

**CENTRAL ASIA'S SECURITY: A CRITICAL STUDY OF  
BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL TREATIES**

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, **Central Asia's Security: A Critical Study of Bilateral and Multilateral Treaties** submitted by **Subhajit Anand** is an original work and has not been previously submitted in part or full for any other degree or diploma in this or any other University.

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*TO MY BELOVED FATHER*

*Late Sri. SATYANANDA SETHI*

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

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SCO:	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
CIS:	Commonwealth of Independent States.
OSCE:	Organisation for Security And Cooperation In Europe.
CST:	Collective Security Treaty.
PPF:	Partnership For Peace Programme.
CBM:	Confidence Building Measure.
ECO:	Economic Cooperation Organisation.
CAEC:	Central Asian Economic Union.
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
CARs:	Central Asian Republics.

## PREFACE

The disintegration of Soviet Union led to the emergence of five independent Central Republics – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. That covers an area of approximately four million square kilometers or almost one sixth of the former Soviet Union. The demise of Soviet Union has softened the hermetic boundaries that separated Central Asia from its neighbours like Iran, Afghanistan and China. The emergence of five independent states now outside Russia's direct control. It has resulted in the appearance of increasingly sharp lines of fragmentation both between Central Asian States and within each one. During the seven decades of Soviet rule, it remained free from internecine conflicts and felt no threats to its security from neighbouring powers.

After the demise of Soviet Union, five Central Asian republics have been thrown into the vortex of international politics. The factors like ethno-national conflicts in Central Asian republics, separatist movements, emergence of the Islamic fundamentalism and narcotic drug trafficking pose a threat to Central Asian security. Following the demise of the Soviet Union the five Central Asian republics got unanticipated independence at the end of 1990, which produced a dramatic new situation with in these countries. One of the most critical





questions was how these newly independent republics would set about creating convincing identities for themselves and their citizens. The problems of reforms, which were resisted by nomenclaturists elite, absence of the rule of law and the political democracy, environmental degradation, economic dislocation, ethnic tensions with in and among states blocked the path of transition and development. The progress of democracy and the state development, thus attacked by these uncertainties.

Further more, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, these newly independent states with their fragile economy, unstable political system and inadequate independent defence capability became vulnerable to external pressure and penetration. As a result certain regional powers – Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan as well as western powers like U.S. attempted to fill the post Soviet power vacuum.

Another important factor is the geo political importance of this region as a land locked area neighbouring Afghanistan in the south Russia in the north, Turkey and Iran in west and south respectively and China in the east attracts the external powers to play the “great game” again.

These are the above factors, which led them to form regional groupings through signing bilateral and multilateral treaties with the external powers: China, Russia and the U.S. Because, these newly independent states are incapable to deal with the regional security problems. Further, the geo-political importance of this region led the external actors to engage with the Central Asian republics for their own interest upon the vast natural resources of this region.

The present study will focus on the bilateral and multilateral treaties and their objectives. The main objectives of the study are to examine whether they fulfill their objectives regarding the resolving the prevalent regional security problems of Central Asian republics. In this context these multilateral treaties are more important than bilateral treaties signed by these republics with the external powers.

The whole study is divided into five chapters. The details of each chapter are as follows:

- the first chapter covers the security situation of Central Asia along with their regional introduction;

- the second chapter contains the analysis of the bilateral treaties that are signed between individual Central Asian republics and the external powers and their significance;
- the third chapter analyses the significance of the multilateral treaties that are signed among the Central Asian republics along with external powers;
- the fourth chapter compares with a critical analysis of these bilateral and multilateral treaties and their significances; and
- the last chapter summarized the whole study and drawn some conclusions.

# Chapter 1

## THEORETICAL PARAMETERS OF NATIONAL SECURITY

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The end of the Cold war and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Unit altered the security situation of the world as a whole. Jose-Cintra a strategic analyst holds a view that the Cold War had suppressed “many potential third world conflicts. Their geopolitical retrenchment will ensure that other conflicts will probably arise from decompression and from loosening of controls and self controls exercised by the two super powers”.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Stanley Hoffman points to “a new world disorder in the third world. A situation for more chaotic than the world of the Cold-war, when the two super powers, knowing that they could blow themselves up, restrains themselves and their allies.”<sup>2</sup>

The word ‘security’ has many connotations both positive and negative. While, physical survival of a nation or an individual is only a negative construct, the positive angle of the issue can also be considered as the well being of a nation or society. The meaning of ‘security’ according to Oxford Dictionary is the state of being or feeling secure and, the

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<sup>1</sup> Jose Cintra, “Regional Conflicts: Trends In a Period Of Transition: The Changing Strategic Landscape”, *Adelphi Paper* no.237, pp.96-97, in Amitav Acharya, “Beyond Anarchy: Third World Instability And International Order After The Cold War”, In Stephaie G. Newman(ed), *International Relations Theory And The Third World*, London, Macmillan, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Hoffman, “Watch Out For A New World Disorder”, *International Herald Tribune*, 26, February, 1991, p.6 cited In In Stephaie G. Newman(ed), *International Relations Theory And The Third World*, London, Macmillan, 1998.

safety of a state or organisation from external threat. This meaning has covered the areas like: freedom from danger, freedom from fear and anxiety; freedom from want and deprivation. Now, the UN development report in its year 2000 has broadened the scope of 'security'. It includes: freedom from discrimination, by gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion; freedom from fear of threats to personal threats from torture, arbitrary arrest and other violent acts; freedom of thought and speech and to participate in decision making and form association; freedom to enjoy a decent standard of living; freedom to develop and realise one's human potential; freedom from injustice and violations of the rule of law; and freedom for decent work without exploitation. Therefore, 'security' is a multi-dimensional concept. The concept basically has two aspects-national and international. Before discussing about security in international sphere, we must understand its national ramifications.

Classically, politicians and military leaders have long used the term 'national security' as a policy objective i.e. "the policy area in which an independent country protects itself against foreign military attack". So, provisions for national security include the maintenance of armed forces. It can be more broadly related to the possibility of war. National security suggests that leaders have a responsibility to protect the community of people who live within their state.<sup>3</sup> Here, this term has been regarded as the self-protection of each nation of the world government. It is further coupled with the

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<sup>3</sup> Frank N. Megill (ed) *International Encyclopedia of Government and Politics*, Vol 2, Fitzarg, Diouborne Publishers, Chicago, USA, 1996, p.44.

protection of national citizens from external threats. In this context, National security is described as “a nation has security when, it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war and is able, if challenged to maintain them by war.”<sup>4</sup>

Later on this term has been modified as “that part of government policy having as its objective the creation of national and international political conditions favorable to the protection or extension of vital national values against existing and potential adversaries”. Here, the terms “national security” and “national interest” are treated as synonym. It can be simply described as the preservation of core values from external threat. But, the advent of “Behavioural Revolution” gives a new colour to this concept. Behaviouralist like Morton Kaplan, who is a leading social scientist in system-analysis reflects the trend to study of all aspects of societal behavior as part of the total pattern which constitutes a behavioral system. He further links the security of sub-systems, which make up the national system. Further, the development of national security has been occurred due to the changes in the administrative system in the United States. The technological advancement, especially the atomic weapons demonstrated that military matters have to link with economic and political considerations in case of both foreign and economic policy formulations. And, it is the post-industrial revolution era, which develops ‘national security’ as an area of economic and political considerations. Here, economic resources coupled with industrial capacity are regarded as a theme of a nation’s ability to wage war. So, the problems of allocation of resources and finding the

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Lippmann, *U.S foreign Policy, Shield of the Republic*, Boston, Little Publisher, 1943, p.5

proper criteria to use regarding the military and non-military sectors of the economy are an objective of study among the academicians and economists.<sup>5</sup>

The 'national security' has close link with 'international security' in the age of international cooperation and coordination. The behaviour of national actors in "international system" and how they take decisions are the focal points of the study. It is the study of how the nations formulate national policies designed to maximize the protection of their international values from external threats. Regarding formulation the foreign policies of a nation, national security has several advantages. It focuses on common elements and uniformities in the external policies of all national actors. It makes a balance in the international system for the considerations of common international interest of all international actors. National security focuses on the underlying unity of the internal and external activities by explicitly recognizing the external behaviour of actors in an international system. It avoids the gap between the international and national system. And, it is finally considered as a parameter to study the political behaviour of national actors in an 'international system'.

The area of "national security" has been growing with the passing phase of time and space. Further, the role of deterrence and the implications of the spreading of nuclear weapons play a major role regarding formulations of national security policies in the

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<sup>5</sup> David L. Sills (ed), *International Encyclopaedia Of Social Sciences*, The Macmillan Company And The Free Press, New York, Collier-Macmillan Publishers, 1972, pp.40-42.

spheres of international relations and cooperation. And, the term “national security” has been emerged and grown up in the era of post second world war period. At first it is emerged as a military concept, which can be applied in the case of maximizing the state power at the expense of other nations and the minimizing the state power in case of international cooperation. But, the growing complexity of “international system” makes “national security” a multi-dimensional concept. While, earlier “national security” signified only military aspect, now it also includes social, economic and environmental aspects. “After 1989, the global as well as regional security systems were subjected to change. It was the demand of new situation, which would cause for the creation of new design of security framework. And, it was created according to NATO’s security framework. Later on it was adopted by most of the European and Asian countries. Here, Germany took the initiative.

In this new security framework, the area of security has covered military along with political, economic and societal aspects. Here, military security means the creation of a balance between political, strategic and military factors. Political security implies that the state strengthens society and protects it from external factors. Economic security means that every country can get all the raw materials without coercion, by means of free trade and international monetary system. Social security means that



social peace is maintained in a given country by means of welfare state to fight the problems of unemployment".<sup>6</sup>

Later on this security framework was universally valid. But, it does not cover new security threats like: terrorism in Asian security context. And, the regional security problems like: internal ethnic-ethnic conflict, border problems should be discussed. Because, most of the Asian countries have authoritarian types of government, where the people's aspirations are suppressed by the state. Here, the state is regarded as a threat to its people. Because, the disturbances like: political terrorism, political violence are a cause for threats to the people and the problems like: poverty, corruption, state terrorism force them to raise their voice against the existing authority through separatist movement and terrorist activities. And, it is the cause for the internal disturbances in the state. Particularly, if we take into account the security situation of Central Asian countries, we can know that security problem of these states are both internal and external, which has been arisen since their independence. So, we should seek to analyse the security situation in newly independent Central Asian states through the theoretical parameters of 'national security'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> R.R. Sharma, "India And Emerging Asia", Paper presented in the Seminar, *India And Emerging Asia*, Organised By The School Of International Studies, J.N.U., Under The Auspices Of Ministry Of External Affairs, Government Of India, On 23-24, March, 2004, pp.5-6.

