

A Study Of Soviet Attitude To The Concept Of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

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P R E F A C E

PREFACE

The Soviet Union attaches great importance to the zonal approach of creating nuclear weapon free zones in different parts of the world which are prone to go nuclear. The establishment of these zones would promote the non-proliferation objectives in various regions either by denuclearising or by non-nuclearisation.

In 1956 - one year before the Soviet ICBM test - the Soviet Union was the first country to propose a nuclear weapon free zone in Central Europe. Since then, almost every nuclear weapon free zone proposal was either inspired or supported by the Soviet Union. The Soviet proposals for nuclear weapon free zones grew out of her insecurity. Soon after its successful ICBM test and Cuban missile crisis, the Soviet Union moved from a position of strategic inferiority to strategic parity with the United States. But the Soviet Union continued to support and subscribe to the principle of nuclear weapon free zones.

The Soviet Union was the first nuclear weapon State which regarded nuclear weapon free zones as a tension reduction, confidence building and war preventive device. It was because of this that Soviet Union either put forward

its own proposals or backed almost every proposal of nuclear weapon free zones at the General Assembly.

The proposal for a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone was of considerable importance to the Soviet Union due to her strategic involvement in that area. The Soviet Union while supporting the Indian stand and India's draft resolution A/c. 1/L. 681 on the 'Declaration and Establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia', preferred to abstain on the Pakistani resolution. The Soviet Union did so because it wanted to avoid any embarrassment to India and to retain its political advantages in South Asia without antagonizing Pakistan. The Soviet Union preferred to remain on the Indian side because it knew that by aligning with India it would remain at the most advantageous position.

The Soviet Union also knew that India's drift towards American and China would be detrimental to its vital interests in South Asia. And, above all, the Soviet Union did not want to lose India-the most dominant power of the South Asian sub-continent.

This work, "A study of Soviet Attitude to the concept of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones," has been done with particular reference to South Asia.

It is attempt to present a Soviet perspective of an important arms control measure namely, nuclear weapon free zones. This study has been divided into four broad chapters. The first chapter deals with the concept of the nuclear weapon free zones in general, principles to be followed, historical background, various treaties (relating to the subject) signed and various proposals put forward at the UN forum for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones all over the world.

The second chapter exclusively deals with the Soviet concept of nuclear weapon free zones and various other nuclear weapon free zones either proposed or backed by the Soviet Union all over the world.

The next two chapters are directly concerned with the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone. Chapter three deals with the Indian and Pakistani perception of the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone. The fourth chapter deals with the Soviet strategic involvement in South Asia, its perception of nuclear weapon free zone is South Asia as well as American's perception regarding the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone.

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Ramon H.

C H A P T E R O N E

CHAPTER ONEI N T R O D U C T I O NHISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The idea of establishing nuclear weapon free zones began to attract the attention of the international community in the 1950's as a means of limiting the areas where nuclear weapons could be deployed, tested or used. Several proposals have been made in connection with the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in various regions. In connection with Central Europe, the Soviet Union suggested in 1956, a ban on the stationing of nuclear weapons and in 1957, Poland, whose Rapacki Plan called for the permanent absence of nuclear weapons from the territories of several States in Central Europe.

The Polish proposal was subsequently revised in 1958 and 1962. A number of initiatives were taken with respect to the Balkans by Romania first in 1957 and later on several occasions, by the Soviet Union (in 1959), also including the Adriatic. In the late 1950's, China suggested the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in Asia and the Pacific. In 1963, the Soviet Union proposed a zone free of nuclear missile weapons in the Mediterranean. Also in

1963 and subsequently from 1971-1973, Finland suggested the creation of a nuclear weapon free zone among the Nordic countries. Suggestions concerning the general approach to be followed with respect to nuclear weapon free zones were advanced by Ireland in 1959, which proposed an area by area approach for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and by Sweden in 1961, which suggested that the UN Secretary-General should conduct an inquiry among member-States which would be willing to enter into undertaking for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones.

Since 1960, the year in which France conducted its first nuclear test explosions in the Sahara, the African countries adopted or sponsored the adoption of a series of decisions aimed at making the continent of Africa a nuclear weapon free zone. Prior to its consideration as a separate item during the twenty ninth session of the General Assembly, the idea of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in the region of the Middle East had been repeatedly expressed by Iran. On 15 July 1974, Iran formally requested its inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly's twenty ninth session. The question of the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South

Asia was discussed at the twenty ninth session (1974) of the General Assembly at the request of Pakistan.

CONCEPT

The concept of nuclear weapon free zone was developed in the course of disarmament negotiations at the U.N. and other international fora with a dual purpose. It was felt that those zones could contribute significantly to the general purpose of preventing the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and, at the same time, would ensure the complete absence of such weapons from those areas of the world where States in the region would make a commitment to establish such zones.

Important questions have been raised with regard to nuclear weapon free zones such as the perception of national security by individual States, conditions in a particular region that might ensure the viability of a nuclear weapon free zones, concern about the threat of nuclear attack, the voluntary participation in the zone of the States located in the region and the danger of becoming involved in a nuclear conflict. There has also been widespread recognition that nuclear weapon free zones might contribute to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, particularly nuclear disarmament.

The dominant interest in the development of the concept of nuclear weapon free zones has been the desire to secure the complete absence of nuclear weapons from various areas of the globe. Where suitable conditions exist for the creation of such zones, it is intended to spare the nations concerned from the threat of nuclear attack or involvement in nuclear war, to make a positive contribution towards general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and thereby to strengthen international peace and security.³

The concept of nuclear weapon free zones has stemmed from the realization that a number of States in various regions of the world have or could have the capacity to develop a nuclear weapon capability within a relatively short period, and that it is possible that more States may decide to do so, should this occur, it could present new threats to the security of States in areas at present free from nuclear weapons ; could precipitate a ruinously expensive and perilous nuclear arms race in those areas , and could add new dangers of nuclear war to an already

(3) Comprehensive Study of the Question of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in All its Aspects - Special Report of the conference of the Committee on Disarmament. (New York United Nations 1976) P.29.

dangerous world situation.⁴ There has, been a growing awareness that the efforts so far to prevent nuclear weapon proliferation have not proved to be fully successful. The rapid increase in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and its potentiality as a material basis for the proliferation of nuclear weapons adds a powerful factor for a closer examination of the relevance of nuclear weapon free zones.

Broadly, the purpose of nuclear weapon free zones is to provide additional means for averting nuclear weapon proliferation and halting the nuclear arms race. Another important benefit could be the creation of a framework for regional co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.⁵ It is thus argued that nuclear weapon free zones provide complimentary machinery to other collateral measures of disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Although the main purpose of a nuclear weapon free zone is to enhance national and regional security, it should also be seen as part of the process of averting nuclear weapon proliferation, of arresting the nuclear

(4) Ibid., p. 29.

(5) Ibid., p. 29.

arms race, and of diminishing the danger of nuclear war. Thus, in this process the interests of all States are involved.

PRINCIPLES

Conditions in which nuclear weapon free zones might be viable and might enhance security are bound to differ considerably from region to region. But, wherever appropriate conditions for a nuclear weapon free zone exist, the following principles should be taken into account :⁶

(a) Obligations relating to the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones may be assumed not only by groups of States, including entire continents or large geographical regions, but also by similar groups of States and even individual countries ;

(b) Nuclear weapon free zone arrangements must ensure that the zone would be, and would remain, effectively free of all nuclear weapons ;

(c) The initiative for the creation of a nuclear weapon free zone should come from States within the region concerned, and participation must be voluntary ;

(6) Ibid., pp. 31-33.

- (d) Whenever a zone is intended to embrace a region the participation of all militarily significant States, and preferably all States, in that region would enhance the effectiveness of the zone ;
- (e) The zonal arrangements must contain an effective system of verification to ensure full compliance with the agreed obligations ;
- (f) The arrangements should promote the economic, scientific, and technological development of the members of the zone through international cooperation on all peaceful uses of nuclear energy ;
- (g) The treaty establishing the zone should be of unlimited duration ;
- (h) It was maintained that States which are members of a zone should not exercise control over nuclear weapons outside the zone though some experts felt that part of a State could also be included in a nuclear weapon free zone and that, in this case, the nuclear weapon free status would be applied only to the part of its territory which is situated within the boundary of the zone;
- (i) In the view of most experts, an essential principle in any nuclear weapon free zone treaty is the effective

prohibition of the development, acquisition, or possession by parties to it, of any nuclear explosive device. This prohibition should, however, not preclude access to the potential benefits of peaceful nuclear explosions through international procedures consistent with article V of the Treaty of the Non Proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as, with other international undertakings entered into by the States concerned, in particular the Treaty establishing the zone. A few experts argued to the contrary and expressed the view that development by parties of nuclear explosive devices intended for peaceful purposes would not be inconsistent with the nuclear weapon free zone concept and that, accordingly, treaties establishing such zones should not prohibit the development of such devices by the parties;

(j) Many experts noted an additional principle that wherever the functioning of a nuclear weapon free zone so required, States, which are not members of the zone should establish a similar nuclear weapon free status in territories within the zone which are under their jurisdiction, Others experts felt, however, that this principle could be applied only to these territories, which being under the jurisdiction of extra zonal States, are within the zonal boundaries recognized by those States ;

(k) Some experts considered it a basic principle that the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone should not interfere with existing security arrangements to the detriment of regional and international security. The view was also expressed that participation of States situated within a intended nuclear weapon free zone in military alliance would not be conducive to the creation of the zone.

(l) Many experts regard also as a basic principle that the boundaries and the provisions of nuclear weapon free zones should be determined in accordance with international law, including the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas and in Straits used for international navigation and international space. Some other experts, however, emphasize that the provision of a nuclear weapon free zone treaty should prohibit the transit of nuclear weapons through the territory of the zone including the entry into ports situated there of vessels having nuclear weapons on board.

TREATIES

International agreements to ensure the absence of nuclear weapons in certain areas and environments include the following : The Antarctic Treaty (1959) ; Treaty for

the Prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America (1967) ; and the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil there of (1971). In addition nuclear weapons are excluded from outer space, the Moon and other celestial bodies. The South Pacific nuclear weapon free zone Treaty was signed in 1985.

(A) THE ANTARCTIC TREATY

The Antarctic Treaty, concluded on 1 December 1959⁷, was the first international agreement which, by establishing a demilitarized zone, ipso facto ensured that nuclear weapons would not be introduced into a specified area.

The Treaty, which basically establishes that Antarctica is to be used for peaceful purposes only was not intended to solve the problem of different territorial claims, but rather to ensure access to the whole of the area in order to carry out scientific research and to prevent it from becoming "the scene or object of international discord."⁸

(7) United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 2102, No. 5778, p. 71.

(8) The United Nations and Disarmament 1945-85. (United Nations, New York) p. 11.

Article V of the Treaty specifically prohibits nuclear explosions and the disposal of radioactive waste material in Antarctica. It does not rule out those activities for peaceful purposes indefinitely but makes them subject to future international agreements on the question.

The prohibition against the introduction and testing of nuclear weapons falls within the scope of article I of the Treaty, which bans "any measures of a military nature", such as the establishment of military bases and fortifications, military manouevers and the testing of any type of weapon.

It does not, however, prevent the use of military personnel and equipment for scientific research and other peaceful purposes.

Under the Treaty's system of verification, observers appointed by each of the original contracting parties have the right of aerial observation and of complete access at all times to any area of installation.

The regime established by the Treaty has been scrupulously observed. This is reflected in the fact that no violations have been reported since it came into force (23 June 1961) and there has been no indication that any problems have arisen with regard to its verification.

(B) TREATY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN LATIN AMERICA

The Treaty of Tlateloco⁹ was the first Treaty to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in a densely populated area. It was also the first agreement to establish a system of international control and a permanent supervisory organ, the Agency for the Prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America (OPANAL).

The seventeen Latin American countries met at Mexico in November 1964 and set up a preparatory commission to draw up a preliminary text for a denuclearization treaty, defining obligations and a system of control. The Treaty was signed at Tlatelolco, a borough of Mexico city in 1967.

The basic obligation of the parties to the Treaty, defined in article I, is to use exclusively for peaceful purposes the nuclear material and facilities under their jurisdiction, and to prohibit and prevent in their respective territories the very presence of nuclear weapons for any purpose and under any circumstances. Parties to the Treaty also undertake to refrain from engaging in, encouraging or authorizing, directly or indirectly, or in any

(9) United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 634, No. 9068, p. 326.

way participating in the testing, use, manufacture, production, possession or control of any nuclear weapon. Its control system includes safeguards to be negotiated with IAEA with respect to all the nuclear activities of the parties.

Its two Additional Protocols create a system of obligations for extra-continental and continental States having responsibility de jure or de facto for territories in the zone of application of the Treaty and for the nuclear weapon States.

