of literacy and 1991-2000 as SAARC decade of girl child. Such a time frame for eradicating poverty was not practical as in South Asia there is no serious commitment backed by political and economic action.

Given the state of poverty in South Asia it is quite difficult to eradicate poverty by 2002, poverty, the question comes to mind as this commitment to eradicate poverty by 2002 merely a political statement meant to express individual leaders traditionally "pious attitude towards poverty"³⁶

Poverty alleviation programs of SAARC has not been successful as SAARC countries are in grip of population explosion along with it inadequate education and high mortality rate have further worsened the situation. Economic backwardness, lack of irrigation facilities, and financial resources, are the major factors behind poverty in rural areas. Migration has also been major factor behind uneven population growth. Population growth is intertwined with poverty therefore South Asian countries need to control their fertility rate.³⁷

³⁶ Mahedra. P Lama, op.cit., n.10,p.31.

³⁷ "Poverty and Population Growth in South Asia: Role of SAARC" in B.C. Upreti (ed.), *SAARC: Dynamics of Regional Cooperation in South Asia*, Vol 2, (New Delhi, Kalinga, 2000), p.209.

However, it needs to be stressed that no poverty alleviation programme is likely to pay desired dividend unless the target sector of society participates, and no poor person is likely to be an active participant unless she/he acutely realizes the need to improve her/his lot. Awareness, realization, encouragement and opportunities could transform such efforts into a real success story. Saarc countries should share knowledge and experience through dissemination of research findings.³⁸

SAARC Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) in its report suggested conditions for success of poverty alleviation programme. These include: member countries should treat poverty as centerpiece of country development strategy; the SAARC three tier mechanisms on poverty alleviation should be operationalized for sharing of experiences, and formulation and implementation of regional programmes; and creating a mechanism for reporting the summit on progress made during the previous year on the basis of agreed norms and standards.³⁹

However, a Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation held in Islamabad adopted a Plan of Action to abate the ever-increasing incidence and menace of poverty in the region. The Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation reconstituted by the Eleventh Summit deliberated upon a set of strategies to deal with the issue of poverty alleviation in the region. Meanwhile, as mandated by the Eleventh Summit, the preparation of a Regional Poverty Profile was pursued to showcase in one document the best practices and experiences of Member States in their poverty alleviation efforts. The Association registered significant progress in the field of economic cooperation during the period.

Health

In health sector, SAARC made a promising start with the identification of key areas like tuberculosis, diarrhoeal disease, rabies, child survival, and development, traditional

³⁸ Dipankar Banerjee op.cit., n. 18, p.252.

³⁹ K.K Bhargava and Sridhar K. Khatri, op.cit., n. 27, p.22.

medicine, and communicable disease control and the disability. SAARC took too much time in establishing SAARC Tuberculosis Centre (STC) which became operational in 1992 in Kathmandu. It was in 1993 disability year was observed. The leaders in their summit speeches didn't raise the issues related to health frequently. Maldivian President Gayoom raised the issue of AIDS and related it to drug abuse.⁴⁰ The suggestions made by India to utilize traditional medicines for curing disease were not addressed. In health SAARC could not take any concrete steps due to bureaucratic problems.

A SAARC-Canada TB and HIV/AIDS Project was initiated in 2000 is financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) with which SAARC signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 1997. The four-year Project, which is in the final year of its execution, is aimed at strengthening the capacity of STC in its fight against TB and HIV/AIDS in the region.

SAARC Funds

SAARC Fund for Regional projects (SFRP) was established in 1991 covers areas such as food, clothing, shelter, education, primary health care, population planning and environmental protection. This Fund was to be managed by a regional council of development financing institutions of the SAARC member countries. SAARC Fund for Regional projects provided smooth functioning of various activities as it will provide them regional assistance. This will further enable the recommendations of the seminars, workshops, and reports into result oriented programme of nation building activity and overall national development. This fund was guardedly specific about the precise activities.⁴¹

In Dhaka 1993 South Asian Development Fund (SADF) was established for the regional institutions. In New Delhi summit 1995, SAARC regional fund was merged with

⁴⁰ Speech by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives delivered in Third SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu ,1987, SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990,p.121.

⁴¹ Ross Masood Husain, 'SAARC 1985-1995: A Review and Analysis of Progress 'in, Eric Gonsalves, Nancy Jetly,(ed.),*The Dynamics of South Asia* (New Delhi,Sage,1999),p.33.

SAARC fund for regional projects to form the South Asian development fund (SADF), to mobilize global surpluses for the development of the SAARC region.⁴²

This fund has identified some projects which are, Hydel power projects, dolomite based projects, regional sericulture project, integrated medicinal and herbal cultivation plants, skiing project and cut flower industry. Discussions on new projects such as manufacture of double sided printed circuit boards, manufacture of LPG cylinders, cement units also took place. However mere identification is not enough, there is need to go further in to the matter and examine how these projects can be realized.⁴³

The government of Japan has provided a special fund to assist in the implementation of SAARC projects and activities selected by SAARC. Many of the activities under the SAARC-Japan Special Fund have been of a short-term nature and no long term projects have yet been identified.

During the year 2002, the South Asian Development Fund (SADF) embraced poverty alleviation in the region as one of its thrust areas. The Governing Board of the SADF meeting in Kathmandu in September, among other things, agreed to commission a comprehensive study for financing under the Fund regional poverty alleviation projects proposed by the Secretary-General.

Cooperation in social areas has so far shown considerable promise and progress. however, It is generally believed accepted that the practice of observance of every year of focusing attention and action on a specific issue does help to raise regional consciousness among the peoples of the subcontinent on specific themes. In the area of development SAARC gradually begun to make progress but all this will depend on a structured and organized way.⁴⁴

⁴² *South Asian Development Fund*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1995.

⁴³ P.A. Joy, *SAARC Trade and Development* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep, 1995), p.220.

⁴⁴ Eric Gonsalves, "An Agenda for Next Decade", *South Asia Journal*, Vol 1, No 1, 1987, p.35.

South Asian regionalism lacks vision as well as translating opportunities of cooperation into measurable achievement. Therefore SAARC should select such areas of cooperation in which there would be mutual benefit for all members' state like poverty, education, unemployment, health, women and children. As in South Asia there is huge gap in levels of economic development therefore its success will depend upon the removal of barriers like asymmetry and promotion of favorable political will. Various experts have conducted studies and found that South Asian countries urgently need to formulate policies and strategies for their developmental plans.⁴⁵

Terrorism and Drug abuse

The issue of terrorism was first raised by Sri Lankan President Jayewardene in first SAARC summit. As his country was a victim of Tamil insurgency, he called for non violence and support from all members against terrorism or any kind of violence.⁴⁶ As result of this the leaders directed to standing committee to appoint a study group to examine the problem of terrorism. In Bangalore summit Rajiv Gandhi tried to convince his member states about the common threats of terrorisms and drug trafficking. Though terrorism was a bilateral issue but SAARC must be appreciated for addressing this issue.