<sup>7</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States And Fear, The National Security Problem in International Relations*, John Spiers, Director Of Publications: Edward Elgar, 16 Ship Street, Brighton, Sussex, 1983, p.65.

### **Regional Security Dimension in Central Asia**

Amitav Acharya argued that “the orthodox view of national security” which defines security in terms of protection against mainly violent external threats to states, is mainly applicable to Western states. In the third world, internal threats are the main source of threat”. In this context, there is distinction between national security and regime security, since they do not necessarily coincide. Hence, Regime security or Regional security is regarded as a solution for resolving both the national security problem and internal disturbances. Hence, it is a motivation for regionalism in the third world. And, Third World Regional Organisation or alliances with security functions are more effective in terms of dealing with domestic threats to their member states than with foreign aggression.<sup>8</sup> If we take into account of these newly independent states of Central Asia, we can know that these states have been facing the regional security problems rather than external security threats. As the third world states of Asian countries, they have formed bilateral and multilateral arrangements with Russia and China the bigger powers to deal with regional security problems.

Another important dimension of security is the five sectors: military, political, economic, and societal and environment affect the security of state. If we take into account of these above dimensions of security as the parameters to study the security problems of Central Asia, we find the five sets of factors cover the most important

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<sup>8</sup> Amitav Acharya, Regionalism and Regime Security in the Third World: Comparing the Origins of the ASEAN and the GCC, In Bian L. Job (Ed), *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security Of Third World States* (Boulder, Co: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1992), p.143.

relations of relevance to the concept of regional security. Their effects are significant in the current situation and will probably remain crucial to the future development of Central Asia as a region.

- Social factors describe and explain the complicated historical, religious, ethnic problems of Central Asia that have provided ground for the presence of Iran, Turkey and Russia in that region and place them in a better position than other contenders to affect regional affairs.
- Economic factors demonstrate the effects of the Russian domination of Central Asia and the main reason behind current economic opportunity restriction faced by the Central Asian states and how these can force or encourage them to adopt one or another pattern of relations with regional and non-regional states.
- Military factors, especially, affect the degree of independence of the Central Asian states on Russia and are the main reason why these states cannot have a life totally independent from Russia, despite their new independence. These factors affect their relations with each other and with other states.
- Political factors deal with issues that indicate the nature of regional states and the role of prevailing views and ideologies in shaping policies.<sup>9</sup>

So, these above factors are regarded as the major roles regarding the formation of regional groupings in Central Asian republics.

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<sup>9</sup> Hooman Peimani, *Regional Security and the Future of Central Asia: The Competition of Iran, Turkey And Russia, west Port, Connecticut, London 1998, pp.17-19.*

### **Problems of Central Asia's security after the disintegration of Soviet Union**

The disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of five Central Asian Republics- Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan covering a vast area extending from western Siberia in the north to Afghanistan and Iran in the south, from the banks of the Volga, approximately around one-sixth of the territory of the former Soviet Union. Historically, this region acted as a transit point for connecting East and West and South to North. The 'Great Silk Rout' connecting Persia and China with the Roman world, also passed through the Central Asian region. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain and Russia fought with each other to secure their foot hold over this vast landmass not only to gain control over this region but also Central Asia indicated the geographical importance of this region, where the Great Britain had played it against Russia. Now, the "New Great Game" is played by the powers such as Russia, China, and the US for natural resources of this region made the security situation more critical. At present oil is a crucial source of energy all over the world and it is likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. Central Asia with its large hydrocarbon reserves and natural gas resources has undoubtedly become a region of critical strategic importance and an object of an international activity and interests.<sup>10</sup>

During the period of Soviet rule, the soviet leadership always demonstrated its adequate concern for the security and stability of its southern territories, which formed

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<sup>10</sup> Mohmmad Monir Alam, "Central Asian Republics: Quest For Security Since Independence", *Contemporary Central Asia*, vol.4, April-August 2000, p.28.

its 'soft underbelly'. It remained free from internecine conflict and felt no threat to its security from neighbouring powers. After, the disintegration of the Soviet-Union, all five Central Asian republics have been thrown into the vortex of the international politics. And, the neighbours like Afghanistan in the East, Russia in the north, Turkey in the west, Iran in the South and China in the East made the region as a zone of conflict among the regional powers. Apart from the distant power USA, the fragile economy, unstable political system, insufficient defence capability made this region vulnerable to bordering states like: Turkey, Iran, South Arabia, Pakistan, Russia and China. As Barry Buzan the neo-realist security analyst notes, "Internal security issues play a crucial role in affecting regional security". Similar situation is arising in Central Asia also. The growth of Islamic radicalism as well as ultra-nationalism is posing a security threat to the Central Asian states. After attaining independence, the Central Asian political elites transformed their political system and ruled in an authoritarian manner. Although, all the five Central Asian republics established institutional mechanisms like: constitution, judicial system a plethora of rights for the citizens, but these things are there in paper only and no genuine efforts are made by them to improve the democratic process of their republics. The chaotic economic scenario added fuel to the fire and led to the growth of unemployment, inflation and macro-economic instability. Further, the border conflicts, drug trafficking, terrorist and

secessionist movements within the republics impeded the process of transition from Soviet republics to independent nation-states.<sup>11</sup>

Again the Islamic factor is also playing a major role in the Central Asian republics for shaping the security situation. People wanted to demonstrate their separateness from the communist system and Slavic culture, but the popular knowledge of Islam was minimal. Around that time in 1992, the politics of Islam which was fought by using violent methods in the Middle East and South Asia influenced the nascent Central Asian republics like that of the Ferghana valley.

The liberating aspects of the religion and culture of Islam was coupled with sectarianism, disturbed the whole Central Asian region. Furthermore, the loosening of Communist system over Islamic Revivalism led it to spread through several areas. People built their own mosques and other structures. And, the arrival of fund. from different regions such as, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan led to the distribution of copies of Qur'an, literature which later on laid the foundation of Muslim Fundamentalism. The members of fundamentalist groups regarded the ruling elites and the secular nationalists as the threats to Islamic Revivalism. The growing involvement of outside powers increased as wahhabi groups from Saudi Arabia, Iranian Revolutionary Guards and some Sunni fundamentalist parties in Pakistan took

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<sup>11</sup> Monique Mekamp, Paul Van Tongeren And Hans Van De Veen (eds), *Searching For Peace In Central Asia And South Asia*, (Lynne Reinner Publishers, Boulder, London 2002), p.68.

advantage of the unprecedented political opportunity” Another feature like, spreading of madrassas in Central Asia and the creation of underground movement made this region a breeding ground of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism.<sup>12</sup> After, the September 11 incident, the situation was more critical. Afghanistan is regarded as a major factor for the instabilities in Central Asian Republics. Furthermore, ‘terrorism’ is regarded as a global problem, where the major powers like US, China, Russia are engaged in this region to eliminate it. The Chechnya’s separatist movement and the terrorist activities in Uighur Autonomous region has also compelled both Russia and China to flush out terrorist groups from this region.

The Central Asian republics are currently facing the heat of Islamic Fundamentalism For, example, in 1998, insurgents led by Mahmud Khudayberdiev entered Tajikistan from Uzbekistan, seeking to wrest the northern part of the country from government control. In, 1999 and the following years there have been annual campaign by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan emanating from the territory of Tajikistan. The inter-republican conflict over sharing of water and other resources has also complicated the security situation in Central Asia. A good example in this regard can be cited from the clash between Uzbek and Kazakh armed guards. Apart from this, the armed incursions that took place in Kyrgyzstan’s Batken province by the Islamic Movement of

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<sup>12</sup> Tabassum Firdous, *Central Asia: Security And Strategic Imperatives*, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi 2002, pp.85-88.

Uzbekistan, and the subsequent years, reflects the growing crisis of “regional security” which the Central Asian republics are currently facing.<sup>13</sup>

## **Distinct Inner Dynamics of Each Republic**

### **Kazakhstan**

The Republic of Kazakhstan is the largest and most prosperous among the five Central Asian Republics. Its unique geopolitical and strategic position due to the stationing of former Soviet nuclear warhead regarded as the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world attracted Russia. At the time of disintegration of Soviet Union, the most important Soviet strategic weapons on Kazakh territory were the intercontinental Ballistic missile, each armed with 70 warheads and 40 TU-95 bear bombers. Kazakhstan is also a home to the nuclear test site and ABM radar site. After, joining as a member of nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, Kazakhstan depends more on USA, Britain and Russia for guarantees of security.<sup>14</sup>

Kazakhstan took the lead on May 25, 1992 for the bilateral security agreements with Russia called as “the treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance” which is basically a military treaty. Kazakhstan, also signed bilateral economic agreements

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<sup>13</sup> Devendra Kaushik, “Islamic Factor and Fundamentalist Threat in Central Asia” in V.D. Chopra(ed) *Rise of Terrorism and Secessionism In Eureasia*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi 2001.pp.175-76.

<sup>14</sup> Ajay Patnaik, “Central Asia Since Soviet Disintegration”, *World Focus*, August 2000, p.4.



with China and became latter's second largest trading partner amongst the countries of CIS states next only to Russia.<sup>15</sup>

### **Tajikistan**

The socio-economic fabric of Tajikistan, the only Central Asian State ethnically and linguistically closer to Iran was torn apart by the years of civil war between the ex-communist and the Islamic forces, receiving sustenance from neighboring Afghanistan. Their clans from distinct regions become enemies to a make alliance in the pursuit of power. Of all the republics of created in Central Asia, Kazakhstan was the most artificial and unsatisfactory one.