Thus, under Additional Protocol I, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States would agree to guarantee nuclear weapon free status to those territories for which they are, de jure or de facto, internationally responsible.

Under Additional Protocol II, nuclear weapon States pledge to respect the "denuclearisation of Latin America in respect of war like purposes" and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the contracting Parties." By 1972, all five nuclear weapon States had adhered to it.

(C) SEA-BED TREATY

In 1967, on the initiative of Malta, the General Assembly discussed the question of reserving that area (sea bed) exclusively for peaceful purposes and exploiting its resources for the benefit of mankind. The question of the regulation of the uses of the sea-bed was also discussed at length in the ENDC, from 1968 until the end of 1970.

In 1969, the Soviet Union and the United States submitted a joint draft treaty to the ENDC. The final draft was approved by a vote of 104 to 2 (El Salvador and Peru) with 2 abstentions (Ecuador and France), on 7th December 1970.

The Treaty¹⁰ provides that the States parties to it undertake not to place on or under the sea-bed beyond the outer limit of a 12 mile coastal zone, any nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction or any facilities for such weapons. Each State, party to the Treaty, "shall have the right to verify through observation the activities of other States Parties," provided that observation does not interfere with such activities."

It entered into force on 18 May, 1972. By the end of 1984, 74 States had become parties to the Treaty and another 28 signed it. Two Review Conferences of the

(10) General Assembly resolution 2660(XXV), annex.

Parties to the Treaty were held, in 1977, and 1983, to determine if the provisions of the Treaty were being realized (article VIII). In the Final Declarations of both Review Conferences, the State Parties confirmed that the obligations assumed under article I of the Treaty had been faithfully observed.

(D) OUTER SPACE TREATY

The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of outer Space,¹¹ including the Moon and other celestial Bodies was concluded in 1967 in order to ensure that environment would be used for the benefit of all peoples.

The States Parties to it undertake not to place in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner (Article IV).

A prohibition of all military activity on the Moon and other celestial bodies is also included in article IV of the Treaty.

(11) General Assembly resolution, 2222(XXI), 19 December, 1966.

(E) SOUTH PACIFIC

Nuclear testing in the South Pacific by some nuclear weapon States, proposals for the storage or dumping of nuclear waste material in the Pacific Ocean, and the presence of nuclear weapon Powers in the region have led the States of that area to seek a solution to these problems at the regional level. Thus, on the basis of an initiative of Fiji and New Zealand, the General Assembly adopted, in 1975, a resolution by which it noted that the heads of Government of the independent or self governing States members of the South Pacific Forum had emphasized in their communique of 3 July 1975 the importance of achieving that aim.

Among the nuclear Powers, only China voted for the resolution. The others abstained, expressing reservations concerning the fact that such a zone would appear, necessarily to include areas of the highseas or international Straits, which could interfere with the rights of navigation.

The idea of a nuclear weapon free zone in the South Pacific was again high on the agenda at meetings of the South Pacific Forum in 1983 and 1984, along with the questions of the testing of nuclear weapons and the dumping of radioactive waste in that region. At the 1984 Forum, heads of

Government "agreed on the desirability of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in the region at the earliest possible opportunity" in accordance with a set of principles endorsed by the meeting.

On February 10, 1987 China signed protocols of a Treaty declaring the South Pacific a nuclear weapon free zone, but reserved its right to reconsider them. It held that it would reconsider its stand if other nuclear powers took any action that changed the status of the nuclear weapon free zone and endangered the security of China. The Soviet Union has also signed the protocols. They prohibit ownership, use, stationing or testing of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste in the region but do not block passage or port calls of nuclear powered ships.

The United States and France have refused to sign the Treaty, which was agreed to by the 13 number South Pacific Forums in 1986.²²

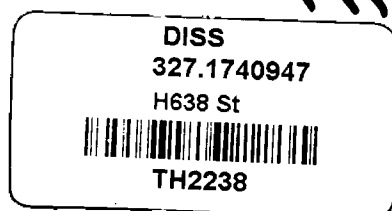
(F) PROPOSALS

PROPOSALS FOR NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES

Proposals for Nuclear weapon free zones in several regions of the world have been discussed in the General

(22) Amrit Bazar Patrika, February 11, 1987.

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Assembly and else where for almost three decades. These include such geographic areas as Africa, the Balkans, Central Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Northern Europe, South Asia and the South Pacific.

(A) AFRICA

The interest of African countries in establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in their continent was first expressed in the early 1960's.¹² Initially, their attention focussed on obtaining agreement that the territory of Africa should not be used for nuclear test explosions and was directed against the plans of France to carry out a series of test in Sahara. In 1961, the General Assembly, on the proposal of 14 African States, called on Member States not to carry out nuclear tests in Africa in any form, to refrain from using Africa for storing or transporting nuclear weapons and to respect the continent as a nuclear weapon free zone. Later on the concept was widened. At a 1964 summit conference, the members of Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued a Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa in which they solemnly declared their readiness to undertake, through an

(12) Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Annexes, Agenda items 67, 68, 69 and 73, document A/4680, para. 17.

international agreement to be concluded under United Nations auspices, not to manufacture or control atomic weapons and appealed to all peace-loving nations to accept the same undertaking and to all nuclear Powers to respect the Declaration and conform to it.¹³ Their resolution was adopted by a vote of 105 to none, with two abstentions (France and Portugal). Ten years after the Declaration of OAU, in 1974, the General Assembly adopted a resolution which called upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear weapon free zone. Every year since then, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions reiterating that appeal by the international community.

In 1979 (on a report) the General Assembly requested the Secretary General to undertake a study on South Africa's plan and its capability in the nuclear field. The study clarified that "there is no doubt that South Africa has the technical capability to make nuclear weapons and the necessary means of delivery" and expressed grave concern over it.

The question of the nuclear capability of South Africa has been on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission since

(13) Declaration on the Denuclearisation of Africa, "Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth session Annexes agenda item 105, document A/5975.

~~since~~ its re-establishment in 1979, following the first special session on disarmament. Due to divergent views regarding the question of possible assistance to South Africa in the nuclear field and the scope of the proposed sanctions, the commission has been unable to agree on a test of recommendations.

(B)

THE BALKANS

The establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans was proposed by Romania in September, 1957. In 1959, the U.S.S.R. suggested that the Balkan peninsula be made a region of peace, without any missiles or nuclear weapons.¹⁴ On various occasions the Balkan countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia expressed support and interest in the zone specifying at the same time some of their concerns and ideas on the modalities and scope of such a zone.

Since the beginning of 1980's, the idea of inter - Balkan cooperation for creating a nuclear weapon free zone has once again come up. Thus, at summit meetings held in 1982, 1983 and 1984, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia

(14) Izvestia, 29 May 1959.

supported in their joint statements and declarations the transformation of the Balkans into a nuclear-weapon free zone.

At the initiative of Greece, a conference of governmental experts from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia was held in Athens in January/February 1984 with an agenda which included the question of the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans. It was the first meeting in Europe of governmental experts representing States belonging to different military alliances or having non-aligned status that discussed proposals for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans.

(C)

CENTRAL EUROPE

Proposals for a nuclear weapon free zone in Central Europe were put forward on numerous occasions in the 1950's. In March 1956, the Soviet Union proposed in the Disarmament Commission that a zone be created in central Europe where armaments would be subject to limitation and inspection and the stationing of any atomic or hydrogen weapons would be prohibited.¹⁵

(15) Izvestia, 18 February 1958.

Poland formally put forward in the General Assembly a proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone (Rapacki Plan), first in 1957 and again in 1958. The latter envisaged the creation of a nuclear weapon free zone covering Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Democratic Republic of Germany and the Federal Republic of Germany.¹⁶

According to the plan, there would be no nuclear weapons in that area ; the use of such weapons against it would be forbidden and a broad system of control would be introduced.

The proposal was supported by Socialist countries. Western countries, for their part, rejected it on the ground that it made no reference to limiting conventional forces and involved a variety of political and strategic problem closely related to the geographical area covered.

In order to meet some of the objections, of the Western nations Poland submitted two more versions of the Plan to the ENDC in 1962. The revision provided, among other things, for the reduction of some conventional forces. In 1964, without withdrawing the Rapacki Plan, Poland submitted a new plan (Gomulka Plan), which did not call for an immediate

(16) A/PV. 697, para. 136.

reduction of the nuclear weapons already deployed within the zone, but envisaged a freeze at the existing level ; in addition, an extensive system of verification was stipulated. Since then, Poland has on various occasions reaffirmed the validity of its 1957 proposal, as developed in subsequent years, as well as that of 1964.

In 1982, the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (the Palme Commission), convinced that there must be substantial reductions in nuclear stockpiles leading to the denuclearization of Europe, recommended the establishment of a battlefield nuclear weapon free zone, starting with central Europe and extending ultimately from the northern to the southern flanks of NATO and WARSAW Treaty Alliances.

More recently, in 1983, the question of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in Central Europe was also discussed in the Disarmament Commission. In that context, Mexico suggested that the Disarmament Commission should endorse the proposal of the Palme Commission envisaging the creation of a battlefield nuclear weapon free zone in Central Europe. Due to certain differences (among the two military alliances), the Disarmament Commission recommended that the proposal be duly taken into account in the on going and future disarmament efforts.

(D)

MIDDLE EAST

Iran, in 1974, asked the General Assembly to consider the question of establishing a denuclearised zone in the Middle East.¹⁷ Egypt subsequently cosponsored the request.

The proposal to establish such a zone was supported by most States of the region and the first resolution on the question was adopted by the Assembly on 9 December 1974. By the resolution the Assembly commended the idea of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East and considered that it was indispensable that all concerned parties in the area "Proclaim solemnly and immediately their intention to refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, testing, obtaining, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons."

Each year between 1975 and 1984, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions on this issue. Since its 1980 session, they have been adopted by consensus.

Recently there has been increasing concern about Israel's reported nuclear weapon capability. Thus in 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to

(17) Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty ninth session, Annexes, agenda items, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35, 100, 101, 103 and 107, document A/9693 and Addl.1-3.

undertake a study on the issue. The study, 'Israeli Nuclear Armament', submitted by the Secretary-General Assembly in 1981, concluded that there was widespread agreement among technical experts that, given Israel's nuclear activities and level of expertise, it was capable of manufacturing nuclear explosive devices and possessed the means of delivery of such weapons to targets in the area, but the experts were unable to conclude definitely whether or not Israel was currently in possession of nuclear weapons. The study also stated that "the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel would be a serious destabilizing factor in the already tense situation prevailing in the Middle East, in addition to being a serious danger to the cause of non-proliferation in General." 18

(E)

MEDITERRANEAN

On 27 May 1963, the USSR submitted to the ENDC a proposal suggesting that the whole Mediterranean area should be declared a zone free of nuclear weapons. Subsequently, the Soviet Union and the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have made proposals aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons from the Mediterranean. Some States bordering the

(18) The United Nations and Disarmament, 1945-1985.
pp. 99-100.

Mediterranean seem to have given high priority to proposals for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in that area. Other States concerned have adopted a more general approach directed towards the transformation of the Mediterranean into a region of peace, Security and co-operation, free from confrontation and conflict. Still others, such as Italy and France, have stated that security in the Mediterranean is inseparable from European security as a whole. Thus, in the view of these States, any disarmament measure envisaged for the Mediterranean should be precisely defined and can not be undertaken in isolation from disarmament measures for all of Europe.

The various approaches are summarised in the analytical report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region, based on replies from 27 Governments, which he submitted to the General Assembly in 1983.

They are also reflected in the resolutions entitled "strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", adopted without a vote by the General Assembly in 1983 and in 1984.

(F)

NORTHERN EUROPE

The idea of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in Northern Europe was first suggested by Soviet Union in 1958. That idea was followed up in several subsequent statements by Soviet officials indicating support for a

nuclear weapon free zone in the Scandinavian peninsula and the Baltic area, as well as for the combining of three proposed zones ---- Scandinavian ---- Baltic, Central Europe and Balkan ---- Adriatic ---- into a single nuclear weapon free zone.

In the early 1960's several suggestions were made regarding the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Nordic and Baltic areas. All these proposals were partially related with other nuclear weapon free zones proposals put forward in Europe and also in part to the consideration, in the United Nations, of the proposal submitted by Sweden (Undén Plan) for a non-nuclear club. Since 1963 the idea of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in Northern Europe has been advocated most notably by Finland.¹⁹ It has been pointed out that despite the differences in their security policies, none of the Nordic countries has acquired nuclear weapons or accepted those belonging to other States on its territory. Accordingly, a Nordic nuclear weapon free zone would only confirm, through mutual undertakings, the existing de facto situation of the absence of nuclear weapons without impairing the security of

(19) Speech delivered by President Urho Kekkonen, Neutrality: The Finnish Position (London, 1970) pp. 143-145.

the Nordic countries of affecting the balance of power in the world (Kekkonen Plan).