In Kathmandu summit the leaders of South Asian states signed SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism which provides for extradition or prosecution of persons connected with wide variety of offences involving acts of terrorism and exchange of information, intelligence and expertise in preventive action to combat terrorism.⁴⁷ The SAARC members also pledged that they will refrain from organizing, instigating, and participation in civil strife or terrorist activities in member countries.

SAARC regional convention on terrorism was particularly significant and contributed to the efforts of regional security. This convention was ratified by all member states.

⁴⁵ V.L.B Mendis, op.cit., n. 12, p.60.

⁴⁶ Speech by Junius Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, SAARC *Summits*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.26.

⁴⁷ SAARC *Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1987.

Although the convention is not too happily implemented and it contains a number of flaws. The convention, for instance, does not clearly define the term terrorist or terrorism and its enforcement is subject to the existing legislation of participating states.⁴⁸ This convention has raised the member states political commitment to cooperation, as Pakistan has said in Male summit that we are committed to enact laws. The SAARC regional convention has not been able to control terrorism in countries like India as Pakistan hardly extradited any terrorist to India under this convention. However, Pakistan is the hub of terrorism in the world and has made promise in nearly all summits to eradicate terrorism.

In the XIth Kathmandu summit, 2002 all the leaders committed themselves to fighting terrorism in a comprehensive and collective manner at the present time when terrorism is ever threatening. The SAARC nations have accepted U.N. Resolution 1373 as the basis for future actions against terrorism, and are determined to "redouble efforts, collectively as well as individually, to prevent and suppress terrorism."⁴⁹

In Islamabad summit, SAARC leaders agreed to observe 1989 as SAARC year for combating Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking and called member states to wage war against narcotics and expressed concern at the high incidence of drug production,

trafficking, and abuse. In Male summit the agreement on the SAARC Regional Convention on Narcotics drugs and Psychotropic substances⁵⁰ was signed and it was ratified by all member states in 1993. It aims at regional cooperation for effective action for the elimination of the root causes of drug abuse, its prevention and control, as well as for the suppression of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

India suggested rehabilitation for the people who are drug addicts as rehabilitation of them was also important. Pakistani heads of state in their summit speeches has expressed commitment to the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking as there was lot of

⁴⁸ Mizanur Rahman, "Terrorism and the Legal Challenge: The SAARC Response", *Biiss journal*, Vol.9, No3, 1988.

⁴⁹ *Kathmandu Declaration*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 2002

⁵⁰ SAARC Regional Convention on Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, *SAARC Secretariat*, Kathmandu. 1990.

narcotics being cultivated in Pakistan. Pakistani government in its eight five year plan has dealt with problems of drug abuse and its aim was to eliminate poppy cultivation ,elimination of heroin laboratories by 1994 and attaining drug free society in Pakistan by the year 2000.⁵¹

The SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) has been set up in Colombo to collate, analyze and dissemination of information on drug offenses. The SDOMD has been particularly helpful but it requires regular and timely flow of information. In New Delhi summit President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga focused on twin phenomena of Terrorism and Drug trafficking which continued to pose a serious threat to the stability and security of member nations. In her opinion, the phenomenon of Narco terrorism is inseparably linked to organized crime, money laundering and illicit arms trade. She suggested a regional approach to tackle the problems of terrorism and drug trafficking. The suggestion of Sri Lankan President was of tremendous importance as narcotics trade provides financial security to terrorist organizations. The issue of drug and psychotropic substances is very threatening because of its social implications.

Environment

In the third SAARC summit the leaders expressed their interest to intensify cooperation with a view to strengthen their respective disaster management capabilities and commissioned a study on natural disaster. In fourth SAARC summit the leaders urged the expert group to complete its study on natural disaster; the leaders decided a joint study on 'green house effect' and its impact on region. In Male summit they agreed to extend SAARC activity to cooperation in environment.

In 1992, SAARC published two reports dealing with environment issues. The first was a pioneering study on the "causes and consequences of natural disasters and the protection and preservation of the environment", as a result of this the South Asian leaders decided

⁵¹ Mahendra P.Lama, *op.cit.*, n. 16, p.27.

during sixth SAARC summit in 1991 to create a technical committee on environment.⁵² The technical committee on environment has so far formulated future activities and programmes in the thirteen areas.

The second report, commissioned by the fourth SAARC summit, dealt with the theme of “greenhouse effect and its impact on the region.” The report covered a wide range of topics, including the sources of greenhouse gases, impact of the green house effect and strategies for emission reduction, as well as the legal framework for environmental protection and measures for implementation, monitoring requirements, and recommendation for regional cooperation in this field.⁵³

They also decided to observe 1992 as the SAARC Year of Environment. In Colombo summit the leaders urged member countries to promote cooperation among them and undertake specific programmes for protection of and preservation of environment. In New Delhi summit the SAARC leaders welcomed the establishment of the SAARC Metrological Research centre⁵⁴ (SMRC) in Dhaka in January 1995.

The environment and natural disaster require urgent studies despite this the leaders failed to take this issue urgently as in first summit itself President Ershad referred to natural disaster and said South Asia is prone to natural disasters. The environment and natural disaster study was commissioned in third SAARC summit and its request a group of coordinators was convened by the secretary general which drafted criteria on which states were invited to submit its reports. The latter was scheduled to for submission to the Male summit of 1990 but several states failed to submit reports.

In South Asia considerable environmental degradation has already taken place which makes it further disaster prone. The recommendation of the study on environment and natural disaster must be taken seriously and a careful examination by experts must be

⁵² *Regional Study on the Causes and Consequences of Natural Disasters and Protection and Preservation of the Environment*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1992.

⁵³ *Regional Study on Greenhouse Effect an its impact on the Region*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1992

⁵⁴ *SAARC Metrological Research Centre*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1995.

done. Feasible programs should be undertaken at the national and regional levels. Linkage between the policy structure and the people in the fields of environment and disaster management is very important. On climate changes issues SAARC should consider negotiating with one voice when matters come up in international fora.⁵⁵ The issue of sea level rise and environmental degradation was not addressed properly by SAARC. The secretary general in his report on SAARC activities found that there was delay in implementation of the decisions on natural disaster and environment.⁵⁶

International linkages

Bangladesh and Pakistan emphasized on establishing linkages with other regional grouping as these regional grouping may provide necessary expertise and share their experience with SAARC. Pakistan in all summits called for establishing linkages with regional groupings like ASEAN, E U.

Initially SAARC was hesitant about the establishment of links with other regional grouping. This was presumably due to fear of involvement of big powers in South Asia. The reservations about linkages meaning acceptance of grants or aid from international agencies which have made offers is that it might compromise its independence and self reliance. Such an image may seem praiseworthy, but not at the expense of sacrificing opportunities which may help in achieving its objectives.⁵⁷ In Male summit the leaders decided to initiate interaction with both European commission and ASEAN.

The Islamabad ministerial conference on the international economic situation emphasized on strengthening linkages between SAARC members to coordinate a common stand at international forums and conferences where SAARC members have common interest which can be collectively affected. In Delhi Declaration the leaders called for closer coordination among member states to formulate a collective voice for South Asia in international forums.