Historically, the Turkic speaking Uzbeks and the Persian speaking Turks has inhabited a common cultural and historical legacy. The 1924 delimitation assigned the greater part of the legacy, to Uzbekistan. All the historic centers such as Chive, Tashkent, Kokand, Samarquand, Burkhara, were designated as Uzbek territory. Uzbekistan also incorporated most of the population of the region, which in 1989, census numbered 20 million as against 5 million in Kazakhstan. The loss of the Zarafasan valley with Burkhart and Samarquand caused the greatest Task resentment. The sense of loss has only deepened the traditional hostility between Turks and the Uzbeks as well as among the Turks. After, the formation of the commonwealth of Independent states,

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<sup>15</sup> Swaran Singh, "Sino-Central Asian Ties: Problems And Prospects", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.XXIV, No. 6, September 2000, p.1118.

Tajikistan also concluded a number of defense and security agreements with Russia. Russia's bilateral security treaties with Tajikistan are the most significant since these directly with future security of the southern flank of the CIS.<sup>16</sup> China has also maintained relations with Tajikistan by emphasising on good neighbourlihood. During, a summit at China's port city of Dalian on August 13, 1999, the two sides had signed five joint statements.<sup>17</sup>

During Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit to Dushanbe to attend fifth summit of Shanghai 5, the two sides signed a joint communique on developing good relations of good neighbourliness and friendship and cooperation geared to the twenty first century at Dushanbe on July, 4 2000.<sup>18</sup>

### **Turkmenistan**

The Republic of Turkmenistan was not a signatory to CIS collective security treaty, but it remained within the collective security zone of CIS. "It has close ties with Russia. It is close to Turkey, but understand the importance of Iran. It is close to Pakistan but sensitive to India's concern".<sup>19</sup> Turkmenistan foresees no direct security threat for the next 10 years. The pursuit of bilateral agreements with Russia enable

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<sup>16</sup> Oumirserik Kasenov, "Central Asia: National, Regional And Global Aspects Of Security", *Himalayan And Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April-June 1997, p.34.

<sup>17</sup> Swaran Singh, op.cit, p.1119.

<sup>18</sup> Oumerik Kasenov, op.cit.

<sup>19</sup> Swaran Singh, op.cit, p.1120.

President Niyazov to meet his security interest while keeping a safe distance from potential ethnic conflicts that could engulf the CIS throughout Central Asia. Besides, the armed forces of Turkmenistan employ many Russian military officers who represent the Russian Defense Ministry Turkmenistan. However, Turkmenistan's officers are being trained in military school of not only in Russia, but also in Turkey. Ashgabat has concluded agreements on training of its officers with the defense departments of Iran and Pakistan as well.<sup>20</sup>

### **Kyrgyzstan**

It is a small landlocked state, situated in Eastern Central Asia. It has joined the defence structures of the Commonwealth of Independent States and has become a member of Collective Security Treaty signed in May 1992. Further, it has bilateral ties with Russia is called the "Friendship, Cooperation, and Bilateral Assistance Treaty" signed on 10 June 1992. This treaty has reaffirmed Russia's role as guarantor of Kyrgyzstan's security. In, the beginning of 1996, both signed 'Air Defence Accord', under which Russia agreed to give spare parts and technical assistance to Kyrgyzstan regarding joint exercise at the Russian test site. On the basis of bilateral defence agreement, both the guards held a joint military exercise in the southern Kyrgyzstan, it is quite vulnerable to the drug trafficking and refugee problem is emanating from Tajikistan.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Oumerik Kasenov, *op.cit.*

<sup>21</sup> Monique Mekenkamp, Paul van Tongeren (eds), *op.cit.*, p.188.

## **Uzbekistan**

It is an important region, which has rich culture and rich human civilization all over the world. Like, all other states, Uzbekistan has close tie with Russia. Both have signed the “Treaty on the Fundamentals of Interstate Relations, Friendship and Cooperation”. They also granted each other the right to use military facilities situated on their territories in case of necessity on the basis of military agreement. The Russian-Uzbek military and cooperation was further strengthened, when they gave proposal for creating a CIS collective security in 1995. Furthermore, the relation with Russia was strengthened, when both the Presidents emphasized the issue of stability in Central Asia. Later on, Tajikistan joined in this proposal. Three of them decided to develop their military capabilities through mutual cooperation along with the interaction with the United Nation (UN), Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).<sup>22</sup>

A rapid study of these republics have shown that they have immense natural resources, but they do not have capacity to exploit these resources effectively due to an effective lack of expertise. Again, the lack of efficient leadership regarding formulating effective economic policy coupled with their unstable political system, authoritarian types of government caused for the fragile economy of Central Asian republics.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

### **Global Aspect of Central Asia's Security**

Apart from the internal aspect as we have discussed above factors, which have complicated the security scenario of the Central Asian republics, one can also mention the role played by external powers like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are also playing their role in fomenting trouble in this region. The US is now trying to strengthen its foothold over the Central Asian region and to keep both the Russia and China at bay. Similarly, both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are trying to promote their own brand of Islam in this region, which adds fuel to fire. In this context "New Great Game" is going on in this region. Both China and Russia want to influence this region to promote economic objectives as well as to control radical Islamic fundamentalism, which may have negative impact on their respective provinces of Xinjiang and Chechnya respectively.

## Chapter 2

### THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF BILATERAL TREATIES

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In the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and emergence of many independent states, generated a complex security situation to which many termed as “New Great Game” or the contest for oil and natural resources, characterised by many as same sort of “New zero sum game”. In the game Russia is struggling to retain its hold over the Central Asian-Caspian oil and the countries of this region, whereas US is vigorously pursuing its objective of establishing control over the natural resources of the former Soviet Central Asia and Caucasia and bringing the countries of this region under its so called protective domain. The countries of Europe, Britain, Japan and even some of the gulf countries are pursuing the American interests directly or by proxy. In addition to these two, Iran, Turkey are also independent contenders for spreading their influence in the oil rich regions of Central Asia-Caucasia.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from external players as mentioned above, number of internal contradictions creates a volatile security situation in this region. Growth of radical Islamic fundamentalism, ultra-nationalism, and inter-clan rivalries and also weak economies of the republics threatens the security situation. As they are weak and cannot solve the problems on their own, they started taking initiative to maintain good relationship with their neighbouring powers on a bilateral level.

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<sup>1</sup> Sheel K. Asopa, “The Caspian Great Game: Geopolitics of Oil and Natural Gas”, *Contemporary Central Asia*, Vol.5, No.3, Dec 2001, p.12.

In this regard one can make special mention to Central Asia's relation with Russia. Central Asian states known as the soft underbelly of Russia due to strong historical, cultural and strategic importance have emerged, in recent years as the most important actor in this region. Russia followed a proactive policy in this region especially after 1996 and with the appointment of new foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov. This period was preceded by a bit of confusion among these Russian policy makers.

It may be mentioned that the Central Asian republics, apart from Russia also tried to strengthen relationship with other external powers like China, Turkey, Iran, India and the US through signing of number of bilateral treaties.

First of all we propose to discuss about the bilateral treaties and their significances, which were signed between individual Central Asian countries and Russia.

### **Russia-Kazakhstan Bilateral Arrangement**

The Republic of Kazakhstan (until December 1991, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic) is the largest and most prosperous among the five Central Asian republics. Apart from geopolitical and strategic location, the existence of former Soviet nuclear warheads of approximately 1410 (considered to be the fourth largest in the world) to a significant extent increased the importance of Kazakhstan as a power in the post-Soviet Phase. In the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the most important Soviet strategic nuclear weapons stationed in Kazakhstan are the Inter-Continental

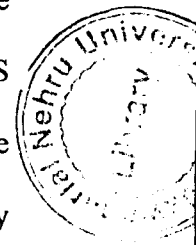
Ballistic Missile (ICBM)(104SS-18), each armed with ten warheads, 40 TU-95 Bear bombers, Kazakhstan was also home to the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, the Baikanur space launch center, and the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) radar site. In fact this aspect to a great extent motivated Russia to forge bilateral security agreement with Kazakhstan in the post-Soviet era<sup>2</sup>.

With the initiative of Kazakhstan on May 25, 1992 the first bilateral treaty between Russia and Kazakhstan titled "the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" was signed. Both Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Kazakh President Nazarbayev expressed hope that other CIS states will take the Treaty as a model to be followed. This bilateral security arrangement between the two countries within the CIS also had an additional regional significance, as it was taking place soon after the Ashgabat Summit in which Central Asian leaders as well as the leaders of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan decided to form an "Asian Bloc". The Ashgabat Summit signified the height of Russia's indifference and passive attitude towards the geopolitics of the southern republics. However, the Treaty with Kazakhstan was the beginning of Russia's Eurasian/Eastern shift and of the regaining of the some of the lost ground in the region.<sup>3</sup>

On the question of military cooperation, President Nazarbayev stated that as Russia and Kazakhstan had signed a collective security treaty, they regarded the territories of the two states as a "single defence space", and that in order to promote the further unity of the armies of the two republics it is necessary to set up joint contingents. A joint

<sup>2</sup> *SWB, SU/1627, P.B/1, March 3, 1993.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



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communiqué issued at the end of the negotiations between President Boris Yeltsin and President Nazarbayev on February 26, 1993, in Moscow, reiterated the commitment of both the states to implement the bilateral treaty signed in May 1992, and they further agreed to enlarge the ambit of the Treaty of Collective security when both the sides agreed to sign a treaty on military cooperation in order to setup a united defence space (common defence zone).<sup>4</sup>

The bilateral security agreement between the two countries received an added impetus when a military agreement was signed between Kazakh Defence Minister, Alibek Kasymov, and his visiting Russian counterpart, Grachev, on 25 January 1996 at Almaty in which 16 military agreements were signed. The agreements include joint air defence system and on Kazakhstan's national fleet which is going to be set-up in the Caspian Sea, and also documents pertaining to the cooperation between the two countries defence ministries. Under a protocol on naval forces, Russia agreed to transfer five Cutters to Kazakhstan for carrying out coastal patrols, mainly used to combat drug trafficking and arms smuggling. Later on, this formed the basis of the Kazakhstan's new Caspian fleet formed to establish control and order in Caspian water.<sup>5</sup>

Under the same agreement Russia gave Kazakhstan Su-25, SU-27 and MIG-29 combat aircraft-Several dozen of each type to ensure the transfer of 40 TU-95 MS strategic bombers from Kazakhstan to Russia. Grachev also agreed to help Kazakhstan in strengthening air defence system to maintain and operate radar reconnaissance facilities

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<sup>4</sup>ibid.