The idea gained new momentum when, in 1978, Finland returned to its 1963 proposal, urging negotiations on arms regulations by the Nordic countries among themselves and together with the great Powers concerned. The Finnish Government has several times reiterated its position on this issue, notably in May 1983, when it stated that the idea had lost none of its validity and that Finland would continue to work for its realization. The different attitudes of the Nordic Governments have prevented the achievement of concrete results thus far.

The Soviet Union has on various occasions expressed an active interest in the establishment of the nuclear weapon free zone in Northern Europe. In a statement of 6 June 1983, the Soviet Union expressed its readiness to respect the status of such a zone, and also to consider the question of certain measures relating to its own territory adjacent to the zone, which would promote the strengthening of its nuclear weapon free status. While France has expressed a cautious attitude with regard to the proposal due to the geo-strategic importance of the Baltic region.

(G)

SOUTH ASIA

The General Assembly first considered the question of a denuclearised zone in South Asia in 1974, at the request of Pakistan,²⁰ which saw an urgent need for such a zone.

In the debate, Pakistan noted that all the States of the region had already expressed opposition to the acquisition or introduction of nuclear weapons. In particular, it pointed out that India, both before and after the 1974 explosion of its nuclear device, had indicated that it would not develop or acquire nuclear weapons.

India made clear its support for the principle of establishing nuclear weapon free zones, provided that suitable conditions existed in a particular region and that the proposal was initiated and agreed to by the countries of the region.²¹ India believed, however, that South Asia could not be treated in isolation, as it was only a sub-region, an integral part of the region of Asia and the Pacific. The existence of nuclear weapons in the region and the presence of foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean complicated the whole security environment and made the situation inappropriate for the establishment of a nuclear

(20) Resolution 3265 B(XXIS) of United Nations.

(21) Resolution 3265 A(XXIX) of United Nations..

weapon free zone there, according to India.

Two separate resolutions submitted by India and Pakistan, closely reflecting their different positions were both approved by the General Assembly on 9 December 1974.

By the resolution initiated by India, the Assembly decided to give due consideration to any proposal for the creation of a nuclear weapon free zone in an appropriate region of Asia, after it had been developed and matured by the countries of the region. By the resolution initiated by Pakistan, the Assembly urged the States of South Asia to begin consultations for the purpose of establishing such a zone and, in the interim, to refrain from any actions contrary to the achievements of that objective.

Between 1975 and 1984, 11 resolutions have been adopted by large majorities on the question, two in 1975 and one each year since 1976, initiated by Pakistan alone.

Since 1974, Pakistan has consistently maintained the generally recognised conditions for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone exist in South Asia. All the States of the region have already declared their

opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons or to their introduction into the region. The five States possessing nuclear weapons have, in principle, indicated their support for or acceptance of the concept of establishing nuclear weaponsfree zones.

India's view point is that the nuclear weapon free zone idea has become unrealistic and that the movement and deployment of nuclear weapon in various regions of the world by nuclear weapon States are fundamentally irreconcilable with the very idea of nuclear weapon free zones. At the second special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament, (UNSSOD - II) in 1982, India's Foreign Minister stated that his country could not subscribe to the legitimization of the possession of nuclear weapon by a few powers by agreeing to live under their professedly benign protection in the guise of a nuclear weapon free zone.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER - TWOSOVIET UNION AND NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES

The Soviet struggle for nuclear weapon-free zones in different parts of the world was motivated by three major factors : (a) the perceived threat to its national security arising from the American and NATO military bases in Europe ; (b) Prevention of nuclear proliferation in the Third world ; (c) a genuine desire to keep certain other un inhabited areas like the Antarctica, Sea-bed and Ocean Floor and outer space free of nuclear weapons.

The NATO bases in West German territory and the US nuclear weapons based there were a constant irritant to the Russians and a direct threat to their national security, Moscow feared the presence of nuclear weapons in West Germany as a direct threat to its neighbours and thus to its national security. That was why it took the initiative to resolve it by proposing to set up a nuclear weapon free zone in Central Europe.

The establishment of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1949, and the policy of containment is another factor which prompted the Soviet Union to work for nuclear weapon free zones in Northern Europe, the Balkans, the Adriatic, the Mediterranean and more importantly Central Europe.

The Soviet Union gained power and influence in the developing countries by backing their national liberation movements and also by generous financial assistance to rebuild their shattered economies. Apart from its genuine support for an interest in the development of the Third world, the Soviet Union also intended to counter the American and Chinese influence in the Third world by favouring the setting up of nuclear weapon free zones in the Third world.

In order to maintain peace and harmony in the area besides those of its own vital interests, the Soviet Union took keen interest in campaigning successfully in declaring the Antarctica, the Sea bed and Ocean floor and Outer Space free of nuclear weapons. The main objective to keep these areas out of nuclear weapons was that the Soviet Union feared future great power rivalry in the region. According to the Soviet Union the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone would promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in various regions, and strengthen the security of states in these regions. The USSR consistently advocates the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in different regions of the world in the belief that this measure helps lessen the threat of nuclear war and consolidate the nuclear non-proliferation regime.¹

(1) Atoms Must Serve Only Peace - International peace and Disarmament series, Moscow, 1985. p. 67.

It was because of this that Soviet Union considered nuclear weapon free zones as a major arms control measure. The Soviet Union was the first nuclear weapon state which regarded nuclear weapon free zones as a tension reduction, confidence building and war preventive device. Although there were certain strategic compulsions for the Soviet Union to adopt such a view in the 1950's. Regarding Europe, there were two basic strategic compulsions, the first was that the American nuclear weapons were stationed within striking distances in the West European bases and the other was that the Soviet Union could not develop the ICBM capability till 1957 to deal with the U.S. nuclear threat. Hence, it was urgent strategic priority for the Soviet Union to attempt to denuclearise Western Europe, Central Europe assumed a pivotal role in the denuclearization scheme.

(a) Central Europe

The idea to set up an atomic-free zone in Central Europe was set forth in the proposals of the Soviet Government on disarmament issues submitted for consideration by the UN Sub-Committee on Disarmament on March 27, 1956. It said; "The agreement shall provide that the

stationing of atomic military formation and the location of atomic and hydrogen weapons of any kind in the zone shall be prohibited.² The plan included both East and West Germany apart from Poland and Czechoslovakia. The United States, however, rejected this proposal of the Soviet Union.

On March 18, 1957, the USSR advanced its plan for the establishment of a zone free of atomic and hydrogen weapons. The Soviet Union described the proposal as "as important step on the path of creating a proper system of collective security in Europe and - - - - - an important contribution to safeguarding world peace."³

The idea to create a nuclear free zone in Europe (Central) did not emerge overnight. After the steps taken by the USSR, it was further specified in Poland's proposals. At the 12th session of the U.N. General Assembly in 1957, the Polish delegation declared that if "the two German States agree to introduce a ban on the production and accumulation of atomic and thermonuclear weapons on their

(2) The United Nations and Disarmament 1945-1970
(New York, United Nations, 1970), P. 303.

(3) Soviet Union calls for the Urgent Implementation of Practical Measures on Disarmament", Soviet News (London), no. 3592, 19 March 1957, P. 223.

territories, the Polish People's Republic will be ready to take similar steps on its own territory.⁴

The government of Czechoslovakia and German Democratic Republic were also prepared to subscribe to the Polish proposal. The Soviet Union also declared its support to the Polish proposal and was ready to begin relevant talks with the governments of the United States and Britain. However, the Polish government revised its proposal once in November 1959 and again in 1964 and on both the occasions, the Soviet government called on the governments of the NATO countries to come to terms on the implementation of the Polish proposal.

(B) The Balkans

Denuclearisation of the Balkans was proposed, for the first time by the Bulgarian Prime Minister Anton Yugov on 14th January 1958.⁵ Romania also made a suggestion for convening a conference with the aim of converting the Balkans into a "Peace Zone".⁶ Two years later, Romania again proposed a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans which was supported by the Soviet Union. While campaigning

(4) International Affairs, No. 8, 1975, p. 67.

(5) G.D. Embree, "nuclear weapon free zone", International Spectation (Hague), Vol. 19, no. 3 Feb 1965, p. 206.

(6) SIPRI Year book of World Armament and Disarmament 1969-1970, no. 21, p. 410.

for a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans, the Soviet leader, Khrushchev announced at the Soviet-Albanian meet in June, 1959 that "it would be most reasonable to create in the Balkans an atom-free and rocket-free zone with mutual control."⁷

Khrushchev also believed that the Balkans would be transformed into an area of peace and tranquility if the countries of the area refrain nuclear weapons from their territory. He also showed his "readiness to join with other great powers to guarantee such a zone."⁸

The six NATO countries (U.K. France, West Germany, Italy, Greece and Turkey) rejected the Soviet proposal firstly, because the range of weapons at the disposal of the USSR makes the concept of an atom-free Balkan zone meaningless as far as the security of the free nations in that area is concerned. Secondly, because of the failure of the Soviet proposal to deal with the basic question of continued production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons by the present nuclear powers.

Unhampered by NATO's opposition, the Soviet leaders first Khrushchev during his visit to Bucharest and then Brezhnev during his visit to Yugoslavia in 1962, extended their

(7) Soviet News, no. 4073, 8 June 1959, p. 209.

(8) Moscow News, no. 51, 27 June 1959, p. 03.

governments support in creating the Balkans a nuclear weapon free zone.

At the Sixteenth session of the UN General Assembly, Sweden (a non-socialist country) proposed the denuclearization of the Balkans because "Several Balkan States had also declared themselves in favour of a nuclear free zone in the Balkans."⁹

However, Romania continued its efforts for the denuclearization of the Balkans. In 1961 in the UN General Assembly it raised the issue of denuclearization of the Balkans.¹⁰ It reiterated its support for the nuclear weapon free zone at the conference of Committee on Disarmament (CCD) in 1974 and again in February 1977. On all these occasions the Soviet Union backed Romania's stand on the denuclearization of the Balkans.

(c) Northern Europe

The Soviet Union demanded the denuclearization of the Northern Europe. The Soviet Prime minister, Bulganin on

(9) UN Doc. A/C. 1/SR. 1178, 28 October 1961, p.80.

(10) UN Doc. A/PV. 1024, 4 October 1961, P. 234.

13 June, 1958 sent a letter to his Norwegian counter part, Gerhardsen, asking him to help ease the international tension and turn Northern Europe into a genuine zone of peace and tranquility.¹¹ Khrushchev, in 1959, during his visits to Riga (East German city) and to Szczecin (Polish city), stressed the need of setting up a nuclear free zone in Northern Europe. The Soviet proposal for a North European nuclear weapon free zone covered Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.

The Scandinavian countries extended their wholehearted support to the Soviet proposal provided it would not effect the balance of power. At the Sixteenth session of the UN General Assembly, Sweden brought forward its "Under Plan",¹² which held that the States which did not possess atomic weapons should declare that they would not produce any nuclear weapons themselves and would ~~and would~~ not accept as well. In May, 1963 and in November, 1965 the question of setting up a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe was raised by Finland's President Urho Kaleva Kekkonen. The Soviet Union fully supported the Finnish plan. The Finnish-Soviet declaration of April 1973 referred to the proposal

(11) "N.A. Bulganin's Message to Heads of Government, Soviet News, no. 3762, 14 January, 1958. P. 37.

(12) 'Under plan' was initiated by the then Swedish foreign minister Mr. O. Unden, UN Doc. A/c. 1/SR. 1178, 26 October, 1961, P. 80.

made by Finland for a Nordic nuclear weapon free zone. Regarding the Nordic nuclear weapon free zone, Pravda said that "the Soviet Union is prepared along with the other nuclear powers to guarantee the status of a nuclear free zone in the North of Europe."¹³

However, the West agreed to support the Soviet proposal only on three conditions. First, a nuclear weapon free zone must be formed with the consent of the States concerned second, the proposal should not alter the balance of power in the area. Third, it should be based on an effective verification and control system.¹⁴ The Soviet Union did not consider these conditions as essential to set up a nuclear weapon free zone in the area.

The idea of a nuclear free zone for the Northern Europe, which was advanced by the President of Finland, is acquiring special urgency today in view of the US-imposed NATO decision on the deployment of new American medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe.¹⁵ While the NATO politicians

(13) Pravda (Moscow), 12, November 1974.

(14) SIPRI Year Book of World Armament and Disarmament. 1969-70, no. 21, p.414.

(15) Atoms Must Serve Peace Only, Scientific Research Council on peace and Disarmament, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, P. 70.

oppose the idea of setting up a nuclear free zone in the North of Europe. At the meeting of the prime ministers of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Sweden in August 1983, the Prime Minister of Norway did not deviate from the position of the NATO partners by an inch. He called the proposed agreement on a nuclear free zone "Dubious". His Danish colleague spoke much in the same vein, although more cautiously.