⁵⁵ K K Bhargava, op.cit., n. 25, p.140.

⁵⁶ Mendis op.cit, no.12,p.67

⁵⁷ Zillur S Khan, *SAARC and Superpowers* (Bangladesh, University Press Dhaka, 1991), p.24.

An MOU has been signed on administrative cooperation between SAARC and the European Commission on July 1996. Since 1998, SAARC had an informal ministerial level dialogue with ASEAN and European Union on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.⁵⁸

The SAARC Foreign Ministers held a dialogue with their ASEAN counterparts in New York in September, 2002 on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly to pursue collaborative efforts in the areas identified by them during their "tête-à-têtes" on earlier such occasions there.

SAARC and the European Union (EU) collaborated in the organization of a series of workshops on EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) and Regional Cumulation of which SAARC is a beneficiary since October 2000. The workshops which rotated in succession over all the SAARC capitals save Thimphu including the region's trade hubs like Mumbai and Karachi in February-March were primarily aimed at capacity building of Member States and increasing public awareness and understanding of the GSP Scheme.⁵⁹

Economic Cooperation

Trade is one of the major priority areas of cooperation under SAARC after Islamabad summit. In fact regional cooperation will be meaningless, if there is no cooperation in respect of trade and economic activity like joint ventures. inspite various commonalities of South Asian countries ,the intra regional trade of SAARC is as little as 3 percent of their total global trade. Therefore, the role of trade of each country is very important. The existence of tariff and non-tariff barriers impedes the trade relations among SAARC countries.⁶⁰Hence the urgency of developing greater regional integration among SAARC

⁵⁸ *Regional Economic Cooperation: Initiatives within the SAARC Region*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu 2000, p.13.

⁵⁹ SAARC Secretariat,op.cit., n. 5,p.8.

⁶⁰ S.N Raghavan, *Macro Economic Performance and Policy Framework in SAARC Countries: A Review*, (New Delhi, RIS, 1990), p.35.

countries in the form of free trade area⁶¹ and customs union⁶² is very important.

The idea of trade cooperation emerged in the third SAARC summit, held in Kathmandu, 1987, when it was agreed by all SAARC countries to examine the possibility of including this core area. Forth SAARC summit held in Islamabad recalled identifying specific areas where economic cooperation might be feasible immediately. Thus a regional study on trade, manufactures and services (TMS)⁶³ was commissioned by the SAARC secretariat. The study was completed in 1991 outlining number of recommendations for promoting regional cooperation in the core economic areas. The Council of Ministers of SAARC at its ninth session in Male in July 1991 endorsed the study and devised to set up a high level committee of economic cooperation (CEC).

In sixth SAARC summit which was held in Colombo the leaders were committed for liberalization of trade in the region through a step by step approach in such a manner that countries in the region share benefits of trade expansion equitably. Sri Lanka made this proposal and member countries agreed to examine Sri Lankan proposal to establish the SAARC preferential trading arrangement (SAPTA) and operationalize it from 1996.

The seven heads of state approved the establishment of an inter-governmental group (IGG) on trade liberalization⁶⁴ to seek agreement on an institutional frame work under which specific measures for trade liberalization among SAARC countries could be advanced. IGG met twice and evolved a draft agreement on SAPTA for approval by the council of ministers. Subsequently, the council of ministers signed the frame work agreement on SAPTA at seventh SAARC summit held in Dhaka 1993. the signing of SAPTA was a landmark achievement.

IGG on trade liberalization negotiated the trade concessions on SAPTA agreement and completed this process in June 1994. it took member countries more than two and a half

⁶¹ Peter Robson, *The Economics of Integration*, (London, routledge, 1993), p.11

⁶² *ibid.*, p.12.

⁶³ *Regional Study on Trade and Manufacturers and Services*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1992.

⁶⁴ SAARC Secretariat, *op.cit.*, n. 50, p.5.

years to ratify the agreement and operationalize it. Thus SAPTA entered into SAARC activities on 7, December 1995, a decade after the launching of SAARC.

During eight SAARC summit held in New Delhi it was felt by seven leaders that SAPTA was a loose arrangement and flexible trade regime was the need of the hour. Therefore they endorsed a proposal to take measures for the establishment of SAARC free trade area (SAFTA), a single South Asian market. SAFTA was the eventual goal of SAARC. During sixth meeting of committee of economic cooperation (CEC) in New Delhi (December 1993), it was decided to constitute a joint expert group to bring out a comprehensive report on the proposed transition of SAPTA to SAFTA with all tariff and non-tariff barriers totally eliminated. It was agreed to constitute a IGG to further negotiate the removal or lowering of tariff, non tariff and para tariff barriers.⁶⁵

The SAARC decided on its ninth summit in the Maldives in 1998 to establish SAFTA by 2001. However, the process was unfortunately delayed as almost all the SAARC activities came to a stop due to escalating nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, the two biggest economies in the group. In Kathmandu summit, 2002 the leaders decided to speed up the free trade process by finalizing a draft treaty by the end of 2002, so as to move more quickly towards a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), which would remove non-tariff barriers and structural impediments and lower tariffs to greatly enhance trade and investment among SAARC countries.⁶⁶

SAARC has established trade cooperation with international and regional organizations. In April 1992, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the Trade Analysis and Information Systems (TRAINS) between SAARC and UNCTAD (United Nations conference on trade and development) was signed. Under this MOU, UNCTAD will provide the SAARC secretariat on a regular basis an updated copy of TRAINS containing data on trade control measures prevailing in several developed and developing countries.

⁶⁵ Para tariffs means border charges and fees, other than tariffs, on foreign trade transactions of a tariff like effect which are levied solely on imports, but not those indirect taxes and charges, which are levied in the same manner on like domestic products. An example of Para-tariffs is anti-dumping duty.

⁶⁶ SAARC Secretariat, op cit., n.5, p.6

This will facilitate global exports. In return of this SAARC Secretariat would provide data on trade control measures prevailing in the SAARC countries.⁶⁷

During SAARC summits leaders have expressed concern over issues prevailing in international economy and demonstrated a common stand to deal with the problems of protectionism, debt servicing etc. As a result of this a framework agreement for cooperation on trade promotion was also signed between SAARC and ESCAP (Economic Commission for Asia and Pacific). The possibilities are also being explored for trade cooperation with EU and ASEAN. Germany, Iran, Italy and South Korea have shown interest in establishing cooperation with SAARC.

However, there are some who have expressed apprehensions that external funding for SAARC may result in priorities for this regional body being set by those who are financing its activities rather than itself. These aspects can be taken care when SAARC enter into agreements with those who offer these funds.⁶⁸

SAARC also emphasized on greater participation of the non-governmental organizations in the process of trade cooperation. The council of ministers in Colombo in July 1992 gave guidelines and procedures for granting recognition to regional apex bodies. As a result of this SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry was established in February 1994 to explore possibilities for cooperation among major business houses in South Asia. Sri Lanka proposed this apex body of business houses. The SCCI provided strong thrust to the SAARC cooperation in economic areas and policy initiatives along with it also provided necessary information and services to the business community.⁶⁹

However, it is noteworthy that out of 12 areas for cooperation under integrated programme of action six were economic in content and impact. These were agricultural and rural sector, joint ventures, market promotion, shipping, scientific and technological

⁶⁷ SAARC Secretariat, op.cit., n. 50, p.12.