<sup>5</sup>ibid.

along the Kazakh border to protect the Commonwealth external borders. Kazakhstan also agreed to pull out a strategic Rocket Troops division from Kazakhstan to Russia within the first half of 1996. Both the ministers also discussed about regional security issues and NATO's eastward expansion. Grachev expressed said that Russia categorically opposes the expansion of NATO into Eastern and Central Europe.<sup>6</sup>

The military cooperation between the two countries further strengthened when Russian President Boris Yeltsin, and his Kazakh counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbayev signed 'Declaration of Eternal Friendship and Alliance' in July 1998. The bilateral military cooperation got added impetus during the visit of President Boris Yeltsin to Almaty on October 12, 1998. Both President Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a number of bilateral military documents on border demarcation between Russia and Kazakhstan, a number of intergovernmental accords, including agreements on the Baikanur space complex and on cooperation in the fight against trans-border terrorism, drugs trafficking and smuggling of illegal arms and ammunition. President Nazarbayev, while commenting on bilateral agreement, stated: 'I pursue the policy of closeness and confidence towards Russia. We want to see Russia a prosperous country, and the Russian president shouldered the responsibility for the reforms which will put the country to a new road'.<sup>7</sup>

### **Russia-Uzbekistan Bilateral Arrangement**

The republic of Uzbekistan was the next to follow the model of Kazakhstan in signing a bilateral security agreement with Russia. On, May 30, 1992, Russia and Uzbekistan

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *SWB, SU/3358, P.G/1, October 15, 1995.*

signed the “Treaty on the fundamentals of Interstate Relations, Friendship and Cooperation’. The Presidents, Islam Karimov and Boris Yelstin agreed that ‘territories of Russia and Uzbekistan will form a common military strategic area”. They also granted each other “the right to use military facilities situated on their territories in case of necessity on the basis of military agreement”.<sup>8</sup>

The Russian-Uzbek military and defence cooperation was further strengthened when Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin visited Uzbekistan on July 28, 1995. After prolonged discussions with Islam Karimov on military-technical cooperation, both the leaders stressed the importance of the Commonwealth of Independent States created on 15 May 1992 and openly spoke out in favour of forming a CIS collective Security System on this basis. Both the Presidents stressed the need for ‘strengthening cooperation and coordination of activity in the interests of ensuring peace and stability in Central Asia’.<sup>9</sup>

Russian President Yelstin during his visit to Tashkent on 11 October 1998 held discussion with his Uzbek counterpart Islam karimov regarding bilateral military cooperation between the two countries and also on security and stability in Afghanistan especially after Taliban takeover of the regime and its repercussions on Central Asia and Russia . After a long discussion on security cooperation both signed trilateral document on the military assistance pact. Tajik President Emomali Rahmonov had signed the document earlier. The declaration says that the sides ‘intend to develop dialogue and collaboration in security and defence on the basis of equality, partnership and military-

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<sup>8</sup> *FBIS-SOV*, 92-107, June 3, 1992, p.21.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

technical cooperation', these three states also pledged to develop their cooperation interacting with the UN, the OSCE and the CIS and also with other interested countries 'in the interest of total political stabilisation in Tajikistan'.<sup>10</sup>

### **Russia-Kyrgyzstan Bilateral Arrangement**

During the visit of Kyrgyzstan President Askar Akayev to Moscow in June 1992 both the countries signed a treaty on 'Friendship, cooperation and a Bilateral Assistance Treaty' on 10 June. According to Boris Yelstin, this Treaty raised the bilateral cooperation to a new level, putting the two states 'on absolute equal footing'. The treaty reaffirmed Russia's role as the guarantor of Kyrgyzstan's security. In the beginning of 1996, a new impetus to the bilateral military cooperation was given, when Director of the Russian Federal Border Service met President Askar Akayev on 5 March, 1996. After discussing various issues related to defence cooperation, both signed two documents – one on the presence of Russian border troops in Kyrgyzstan and another on extending the mandate of the Kyrgyz battalion currently serving in Tajikistan. They also signed 'Air Defence Accord', under which Russia agreed to supply Kyrgyzstan with arms, ammunitions, spare parts, and technical documentation, mutual exchange of information, and allowing Kyrgyz military units to carry out exercises at Russian test sites.<sup>11</sup>

On the basis of the bilateral defence agreement, Kyrgyz troops and Russian border guards held a joint military exercise in Chon-Alay District in southern Kyrgyzstan on April 4-5, 1997 to step up vigilance in view of the tense situation prevailing in Tajikistan. In this

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<sup>10</sup> SWB, SU/3356, P.S2/1, October 13, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> SWB, SU/2553, P.G/1, March 8, 1996.

joint exercise, units of the OSR Motor Rifle Brigade, the OSR Militia, a Directorate of the republic's National Security Ministry and a detachment of the ministry for emergency were involved.' This military exercise was the first of its kind to be held in the republic. The military exercise was held because Kyrgyzstan was alarmed by the possible spread of the inter-Tajik and inter-Afghan military conflicts to its territory. Bishkek had repeatedly expressed fears that 'the growing influx of drugs and refugees from Tajikistan posed a threat to Kyrgyzstan, and that armed groups ousted into the eastern Tajikistan would have easy access to Kyrgyz territory.'<sup>12</sup>

### **Russia-Turkmenistan Bilateral Arrangement**

The Republic of Turkmenistan was not a signatory to the CIS Collective Security Treaty of May 1992, but it remained within the collective security zone of CIS. The treaty signed between Suparmurad Niyazov and General Pavel Grachev on June 8, 1992, in Ashgabat, was a unique one as it provides for the formation of a national army for Turkmenistan under joint command. The control of air force and air defence systems of Turkmenistan is to rest entirely with the Russian Armed Forces with some limited control by Turkmenistan.<sup>13</sup>

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

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> *FBIS-SOV*, 92-117, June 17, 1992, pp. 53-54

maintaining Russian forces on the border after January 1, 1994, and in return Russia would preserve some strategic bases in Turkmenistan.<sup>14</sup>

A close examination of Turkmenistan's politico-military policy reflects the two key elements: first, continuous and direct dependence on Russia for security of the new state vis-à-vis its neighbours. Second, the political desire and commitment to remain as independent as possible from Moscow and to avoid meaningful commitment in any regional politico-military bloc. Turkmenistan's continuous effort to enhance the political weight of its position in the command structure and decision making mechanisms of the 'joint command' of the army and its persistent policy within the CIS-rejecting any notion of creating a 'supra state' structure of the Commonwealth-are reflecting of Turkmenistan's dual predicament. Russia's forward politico-military position in Turkmenistan will thus continue to be affected by the inherent tension between Russian security needs and Turkmenistan's independent regional posture.<sup>15</sup>

### **Russia-Tajikistan Bilateral Arrangement**

After, the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tajikistan had also concluded a treaty with Russia. After, the ouster of the Nazaibulla government in Afghanistan and victory of Islamic forces in that country, Tajikistan became vulnerable to the Mujahedin influence and penetration. This development increasingly received the attention of both Moscow and Central Asian states. Further, the 'Civil War' between northern and southern parts of Tajikistan made the infiltration of arms and fighting

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<sup>14</sup> *SWB, SU/1788, September 8, 1993.*

<sup>15</sup> *FBIS-Central Eurasia, January 23, 1993, pp.5-14.*

groups from Afghanistan a potentially explosive issue. Islam Karimov, the Uzbek President, with a clear stake in the security of the 'southern flank' took the lead in addressing the issue in both the Tashkent and Moscow CIS summits. Tajikistan's further incorporation into the security arrangements was underscored by the request of President Nabyev for deployment of CIS 'blue helmets' and 201<sup>st</sup> Motorised Rifle Division of Russia in Tajikistan's 'conflict zones' and to take over the task of ensuring the activities of the national economy and protection of the population.<sup>16</sup>

The invocation of a collective security agreement in the case of Tajikistan during the Almaty meeting on November 4, 1992, was a clear indication that Russia and the Central Asian partners, regardless of their intra-CIS differences will continue hold the former Soviet Union's southern borders as the borders of the CIS and as Russia's sphere of influence. More significantly, it also indicated that the maintenance of the domestic stability of the republic has been considered a legitimate security concern of the member states, which falls within the jurisdiction of the collective security agreements.

Earlier, when Afghan crisis deepened in May 1997, after a major Taliban victory in Afghanistan with the seizure of Mazar-i-Sharif, Russia along with other Central Asian States convened an emergency meeting in Moscow, and decided to put on full alert the Russian 201<sup>st</sup> Motorised Rifle Division, which forms the core of the CIS peacekeeping force in Tajikistan. At the time of second seizure of Mazar-I-sharif by Taliban Islamic militia, which took place in early August 1998, all the Central Asian States together with Russia and China were ready to prevent the spillover effect of the forcible occupation of

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<sup>16</sup> *FBIS-SOV*, 92-150, August 4, 1992, p.73.

Afghanistan by the Taliban. As the Pakistan-America backed Taliban forces advanced towards the CIS borders, leaders of Russia and Uzbekistan declared their readiness to evoke the provisions of the 1992 Tashkent Collective Security Pact. This decision was taken after urgent consultation between the First Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of General staff of Russia, General Anatoly Kvashinin and First Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, General H. Tursunov held in Tashkent on 5, August 1998. They reserved their right to take all measures needed for strengthening security of their external borders in compliance with the Collective Security Agreement of 15 May 1992.

During his Moscow visit on April 16, 1999, Tajik President Emomali Rahmonov signed a treaty 'on joint cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan oriented to 21<sup>st</sup> century'. The treaty, while providing a military base to Russia in Tajikistan signifies the establishment of a long-term strategic partnership between the countries. At a press conference in Dushanbe held on April 5, 1992, he referred to a functioning collective system of air defence which, now embraces Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and will soon be joined by Tajikistan as 'the key to CIS security'.<sup>17</sup>

In the aftermath of September 11 incident, the geopolitical scenario of Central Asia underwent a sea change. After the entry of the US more actively many begin to doubt the role of Russia in this region. However, due to the farsightedness policy of Putin, Russia was successfully able to regain its position in this region. This is evident from 22 April

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<sup>17</sup> *FBIS-SOV*, September 9 1992, p.11.