Coming in support of the proposal to make Northern Europe a nuclear free zone, the Soviet Union is ready, for its part, to pledge not to use nuclear weapons against the countries of Northern Europe, which will become participants in this zone.

(d) Denuclearisation of European Seas

Khrushchev, during his visit to Albania in June 1959, proposed to transform the Adriatic Sea into a nuclear free zone. The Soviet Union, along with Albania issued a joint declaration regarding nuclear free zone in the Adriatic Sea.¹⁶ This joint declaration was wholeheartedly supported by

(16) "Statement by Party and Government Delegations of the Soviet Union and Albania, "Soviet News, no. 4071, 4 June 1959, p. 203.

Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, while it was outrightly rejected by the United States and its allies.

The United States rejected the Soviet proposal because it thought that the plan was similar to other Soviet proposals to accomplish piecemeal the design of rendering the Western nations incapable of deterring aggression.¹⁷

A joint Soviet-Romanian communique of 15 August 1961 attached great importance to the question of the Adriatic nuclear free zone proposal. But in spite of its best efforts, the Soviet Union could do nothing to remove nuclear weapons from the Adriatic Sea due to the West's indifference.

Because of the fear of the further military build up, by NATO, in the Baltic Ocean, the Soviet Union began vigorous campaign for the denuclearization of the Baltic. However, Khrushchev was the first to propose a Baltic nuclear free zone in June 1959 at Riga where he pointed out that it could provide a firm guarantee for the peaceful development of the Baltic coast.¹⁸ Again in June 1959,

(17) "United States Rejection of the Soviet Declaration", 11 July 1959, Documents on American Foreign Policy Relations 1959 (New York, Harper and Broliers 1960) p. 358.

(18) SIPRI Year Book of World Armament and Disarmament 1969-1970 no. 21, p. 413.

the Soviet Union alongwith the German Democratic Republic appealed to all the nations in the Baltic area to transform it into a nuclear free zone.¹⁹ The Soviet proposal was revived in July 1959, when the Scandinavian-Baltic along with central Europe and the Balkan-Adriatic should be connected into a nuclear free zone.²⁰ The NATO, however, rejected the Soviet proposal.

The Soviet Union again revived its proposal of the denuclearization of the Baltic, when NATO began discussing its Multilateral Nuclear Fleet project in the spring of 1963.

With a view to reduce the tensions caused firstly by the Middle East conflicts and secondly by the threat of Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM) from Polaris submarines which the United States and its NATO allies decided to base in the Mediterranean the Soviet Union proposed that the Mediterranean Sea be declared a nuclear free zone.

(19) "Atoms-Free Zones", International Affairs (Moscow), December 1960, p. 106.

(20) SIPRI Year Book of World Armament and Disarmament 1969-1970 no. 21 pp. 412-413.

Subsequently the USSR and other socialist countries repeatedly urged the implementation of this proposal. Striving to enhance international security, the USSR again suggested on May 20, 1963 for a Mediterranean nuclear weapon free zone, through its note to the government of the great powers - the USA, Britain and France and to the countries of the Mediterranean - Algeria, Greece, Israel, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the UAR, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, that if a nuclear free zone were built in the Mediterranean, the Soviet Union would be ready "to take on obligation not to deploy nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles in the waters of this sea, provided other powers assume similar obligations as well."²¹ The note emphasized that the Soviet Union was ready to give "reliable guarantees to the effect that the Mediterranean region would be regarded as an area lying outside the sphere of the application of nuclear weapons in the event of any military complications",²² if this example were followed by the United States and other western countries.

The U.S. government, on the other hand, observed that the Soviet note was "directed at the more stable sea-borne deterrent forces which the United States has deployed

(21) Pravda, May 22, 1963.

(22) Ibid.

in the Mediterranean area in defence of all members of the NATO alliance. It also felt that Soviet proposal might breach the essential principle of balance carefully enunciated in the joint statement of agreed principles".²³ Hence the US government refused to accept the Soviet proposal. But the implementation of these proposals would be a tangible contribution to the relaxation of international tensions and to the maintenance of peace in Europe, Africa and the rest of the world.

(e) Africa

The idea of declaring Africa a nuclear free zone was advanced for the first time in 1960, at the 15th session of the UN General Assembly. A group of African States (Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria the UAR and Elthiupia) came forward with a draft resolution urging all UN member countries to regard and recognize Africa as a nuclear free zone. But this resolution was not adopted through the fault of Western countries. Nevertheless, at its 16th session, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution tabled by the same Group of African nations, which urged the UN member-countries "to refrain from carrying out or continuing to carry out

(23) UN Doc. ENDC/PV. 137, 27 May 1963, P. 26.

in Africa nuclear tests in any form, to refrain from using the territory, territorial waters or air space of Africa for testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons ; to consider and respect the continent of Africa as a denuclearized zone."²⁴ The Soviet Union and other socialist countries backed this proposal of African nations. Western Countries, especially those which had colonies in Africa, actually opposed the resolution by abstaining from voting.

Earlier, in 1957 at the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Cairo from 26 December 1957 - 1 January 1958, the Soviet Union's delegate Rashiadov made general references to the zone of peace, free from nuclear weapons both in Asia and Africa.²⁵ Again in April 1960, the Soviet head of state N. Khrushchev, at Accra conference of African countries, offered his government's full support to the desire of the African people to convert their continent into a zone of peace free from nuclear weapons.²⁶

In 1960 France conducted its first nuclear test explosion in the Sahara Desert. This was a significant development which evoked criticism not only from the African

(24) General Assembly Official Records : Sixteenth Session Supplement, No. 17, Res. of November 24, 1961, p.4.

(25) Afro-Asian Peoples Conference 26th December 1957 - 1st January 1958 : Principal Reports (Cairo, published by the Permanent Secretariat, 1958), pp. 5, 9.

(26) "Make Africa Zone of Peace", Moscow News, no. 29, 9 April 1960, p. 1.

States, but also from all over the world. The first draft of the African State of make Africa a nuclear free zone, was not adopted at the UN, but their resolution was passed by the UN General Assembly in the next session in 1961.²⁷

The Soviet Union, however, along with its Socialist allies and African States continued with efforts to denuclearize Africa through the Organisation of African Unity, Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee of the UN, etc. The Soviet Union gave its full support to all the proposals put forward by the African countries to denuclearize the African continent.

The need to denuclearize Africa was reaffirmed at Cairo Conference of OAU in July 1964, and again by the conference of Non-Aligned States held in October 1964 and again at the Twentieth session of the UN General Assembly in 1965, at the request of 34 African States.

At the Twenty-Ninth session of the UN General Assembly in 1974, the discussion converting Africa as nuclear free zone was renewed by the African States. The Soviet Union again voted for the draft resolution on denuclearization of Africa.

(27) UN Doc. GA draft Resolution 1652 (XVI), 24 November 1961, p.4.

In 1976 there was an speculation that South Africa had both advanced scientific technology and plenty of Uranium resources and was on the verge of achieving nuclear capability made the African States to make an urgent appeal to the UN General Assembly, to denuclearize their continent. They also requested all the States not to deliver to South Africa any equipment whether it be fissionable material or technology that would enable that country to acquire nuclear weapon capability.²⁸

In August 1977 Tass issued a formal statement to the effect that work was nearing completion in South Africa on the creation of the nuclear weapon and preparations were being held for carrying out a test. The Tass also called for international co-operation to prevent a South African test,²⁹ while a Tass Commentary the next day reiterated this warning and called for concerted action.³⁰

In order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union and its Socialist allies boycotted South Africa and Rhodesia.

(28) UN Doc. A/RES/31/69, 10 December 1976, p.35.

(29) pravada, 9 August 1977.

(30) pravada, 10 August 1977.

(f)

Latin America

The Cuban Missile crisis of 1962 changed the strategic environment of the Latin America. To prevent the recurrence of a similar crisis and preclude the possibility of a nuclear arms race in the continent, the Latin American States decided to propose for the denuclearization of the continent.

Mexico was the first country to put forward such a proposal.³¹ In March 1963, the Mexican President Adolfo Lopez Mates took the initiative to write to the Presidents of Brazil, Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador, proposing a joint statement regarding the establishment of a nuclear free zone in Latin America. They all expressed their willingness to sign a multilateral agreement whereby they would undertake not to manufacture, receive, store or test nuclear weapons or nuclear launching devices.³²

The revised draft of the joint statement was presented to the UN General Assembly and was unaimously adopted by the Eighteenth session on 24 November 1963 as draft resolution 1911.

When the resolution was put to vote, it was supported by the United States, while the Soviet Union abstained. The

(31) UN Doc. ENDC/PV. 294, 17 August 1965, p. 31.

(32) UN Doc. A/5415/REV, 1, 14 November 1963, P.1.

Soviet representative pointed out at the First committee of the UN General Assembly "that the aims of the draft resolution could not be achieved unless the nuclear Powers were prepared to respect the region's status. "It asked the United States that it should under take to refrain from installing nuclear weapons south of its frontiers, to liquidate its military bases in Latin America, and to refrain from employing nuclear weapons against the States of that region. The other nuclear powers with colonies in Latin America should enter into a similar undertaking.³³

The Latin American countries supported the Soviet demands. In November 1964, they set up a Preparatory Committee to prepare a preliminary draft of a multilateral treaty for the denuclearization of Latin America. Between 1965-67, the Committee met four times and worked out a draft treaty known as the Treaty of Tlateloco to denuclearize Latin America. This Treaty Consisted of 31 articles and two Additional Proto-cols 1 and 2.

The effectiveness of the Treaty of Tlateloco depends on the two Protocols appended to the Treaty. They are designed to guarantee the status of Latin America as a

(33) UN Doc. A/c. 1/SR. 1340, 10 November 1963, p. 146.

denuclearized zone. Protocol I imposes the duty to observe the provisions of the Treaty on those countries which exercise de jure or de facto sovereignty over territories within Latin America i.e. the US, UK, France and the Netherlands.

Protocol II imposes an obligation on the nuclear weapon powers to maintain the status of Latin America as denuclearized zone.³⁴

On the recommendation of the first committee of the UN General Assembly, when the Treaty was put to vote on 8 December 1967, the United States voted for it while the Soviet Union abstained. The Soviet Union abstained because the US right to transit of nuclear weapons through the Panama Canal has not been prohibited by the Treaty. According to the Soviet Union, it ran counter to the very principle of a nuclear weapon free zone and would also be a gross violation of the Treaty. The Soviet Union also objected to the zone of applications of the Treaty, which would cover large areas of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans extended up to 200 miles as territorial waters as claimed by some Latin American

(34) Status of Multilateral Arms Regulation and Disarmament Agreements: Special Supplement to the United Nations Year book, Vol. 11 1977 (New York, United Nations, 1978), pp. 60-61.

States. Even on the right to peaceful nuclear explosions, the Soviet Union has some objections, because the question of peaceful nuclear explosion is indissolubly linked to preventing further dissemination of nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union, therefore, refused to sign protocol II of the Treaty for a long time. However in May 1978 it signed the Protocol II. Brezhnev explained, "In committing ourselves to respect the nuclear free zone status in the Latin American Continent, we are proceeding from the premise that other nuclear Powers too, will be strictly observing this status, that the participants in the Treaty will ensure a truly nuclear free regime in the zone covered by the Treaty."

(g)

Middle East

The Arab-Israel conflict has been threatening the peace and security of the Middle East, ever since Israel came into existence. It was feared that the Arab-Israel conflict might lead to a nuclear war because of two factors. The first one was the Israeli nuclear weapon programme and the second one was horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Iran was the first to propose for a nuclear free zone in Middle East.

It initiated its proposal at the Twentyninth session of the UN General Assembly soon after the third Middle East war of 1973.

The proposal did not state the geographical extent of the area but it indicated that it should be large enough so that the security interests of the entire region were to be taken into consideration.³⁵ The Soviet Union and its Socialist allies gave their full support to the Iranian proposal.

Egypt suggested three points to be taken into consideration regarding the nuclear free zone in the Middle East. These three are (a) the States of the region should refrain from producing, acquiring or possessing nuclear weapons, (b) the nuclear weapon States to refrain from introducing nuclear weapons in the area, or using nuclear weapons against any state of the region. (c) there has to be a an International machinery for verification of both nuclear weapon States and States belonging to the region.³⁶ The Soviet Union and its Socialist allies supported the Egyptian suggestion.

(35) UN Doc. A/9693, 15 July 1974, p. 3.

(36) Comprehensive study of the Question of Nuclear weapon Free zones in All states its Aspects : Special Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. (New York, United Nations, 1976), p. 26.

Israel objected to the Iranian proposal. It held that there should be direct negotiations among the States and these States should not be dictated by the UN.