⁶⁸ Arif A. Waqif, *SAARC'S Relations with Other Regional Blocs: Issues and Approaches*, New Delhi, Freidrich Ebert Stiftung, 1995, p.54.

⁶⁹ K.K .Bhargava, op.cit., n. 25, p.121.

cooperation and tourism. Despite this it took almost ten years to conduct cooperation in trade and industry.

The leaders were of the view that programme of economic cooperation would bring a favorable climate for addressal of other issues like poverty, development. The full potential of SAARC cannot be realized until the core sectors of industry and trade. SAARC has been slow in bringing vital economic areas such as trade, industry, manufactures and finance on the agenda, notwithstanding the demand from the SAARC member states in various summits as we have discussed in previous chapter.

Constraints in SAARC

In SAARC summits leaders of all South Asian states identified major problems of SAARC but it seems that there is huge gaps between declaration and their final implementation. The major constraints in the success of SAARC are:

- (i) The prevailing political and security climate in the region.
- (ii) The asymmetry in the resource position of the South Asian states.
- (iii) The divergence in the relative stages of economic development.
- (iv) The lack of balanced interdependence in South Asia.
- (v) India's significant position in terms of size, location and influence.
- (vi) The perception of India's role within SAARC at the level of the other states in the region.⁷⁰

Political Constraints

In view of the complex problem of bilateral relations Bangladesh suggested that SAARC goal should be to create a new set of relations on a regional basis without

⁷⁰ M.J. Vinod, "South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation : Working ,Challenges and Prospects" in B.C. Upreti (ed.), *SAARC :Dynamics of Regional Cooperation in South Asia* (New Delhi, Kalinga, 2000), p.73.

intruding on the existing bilateral and multilateral relations. Bangladesh working paper did not include the political issues in the agenda for the sake of creating trust among the members. It was felt that South Asian environment which was full of tension, suspicion, and hatred, inclusion of political issue will further lead to conflict and hamper the process of regional cooperation.⁷¹

The basic factor behind the slow growth of regional cooperation is not economic, but political. As Jigme Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan, observed at the first SAARC summit, he said in the geo political realities of our region, it would be unrealistic to ignore the primacy of the political factor, as in the final analysis, it will be political environment of the region which will determine the shape and scope of regional cooperation.⁷²

In political field the centrality of India's position in the region and its vast size, population, resources and economic and military power as compared to those of South Asian neighbors. This position of India makes them feel that India is hegemonistic. India's plea for collective self reliance in the region and warning against allowing external powers any foothold are interpreted as hegemonistic designs of India. This mindset of South Asian countries have led to situation in which India wants all South Asian countries to cooperate in the political field in order to safeguard the region's autonomy and security vis a vis major external powers.⁷³

On the other hand, the other South Asian states constantly look out to forge political and other linkages with those external powers in order to counterbalance India and safeguard the region's autonomy and security against possible encroachment by India. This makes India apprehensive about the designs of its neighbors. Any alliance of India and other South Asian with major powers can seriously jeopardize security situation in South Asia. As a result of this, India had forged special relationship with Soviet Union.

⁷¹ Virendra Narain, B.C.Upreti, (ed.), *SAARC A Study of Perceptions and Policies* (New Delhi, South Asian Publishers, 1991), p.20.

⁷² Speech by Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan delivered in First Summit held in Dhaka, 1985, quoted from SAARC Summits, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1990, p.13

⁷³ Bimal Prasad, "Prospects for Greater Cooperation in South Asia: The political Dimensions" in, Eric Gonsalves, Nancy Jetly, (ed.), *The Dynamics of South Asia* (New Delhi, Sage, 1999), p.66.

All these factors have effected the growth of regional cooperation in South Asia.⁷⁴

The bilateral problems are clearly visible in SAARC summit speeches as leaders of Bhutan, Pakistan; Sri Lanka has raised these problems time and again. The history of South Asia has been marked by bilateral problems like trade and immigration with Nepal, sharing of river waters and boundary disputes with Bangladesh, immigrant communities of Indian origin and Tamils of Sri Lanka, the Kashmir problem and the arms race between India and Pakistan. Thus the discussion on bilateral issue would have opened flood gates, drowning any proposal for cooperation. Despite this, informal talks⁷⁵ have taken place during summits and resulted in easing of tensions.

India over the years have initiated large number of bilateral agreements with South Asian countries in trade and cooperation.⁷⁶ In Islamabad summit India and Pakistan concluded three bilateral agreements related to cultural cooperation on the avoidance of double taxation in civil aviation, and on the prohibition of attacks on each other's nuclear installations and facilities.

This discord between India and Pakistan, has affected the success of SAARC in a big way as both of them are the two most powerful states in South Asia and have different policy orientation. The postponement of summit over the years has been partly due to India and Pakistan. The partition of India in 1947 in which Pakistan became a new nation on the basis of two nation theory, the differences with India over the division of assets and disposal of evacuee properties just after partition as well as history of the Kashmir dispute are regarded as India's unwillingness to give Pakistan its due. The part played by India in emergence of Bangladesh has become source of conflict between India and Pakistan. Pakistan has continuously raised Kashmir issue in SAARC forum and called for U N

⁷⁴ P.R. Chari , "National Security and Regional Cooperation : The Case of South Asia," in Iftekaruzzaman (ed.), *Regional Economic Trends and South Asian Security*, (New Delhi, Manohar,1997),p.193.

⁷⁵ Ross Masood Husain, 'SAARC 1985-1995: A Review and Analysis of Progress 'in, Eric Gonsalves, Nancy Jetly,(ed.),*The Dynamics of South Asia* (New Delhi,Sage,1999),p.36.

⁷⁶ Suman Sharma, *India in SAARC* (New Delhi, Gyan Publishing, 2000), p.45.

resolution on the Kashmir settlement.⁷⁷

In South Asia there should be harmonization of foreign policies which is only possible through political will. SAARC cannot go even a step forward in an environment of mistrust, tension, acrimony. Non political issues cannot achieve any result unless the political issues are addressed properly. Political goodwill can create the necessary ground for greater socio-economic, cultural and technical cooperation.⁷⁸

During the summits the leaders have expressed their desire to include political issues in SAARC forum. The members of SAARC should allow discussions on political issues. It has been realized that SAARC cannot progress unless it adopts a conflict resolution mechanisms. Removal of mistrust and fear from the minds of people of South Asia is very important. SAARC should allow more people to people contact by facilitating cross border travel. This can bring an atmosphere for growth of political cooperation.⁷⁹

With a view to relieving tensions and building confidence among the member states, the ninth summit at Male initiated a process of informal consultations. Bilateral consultations were held at Male between Prime Minister of India and Pakistan and resulted in 'Gujral Doctrine'. Similarly, the process continued during the tenth summit at Colombo.