2002 speeches of Tajik President Rahmanov. He characterized the Russia's relation with Tajikistan "an important factor of regional security". Similarly, the joint Turkmen-Russian communiqué issued on 21 January 2002 at the end of Turkmen President Niyazov's visit to Moscow both the side reiterated the central role of the United Nations and its security council in settling the Afghan conflict. The two countries also reaffirmed their devotion to the aim of reviving a peaceful independent Afghanistan, free from terrorism and drug and living in harmony with its neighbours and the international community as a whole. The two presidents declared their belief that it was impossible to remove the threat to stability in the Central Asian region without an all-embracing settlement of the protracted inner conflict.<sup>18</sup> They also confirmed their striving for determining a new legal status of the Caspian Sea at the earliest by taking into account the interests of all Caspian states.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Us Engagement in Central Asia**

American interest in Central Asia and Trans caucasia has been expressed by Zbigniew Brzezinsky in his book "The Grand Chessboard: American primacy and its Geostrategic imperatives" (New York, 1997) where he states: Ever since the continents started interacting politically some 500 years ago, Eurasia has been the center of world power. The disintegration of the Soviet Union is seen as an opportunity for the US to assume the leadership of Eurasia and fill the power vacuum caused by eclipse of the Soviet power. Besides other commonly expressed interests: to counter Russian influence. Reduce

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<sup>18</sup> Devendra Kaushik, "Central Asia: Changing Geo-Political Alignment In The Aftermath of 11 September", *Dialogue*, Vol.3, No.4, p.52.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Russian monopoly on oil exports from Central Asia and the Caspian Sea regimes and bringing them in the fold of market economy oriented western world. America's major interests lie in not allowing the rise of any other power with aspirations and capabilities to compete with the US for the leadership of and control over the Eurasian region and resources."<sup>20</sup> United States of America tried to maintain relations with Central Asian republics through encouraging US oil companies and their participation in the areas of formulation of marketing plans and transportation of oil. And, these developing projects involved Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. America's policy towards Central Asia changed radically in the aftermath of September 11. It established military bases in order to fight Taliban forces in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan and air bases in Kyrgyzstan. Apart from establishing military bases, it sought to strengthen its relationship with Central Asian republics. In this process, it signed a number of bilateral agreements with these republics. During Kazakh President Nazarbayev's visit to Washington in December 2001, a joint statement was issued along with US President George Bush . The statement noted that, "We declare our commitment to strengthen the long term strategic partnership and cooperation between our nations, seeking to advance a shared vision of a peaceful, prosperous and sovereign Kazakhstan in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is increasingly integrated into global economy and the community of democratic nations. To this end, we will advance our cooperation on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation, democratic, political and free market based investment and development of energy resources."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Sheel K. Asopa, "Situating Trans-Caucasia And Central Asia: Geopolitics Or Geoeconomics !!", *Contemporary Central Asia*, Vol.6, No.1-2, April-Aug, 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Devendra Kaushik, *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia: Russia, China And India*, in J.K. Ray (ed), *Asia Annual 2000*, Shipra Publications, New Delhi (India), pp.175-176.

Similar, agreement was also signed between Uzbekistan and US signed in Washington. The declaration on the strategic partnership and cooperation framework between US and Uzbekistan signed in Washington during the visit of President Karimov on March 2002 reflected the desire of US officials in strengthening its ties with Uzbekistan, its most important regional ally. On the security issue, both the sides recognized that the security of states in the region is key to the development, prosperity, and stability of Central Asia and developing a qualitatively new long-term relationship. The US affirms that it would regard with grave concern any external threats to the security and territorial integrity of Uzbekistan and to develop and implement an appropriate response in accordance with US constitutional procedures. For its part, the republic of Uzbekistan recognizes the critical importance of developing close, cooperative ties with its neighbours and promoting efforts at regional cooperation. "In the bilateral military, technical cooperation, both the sides took note of dynamic development of military and military-technical cooperation between the two countries and intend to intensify relations in this area in the future"<sup>22</sup>. Apart from this bilateral military cooperation, the two countries agreed to cooperate each other within the NATO's framework for partnership for peace programme.<sup>23</sup>

### **China-Kazakhstan Bilateral Relations**

Apart from Russia, all other Central Asian neighbour China is also taking active interests in pursuing a cordial relationship with Central Asian republics. The major objectives of China in Central Asia are in first:

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.fas.org/terrorism/at/docs/2002/us-uzbek-partnership.html>.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*

- The Chinese economy is expected to grow in future. Thus, it requires the Central Asian oil to run its economy.
- Second objective of China is that at present China is also facing the problem of ethno-religious resurgence, in its western province Xinjiang. This problem can be contained only with the assistance and cooperation of Central Asian republics.
- In the aftermath of 11 September, the big presence of American troops in Central Asia in the name of fighting terrorism threatens China's security interest in the long run.

So the above reasons forced China to maintain a very good relationship with Central Asian republics.<sup>24</sup> In this context, we would like to focus on the bilateral relationship between China and Kazakhstan republic.

At first, we have to focus on China- Kazakhstan Friendship Treaty signed in the aftermath of the 11 September; which to a significant extent strengthened the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev during his visit to Beijing held talks with his Chinese counterpart President Jiang Zemin in Beijing, on 24, December 2002. In the meeting two countries signed a good-neighborly treaty of friendship and cooperation. During the talks, Jiang spoke highly of the cooperation between the two countries since they established diplomatic relations 10 years ago, to which Nazarbayev agreed. Jiang made a four-point proposal for promoting China-Kazakhstan ties, with focus on establishing a lasting friendship between the two countries. He also urged broader bilateral cooperation and mutual trust, optimizing bilateral trade, strengthening

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<sup>24</sup> Devendra Kaushik, op.cit.

cooperation in energy, providing more preferential conditions for investors from both sides and promoting cultural exchanges. While extending appreciation for Kazakhstan's understanding and support in the fight against "East Turkistan" terrorist forces, Jiang said that China hoped to work with Kazakhstan to widen cooperation in combating terrorism, extremism and separatism. Jiang also hailed the significance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which groups China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, adding that the SCO has made marked progress in improving the cooperation mechanism among its members and had exerted increasing international influence this year. He said it was of vital significance to give full play to the role of the SCO in safeguarding the common interests of its members in the current situation. He also urged that a SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) secretariat and anti-terrorism body be set up as soon as possible to for substantial progress in boosting security and economic cooperation among members.<sup>25</sup>

Nazarbayev also praised the political and economic cooperation between his country and China in fighting terrorism and under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. He reiterated that Kazakhstan adhered to the one-China policy and would not have official contact with the Taiwanese authorities. He said, "Kazakhstan resolutely opposes terrorism, separatism and extremism, particularly in the "East Turkistan" terrorist forces, to safeguard the lasting peace and stability in the region".<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.fmrc.gov.cn/eng/4372.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

In June 7, 2002, Tajik President E.Rahmonov, Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Kazakh President Nazarbayev, Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev and Uzbek President Islam Karimov during the SCO Conference in St.Petersburg discussed mechanism to strengthen bilateral cooperation regarding resolving the security problems. In that meeting, China's President held fruitful talks with the presidents of Central Asian republics. During his meeting with Rahmonov, the Tajik President appreciated the Tajik-China relations and called for further improvement in bilateral relations between the two countries in the field of transportation, energy and infrastructure development. Similarly, his meeting with Nazarbayev was also fruitful and both the side agreed to work together to solve the existing problems between the two countries. In his meeting with Akayev, Jiang stressed on close historical, cultural, and political relations give an added impetus to the overall bilateral Kyrgyz-China relations. Akayev mentioned that Kyrgyz parliament approved the border agreement signed between the two countries.<sup>27</sup>

The meeting of Chinese President with Karimov, president of Uzbekistan was also fruitful. In this meeting, "Karimov said that Uzbekistani people have deep respect and gratitude towards the Chinese people. He further mentioned that Uzbekistan faces difficulties it is China who offers them support and aids. In the recent years, the fields of cooperation between the two countries have expanded with the achievements in the trade and economic fields particularly remarkable."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## **Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan Bilateral Arrangement**

The Central Asian republics are also engaged in bilateral cooperation among themselves for resolving their security problems. It is the feeling of insecurity, which compelled them to form the regional cooperation. Although, they have bilateral relation with external powers, they have tried to cooperate each other to check the prevalent security problems. In this regard we can take into account of the bilateral relation between the two republics: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Both the countries have been facing the problems like: border problem, Islamic fundamentalism, narcotic drug trafficking. These are the common problems, which prompted them to strengthen their bilateral relations. Both the republics have signed a bilateral treaty in Tashkent on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2000 during the visit of Nazarbaev to Uzbekistan. The treaty took note of the regional and international problems of mutual interests and declared as follows:

- The heads of the states repeatedly stressed their commitment to the principles of respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of the borders of both states, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual advantage.<sup>8</sup>
- Both the sides stressed the importance of carrying out the delimitation of the state border between the two countries.
- The heads of state noted that the negotiations, which have begun on the juridical description of the line marking the border between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan, must proceed in accordance with international practice, justly and rationally and in spirit of understanding. They expressed

satisfaction with the progress of the talks in this advocated that they should be completed as soon as possible.

- The heads of state are unanimous that the border between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan has been and remains a border of the two countries.
- The president of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the president of the republic of Kazakhstan confirmed their mutual striving mutual striving to further deepen Uzbek-Kazakh trade and economic relations in order to raise the prosperity of the peoples of the two countries.
- They expressed satisfaction with the result of the meeting between the delegations of the sides led by Deputy Prime Ministers of the Republics, which take place on the sidelines of the current visit.
- The governments of the two countries were instructed to hold working talks in the near future in order to take specific decisions.
- The Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan will intensify interaction in fighting against international terrorism, religious and political extremism, smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances, precursor chemicals and arms and against organized trans-border crime.
- Both the countries will perceive any actions directed against one of the states as a common threat all measures to counter them. If necessary, joint and coordinated measures will be carried out.
- In this context, the Republic of Kazakhstan supports the Republic of Uzbekistan's initiative to set up an international center for combating terrorism.