Basically, it was due to Israeli objections that all efforts to denuclearise the Middle East have failed so far.

(h)

South Asia

India's peaceful nuclear device of 1974 made Pakistan feel that its security was threatened. Pakistan put forward a proposal to denuclearise the region of South Asia. It was a diplomatic initiative of Pakistan to counter India from going nuclear. Pakistan sent an Explanatory Memorandum to the Twentieth session of the UN General Assembly in 1974. Its representative held that the establishment of nuclear free zone was possible in South Asia because "all the countries of South Asia have already proclaimed their opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons or to introduction of such weapons into the region"³⁷ and "this common denominator can form the basis of an agreement establishing a nuclear free zone for this region".³⁸ India rejected this proposal.

(37) UN. Doc A/906, 19 August 1974, pp. 12.

(38) U.N. Docs. A/PV. 2309, 1 December 1974 ; A/31/383, 8 December 1976 and A/33/532, 11 December 1978.

India's opposition to the Pakistani's proposal was due to India's positive approach to the concept of nuclear free zone. India maintained that any proposal for the creation of the nuclear free zone in the South Asia should come from a consensusⁿ of the States of the region as it happened in the case of Latin America and it should not be imposed by the UN. India also maintained that the geographical extent of such region is also to be taken into consideration. South Asia was a sub-region at whose backyard existed China, nuclear weapon power.

The proposal to denuclearise South Asia was of considerable importance to the Soviet Union due to its keen involvement in the area. The Soviet Union supported the Indian stand and India's draft resolution A/C. 1/L. 681 on the Declaration and Establishment of a nuclear free zone in South Asia.³⁹

The United States, on the other hand, thought that the establishment of a nuclear free zone in South Asia would enhance security in the region and hence it should be negotiated and agreed on among the appropriate parties before states could be expected to undertake commitments regarding it.⁴⁰

(39) UN Doc. A/9911, 6, December 1974, p. 2.

(40) The United Nations Disarmament year Book 1977
(New York, United Nations, 1978), p. 180.

However, the Soviet Union supported the setting up of different nuclear weapon free zone in different parts of Asia. The Soviet Union felt that such proposals should naturally be implement with due regard to the possibilities of one region or another in Asia where a nuclear free zone was to be set up. But the point was that these zones should really be free from nuclear weapon and that the appropriate agreements should close all loopholes for the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Asia.⁴¹

(i) South Pacific

The US naval deployment of late 50's in the Pacific prompted the Soviet Union to propose the denuclearization of the whole Pacific area. Nikita Khrushchev, at the Twenty first Extra ordinary congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 27 Jaunary, 1954, pointed out that "a zone of peace, above all an atom-free zone, can and should be created in the Far East and the rest of the Pacific area."⁴² The Soviet Union felt that a nuclear free zone in this region would reduce tensions, restore stability and strengthen peace

(41) Y. Utkin, "The Road to Security in Asia", International Affairs (Moscow), May 1977, p. 98.

(42) N. Khrushchev, World without Arms, World without War (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1959), bk.1, pp. 34-35.

and security in the region.⁴³

The 1969 Guam Doctrine of the United States was followed by the Pacific Doctrine of 1975. During this period the US increased their military presence in the area. The Soviet Union viewed these developments as a serious threat to its vital interests in the area. The presence of American nuclear weapons in the Pacific areas posed a serious danger to the cause of peace in the region.⁴⁴

On 3 July 1975, the countries of the South Pacific expressed at United Nations their support for keeping their region free from nuclear weapons. The Thirteenth session of UN General Assembly adopted the resolution 3477 endorsing the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear free zone in the area and invited the countries concerned to enter into consultation for realizing that objective.

The idea of nuclear free zone in the South Pacific was again high on the agenda at meetings of the South Pacific forum in 1983 and 1984. At the 1984 Forum, the heads of Governments "agreed on the desirability of establishing a nuclear free zone in the region at the earliest

(43) "Atoms Free Zones", International Affairs (Moscow), December 1960, p. 106 .

(44) A Chernyshov, "The Pacific : Problems of International Security and Cooperation", International affairs (Moscow) November 1977, P. 79.

Possible opportunity" in accordance with a set of principles enclosed by the meeting. China on February 10, 1987 signed protocols of the Treaty, declaring the South Pacific a nuclear free zone, but reserved its right to reconsider them. The Soviet Union has also signed the Protocols. They prohibit ownership, use, stationing, testing of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste in the region but do not block passage or port calls of nuclear ships.

The United States and France have refused to sign the Treaty, which was agreed to by the 13 member South Pacific Forum in 1986.

(j) Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean became a zone of Super Powers rivalry soon after the British withdrawal from the area. But the actual militarization of the zone by the Super Powers became since 1968. The periodic visits of the American and Soviet nuclear warships in this area made the hinterland and littoral States to take an initiative to denuclearise the Indian Ocean and to declare it a 'Zone of Peace'.

The idea of a zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean was first advanced by Sri Lanka at the second nonaligned conference in 1964. It was developed in the third non-aligned

conference in 1970, which adopted a resolution offering the United Nations to devote one of its declarations to this problem. Next year the 26th General Assembly of the UN approved this proposal and set up a UN Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in 1972. Beginning with its 29th session, the UN General Assembly repeatedly took resolutions urging the littoral nations to start multilateral consultations with a view to convening a conference on this problem. The conference of littoral and other countries of this region held at the initiative of the 32nd General Assembly, produced an appeal to hold an international conference on making the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. But this conference did not take place.

The Soviet Union has always supported zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. It has always backed the various proposals of the States of the region to denuclearize the Indian Ocean and to declare it a zone of peace.

The Soviet Union was particularly interested in eliminating foreign military bases existing in the Indian Ocean. It was prepared to join other Powers in seeking ways to reduce on a mutually acceptable basis the military activity of external powers in the Indian Ocean and areas immediately adjacent to it.⁴⁵ But it pointed out that there

(45) UN Doc. CCD/522, 15 Feb. 1977. p.12.

was to be no impediment to the freedom of navigation and scientific research, which were of special importance to it. Because the Soviet Union does not have any other alternative route between its European part and its Far East.

Basically it was the US decision to construct a full-fledged naval base at Diego Garcia which made the Soviet Union to pursue the denuclearization of the India Ocean with more fervour. Four rounds of talk with the United States were held at Soviet initiative. In 1979 Washington refused to continue these talks, thereby displaying the lack of interest in them.

(h) Antarctica, Outer Space, Sea-Bed and Ocean Floor

The Antarctica Treaty concluded by 12 countries (US, USSR, UK, France, Belgium, Norway, Argentina, Chile, Japan, Australia, Newzealand and Union of South Africa) in 1959 prohibits the establishment of military bases and fortifications in Antarctica as well as carrying out military manoeuvres and the testing of any type of weapons. Besides the Treaty also bans all nuclear explosions whether peaceful or military and disposal of radioactive waste in the area.

The Soviet Union held that the provisions of the Treaty "set in example of fruitful international cooperation and successful effort in the working out mutually acceptable solutions."⁴⁶

It also felt that the provisions of the Treaty "are in keeping with the main task facing mankind today ——— the preservation and consolidation of world peace."⁴⁷

Soon after launching its satellite in the space in 1957, the Soviet Union began its efforts to prohibit nuclearization of outer space. It proposed to the UN General Assembly (1958) to ban nuclear weapons in outer space and also to conclude an international treaty for peaceful exploration of outer space.⁴⁸

The Soviet Union also pointed out that it "was prepared to sign an agreement prohibiting the use of Outer Space for military purposes.

On their part, the United States put forward a proposal for control over all missiles launched into space, to which the Soviets did not agree. They considered the American proposal

(46) "Antarctica Sets an Example", New Times (Moscow), no. 51, December 1959, p. 1.

(47) Soviet News, no. 4168, 3 December 1959, P. 202.

(48) UN Doc. A/4009, 28 November 1958, P.6.

as a move to acquire military advantage over them. The 18th session of the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the lines of Soviet proposal, a Declaration of legal principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space.⁴⁹

The Soviet plan was further discussed at the Third and Fourth session of the legal sub-committee in 1964 and 1965.

However, in the fifth session of legal sub-committee, the Soviet Union placed a draft treaty on "Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, the Moon and other Celestial bodies,"⁵⁰ However, this Treaty was concluded in 1967 in order to ensure that environment would be used for the benefit of all peoples :

In 1967, the United Nations decided to study the possibility of reserving exclusively for peaceful purposes the sea-bed, Ocean floor and sub-soil.⁵¹ Soon after the UN decision, the Soviet Union started taking interest in keeping sea-bed and Ocean floor free of nuclear weapons.

(49) UN Doc. GA Draft Res. 1962 (XVIII), 13 December 1963 pp. 15-16.

(50) Department of State Bulletin (Washington) Vol. 55, no. 1411, 11 July 1966, pp. 61-62.

(51) UN Doc. GA Draft Res. 2340 (XXII), 18 December 1967 p. 14.

In July 1968, the Soviet Union submitted a memorandum to the UN, through which it proposed that an agreement be reached to denuclearize sea-bed and Ocean floor. It also suggested that the ENDC should consider the prohibition of the use for military purposes of the sea-bed beyond the limits of the territorial waters.⁵² The Soviet Union, again in 1969, submitted a proposal to the UN for complete demilitarization of the sea-bed and Ocean floor. In 1962, the Soviet Union and the United States submitted a joint draft treaty to the ENDC. The final draft was approved by a vote of 104 to 2 with 2 abstentions, on December 1970. Thus, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of the Nuclear weapons and other weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Sub-soil was formed. It came into force on May 18, 1972.⁵³

(52) UN Doc. A/Ac. 135/20, 20 June 1968, p.1.

(53) Comprehensive Study of the Question of Nuclear Weapons-free zones in All its Aspects : Special Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, no. 83, pp. 18-19.

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER - THREE

SOUTH ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE-I

(A) India's Perception

Though the Soviet perception of the nuclear weapon free zone is the main focus of this study, it is important first to examine the Indian and Pakistani perceptions about the nuclear weapon free zone of South Asia.

Hence, this chapter is devoted to the analysis of the perceptions of India and Pakistan, before going into the Soviet approach.

India has been supporting nuclear weapon free zones since the 1950's in the Balkans, Adriatic, Central Europe and Nordic countries, and in Africa and Latin America in the 1960's through resolutions in the United Nations and the Non-aligned conferences. India felt that a beginning should be made in the direction of lessening the fear of a possible nuclear attack by declaring different areas as nuclear free zones. Speaking before the Disarmament Committee, Krishna Menon stated :

We subscribe to the proposition of nuclear weapon free zones. I am glad to say that the demand for such zones spreads each day - - - - - . To the extent the idea

is spreading, we are happy about it, We are in support of these nuclear free zones, But not on the basis that there are some places in the world that may be destroyed, that is, that there are expendable portions and non expendable portions - - - - - . We can not accept it.¹

India was in favour of nuclear free zones because that was an effective way of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons² and its successful application in certain areas could pave the way for achieving the goal of making the world free from nuclear weapons. This may be an effective way to compel the nuclear Powers to take steps for the liquidation of their nuclear stock piles.³

In India's view, it was not possible to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in any area if some countries of the area are interested in military alliances with the nuclear powers to pressurise their neighbours. It also held that a nuclear weapon free zone was possible only if all the countries of that zone were unanimous in doing so and that nuclear free zone did not mean that the nuclear Powers

(1) ENDC/PV. 5, 20 March 1962, p. 36.

(2) Ashwani Kumar Chopra, India's Policy on Disarmament (New Delhi) 1984, p. 128.

(3) The United Nations and Disarmament, 1945-1965, op cit, p. 219.

had the right to destroy the areas which were not declared as nuclear free zones for some reasons. Explaining India's view, Ambassador Misra stated .

"We have supported such zones whenever it has been demonstrated that there is agreement in regard to them in particular region that has meant prior consultations and agreement among the states of those regions.⁴

Thus India thought that denuclearization of any area should be brought about by the voluntary nature of the participation of the countries of the region. A nuclear free zone can not be imposed on the countries of the region against their will and neither can it be created in an atmosphere full of fear and suspicion.