The concept of informal consultations has not matured completely and it requires full understanding of India and Pakistan on this subject, as eleventh SAARC Summit was again postponed due to India as it did not recognize the military rule in Pakistan. However it was finally held in Kathmandu, 2002. The twelfth summit in Islamabad has also been postponed due to India's stand on certain bilateral issues.

⁷⁷ Sumit Ganguly, "The Prospects of SAARC", in Hafeez Malik (ed.) *Dilemmas Of National Security and Cooperation In India and Pakistan*, (New York, St. Martin Press, 1993), p.276.

⁷⁸ Akmal Husain, "The Imperative of Political Agenda for SAARC", in, Eric Gonsalves, Nancy Jetly, (ed.), *The Dynamics of South Asia* (New Delhi, Sage, 1999), p.77.

⁷⁹ Ross Masood Husain, *Promotion of Greater Inter-Governmental, Inter -Institutional and Inter- People Understanding in South Asia*, (New Delhi, Freidrich -Ebert -Stiftung, 1995), p.25

The GEP has recommended that the process of holding informal consultations should be carried forward and operationalized so as to achieve the charter of objectives of fostering mutual trust, understanding and friendly relations among the member states.⁸⁰ The internal tensions of the south Asian countries as well as regional disputes require an approach of regional consensus. Keeping in mind this thing GEP also recommended establishing a South Asian Security Forum.

The experience of other regional groupings can provide practical guidelines. ASEAN decided to establish ARF, while the European Union has developed an effective OSCE to consider political and security issues in their respective regions

Constraints to Economic Cooperation in SAARC

In 1991 SAARC identified the following factors to be the major impediments to trade expansion in the region :restrictive trade policies, lack of information ,resource constraints and thus dependence on external aid which, in turn, is tied to imports from aid donors, on availability of exportable surplus of desired specifications, high cost of production, inadequate transit facilities and transport network, imbalance in trade, lack of standardization of documentation and complexity of procedures. The major hurdles for economic cooperation in the SAARC region are political divisions, lack of confidence and conflicts between states of South Asia.⁸¹

In SAARC countries India account for 75 percent of GNP in the region. All neighboring countries tend to perceive a threat from India to their security. Trade complementarities⁸² based on agriculture and light manufactured products appear to have reached their limits in the SAARC region as most of the countries in the region are producing the very goods that are traded. Consequently intra-trade turnover declines in proportion to the degree of self –sufficiency achieved in these products. It has been observed in the past that the

⁸⁰ *The Report of the Group of Eminent Persons*, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1997.

⁸¹ V.R. Panchmukhi et al., *Economic cooperation in the SAARC Region: Potential, Constraints and Policies* (New Delhi ,RIS ,1990), p.36

⁸² Saman Kelegama, "SAPTA and its Future", in, Eric Gonsalves, Nancy Jetly,(ed.),*The Dynamics of South Asia* (New Delhi,Sage,1999),p.177.

increase of domestic production of rice, fish, vegetables, spices, sugar, cotton textiles, etc., has tended to slow down the intra trade in such products in the region. It appears that with the liberalization measures in the SAARC countries and the consequent growth of export industries these countries find greater complementarities with other regions and countries.⁸³

The discord between India and Pakistan in economic sphere has existed over the years. The volume of trade has remained restricted at around \$ 250 million a year because of tariff and non –tariff barriers. The unofficial trade between the two countries is believed to be much more than the official trade. Pakistan has expressed reservations at increased trade with India as it fears imports from India will hit the interest of its domestic industries. Pakistan has also complained about the lack of ‘level playing field’⁸⁴ between India and Pakistan since the latter has liberalized imports much more than the former. Pakistan has not granted India the most favored nation (MFN) status. India has granted Pakistan this status. GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is a multilateral trading agreement, which provides MFN (Most Favored Nation) status to all its 132 member countries including SAARC. The volume of intra regional trade and economic cooperation however remained abysmally low and as a result of this attempts at diversification have only resulted in trade agreements with north.

In order to make SAPTA more meaningful, all the SAARC countries must increase the tariff concessions⁸⁵ under SAPTA. The lists of items offered for preferential treatment by member countries must be widened. As there were fears in the minds of small South Asian states that India and Pakistan would swamp them. But the fast ratification of SAPTA by smaller economies i.e. Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka reflects their commitment toward economic cooperation.

⁸³ Abid Husain, “Trade Expansion among South Asian Countries: Problems and Prospects”, *South Asia Journal* Vol.1, No.2, October –November, 1987, p.120

⁸⁴ Shashi Upadhyaya, “Pakistan’s Perception of India’s Role in SAARC”, *South Asian Studies*, Vol.31, No.1&2, January-December, 1996, p.147.

⁸⁵ Lakshman Kadirgamar, “South Asian Cooperation in the Twenty First Century: Opportunities and Challenges”, *South Asian Survey*, Vol .5, No.1, January –June, 1995, p. 28

Raghavan said “There are certain basic guiding principles which need to be followed for ensuring success in the efforts towards regional economic cooperation.”⁸⁶These are:

- (i) Cooperation should be based on the principles of equality, equity and mutual benefit, taking fully into account the economic and social disparities as well as the differences in the level of development among the countries in the region.
- (ii) Cooperation should involve a commitment towards the common goals on the part of all participating countries with equal respect for each other.
- (iii) Cooperation should be based on consultation, deliberations and consensus on all economic and other related issues.
- (iv) Cooperation should complement and build upon existing bilateral and other kinds of arrangements among the member countries.
- (v) Cooperation should be based on modalities of economic openness and interdependence and should be consistent with the principles of multilateral trading system established by GATT.

The development of regional economic cooperation in the SAARC region can progress rapidly if all the member countries perceive this process as a means to accelerate economic growth in individual member countries. The main instrument for achieving regional economic cooperation is to agree on certain common programme of industrial restructuring in line with the developments taking place in other parts of the world. Secondly, it has to be ensured that the process of regional cooperation leads to more accelerated economic growth in the relatively less developed and small member countries

⁸⁶ S.N .Raghavan , *Regional Economic Cooperation among SAARC countries*, (New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1995),p,10.

in the region. Thirdly, the industrial and trade policies of the member countries should facilitate expansion of intra-regional trade and investment.⁸⁷

Fourthly, since governments by their very nature tend to take a short –term view and also tend to delay in taking decisions on many economic issues, the private sector should take greater initiatives on promoting regional economic cooperation.

SAARC nations are handicapped by various constraints such as inadequate communications and infrastructure facilities, low levels of financial development and intermediation, and a large share of labour force without skills. Most of these constraints can be much more easily tackled through functional integration among the SAARC countries in specific areas like transport and communications infrastructure, cooperation among financial institutions and collaborations in other fields such as energy development, water resource development and human resource development.⁸⁸

In South Asia there is need to define clearly the role and function of the private sector in the light of the current policies on privatization and marketisation, which are being followed by most SAARC countries. No preferential trading arrangement can succeed without the active participation of the private sector; its cooperation can contribute to sub regional trade expansion even without a preferential trading arrangement.⁸⁹

However, it is significant to note that the spectrum of possibilities for the private entrepreneurs has also widened with the process of deregulation and economic reforms progressing rapidly in the SAARC region.⁹⁰ Measures like projects in expansion of trade, cooperation in research and development, supporting mechanisms like clearing and payments arrangements, arbitration centre, trade financing facilities and trade information network will help in economic cooperation.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p.11.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p.12.