- The heads of state stressed that the constructive and fruitful negotiations which had been made a positive contribution to further increasing bilateral cooperation.
- President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev expressed gratitude for the warm and cordial reception afforded by President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Karimov, and invited him to make an official visit to the Republic of Kazakhstan.<sup>29</sup>

This bilateral treaty signed between the president of Uzbekistan and the president of Kazakhstan in Tashkent, on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2000 is apparently a significant step to strengthen and deepen the regional security framework. It is the bilateral arrangement through which these Republics have tried to build confidence-building measures among themselves. Evidently, these arrangements will also help them to resolve number of internal security problems like cross-border terrorism, ethnic conflicts, narcotic and small arms trafficking, human trafficking and religious fundamentalism as well as provide them an opportunity to improve their economy through mutual cooperation.

Nevertheless, bilateral relation has its own limitations like existing border problems, political elites perception towards the other state (for example Uzbekistan does not interested in maintaining very close relationships with Russia) conflict with in the republics of Central Asia (the border clashes that took place recently between Uzbek and Kazakh army) lack of cooperation and coordination among the Central Asian states to solve common problems (it has been alleged that Turkmenistan maintained clandestine

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<sup>29</sup> Source: *'Narodnoy Slovo'*, Tashkent, 22 April 2000, pl.

relationship with the Taliban regime) are some of the factor hindering bilateral relations which in turn impeding the regional security environment in Central Asia. So the solution lies in resorting to multilateralism.

## Chapter 3

### **MULTILATERAL TREATIES AND THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF CENTRAL ASIA**

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After attaining independence the Central Asian republics as mention in the second chapter are facing number of security problems like inter-ethnic conflicts, cross-border terrorism, riser of Islamic fundamentalism, border conflicts as well as unstable political system. Knowing well that these problems are difficult to resolve the republics Central Asian embarked upon multilateralism as a means to solve the existing problems. The present chapter is an attempt to study two important multilateral organizations in the Eurasian space – Commonwealth of Independence State and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-- in which the Central Asian republics are member. Apart from this chapter will analyse to what extent these two multilateral bodies able to serve the security need of the Central Asian republics.

#### **Commonwealth of Independent States and its Objectives**

Commonwealth of Independent States comprising 12 members of former republics of the Soviet Union came into existence in the form of a loose alliance on 21 December 1991 at Alma Ata.<sup>1</sup> The formation of Commonwealth of Independent States by the former independent components of Soviet Union and their collective declaration on several issues of socio-economic, strategic, defense and security cooperation was a landmark event symbolizing their peaceful existence in the post-Soviet era. It was presupposed by all the members of the CIS that Russia, the real successor of the Soviet Union and having

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<sup>1</sup> *Summery of World Broadcasts* (British Broadcasting Corporation), London, Part-1 (Former USSR). No.SU/1262, P,CI/6, December 23, 1991.

special as well advantageous position, would play a vital role during the transitional phase of independence in the overall security of the newly emerged Commonwealth of Independent States. Hence, all the five Central Asian republics though having some differences with Russian Federation, fully shared the concern of Russia towards security. The leaders of Central Asian republics emphasized that Russia, for all practical purposes within the institutional context of CIS, would be the sole guarantor of peace and security in the region. The CIS Collective Security Treaty signed on 15 May 1992 in Tashkent by Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reflect the mutual concern of member states towards security issues in the post-Soviet phase.<sup>2</sup> Azerbaijan joined the treaty September 24, 1993. Georgia and Belarus signed this document on December 9, 1993 and December 31, 1993, respectively. Other CIS countries, i.e. Moldova, Turkmenistan and Ukraine did not joined the treaty. The Collective Security Treaty was enacted by April 20, 1994 and registered at the UN Secretariat on November 1, 1995.<sup>3</sup>

This open treaty does not stipulate the creation of any military bloc whatsoever. Article 1 of this treaty reaffirms the commitment of signatory states to refrain from using force or from the threat of using force and to settle all mutual differences, as well as those with other countries by peaceful means alone. Signatory countries shall have no right to join military alliances or other groups of states; nor can they take part in various actions spearheaded against any of their partners.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *SWB- SU/ 1383*, p.P, C2/1, May 18,1992.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *SWB-SOV, 93-131*, July 8, 1992, pp. 12-14.

An aggression against one signatory country shall be considered as an aggression against all parties to the treaty. Consequently, all other signatory countries shall render all necessary assistance, including military assistance, to the aggression's victim. Moreover, they shall provide support with the help of all means at their disposal in line with the right to collective self-defense being envisaged by article 51 of the UN Charter. The relevant decision to use armed forces for the sake of repelling aggression shall be made by the heads of signatory states. Outside of their respective countries specific military units can only operate in accordance with the UN Charter and national legislations.<sup>5</sup>

The Collective Security Council and its bodies shall coordinate joint activities and will provide the required support for such activities. Similarly in February 1995 at a CIS summit, a Declaration of Member States on the Collective Security Agreement and a Concept of Collective Security were adopted. The declaration outlined major threats to the CIS. They are as follows:

- The build-up of military capabilities in region neighbouring member states to limit which disturb the existing balance of force;
- The formation and training on the territory of other states of armed forces intended for use against member states;
- Border conflicts and armed provocations from the territory of member states;
- Transfer of foreign troops on to territories neighbouring the member-states

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

(if this is not in accordance with the resolutions on the UN security council or CSCE[ presently OSCE] ).<sup>6</sup>

On April 2, 1999 at the session of the Collective Security Council the Presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan signed a protocol prolonging the treaty for another five-year period. This protocol stipulates the treaty's automatic prolongation for subsequent five-year periods, thus guaranteeing the relevant collective-security system's validity in line with the treaty. However, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan, which didn't sign this protocol, withdrew from the treaty. Right now, the Collective Security Treaty comprises Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.<sup>7</sup>

On May 2000, the signatory states decided to establish the relevant collective-security system within the Treaty's framework. Such a system would make it possible to cope with specific national-security, regional-security and international-security threats like terrorism. In May 2001, it was decided to establish a collective rapid-deployment force within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty. These forces are mostly called on to maintain peace and stability and also to fight terrorism in Central Asia. Moscow hosted yet another session of the Collective Security Council on May 14, 2001. In this conference members discussed at length about transforming the existing Collective Security Treaty into an international regional organization and decided to create an inter-

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<sup>6</sup> Oumirserik Kasenov, " Central Asia: National Regional and Global Aspects of Security", *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, April-June 1997, p.31.

<sup>7</sup> <http://newsfromrussia.com/cis/2002/05/14/28655.html>

state troop-control division as well as expanding military-technical cooperation and coordination of foreign-policy activities of the member states.<sup>8</sup>

However, if a critical appraisal of the performance of Commonwealth of Independent States can be made, it can be observed that, although more than hundred agreements within the framework of CIS have been signed by its constituent members, but in practice, only a few have been implemented. Similarly the internal discontents among the member states was clearly visible when in February 1999 President Islam Karimov openly declared that it would not renew its membership and gave formal notice for withdrawal of Uzbekistan from the Collective Security Treaty. Moreover, the changing perception of leaders of participating countries as well as nature of alliances they have apart from the CIS also significantly affected the effectiveness of the Commonwealth of Independent States as a collective organisation to look after collective security of the member states.

Any study of CIS cannot be possible without examining the role of Russia in it. As Russia is the largest CIS donor country. The overall debt of Commonwealth countries to Russia is around nine billion dollars, and there are no effective mechanisms within the CIS to settle the same. Apart from economic assistance which Russia provided to member states, militarily, politically as well as historically Russia is a dominant power with in the CIS. As a result of which all the problems currently CIS facing cannot be resolved without Russia's active involvement.<sup>9</sup> However in the aftermath of the

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*

disintegration of the Soviet Union Russia's economy collapsed which hindered it to maintain a large army. Subsequently the problem in Chechnya also further compounded the problem for Russia as it require huge sum of money to fight the Chechen terrorists. So the Russian policy makers realized that the only way through which they can safeguard Russia's interest is through maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring countries of CIS. The Collective Security Treaty helped Russia to strengthen itself militarily without fearing aggressive actions of other states. Thus, the Collective Security Treaty is advantageous both to Russia as well as to other Commonwealth states.<sup>10</sup>

The Commonwealth of Independent States is the first multilateral security arrangement emerged after the demise of Soviet Union to resolve all the security problems of Central Asian Republics. After the formation of CIS, Russia's perception towards the Central Asian Republics radically changed. The latter's borders are also considered to be strategic significance for Russia. Domestic, economic, historical, and geo-strategic location of Central Asia shaped the foreign policy of Russia towards Central Asia In the absence of Soviet Union, Russia sees its role as the guarantor of security of the Central Asian republics and protecting their borders against internal and external threats.<sup>11</sup>

The 'Near Abroad' policy of Russia, after the demise of the Soviet Union revolves around settlement and prevention of conflicts; the protection of the external borders of the Russian Federation and the entire CIS; the promotion of a constructive military-

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<sup>10</sup> ibid

<sup>11</sup> Shamina Ahmad, "New Challenges To Russian Security: The CIS And Its Southern Borders", *Regional Studies*, Islamabad, Vol. XVI, No.3, Summer, 1998, pp. 85-91.



politically interaction and mutually beneficial economic relations, and safeguarding of the rights of Russian minorities in Central Asia. However there are several irritants still exists like distribution of military assets, as well as border disputes is hindering the cordial relationship between Central Asia and Russia.<sup>12</sup>

Although most of the disputes between Russia and the Central Asian states over the division of assets to a large extent peacefully resolved through negotiation, a drastic deterioration of the Russian economy and demand on part of the Russian business tycoons as well as politicians could result in an aggressive and assertive stance on part of the former to secure access to the oil and natural gases of Central Asian region might fuel rivalry between the two. Economic factors also played a major role in shaping the relationship between Russia and Central Asia. During the Soviet period Russian engineers, technicians as well as skilled workers played a crucial role in industrial and infrastructural development of the republics. In the aftermath of the Soviet disintegration, the control of these industries has passed into the hands of Central Asian administrators. In some republics, the economic elites have tried to remove the Russians from holding the assets. It has resulted in the exodus of Russian managers and technicians. Apart from this another major irritant that exists between Russia and Central Asia is gaining access to European markets to transport oil and gas resources as these republics are landlocked. Although Russia is interested in giving access to Central Asia to market their products but guided by vested interests these Central Asian republics

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

trying to diversify their products bypassing Russia thus depriving it the monopoly to control these resources.<sup>13</sup>

After, the demise of the Soviet Union, Russian policy makers continue to perceive threats to its security emanating from developments in and around southern borders, including the growth of Islamic extremism and the flow of drugs and arms from Afghanistan through the Central Asian republics to Russia. The Russian Federation is especially apprehensive about the activities of Islamic dissidents against the Central Asian governments carried out through getting support from Afghanistan. Russian security analysts believe that a close nexus exists between Taliban and Central Asian Islamic militants and drug traffickers as well Chechen extremists. In the light of these developments one can naturally share the concern of Russia.<sup>14</sup>

China is also a key player in the Central Asian region as it shares border with three Central Asian republics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. As highlighted in the previous chapter the major objectives of China in Central Asia are; containing the growth of radical Islamic fundamentalism in the Xinjiang province situated bordering Central Asian republics. There has been a view that close relationship exists.<sup>15</sup> Apart from this China also need huge amount of oil and gas resources to rebuild its economy so also China fears the presence of American troops Central Asia in the aftermath of 11 September. As a result of which China need a friendly Central Asian states in its border.