In India's view, the concept of nuclear free zone is a double sided affair. It could be made possible only with the effective co-operation of the nuclear Power with the non-nuclear Powers of the area concerned.⁵

Ambassador Hussain explained India's view on this issue. He stated :

"Agreements on denuclearized zones would also require

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- (4) UN General Assembly, 20th session, 2002nd mtd. 28 October 1974, P. 28.
- (5) Ashwani Kumar Chopra, India's Policy on Disarmament (ABC Publishing House, New Delhi) 1984, P.130.

that nuclear Powers undertake to respect the status of such zones and lend their full co-operation in implementing arrangements concerning their establishment.⁶

The nuclear Powers should refrain from violating the sanctity of nuclear free zone by placing nuclear weapons there. The obligations of the nuclear Powers could be specified in detail in treaties establishing nuclear free zones. Thus without the co-operation of the nuclear Powers, the concept of nuclear free zone would be meaningless.⁷

The question of the establishment of a nuclear free zone in South Asia was discussed at the twenty ninth session of the General Assembly at the request of Pakistan. Pakistan mooted in late August 1974 a proposal at UN calling for a nuclear free zone in South Asia. Pakistan took the initiative soon after India had successfully detonated a plutonium device, in the 10-15 kiloton range, near Pokhran in Rajasthan in May 1974.

Prof. T.T. Poulse, says "Perhaps Pavlov's reflex action theory or Mcnamaras" action-reaction phenomenon can

(6) Foreign Affairs Record, September 1968, P. 201.

(7) Ashwani Kumar Chopra, India's Policy on Disarmament. (ABC publishing House, New Delhi) 1984, P. 130.

easily explain why Pakistan sponsored a nuclear free zone in South Asia ----- . Admittedly, India is the only coherent and viable regional Power in South Asia. Therefore, every accretion to India's Power has had a disquieting effect on the surrounding small powers.⁸

It has always been a tendency on the part of some of the States in South Asia to raise the bogey of India nuclear profile just to embarrass India.

As it was expected, Pakistan reacted very sharply to the successful Indian nuclear experiment. Yet, Pakistan failed to gain acceptance of the first draft it put up in which it wanted that the General Assembly straight away to proclaim the South Asia as nuclear free zone.⁹ Even after two further drafts to take note of the views of concerned nations, it was unable to find a co-sponsor for its motion. Yet, the fact remains that the UN political Committee, where the arguments took place, adopted the Pakistani motion as well as the parallel one put up by India by a large number of affirmative votes.

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- (8) T.T. Poullose, "The Politics of Nuclear Free Zone and South Asia, Pacific Community, April 1977, P. 554.
- (9) Dilip Mukherjee, "India's Nuclear Test and Pakistan", India Quaterly, Vol. 30, 1974, P. 260.

In the explanatory memorandum, Pakistan stressed the urgency and need for creating such a zone in South Asia. Since all the States of the region had already proclaimed their opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons or to the introduction of such weapons into the region, this alone could be formed a basis of nuclear free zone.¹⁰ The Pakistani resolution¹¹ "endorsed in Principle, the concept of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia" and called upon the Secretary General of the UN to hold consultations on the subject for making a report to the next General Assembly.

But the Indian resolution¹² held that "the initiative for the creation of such a zone in the appropriate region of Asia should come from the states of the region concerned, taking into account its special feature and geographical extent. "No doubt, the Indian resolution was supported by 90 nations and Pakistanis by 86, but this slight edge has no significance. The point really to note was that the great majority of the UN membership was in favour of progressively outlawing nuclear weapons from as large an

(10) Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty Ninth Session, Annexes, document A/9706.

(11) Res. 3265 B, UN General Assembly, XXIX session, 1974.

(12) Res. 3265 A, UN General Assembly, XXIX session, 1974.

area of the globe as possible by the creation of one zone after the another.

The Indian stand, as explained on November 15, 1974 to the Political Committee by Kewal Singh, foreign secretary, was that 'the differing conditions from one part of the world to another need to be taken into account in assessing the feasibility of creating a nuclear free zone. He pointed out, according to verbatim record, that "Africa and Latin America are separate and distinct continental Zones, geographically and politically. In that sense, South Asia can not be considered a zone. The presence in Asia of countries belonging to military alliances and the existence of nuclear weapon Powers could have a vital bearing on the viability of a nuclear weapon free zone."

Yet, he did not reject the idea of a South Asian nuclear free zone, but suggested prior consultations and agreement before the UN was asked to endorse it.

Mr. B.C. Misra, India's ambassador in Geneva, said that the parallel of African and Latin American Nuclear free zones cited by Pakistan in support of a South Asian Zone would not apply to South Asia. He said that Africa

and Latin America were separate and distinct continental zones, geographically and politically. In the same sense, South Asia could not be considered in isolation because South Asia was surrounded by nuclear weapon States and countries belonging to their alliances.¹³ He made some further points when explaining on India's negative vote on the Pakistan's resolution. As he put it, it is not possible for India to accept a Zone of South Asia, because this would place those in favour of negotiations for a larger region at a disadvantage. In any event, the problem of proliferation "Cannot be tackled merely by binding the hands of non-nuclear weapon states." As for verification and safeguards (proposed in the Pakistan's proposal), "it is not possible for us to agree to a system which will be applicable to the peaceful activities of all States, while leaving open the military activities of nuclear weapon States."¹⁴ India has consistently rejected free scope safeguards, not just as arbitrary and discriminatory but also as an infringement of its national sovereignty and a hinderance to the development of its nuclear energy programmes. Thus, Pakistan's objective was to open the way for out side

(13) Hindustan Times, 13 Nov. 1974, Quoted B.C. Misra (New Delhi ed.)

(14) Dilip Mukherjee, "India's Nuclear Test and Pakistan", India Quarterly, Vol. 30, 1974. P. 264.

interference in India's nuclear research.¹⁵ Pakistan's spokesmen in their speeches said that the peaceful Indian test had raised a question of security and called for international inspection of underground explosions, even though they were meant to serve peaceful purposes. This was a position India could not accept. It could not tolerate interference in its affairs in the name of inspection.

The real irritant in the Pakistani resolution was the provision of verification and control of all nuclear activities. Since India has nuclear facilities, equipment and materials which are not all entirely under safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), its opposition was legitimate.¹⁶ Since China's delivery systems can reach Indian targets, India rightly objected to the meaning of such a zone as there is an unfriendly nuclear neighbour in the backyard of South Asia.¹⁷ This objection of India can be over ruled because China is the supporter of South Asian nuclear weapon free zone and has pledged of no-first use of nuclear weapons. But there is no evidence of a Chinese nuclear threat or nuclear blackmail to India. And India, due to her bitter past experiences, could no more afford to trust China's "good intentions".

(15) Patriot (New Delhi) 23 November 1974.

(16) T.T. Poulose, "Nuclear Polycentrism and Denuclearization of South Asia, Asia Pacific Community, October 1984.

(17) Ibid, p.330.

In its proposal, Pakistan had raised the point that South Asian nuclear free zone could be created because the countries of South Asia had declared not to manufacture nuclear weapons and also that South Asia was free of nuclear weapons. To this point, Rikhi Jaipal pointed out that South Asia was not the only region free of nuclear weapons. He said it did not follow that because a particular region was free of nuclear weapons, it should be converted into a nuclear weapon free zone. Different countries had different perceptions of how their national security was best served, and it is improper for the General Assembly to impose its views on them in this manner.¹⁸

He further emphasized that "India's opposition to Pakistani's initiative lay in her realistic assessment that South Asia was not at all the region where a nuclear weapon free zone first be created. Any honest study would show that the threat of a nuclear holocaust is much greater else where than in South Asia."¹⁹

The same view was put by the then Prime Minister of India Mr. Morarji Desai, at the UN special session on Disarmament in 1978. He stated, "It is idle to talk of

(18) Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta) 19 Dec. 1978.

(19) Ibid. 7 December 1978.

regional nuclear weapon free zones when there would still be zones which could continue to be endangered by nuclear weapons ----- . We are convinced that there cannot be a limited approach to the question of freedom from nuclear threats and dangers, but the whole world should be declared as a nuclear weapon free zone.²⁰

India found it difficult to accept the Pakistani's idea of South Asian nuclear weapon free zone because the idea was in itself an extension of Non Proliferation Treaty, the objective of both being to deny nuclear status to the non-nuclear Countries and legitimise nuclear weapons of the nuclear weapon States by projecting them as guarantors of security against nuclear threat.²¹

India felt that universalization of the concept of nuclear free zone made the nuclear weapon States as protectorate of the rest of the developing world.

That was why India felt compelled to reject Pakistan's proposal and introduce a separate resolution, as, in the Indian view, the Pakistani leadership had always played a 'Collaborative role' in extending the dominance of western powers over the developing world,

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- (20) Morarji Desai's Address to the UN Special Session on Disarmament text in 'Strategic Digest' (New Delhi) Vol. 8, July - Aug. 1978.
- (21) C. Subramaniam's (India's Defence minister) Statement at National Defence College (For Details see - 'Nuclear Myths and Reality - 9(K. Subramaniam) pp.85.

and their nuclear free zone proposal was in line with their traditional collaborationism.²²

This proposal of Pakistan was perceived in India as yet another instance of Pakistan's collaboration with an external power i.e. China, to counter veil India. Thus, while rejecting the Pakistan's proposal, India had certain security reason behind it. Because it is well known that Pakistan deliberately excluded China from its proposal and aimed only at South Asia.

Pakistan has repeated its resolution annually in the UN and pleaded its case for a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone vigorously since 1975.

The Indian stand remains the same. India also hold that proposals for nuclear weapon free zones can succeed only when nuclear weapon powers also agree to denuclearize and nuclear weapons are delegitimized by the international community.

Thus, India's approach towards this issue is contrary to any move which accords legitimacy to nuclear

(22) P.S. Jayaram, "Nuclear weapon Free Zone, NPT and South Asia", Nuclear Myth and Reality (Ed.K. Subramaniam) P. 86.

weapons. This is the reason why India is unable to support the proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone of negative guarantees in South Asia which tend to legitimize the possession of weapons in the hands of a few nuclear weapon powers and their use in war.

(B) Pakistan's Perception

Attempts have been made by some countries to rush through a resolution in the General Assembly on the question of creating a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia. Pakistan took the lead in that matter. Stymied by India's Pokhran test explosion, Pakistan was preparing a booby-trap for India. After for the diplomatic forays against India at CENTO meeting and the Islamic Conference, Pakistan decided to corner India by seizing the initiative to introduce a proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia.²³ Pakistan reacted violently to the successful Indian nuclear experiment. Prime Minister Bhutto, in the press conference on 19 May, 1974, said that Pakistan would demand a "Nuclear umbrella" from at least one nuclear Power. In the same conference, he said that he would not sign a no-war

(23) T.T. Poulouse, "The Politics of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and South Asia," Pacific Community, April 1977 P. 550.

pact with India. Along with seeking a nuclear umbrella, Pakistan also sought international support for a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia.

However, the question of the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia was discussed at the twenty ninth session of the General Assembly at the request of Pakistan. In the explanatory memorandum, Pakistan stressed the urgency and need for creating such a zone in South Asia.

Pakistan held that since all the countries of South Asia had already proclaimed their opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons or to the introduction of such weapons into the region, this common denominator could form the basis of an agreement to establish a nuclear weapon free zone.²⁴

During the debate in the General Assembly on this question, Pakistan (A/DV. 2247, A/C. 1/PV. 2002, 2020, 2024 and 2025) stated that generally recognized conditions for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone existed in South Asia. All the States of the region had already declared their opposition to the acquisition or introduction

(24) Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty ninth Session, Annexes , A/9706.

of nuclear weapons into the region. In particular India had reiterated, both before and after its nuclear explosion, that it would not develop or acquire nuclear weapons. The five States possessing nuclear weapons had in the debate indicated their support or acceptance of the concept of establishing nuclear weapon free zones. Thus all this had set the stage for initiating consultations for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia.

Pakistan Stated that the existence of "alliances" or "treaties" of friendship with nuclear weapon Powers had not prevented the establishment or consideration of nuclear weapon free zones in other areas of the world.²⁵ Nor could the proximity of nuclear weapon Powers be an inhibiting factor for the creation of such zones. This latter factor should not militate against, but was yet another reason for, The creation of nuclear weapon free zones. It was through such collateral measures that smaller States could ensure their survival and security,

Pakistan added that a meeting of the countries of the region should be convened by the Secretary-General to begin the consultations under appropriate guidelines set down by the General Assembly in order to facilitate the process of negotiations and give it a sense of direction.

(25) Comprehensive Study of the Question of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in All its aspects (New York 27. U.N. 1976) P.27.

Speaking in favour of his resolution Pakistani representative said that "his country's prime concern at the juncture was (1) the security of the non-nuclear States viewed in the context of spiralling nuclear proliferation by nuclear countries and by countries which had just joined the nuclear club and (2) to strengthen the prospects of security of the non-nuclear States."²⁶

The Pakistani resolution, while accepting the right of States to harness nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, referred to the dangers of its diversion to military purposes. It said that the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone, inter alia, entailed commitment by the States concerned to use nuclear materials and facilities under their jurisdiction exclusively for peaceful purposes, and to prevent the testing, use, manufacture, production, acquisition or storage of any nuclear weapons. It would also entail an equitable and non-discriminatory system of verification and inspection to ensure that nuclear programmes were in conformity with the foregoing commitments. Lastly, it would entail an undertaking by nuclear - weapon States not to use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against the States of the region.²⁷

(26) UNGA, First Committee Report, 29th session, A/C 1/P.V. 2002, P.41.