⁸⁹ V. Kanesalingam, *Private Sector and Regional cooperation in South Asia* (New Delhi ,Macmillan,1993), p.76.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p.79.

Administrative Restructuring

SAARC institutional arrangement requires restructuring. There is need to give Secretary General his due. As Secretary General and the SAARC secretariat have been entrusted by the members states with task of furthering regional cooperation, the Secretary General must be empowered to become the central authority to recommend, implement, monitor and review the activities of SAARC. The tenure of the Secretary General should be extended beyond its current stipulated two-year term in order to make him work effectively. The rank of secretary general should be upgraded to that of cabinet minister. The Secretary General should call for reports on the current activities and future programmes of already established SAARC institutions. These institutions should be strengthened and monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.⁹¹

The Secretary General should be appointed by SAARC Summit .he should be appointed on merit, with due regard to adequate representation of the member states. The major weakness in the structure of the SAARC secretariat has been the absence of highly qualified and experiences professional experts. The main reason for success of the E.U, ASEAN is that they are supported by highly efficient and professional staff and well equipped secretariats.

The whole structure of SAARC institutions, including technical committees, be streamlined with a view to making them more effective in promoting regional cooperation. The measures for restructuring should begin with decision regarding the role of the standing committee. Its position, as matters stand at present, is that it is both redundant and constitutionally unsound. Standing committee is a bridge between secretariat and executives. These functions are duplication of the functions of council of ministers. The standing committee is essentially a nebulous presence, which has no substantive body by way of a central location or administrative personality.⁹² This means that secretary general has to wait until it meets in formal sessions to get directives. So

⁹¹ K K. Bhargava,op.cit., n. 25, p.34.

⁹² *ibid.*,p.35.

there is a case for disbanding standing committee. After the adoption of integrated programme of action, the standing committee role has diminished.

The GEP recommended rationalization of technical committees. The number of technical committees under the integrated programme of action should be reduced to two. the Secretary General should be given flexibility to mobilize resources for the agreed activities under the IPA in conformity with prioritize laid down , from the interested funding sources, both from within and outside the region.

SAARC institutions will continue to stagnate unless they are backed by the dynamics of regional cooperation in South Asia. If the institutions are properly designed and utilized, they can promote dynamism in cooperation. South Asia should not hesitate to learn from examples of other successful groupings like ASEAN, EU in this respect. Institutional mechanisms involving professional bodies and non-governmental organizations can be important sources for capacity building in the field of South Asian regional cooperation. A Working Group should be set up for reviewing the functioning of the existing institutional mechanism and making suggestion in regard to widening the scope of their functions and creating new ones where necessary.⁹³

Integrated Programme of Action

The activities of integrated programme of action suffer from no of reasons. Despite the fact that the member states have actively participated in the technical committees meeting, the functional machineries are quite slow and deficient of dynamism.

The level of commitment to the SAARC process by the leaders of member states as manifest in the summit declarations has not led to the implementation of programmes. The frequent changes of person's incharge of National Focal Points (NFPs) and Sectoral Focal Points (SFPs) and lack of proper coordination between them leaves much to be desired. Non-participation of SFPs in technical committees meeting has further worsened the situation. The dismal performance of IPA activities was due to three racial factors, viz.

⁹³ *ibid.*,p.53.

Resource crunches, lack of inter sectoral coordination and non-implementation of decisions.⁹⁴

Resource crunch

The Technical Committees have not been able to prepare any regional project apart from the setting up of SAIC, STC, and SMRC. The funds for SAARC activities from the member states are inadequate. The fund commitment by member states has remained stagnated at the level which it started ten years back. This indicates the serious nature of financial constraints of the activities under IPA. The secretary general has observed that in view of the inadequacy of resources available to NFPs to fund regional projects, one way could be that concerned sectoral line ministers in each member state could be involved for this purpose.

Lack of inter-sectoral coordination

The first meeting of the chairmen of the technical committees (MCTC) held in Male in 1990 recommended that technical committees should include an item of inter sectoral coordination and another relating to the recommendations and decisions of other TCs having bearing on its work. The second MCTC stressed the need for proper coordination to avoid duplication and ensure wider participation. Despite this the priority areas identified by TC on rural development are common to many TCs and resulted in overlapping of activities. Reports of the TCs have been exchanged with one another and suggestions have emanated as to how the activities of one TC can help another. However, so far no specific coordinated programmes or activities have emerged.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Mahendra P.Lama, *op.cit.*, n. 16, p.34.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*,p.36.

Non-implementation of decisions

Non implementation of decisions is a common phenomenon in SAARC activities. There is non implementation at level of technical committee, workshops, seminars and reports, and decisions by standing committee.

IPA is a key component of the SAARC process. The 12 areas of activity under IPA have clear mandate of the seven member states as far as cooperation and implementation in the identified areas are concerned. All these areas need to be seriously and adequately addressed as they can provide regional complementarity and a new regional development paradigm. What is required is the systematic refocusing of member states and attention on strengthening and consolidating IPA activities. Hence, the need for revamping and restructuring of the integrated programme of action is vital for the very substance of SAARC.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p.39

Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the importance of regionalism in the study of international relations. The force of regionalism merits our attention, given its emergence in 1950s and resurgence in the post cold war years. Since then it has been shaping international relation. The study of regionalism has been marked by two phases. The first phase began under the sub field of international relation in the late 1950s and the second phase emerged in the context of international political economy in 1980s.

Regional groupings around the world in its initial stages were part of collective security and regionalism was used as an instrument of International struggle for power. These include the North Atlantic treaty organization (NATO) formed in 1949, the ANZUS pacific security pact in 1951.the ANZUS pact was a security treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the USA and the South East Asian Treaty Organization of 1954. In 1955 the Soviet Union responded to the threat of these military alliances by setting up the Warsaw treaty organization (WTO). In 1980's regionalism took new dimensions and concentrated on intensifying political and economic process of cooperation among states and other actors in particular geographical regions. The European economic integration and increasing interdependence among three North American countries US, Canada, Mexico under NAFTA and the transformation of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are examples of association, which are based on economic cooperation.

Over a period of time relevance of regionalism for development and conflict prevention was being questioned as old regionalism failed to promote peace and development. The old regionalism was imposed from outside the region for geopolitical reasons, and in such cases there were few incentives for economic cooperation and the economic region had been divide in accordance with the cold war pattern. The old regionalism didn't go beyond trade arrangement between nations where economic relations already had become distorted. Uneven development along with political tensions led to further conflict.

The eventual emergence of multipolarity in international system led to the rise of new regionalism. The new regionalism is a multidimensional form of integration, which includes economic, political, social and cultural aspects. It goes far beyond the goal of creating region based free trade regimes or security alliances. The new regionalism that emerged in 1980s was a result of comprehensive structural transformation of the global system which we have discussed earlier.