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Amalendu Mishra, "Shanghai Five and the emerging alliance in Central Asia: the closed society and its enemies", *Central Asian Survey* (2001), 20 (3), pp. 310-311.

As Russia, China and Central Asian republics are facing common problems and convergence of interest among these countries led to the formation of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (formerly known as Shanghai Five). Although it was created in 1996 to solve the border disputes among the bordering states of Central Asia, China and Russia, however, over the years it significantly transformed itself and emerging as most effective multilateral regional cooperation organization in the vast Eurasian space. Initially, China, Russia, and three Central Asian States Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan formed this organization but in 2001 Uzbekistan joined this organization and the name of the organization changed to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The group specifically focused on battling the terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan and ensuring regional stability. Although dismissed in American intelligence circles as a loose alliance against the proposed National Missile Defense system and described by anti-China fanatics as a Chinese led anti-US "axis", the group is applying for formal recognition from the United Nations and could well be the new cornerstone in any prolonged effort to end the threat of global terrorism. In the conclusion of the summit in June 2001, Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated, "We are confident that the example of good relations among neighbours and a mutually advantageous partnership across the wide space from Europe to the Pacific Ocean, which the countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are demonstrating -- will be positively received by the world community."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Declaration, 15/06/2001 cited in [http://www.sinomania.com/CHINANEWS/shanghai\\_cooperation\\_organization.htm](http://www.sinomania.com/CHINANEWS/shanghai_cooperation_organization.htm)

### **Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Its objectives:**

The Presidents of the Republics of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan signed the Declaration of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2001. The presidents highly appraised the active role played by the "Shanghai Five" in stimulating and deepening mutual trust, good-neighborly and friendly relations among the member states, strengthening regional security and stability, and promoting common development in its five years of history. They held the same view that the establishment and development of the "Shanghai Five" had conformed to the historic trend for peace and development in the human society after the Cold War and displayed the great potential of good-neighborly co-existence, unity and cooperation, through mutual respect and trust, among countries with different civilization backgrounds and traditional cultures. Again, the presidents of member states specially pointed out that the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions in 1996 in Shanghai and the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions in 1997 in Moscow signed by the heads of states of Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, as well as the summary documents of the 1998 Alma-ata Summit, the 1999 Bishkek Summit and the 2000 Dushanbe Summit, have made significant contribution to regional and world peace, security and stability, greatly enriched the modern diplomatic and regional cooperation practice, and exerted an extensive and positive influence in the international community. Against the backdrop of political multi-polarization, economic and information globalization in the 21st century, the presidents firmly believed that to transform the "Shanghai Five" mechanism into a higher level of cooperation would help member states

to share opportunities and deal with new challenges and threats more effectively. Therefore, they announced the establishment of the SCO, which aims at strengthening mutual trust and good-neighbourly and friendly relations among member states, encouraging their further effective cooperation in politics, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transportation, environmental protection and other fields, jointly ensuring regional peace, security and stability, and creating a new international political and economic order featuring democracy, justness and rationality.<sup>17</sup>

The SCO plans to organize annual formal meeting of heads of states of member states and regular meetings of heads of governments to be hosted by its members in turn. In order to extend and strengthen cooperation in various fields, the SCO is considering, besides the existing meeting mechanism among officials of corresponding departments, to set up necessary new meeting mechanisms and establish permanent or temporary expert groups to study plans and proposals for further cooperation. The "Shanghai Spirit", featuring mutual trust and benefit, equality, consultation, mutual respect to different civilizations and common prosperity, which was developed in the course of the "Shanghai Five", is a treasure accumulated through the member states' cooperation in recent years. This spirit should be carried forward and developed into the principle for bilateral and multilateral relations of the SCO countries in the 21st century.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

All the SCO member states should strictly abide by the principle of the Charter of the United Nations, respect each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, not to interfere in each other's internal affairs, not to use force or threat to use force, achieve equality and mutual benefit, solve all issues through consultations, never to try to gain military superiority over neighboring countries.<sup>19</sup>

On the basis of the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions in 1996 in Shanghai and the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions in 1997 in Moscow, the SCO plans to expand cooperation among the member states in political, economic and trade, cultural, scientific and technological and other fields. The principles embodied in the above two treaties determine the basis of the relationship among the SCO member states.<sup>20</sup>

In pursuit of the principle of non-alignment, not targeting to the third country or region, and opening to the outside world, the SCO is willing to carry out various dialogues, exchanges and cooperation with any other country and other international or regional organizations. On the basis of unanimous agreement through consultation among the existing member states, the SCO is also willing to accept new member, who agrees with the organization's aim, tasks, principle and other provisions.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*

The SCO attaches special importance to make every effort to ensure regional security. All member states will closely cooperate with each other in implementing the Shanghai Treaty on the crackdown on terrorism, separatism and extremism, including establishing the SCO anti-terrorism center in Bishkek of Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the member states will work out corresponding documents of multinational cooperation in a bid to curb illegal arms smuggling, drug trafficking, illegal migration and other criminal activities.<sup>22</sup>

Making use of the great potential and extensive opportunities in trade and economic cooperation among the member states, the SCO will promote the further development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between and among member states and the pluralism of cooperation. Within the SCO framework, the SCO will start the negotiation procedure of trade and investment facilitation. The SCO member states will strengthen their consultation and coordination in regional and international affairs, support and cooperate with each other in major international and regional issues and promote and consolidate regional and world peace and stability. To maintain global strategic balance and stability under the international circumstances at present is of special significance. The SCO has approved to set up the Council of Coordinators of Member States to coordinate cooperation among the member states. The activities of the council are standardized by the Interim Rules of Procedure for the Council of Coordinators of SCO Member States approved by the foreign ministers of the member states.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*

The council is ordered to draft the SCO Charter on the basis of this Declaration and other documents signed by the heads of states of the "Shanghai Five" countries. The charter, which is expected to be signed by heads of the states of member states during the 2002 SCO summit, will expound the principle, purpose and tasks of the SCO future cooperation, the principle and procedure for accepting new members, the legal effect of the organization's decisions, and means of cooperation between the SCO and other international organizations.<sup>24</sup>

Summing up the past and looking forward to the future, the presidents of the participant member states believe that the establishment of the SCO marks a new development stage for cooperation among all the member states, which conforms to the trend of the times, the reality of the region and the fundamental interests of the people of all the member states.<sup>25</sup>

### **Significance of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation:**

Prior to the U.S.-led military campaign, Russia and China were attempting to close their strategic dominance over the region, courtship the Central Asian governments into closer military, economic, and political relations. Sino-Russian interests and their vision of the region's political future have been severely shaken by the new U.S. military and diplomatic initiatives in Central Asia. The entrance of another great power in the game of regional geopolitics almost certainly will affect the viability of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Shanghai Five preceded the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It

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<sup>24</sup> ibid

<sup>25</sup> ibid



was formed in Shanghai in 1996 as an informal association that united China and four ex-Soviet states bordering it- Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The leaders of the five countries have met five times since its formation. Originally set up to tackle border issues, its focus has shifted to security, as the region became more volatile.

The SCO emerged as the institutional representation of the Shanghai Five, an informal, and little-known security alliance since 1996 included all the SCO members, except for Uzbekistan. In its first year of existence, the nascent SCO concerned itself primarily with security issues; at its founding, the member countries pledged to combat the "three evil forces" of terrorism, extremism, and separatism--a thinly disguised reference to Islamism. Russia and China, who spearheaded the group's formation, intended to make the SCO a military-political alliance, one that would fashion new regional security architecture. From its founding, however, there has been hope that the SCO would eventually forge mutually beneficial economic and political ties among its members. Members discussed the possibility that the SCO could also encompass trade, investment, cultural, and technological components in the future. The organization has applied for UN recognition and has approached Mongolia, Pakistan and India for prospective membership yet with respect to the U.S.-led war on terrorism. Many observers interpret as a sign of the organization's state of turmoil and indecision. When the group signed its official 26-point legal charter in St. Petersburg on June 7 this year, Western diplomats largely regarded the SCO a stillborn organization--an ineffective young alliance made yet more irrelevant by the recent injection of U.S. troops into the heart of Central Asia. The SCO could not, for example, marshal any military response to the terrorist presence in Afghanistan.

Moreover, much to the alarm of Moscow and Beijing, its Central Asian members, particularly Uzbekistan, wholeheartedly welcomed U.S. troops onto their soil. In short, the SCO's inability to mount a cohesive strategy toward Afghanistan reflected its dismal failure as a security mechanism.