(27) K.R. Singh, "Nuclear weapon Free Zone in South Asia", India Quarterly, Vol. 37, no.3 July-Sept.1976, P.225.

The operative paragraph of the Pakistani resolution 9576 B(XXX) urged the States of South Asia to continue their efforts to establish nuclear weapon free zone, as recommended in resolution 3265 B (XXIX) and to refrain from any action contrary to the objectives of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone. Thus, the Pakistani resolution not only reiterated the points included in its earlier resolution of 1974, but also added a clause that no action should be taken by the South Asian States that might be considered contrary to the objectives of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone. The inclusion of such a blanket moratorium on the nuclear experiment in the South Asian sub-system, without agreement among the local States.²⁸

The Pakistani representative said that his Country would welcome other non-nuclear neighbouring States around South Asia to join the group. He said by its very definition, a nuclear weapon free zone could be developed only among the non-nuclear powers.²⁹ Thus Pakistan excluded even the

(28) Ibid, P. 297.

(29) U.N. Document A/c 1/PV 2702, 2 December 1975, P.41.

possibility of a dialogue among the States in South Asia and other nuclear Powers that pose a possible threat to the countries of the South Asian sub-system.

To the India's objection to the Pakistanis proposal to the UN Secretary general to convene a conference of the States of the region concerned, Mr. Agha Shahi defended bringing the UN into the consultation on the zone from the start by citing views expressed in other contexts by Romania and Nigeria, highlighting the obligation of the UN-flowing from its purposes and principles to stimulate the efforts of the States towards the goal of nuclear free zones.³⁰ Agha Shahi also referred to the fact that the initiative for the denuclearization of Africa was taken by Nigeria and some other States which got the UN General Assembly to adopt a recommendatory resolution even before consultations had taken within the African Community.

He did not minimize the importance of regional consultations. "For example, an equitable and non-discriminatory system of verification must be the subject of consultations before it can be given practical form, "so that the procedures entail equal rights and obligations. He envisaged that the system would be evolved by the participating States themselves to meet the objection that the existing system of international safeguards is discriminatory.

(30) Dilip Mukherji, "India's Nuclear test and Pakistan", India Quarterly, Vol. 30, 1974. pp. 260-270.

In analyzing Pakistani's motivations, it may be mentioned at the very outset that the Pakistan's Proposal was a violation of Principle three of the UN study which categorically refers to the need for obtaining a regional consensus before such proposals are brought before the UN.³¹ On the other hand Pakistan requested the Secretary General of the UN to convene a conference of the South Asian States. The reasons behind such a tactical move by Pakistan are not hard to unravel. Pakistan wanted to put a blanket ban on India's nuclear activities would be through the world body and the Secretary-General. Pakistan earlier used CENCO and Islamic Conference forums to raise the issue of the dangers of India's nuclear explosion and there after used the UN forum to confront India.³² In other words, unlike the case of Latin America but somewhat on the model of Middle East and South Africa, this nuclear weapon free zone proposal is to cover countries which had an active adversary relationship.

It was indeed a pusillanimous move on the part of Pakistan to way lay in this manner India who was striding

(31) P.S. Jayaram, "Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, NPT and South Asia", Nuclear Myth and Realities (ed. Subramaniam K.) pp. 72-86.

(32) T.T. Poulouse "The Politics of Nuclear Free Zone and South Asia", Pacific Community, Vol.8, Apr.1977 P. 550.

across the sub-continent like a giant in a glorious mood.³³ Pakistan wanted to trap India in its own logic of righteousness since India had been a supporter of nuclear weapon free zone all along or to condemn India if she rejected the proposal.

Pakistani's proposal was a nervous reaction of her's against the India's nuclear explosion. It was also a move to pressurize India to give up her nuclear options.

What an irony that the country like Pakistan who was busy opposing the Indian nuclear programme, was the one who not only welcomed, but also lauded the Chinese nuclear explosions and nuclear weapon programme. Its leaders talked about Chinese nuclear umbrella for Pakistan while simultaneously propogating a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia.³⁴

Pakistan should understand that nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia is a matter that has to be first resolved by the regional Powers themselves and to make it an issue of international controversy would only prove counter productive. It should also understand that the estential requirement

(33) T.T. Poulouse "The Politics of Nuclear Free Zone and South Asia", Pacific Community, Vol.8, Apr.1977 P. 550.

(34) K.R. Singh, "Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia" India Quarterly, Vol. 32, no. 3, July-Sept. 1976 P.

for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zone is the participation not only by the regional powers but also by the threshold countries. And without Indian participation the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone can not take shape.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER - FOURTHE SOUTH ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE - IITHE SOVIET PERCEPTION(A) Soviet Strategic Involvement In South Asia

South Asia had always been a higher priority area for Soviet Union. What had changed in the late 1970's and attracted U.S. attention was the level of Soviet involvement in the Area and the instruments of policy that Moscow was willing to deploy in pursuit of its interests.

The Soviet Union has pursued an active policy in South Asia only since 1955.

It was only after the de-Stanilization set in motion by Khrushchev at the 20th party congress that led to clearly different assessment of the South Asian countries by Soviet theoreticians and policy makers. The stress was now on

- (1) peaceful co-existence ;
- (2) peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism ;
and
- (3) poly centricism ;

Still not a truly global actor and relatively isolated behind the Iron curtain, the Soviet Union lauded the effort to build stronger economic and diplomatic ties in India, the largest South Asian state, out of a mixture of defensive counter-offensive and preventive motives.¹ U.S. efforts in 1954-55 to enlarge the ring of containment by enlisting military allies on the Soviet Union's southern periphery (Pakistan, Iraq, Iran) seriously alarmed the Soviets. The hostile reaction to the American policy on the part of several important and strongly nationalist states in the region, some officially neutralist in their orientation, encouraged Moscow to counter-attack.

The Soviet involvement in the Indian sub-continent was primarily motivated by the spread to South Asia of Moscow's bipolar competition with Washington and its nascent rivalry with Beijing. In particular, Soviet activity in India followed upon the conclusion of the 1954 U.S. - Pakistani defence agreement and the agreement on Tibet concluded the same year between Zhou Enlai and Nehru.

Khrushchev, during his visit to India, lent support to her on Kashmir, an issue most crucial to India's national

(1) Kanet (Roger, E.) 'Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980's'. (Praeger special studies, Praeger scientific) pp.330.

pride. He declared that people themselves had already decided that Kashmir was part of India. On his return to Moscow, the Soviet leader was careful to make a statement that left the door open for a warming of Soviet-Pakistani relations, should that state return to an "independent" policy.² But, at the same time, the Soviet Union had been able to put a profound impact on the Indian mind by offering liberal economic assistance, and by the 1960's India had already become the USSR's most important non-communist trading partner.

Thus the multifaceted development of Soviet relations with India, the leading power in South Asia and a major architect of the growing neutral bloc, helped to enhance the Soviet influence and prestige throughout the region.

But the situation started worsening in the late 1950's, when outbreaks at the Sino Indian border started. On September 10, a Tass statement was issued from Moscow, expressing regret over the border conflict, asserting that the USSR enjoyed friendly relations with both parties, and urging prompt negotiations.³ The Chinese got angry over such a neutral view taken by USSR and condemned it as "siding with a bourgeois country against a Socialist ally."⁴

(2) Ibid., pp. 330.

(3) TASS statement 10th September 1962.

(4) Xinhua, September 1962.

The full scale war between China and India started on 20th October, 1962, in which China thoroughly defeated the Indian army. This caused Nehru to appeal to Britain and United States for military aid. The Soviet Union, at first, seemed to side with China, but it must be remembered that the fighting had broken out almost simultaneously with the Cuban missile crisis and the Soviet Union could not have dared to displease the Communist camp.

After the Sino-Indian war, the Soviet Union certainly lost standing with the Indian people, while the influence of the US and Britain, which provided military aid to India, had risen.

The 1962 war brought China and Pakistan, India's two adversaries, close together. Moscow, while having good relations with India, did not want to abandon Pakistan to the exclusive blandishments of Peking and Washington.⁵ The Moscow tried to improve its relations with Pakistan. During President Ayub Khan's visit to USSR, in 1965, a joint communique was released by USSR and Pakistan which marked a degree of change in Soviet Stand on Kashmir. This emboldened the Pakistani leadership. In August 1965 a war erupted over the issue of Kashmir. The Soviet Union at

(5) Kanet (Roger E) 'Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980's (Praeger Special Studies, Praeger Scientific) pp.330.

first ignored the conflict but later on it called upon the two countries to end the conflict.

Even when China, sided with Pakistan, made threatening demands on India. Over the Sino-Indian border, the Soviet Union warned China, not to meddle in the sub-continent's affair.

The Soviet Union sponsored mediation between India and Pakistan. Although, it could not succeed in settling the Kashmir issue, but it definitely defused the immediate crisis.

The Soviet efforts got wide propaganda and their image was projected as a peace loving great power.

In May 1968, Moscow responded to India's request for arms with a shipment of 100 SU-7 fighter bombers, but it also agreed to sell weapons to Pakistan after Ayub's cancellation of the lease on the US intelligence base in Peshawar. The Soviet-Pakistani diplomatic and trade relations did not last long and these were broken in 1971 because of civil conflict in East Pakistan. The Soviet president issued a statement asking the Pakistani leadership to stop bloodshed in East Pakistan. Thousands of refugees came across the border into India, stimulating its demands for Indian military action against Pakistan.

The Soviet Union, anticipating a Sino-Pakistan liasion in case of war with India, moved decisively in an attempt to extend its influence and deter a war.

It is in the context of the larger campaign for collective security against China that the Soviet-Indian Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed on Aug 9, 1971, must be viewed.⁶ The formal obligations the Soviets incurred from the Treaty were minimal ; its main purpose from the Soviet point of view, was to formalise and extend Russians influence for the immediate purpose of stabilizing the situation in South Asia.

Never the less, India moved her troops into East Pakistan at the end of november 1971. The brief war ended in mid-December with the unconditional surrender of Pakistani troops in the east and a ceasefire on the western border. The Soviet Union placed full responsibility on Pakistan for the conflict and vetoed the ceasefire resolution at UN so that Indian army could successfully complete its operation in East Pakistan. The conflict ended in the creation of an independent State, Bangladesh. The Soviets tried to build good relations with Bangla desh.

(6) 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship ' was signed between USSR and India on August 9, 1971.

However, the Soviets calculations, in the post 1971, went wrong on more than one occasion. India while taking steps to improve its long damaged relations with Beijing and Washington, refused to give explicit endorsement to the Soviet Plan for collective security in Asia.⁷

The events of the mid-70s have represented a setback for Soviet interests in the sub-continent. The overthrow of the pro Soviet government of Sheikh Mujib Rehman in Bangladesh, and its replacement by a more pro-Western government, was viewed with apprehension in Moscow. The 1977 change of government in Pakistan was also not to Moscow's liking ;

In the late 70s, the Soviet press commented with favour on Pakistani's turn towards non-alignment and its distancing from U.S. Moscow, however, became critical of Pakistan when it saw the sinister hand of China in fuelling the Pakistan's nuclear ambitions. Later on, the Soviets reacted sharply over the Pakistani's deteriorating relations with Marxist-Leninist government at Afghanistan. It condemned the Pakistani government for openly cooperating with imperialist and Chinese schemes to intervene in Afghanistani's internal affairs.

(7) The term 'Collective Security' in Asia was, for the first time, used by L. Brezhnev at International Meeting of Communist and Workers at Moscow, 7th June 1969.

Even in allied India, Moscow suffered a set back when the new government of Desai said that "the Indo-Soviet treaty must not come in the way of our friendship with any other country. We don't have special relations with any country".

However their relations started warming up when Mrs. Gandhi came back to power in 1980.

The Soviet intervention of Afghanistan in December 1979, dramatically changed the military balance in South Asia and the Indian Ocean. It has brought with it a severe arms race in the sub-continent. This has caused the United States to give heavy military aid to Pakistan. While US was giving the arms to Pakistan to counter Russians in Afghanistan, the Pakistan was taking the arms to counter India's fast growing military build up.

However, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan gave it a wide condemnation by virtually the entire Islamic and Western world. Even Indians who were, by no means, pleased by the Soviet action sought to view the Soviet action with concern but "understanding", while privately they urged the Soviets to arrange a rapid political settlement and troops withdrawal.

In the early 80s the Indo-US relations further deteriorated due to US arms deal with Pakistan, together with the Reagan administration's decision to consider arms sale to China. This made the Soviet Union to accuse the US of trying to destabilize the sub continent by selling arms to Pakistan and China. At the same time, Moscow stepped up its pressure on Pakistan to agree to talks with the Afghan government, aimed at bringing about a negotiated withdrawal of Soviet troops.