Regionalism is determined by various factors, these are, Proximity, Homogeneity, Functional Interest, Common Threat Perception, Similarity in Foreign Policy Orientation, Acceptance of Pivotal Power in the Region, Strategic harmony, Regional institutions.

Over the years various approaches of regionalism have evolved these are functional approach, neo functional approach, communication approach, world order approach and fractured functionalism especially in South Asia.

Regionalism is achieved through formation of regional organizations. A regional organization is intended to appeal only to a specified category of states, less than global in scope. Regional organization may be classified on the basis of their nature or scope of their functions or membership, or possibly on the degree of an eventual integration that is sought. Regional organization can be divided in three general types Multipurpose regional organizations, Alliance type organizations and Functional organizations. There is also a distinct category of regionalism promoted by United Nations regional commissions.

Regionalism has undergone changes from time to time however regionalism has emerged as means to conflict management and conflict resolution. Regionalism has been tried as a development policy on the contrary traditionally regionalism was concerned with trade. Over a period of time regionalism relevance for development and conflict prevention is being questioned as old regionalism failed to promote peace and development. Development Regionalism may provide solutions to many specific economic and development problems in the South, as well as in the north that have been accentuated by the process Globalization.

Regional organizations like European Union and ASEAN have different integrated mechanisms. External threats particularly by Soviets communism and economically by United States and Japan led to the emergence of European cooperation. ASEAN countries felt threatened by communism and growing Soviet's and Chinese influence. The downfall of Sukarno after PKI coup was the most crucial factor for formation of ASEAN.

The E.U is based on French inspired legal and institution integration model, unlike ASEAN which can be characterized as a more networks based. The Treaty of Rome outlined the structure of institution for EEC (and now the EU) in a manner reminiscent of the Treaty of Paris. The E.U has, in effect, executive, legislative and, judicial institution. In Europe governments have played a key role in framing regional frameworks that have served to shape regional business activity whereas in Asia Pacific region it has been the activity of the business community which have to a great extent forced governments to regularize the regional relations. Economic integration in South East Asia is a result of trade and business operation. ASEAN's success on political and security fronts is also remarkable.

Diplomacy and leadership play vital role in the success of regional organizations around the world. Diplomacy continues to make an important contribution to cooperation and order in the international system. But diplomacy is no panacea. It cannot guarantee international cooperation but, given goodwill on all sides, it can provide the means to make it happen through dialogue and negotiation. It has become more of a management process in which all actors seeking to reach agreement through a process of adjustment. The development in the twentieth century has had a significant impact on the way in which the dialogue between states is conducted. As regional organizations have large representation especially like European Union and sometimes such large representations of leaders prevents meaningful dialogue. So without a political profile in a summit the agreements in that particular summit are a distant reality.

This study attempted to analyze the evolution of regionalism in South Asia. Regional cooperation in South Asia were marked by two phases; the first phase of regionalism was pursued by India under the leadership of Nehru, in a wider Asian context during late forties and continued till 60s. These were the Asian Relation Conference, at New Delhi in 1947, the Conference of Asian, Australian and Middle Eastern nations on the Indonesian question at New Delhi in 1949, the Afro Asian conference at Bandung in 1955, the Shimla conference in 1955 and the first Non align summit at Belgrade in 1961. This phase still remains relevant today to some extent. The second phase was initiated by the late President Zia ur Rahman in December 1980 when he distributed a working paper on regional cooperation in South Asia. This attempt was exclusively meant for the countries of South Asia.

Regionalism attempts in Asia particularly South Asia was determined by the diplomatic rivalry between China and India. This was evident as the second Asian Relation Conference in China, Nanking could not be held because of Sino-Indian rivalry. India also faced reservations from its South Asian neighbours particularly Pakistan which did not accept India's increasing role in Asia as well as South Asia.

The early attempts to regionalism in Asia were dominated by politico –strategic considerations, these were military alliances and pacts on the one hand and on decolonization and Asian resurgence on the other hand. The first phase of regionalism in Asia and Africa came to an end, as they could not avoid the impact of cold war and the great power designs. All these attempts to regionalism were provided by the extra regional powers and were political and these conferences could not move beyond deliberations. The failures of second phase of regionalism created conditions necessary for emergence of second phase of regionalism, ultimately leading to the emergence of SAARC. Regionalism attempts in South Asia in second phase emerged as a result of international and domestic factors. The major factors are, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan led to the extension of cold war in South Asia in 1970 and particularly emergence of Bangladesh in 1971. The period after 1970 further consolidated the rivalry

and competition between two super powers. This rivalry continued in South Asia as both Super Powers provided support in the form of military alliances to their allies.

President Zia-ur Rehman of Bangladesh mooted the idea of regional cooperation as early as 1977 and finally in December 1980, he distributed the 'Bangladesh paper on regional cooperation.' Zia's main concern was to enhance the security of Bangladesh and he saw a multilateral South Asian forum as a mechanism for bringing collective pressure on India which cannot be exerted by bilateral negotiations. India was less enthusiastic about this proposal as it viewed a western approval behind it and simultaneously it feared that smaller neighbours might gang up against India and put collective pressure. Moreover India's relation with Zia 's government was not cordial as compare to Awami league government.

Small states consider India as a hegemonistic power and in order to contain India they endorsed the proposal of regional cooperation by Zia very early. Though India and Pakistan expressed some reservations to the Zia's proposal. Perceptions of India and Pakistan on national interests and perceived threat apparently came in the way of this proposal of regional cooperation. Finally in December 1985 after a series of meeting by foreign secretaries and foreign minister and other committees for nearly five years, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was launched in Dhaka.

In this study a close analysis of SAARC Summits from 1985 to 1995 has been done. Since its inception eleven SAARC Summits have taken place in the different capitals of South Asian countries. These Summits have deliberated on large number of critical issues and have a range of declaration containing many issues of regional interest. In its initial years SAARC didn't address core areas of cooperation i.e. trade and industrial cooperation. The first four SAARC summits addressed areas related to social problems which include, poverty, unemployment, over population and people to people contact.

In these summits leaders of South Asian states expressed their views on issues related to poverty, unemployment, human development, people to people contact. Bangladesh in all four summits gave various suggestions for development of SAARC. India in all four summits have emphasized on core areas of cooperation and increasing people to people contact in South Asia. Nepal has called for utilization of Himalayan water resources in these four summits. Nepal has suggested the attitude of give and take for the success of SAARC. Pakistan from Dhaka summit called for cooperation with other regional groupings and in other summits also Pakistan raised this issue. However Pakistan has raised contentious issue of Kashmir indirectly in many summits and called for UN resolution on Kashmir. Bhutan identified political environment as the major barrier in success of regional cooperation in South Asia. Nearly in all four initial summits Bhutan has raised the importance of political issues in SAARC forum. Bhutan has also raised international issues. Sri Lanka has raised the issue of terrorism in all four summits and called for non-violence.

The first four SAARC summits identified new areas of cooperation and commissioned various studies to conduct cooperation in areas which are mutually beneficial to SAARC members. As a result of regular meeting and contacts, an awareness of the commonality of problems has developed in South Asia. In its initial years regional cooperation in South Asia addressed non-political, economic, social, cultural and scientific fields as it was felt that this will help the SAARC states to overcome the problems of poverty and backwardness and ultimately this cooperation will lead to cooperation in political sphere, as political trust and cooperation are very important for economic cooperation in SAARC.

The studies conducted by SAARC took too much time in giving their reports. It has been found that what leaders say their speeches are not being followed by them as Pakistan in all its speeches called for prevention of terrorism and drug trafficking but nothing concrete had taken place till now by Pakistan. Countries like Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka has suggested discussions on bilateral issues in SAARC forum whereas India

and Pakistan in Islamabad summit concluded three agreements as result of informal meeting between them. SAARC meetings have provided leaders' opportunity to discuss their bilateral issues informally though the general provisions of SAARC do not allow discussions on contentious and bilateral issues.

From male summit onwards postponement of summit became a normal affair. The annual summit could not take place in 1989 due to Sri Lanka's flat refusal for holding the summit till the withdrawal of the Indian peace keeping force (IPKF) from its soil. Male summit emphasized on objectives and principles of SAARC, one of the most important outcomes was suggestions on result oriented programmes and business like approach in summits.

The sixth summit was originally scheduled to be held on 7 November 1991. but could not held because of Bhutan Kings inability to attend owing to the domestic problems. The seventh SAARC summit was postponed twice. The summit was postponed due to Indian Prime Minister inability to participate as a result of Babri Masjid demolition and there was threat of anti India demonstration at Dhaka, Pakistan and Bangladesh was looking to raise Ayodhya issue in the summit. The reason for the postponement of eighth summit as quoted was Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir state visit to the United States during that period.

The idea of trade cooperation emerged in the third SAARC summit, held in Kathmandu, 1987. Fourth SAARC summit held in Islamabad recalled identifying specific areas where economic cooperation might be feasible immediately. Thus a regional study on trade, manufactures and services (TMS) was commissioned by the SAARC secretariat. Finally in New Delhi summit SAPTA was adopted. SAARC took almost ten years to include trade in its cooperation activity. Male summit onwards SAARC included areas like environment. Pakistan's suggestion of establishing cooperative linkages with other regional grouping was also accepted in 1992. Pakistan and Sri Lanka expressed that SAARC summits should allow discussions on bilateral issues, the even called for

alterations in SAARC charter. SAARC has addressed bilateral issues like terrorism by adopting SAARC Convention on Suppression of Terrorism.

A brief survey of SAARC Summit gives impression that the speeches given by leaders in SAARC summits were not being addressed properly. In all summits leaders identified new areas and barriers to cooperation in SAARC. But nothing concrete happened after summits. It is found that new programmes and activities which were launched in declarations were normally neglected when it came to their actual implementation, due to various constraints which we have already discussed.

The most important problem relating to regional cooperation is the divergence among SAARC members in their respective economic capacities. India is by far the most dominant power in South Asia by virtue of its size, population, resource base, potential for economic growth and military strength. This disparity in power balance between India and other South Asian countries has generated a fear psychosis in the mind of smaller South Asian countries. Due to political instability and economic dependence, the smaller nations have adopted different strategies towards their nation building programs. As a result of this they have resorted to reckless borrowing from other nations.

The political differences between South Asian states especially India as all South Asian states except Bhutan and Maldives have some bilateral dispute with India. The South Asian states have used SAARC forum in discussing these issues. The discord between India and Pakistan had affected the SAARC process in its sixteen years history. Pakistan had raised Kashmir issue in SAARC forum regularly and called for UN resolution on it. In Islamabad summit India and Pakistan concluded three bilateral agreements related to cultural cooperation on the avoidance of double taxation in civil aviation, and on the prohibition of attacks on each other's nuclear installations and facilities. India over the years has also initiated large number of bilateral agreements with South Asian countries in trade and cooperation

However, it will be in the best interest of all the SAARC nations to forget their political differences that stand in the way of regional cooperation. The member countries should overcome the legacy of mistrust and suspicion and a partnership of mutual trust and commonality of interest.

Moreover in ninth Male summit with a view to relieving tensions and building confidence among the member states, the leaders initiated a process of informal consultations. Bilateral consultations were held at Male between Prime Minister of India and Pakistan and resulted in 'Gujral Doctrine'. Similarly, the process continued during the tenth summit at Colombo.

The success of regional cooperation depends on strengthening of democratic system and empowerment of the people as this will reduce the stranglehold of elites. In South Asia the restriction on travel like stringent visa and passport requirements coupled with difficulties due to non-availability of currencies and on the free flow of information has ensured that the mass population in each country is ignorant about their neighbors. Though SAARC had introduced some schemes to promote more interaction like SAVE, SVES and SPOT, all these schemes have not yielded any concrete results.

The ultimate success of the SAARC depends largely on its ability to promote inter-regional trade and industrial cooperation. It is the clash of economic interest between the various national bourgeoisies which largely accounts for the slow speed of regional cooperation. Trade between the two big countries of South Asia is very important and this will require imaginative cooperation and political will based on shared perception for the future in the region. But Pakistan over the years had been dependent on aid and foreign credit especially from US and China. This dependence of Pakistan and other South Asian countries have brought the intervention of extra-regional powers into South Asia. Such dependence brings influence on strategic perceptions and foreign policy decisions.

The expansion of trade in South Asia requires a restructuring of economic relationships based on recognition of mutual benefit. This calls for collaborative ventures which will identify projects and commodities. This restructuring of the South Asian economy would require major concessions to its neighbors which may be unpopular at home where the main priority is to eliminate poverty.

The extension of trade among South Asian states has several barriers like free trade though negotiations are on for SAFTA as there is wide spread fear among the smaller states that asymmetry between India and rest of the countries will make free trade largely benefit to India. Even the strong supporters of regional cooperation share this fear, arguing that the powerful Indian national bourgeoisie would strengthen its hold in the region.

Regional cooperation in South Asia depends upon a democratic revolution which will ultimately strengthen the people. By giving power to people of South Asia there will be awareness about the region and this will make people feel more attracted toward regional cooperation. As over the years the political leaders of south Asia have also contributed to mutual suspicion and fear among the people. This can only be possible by more and more exchanges and cross border travel.

Institutional structure of SAARC also requires revamping from Integrated Programme of Action, Secretary General, Secretariat and Council of Ministers. SAARC Summits should adopt business like approach and summit leaders should clearly focus on specific issues of vital importance and need not be burdened with peripheral issues. Political will is also important as over the years it had been lacking. In fifth Male summit it was decided to adopt business like approach in summit meetings. The annual cycle of summit meeting should be maintained as it abrupts the entire schedule of related meetings of the council of ministers, standing committee, and sectoral meetings. In the end we would like to say that future growth and long term effectiveness of SAARC to a large extent depends upon Indo-Pak relations.

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