For the foreseeable future there will continue to be certain parallels in Indian and Soviet interests in the security realm. To lose its standing as the ally of the strongest regional power in South Asia would cost Moscow heavily. It would entail some risk to its security bordering region that has both offensive and defensive value in the Soviet conflict with its primary rival China. Moscow's substantial stake in the existing order in South Asia thus gives it continuing interest in helping to stabilize the region by playing the role of "reliable friend to India".

(B)

The Soviet Perception

Thus the Soviet perception of nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia grew out of her strategic involvement in the sub continent. Apparently the Soviet conception

of nuclear free zone was compatible with the broad spectrum of the Soviet nuclear disarmament thinking. It also refurbished her image as a nation constantly engaged in the struggle for achievement of general and complete disarmament. However, the Soviet Union backed nuclear weapon free proposals as long as she required to counter American and NATO influence.

The proposal for a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone was of considerable importance to the Soviet Union due to its strategic involvement in that area. When India exploded a nuclear device in 1974, the Soviet Union accepted India's stand that it was a peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE). But Pakistan, fearing that India was developing a nuclear weapon capability, introduced a proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia,⁸ hoping thereby that the world public opinion would prevail upon India and dissuade her from becoming a nuclear weapon power. In order to avoid any embarrassment to India and to retain its political advantages in South Asia without antagonizing Pakistan, the Soviet Union abstained in the voting in the UN General Assembly on the Pakistani proposal for declaring South Asia as a nuclear free zone.

(8) UN Doc. A/9706, 19 August 1974, pp. 1-2.

On the other hand, when India made a counter proposal to the effect of opposing the Pakistani proposal, the Soviet Union supported it.⁹ Thus the Soviet Union preferred to remain on the dominant side, by aligning with India the dominant most power of South Asia, with a slight advantage over the United States and China.

Besides its political interests, its support to the Indian proposal was also based on the fundamental assumption that the initiative for the setting up of nuclear weapon free zones in different regions of the world should come from within the region concerned and should be acceptable to all States belonging to the region.

As regards South Asia, it "is only a sub-region and an integral part of the region of Asia and the Pacific"; and "it is necessary to take into account the security environment of the region as a whole". Moreover, "the existence of nuclear weapons in the region of Asia and Pacific and the presence of foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean complicates the security environment of the region and make the situation inappropriate for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the sub-region of South Asia."¹⁰ That was the Indian proposal which was supported by the Soviet Union.

(9) UN Doc. A/9911, 6 December 1974, p.2

(10) UN Doc. (A/PV. 2247 ; A/c. 1/OV, 2016, 2020, 2024 and 2025).

The Soviet Union supported the Indian stand and India's draft resolution A/c. 1/c. 681 on the Declaration and Establishment of a nuclear free zone in South Asia. According to India, "the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in any part of the world will be determined, in each individual case, by the specific content of these proposal (geographical boundaries of the zones, its status, etc.) and by the attitude to these proposals adopted by other States, particularly the prospective participants."¹¹

The Soviet Union also declared (at the XXIX UN General Assembly session) that a nuclear free zone can be created only on the condition that territories of the States of the "Zone" are really turned into an area entirely free from nuclear weapons.¹²

The Soviet Union was ever against the nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes in any area to be declared as nuclear free zone. Because it held that nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes could not be technically distinguished from military nuclear explosive devices.¹³ But when Indian

(11) UN Doc. CCD/PV. 683, 21 August 1975, P. 32.

(12) International Affairs (Moscow) no. 3, March 1975. P.15.

(13) U.N. Doc. CCD/PV. 683, 21 August 1975 P. 32.

resolution said that the countries of the region should be allowed to carry out nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, the Soviet Union did not oppose it, This, however, ran counter to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.¹⁴

Thus, the Soviet Union could not afford to antagonize its friend which happened to be a dominant power in South Asia.

In sum, the Soviet Union was not only in favour of setting up nuclear free zones in South Asia but also in different areas of Asia. According to a Soviet political commentator Y. Utkin :

"Some Asian States propose establishment of nuclear free zones in certain regions of the continent ; this reflects their aspiration for an effective limitation of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and a reduction of the threat of a nuclear war. The Soviet Union supports such proposals - - - - - . The point is that these zones should be really free from nuclear weapon and that the appropriate agreements should close all loopholes for the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Asia."¹⁵

(14) International Affairs (Moscow) 8 August 1975. p.68.

(15) Y. Utkin, "The Road to Security in Asia", International Affairs (Moscow), May 1977 P. 98

The U.S. Perception

The United States expressed support, in principle, for the creation of nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia. The United States thought that the establishment of such a zone in South Asia would enhance security in the region and reinforce nonproliferation on a regional basis.

The U.S. believed that the actual provisions governing the establishment of the zone in South Asia should be negotiated and agreed on among the parties concerned before States could be expected to undertake commitments in that regard.¹⁶

The United States held, that for any nuclear weapon free zone arrangement to accomplish its objectives, it would have to preclude the conduct of any nuclear explosion, whatever their declared purpose.¹⁷ In that connection, the US attached particular importance to operative paragraph two of the draft, which contained an admonition urging all States in the region of South Asia to refrain from any action contrary to the objective of the resolution.

(16) The United Nations Disarmament YearBook 1977
(New York, United Nations, 1978), P. 180.

(17) The United Nations Disarmament Year Book 1979
(New York, United Nations, 1980) Vol. 4. P.

The United States held that it was scientifically not possible to distinguish between the technology for the production of nuclear weapons and technology for the production of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The creation of zone was not the only means to the curtailment of nuclear competition in South Asia.¹²

The proposal for a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone was formally mooted by U.S. for the first time when Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee met President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in April 1979.¹⁹

Under the US proposal, India and Pakistan were required to agree to renounce acquisition of nuclear weapon and accept international safeguards at all existing nuclear facilities. In return the three nuclear weapon Powers i.e. US, USSR and China were to undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the countries of the Indian sub-continent. India opposed the concept of piecemeal nuclear free zones all along. It held that this would lead to discriminatory inspection and also the country would be reduced to being a protectorate of the Big Powers.²⁰

(18) Dawn (Karachi), 23 November 1979.

(19) A.G. Noorani, "US Proposal on Nuclear Free zone", Indian Express, 7th June 1979.

(20) Statesman (New Delhi) 29th May 1979.

The Indian government did not accept the principle that the nuclear weapons powers could go on adding to their nuclear weapons stockpile and simultaneously deliver "Sermons" to others.²¹ Any thing that remotely smokes of being discriminatory would be totally unacceptable to India. The provision for international inspection and safeguards would not be acceptable to India as long as the big Powers, too, did not agree to similar safeguards and supervision. Another annoying feature of American proposal was to confer 'Super Power Status' to China. In this context, it is pointed out that US is not loath to use double standard; while on the one hand it blesses moves to augment China's nuclear capability on the other hand it is not ready to fulfill its contracted obligation²² towards India.

To sum up the US proposal, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy says, "the US offer of security guarantee for a hypothetical South Asian nuclear weapon free zone is fraudulent and something India will never accept. The concept of regional nuclear free zones is mischivious. The US persists infloting the idea with the obvious hope of persuading India into signing full-scope safeguards agreements."²³

(21) Statesman(New Delhi) 29th May 1979.

(22) 'Tarapore Contract' signed between India and US was not being fulfilled.

(23) Indian Express (New Delhi) 29th May 1979.

C O N C L U S I O N S

CONCLUSIONS

The Soviet concept of nuclear weapon free zone grew first out of the genuine fear of her strategic inferiority and means vis-a-vis American nuclear threat.

It was a period of American nuclear monopoly. Its nuclear weapons, based on Western Europe, were causing a direct threat to the security of the Soviet Union. And the Soviet Union had yet to develop an inter-continental capability to counter the American targets. It was under such conditions that the Soviet Union mooted ideas of nuclear weapon-free zones in Central Europe, the Balkans, the Adriatic Northern Europe and the Mediterranean.

But the Soviet concept of nuclear weapon free zone did not grow only out of her strategic encirclement but also out of her shared interest with all peace loving countries of Europe to create nuclear weapon free zone. If an objective assessment is made, it is found that the Soviet Union, even after moving from a position of strategic inferiority to that of strategic parity with the U.S., continued to support or sponsor nuclear free zones proposals. Although, her attitude oscillated between virtual rejection as in the case of Latin America and qualified support as in the cases of

Africa, West Asia, South Asia and South Pacific.¹

The Soviet Union, attaching great importance to the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones, holds that the creation of such zones would promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in various regions, strengthen the security of the States of the region and also the security of the world as a whole. Creation of such zones would consolidate the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union also holds that a genuine nuclear weapon free zone should be entirely free of nuclear weapon and the States parties to such a zone should preclude any kind of loop-hole for violating the nuclear weapon free status of such zone.

The Soviet stand on South Asian nuclear weapon free zone was a necessary outcome of her strategic involvement in the region. The Soviet Union, in Principle, supported the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone. But, in view of the Indo-Soviet friendship on the one hand, and Pakistani alliance with the U.S. on the other, the Soviet Union

(1) T.T. POULOSE, "The Politics of nuclear weapon free", Pacific Community, Vo. 8, April 1977. P. 544.

supported the Indian resolution which was tantamount to the rejection of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia and opposed the Pakistani proposal for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone as a necessary step to prevent a nuclear arms race in South Asia, after India's nuclear explosion in 1974. However, the Soviet stand on the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone has always been ambiguous. It has never come out with a clear cut stand. It has always abstained on Pakistani proposal while at the same time always supported the Indian proposal. By doing so, it tried to avoid any embarrassment to India while at the same time also tried not to antagonize Pakistan. But it certainly inclined towards the Indian stand mainly because of her political and strategic interests. The Soviet Union knew the fact that Pakistan had already been wooed by the US, especially after the Bangladesh crises of 1971, thus she could not have afforded to lose India, the most dominant power of South Asia, at the cost of her sweet relations with Pakistan. The Soviet Union also knew it very well that India's slight inclination towards U.S. and China, would be quite detrimental to its interests in South Asia. The Soviet stand on the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone was also based on her fundamental assumption that the initiative for the setting up of nuclear weapon free zone in any

region should come from the countries of the region concerned and be acceptable to all states concerned in the region. Thus it was on this fundamental assumption that the Soviet Union supported the Indian stand on the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone.

As for as the South Asian Countries perception regarding a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone is concerned, they do not have a shared perception regarding the question. This is itself one of the major hurdles that come in the way of the creation of the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone.

The other point is that a nuclear weapon free zone is feasible in an area where no country has carried out a nuclear test or no country is believed to be on the threshold of crossing the nuclear Rubicon. In South Asia, India has already conducted a nuclear test and has shown its capability of producing nuclear weapons. While Pakistan has also got weapon grade enriched Uranium and is also a threshold power. Recently there have been some reports that Pakistan has already manufactured a nuclear bomb. But there has not been any official declaration of it. The next hurdle in the creation of the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone is that the facilities to be inspected by the two sides are very asymmetrical. While in the case of Pakistan it will cover only the reprocessing cell and the centrifuge facility,

in the case of India it will include the fast breeder reactor, the Madras reactor, the Dhruva reactor, Trombay and other reprocessing plants and also centrifuge facilities. Also, no operational inspection procedures have been developed for facilities like fast breeder reactors or uranium centrifuge enrichment.

As long as China, a nuclear power, lay to the east of South Asia and as long as big and super powers military presence continues in the Indian Ocean to the South of the region, the South Asian nuclear weapon free zone can not become feasible.

If Pakistan were really concerned about the nuclear threat to human life and civilization (as it held to be) it should have put forward a proposal to make not only South Asia but also the entire Asian continent, if not the whole world, nuclear free. Evidently, one of the basic aims of Pakistani initiative was to ensure continued supremacy of some of the big powers who wish to dominate if not blackmail, this region by virtue of their nuclear weapons and who for that reason, frown upon India's refusal to either join a nuclear weapon free zone or accept full scope safeguards.

But apart from all these facts, there is a way out. "It would be in the interests of India and Pakistan to agree to examine the proposals for building confidence between the two countries. If Pakistan is using it as a camouflage to serve some ulterior motives, it will be known in the course of the negotiations. But, if the real objective of the bilateral negotiations is to use the confidence - building measures as a means to achieve denuclearization of South Asia, there by renouncing nuclear weapons as an instrument of national policy, then India should take advantage of this historical opportunity. If Pakistan turns out to be a black sheep, India is then free to return to out nuclear option with good conscience." 2

(2) T.T. Poulouse, "Nuclear Polycentrism and Denuclearization of South Asia", Asia-Pacific Community - 1984, P. 114.

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