Russia and China were the engines driving the SCO's creation, and therefore have the most at stake in its survival. Over the past six years they have engaged in increasingly tight relations, cooperating on issues like border demilitarization and trade; the June 2001 "Good-Neighborly Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation" was the first formal treaty of friendship between Russia and China in decades. The SCO refused Moscow's long-standing quest to control the near abroad with Beijing's ambition to slowly build a multipolar world in which it is an influential player. Both of these powers envisaged the organization as an instrument to carve a safe rear from foreign encroachment in their geopolitical backyard, a way to exert dual hegemony over Central Asia.<sup>26</sup>

However, the war on terrorism brought an American reconciliation with Russia that has troubled Chinese leadership. The May Treaty of Moscow followed by the creation of the NATO-Russian Council, raised considerable disturbances in Beijing, which worried that Russia would be pulled into the orbit of the West and hence would no longer invest in the SCO. The then Chinese President Jiang Zemin feared that this would marginalize China and weaken its relative position vis-à-vis the Beijing-Moscow-Washington strategic triangle. However, Moscow still maintains strong ties with its eastern neighbour, with

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<sup>26</sup> Power Politics in Central Asia by Sean Yom July 26, 2002, Friday, 2002 2:24 PM, cited in <http://www.fpiif.org/index.html>

which it shares a border of 4,600 miles. Bilateral trade is greater with China than with the U.S.; the Chinese military also buys more than \$1 billion in Russian arms annually. Diplomatically, both countries stand together on such issues as their opposition to U.S. National Missile Defense and to their zero-tolerance approach to Islamic and separatist movements.<sup>27</sup>

A powerful American presence in Central Asia will, however, necessarily compromise the SCO and reconstitute the region's political future. The U.S. holds two primary interests: first, it has long eyed the area's rich oil and gas reserves, and American companies are eager to develop this wealth; and second, it desires tactical ground to observe on-the-ground political developments.

Not surprisingly, the U.S. has laid the foundation for a long-term presence by nurturing close partnerships with the Central Asian states. Economic assistance to these states has drastically risen (aid to Uzbekistan nearly tripled this year alone), and the State Department has toned down its usually stringent criticisms of their poor treatment of human rights. However, it is not clear what lasting imprint any American presence will leave beyond closer diplomatic and economic relations with the Central Asian state. Although its military bases in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan may eventually be closed as this theatre of the war on terrorism winds down, plans have been drawn for future military cooperation and training exercises with these countries. The continuing U.S. presence will likely serve to lure the Central Asian states away from Moscow and Beijing. Additionally, having American forces stationed within the Central

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

Asian states and so close to Russia and China--U.S. troops in Bishkek, Tajikistan are only 200 miles from the Chinese border--effectively nullifies any regional security framework the SCO had in mind.<sup>28</sup>

The third and final factor that will shape the SCO's future is the ongoing struggle with political Islam. Although the war in Afghanistan retrenched Islamist radicalism, it did not eliminate it, and in fact it may have multiplied the threat by dispersing Islamist groups into hiding across Central and South Asia. Indeed, the precise danger of Islamism is what binds the regional security policies of the SCO countries together. All its members share growing unease with Islamic-styled militancy or separatist movements: China faces its perennial Uighur problem in Xinjiang; Russia uneasily conducts its war in Chechnya while also tightly clutching the restless Muslim provinces of its underbelly; and Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan struggle with violent groups fermenting in the volatile Ferghana Valley, like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Islamic Freedom Party). While some of these groups have been decimated by the U.S. campaign--for instance, IMU's leader Juma Namangani was reportedly killed in Afghanistan earlier this year, and many of its fighters were captured--the threat of militant Islamic movements has been projected far beyond any real capacity they possess to genuinely challenge the Central Asian states' integrity.<sup>29</sup>

The SCO governments will continue to engage in hard-line tactics to crush any reverberating of Islamic radicalism. For the Central Asian states, this means harassing or

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Jane's Defence Weekly*, October 10, 2001.

imprisoning even moderate Muslim leaders, monitoring all religious groups, and sustaining a regime of secularization within civil society. As should now be self-evident, such a response sustains an ebb-and-flow cycle of Islamist violence. Brutal repression alienates unemployed youths who are already dislocated by the lack of economic opportunities and disillusioned with the persistent institutional failures of their governments to provide even the barest semblance of a just, efficient state. Consequently, Islamic militant networks easily recruit more fighters; in turn, the appearance of more fighters spurs governments to maintain the repression. In Chechnya and Xinjiang, for instance, persistent low-level violence by Islamic separatist groups spurs Moscow and Beijing to harshly suppress the ethnic Muslim population, enabling militant groups to add to their militant ranks without difficulty.

The future of the SCO will reflect three different dynamics--Sino-Russian relations, U.S. presence in Central Asia, and the response to Islamist transnational issues should be regarded as a positive step forward in the pursuit of regional peace, stability, and progress. In the end, its contribution to these goals will essentially depend on the degree to which the individual interests of the two great powers who are founding members of the SCO contradict or complement the somewhat different set of interests that the U.S. brings to Central Asia.

Finally, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a multilateral organisation, which has covered the regional security problems of Central Asian region. Furthermore, it is the creation of the vested interest of the powers like: Russia and China regarding the Central

Asian region's vast natural resources and common security problem. In spite of all the vested interest, both Russia and China have stakes in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. And, the Central Asian republics could get a chance to bargain with them regarding their interest. The SCO is a multilateral treaty, which has successfully addressed the security problem of Central Asia as a global problem. Although, Commonwealth Of Independent States is the multilateral arrangement after the demise of the Soviet Union, It could not be regarded as a successful multilateral alliance. Again, the Taliban's northward expansion coupled with the regional security threats like: Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism and separatist movements impelled them to join the new forms of alliance. Another, factor is the weakening of Russia's stronghold over the Central Asian region due to its financial crisis that made the Central Asian states to depend upon other regional powers especially China.

The above factors have impelled the Central Asian states to join in new forms of alliance, named Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In, these new alliances they have found common cause to resolve their security problems. And, the key members: China and Russia have their common interest in this regional alliance facilitate the Central Asian republics to bargain their demands near the bigger powers.

If we analyse these two types of alliances, we can find that both the treaties have their own significances. Although many analysts believe that the Commonwealth of Independent States failed to provide security to the Central Asian states in the post-Soviet phase and also failed to perform its role as a multilateral security organisation. The

pessimistic views given by anti-CIS rhetoric's are far from true. If one looks at the assertive role the Collective Security Treaty under the leadership of Russia currently playing in Central Asia like establishing bases in Kyrgyzstan as well as various policy statements of Central Asian Presidents so also the Russian President Putin's statement on CIS reflects that Central Asian Security is closely associated with CIS. It may also be noted that it is the first multilateral arrangement, which addressed the common security problems of newly independent states of erstwhile Soviet Union. But, the growing complexity of security situation and the differences among the member-states to some extent hindered the effectiveness of CIS. Apart from CIS in recent years the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is also playing a crucial role in strengthening peace, security and stability of the Eurasian region.

## **Chapter-4**

### **A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL SECURITY TREATIES**

The sudden demise of Soviet-Union has left the Central Asian Republics in such a situation, where there is no single guarantor of security of these Republics. Apart from this they are facing the regional security problems like fragile economy, widespread corruption, poverty, along with Islamic radicalism. As they have no effective military structure of their own to ensure regional security they entered into both bilateral and multilateral security arrangements to ensure security in the post-Soviet Eurasian space. This chapter will examine to what extent bilateral and multilateral able to provide security to the Central Asian states.

In the bilateral field the biggest ally of Central Asian republics is Russia. Central Asian states are not only regarded as 'soft underbelly' of Russia, but have also deep-rooted historical-cultural relations with this region. Apart from strategic and economic considerations the other important factor hindering the bilateral relations of Central Asian republics with Russia is the presence of large number of Russian ethnic minorities in Central Asia. Although during Soviet period most of the Russians employed in large scale industrial enterprises, and contributed a lot in improving the industrial development of respective Central Asian republics. However in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union the inter-ethnic relations between Russians and natives changed completely. The policy of native ruling elites in the Central Asian republics and policy



relating to language, citizenship laws as well as the provisions of the constitution, tried to protect the interest of titular nationalities and in such a environment the Russians found themselves in a awkward situation. As the political elites trying to garner legitimacy to their rule by enacting populist measures like elevating the status of native languages vis-à-vis Russian it creates a sense of insecurity among the Russians and as well as motivates them to migrate to Russia.<sup>1</sup> The large-scale migration of Russians from Central Asia to Russia also creates bad blood between Russia and Central Asian republics. Even many Russian organizations also came up in the northern part of Kazakhstan like *Union of Cossack and Ednistvrio* (although banned by Kazakh government) are quite active in protecting and promoting interests of Russians.<sup>2</sup> The large-scale migration of Russians is also hinders the economic development of these republics. For example the worst hit republic due to migration of Russians is Kazakhstan. During Soviet period large numbers of Defence related industries were situated in Northern Kazakhstan. But these industries are hardly operating as most of the employees were Russians and left Kazakhstan in view of hostile ethnic situation prevailed there.<sup>3</sup> The same is also true in the case of Turkmenistan, whose borders are secured with the participation of Russian troops through a common task force of Russian and Turkmen border troops. A treaty on the joint protection of the Turkmenistan's state borders was signed to this effect in September 1993. This was especially at the time of independence, since Turkmenistan had only thirty Turkmen officers in the border troops and it was difficult to recruit and train professional officers from among the local population. Given the fact only ten percent of

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<sup>1</sup> Ajay Patnaik, "Russian Minorities in Central Asia", op.cit, p.15

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid* , pp.15-16

Turkmenistan's officer corps is indigenous, the role of the Slavs is vital in the evolution of republics defence forces. In response, Turkmenistan was the first republic in this region to have granted Russians the right to dual citizenship.<sup>4</sup>

Though most Russian emigrations have been from Tajikistan, the present Government is eager to ensure the protection of the Russians both for the economic and national security reasons. Tajikistan has delegated to Russia the authority to protect its external borders. It has continued close ties with Russia, which remains the main commercial partner. As regards to Kyrgyzstan where poor pay and living conditions as well as state policy of protecting native Kyrgyzs compelled Russians to migrate. Although Kyrgyz government offered many incentives like allotment of free housing.<sup>5</sup> Ethno-nationalism in Central Asian states also to a large extent shapes Russia's relationship with Central Asian states.<sup>6</sup> Apart from ethno-nationalist factor shaping the Russo-Central Asian relations in the aftermath of the disintegration in the security front after the demise of Soviet Union, the Central Asian republics are also depending upon the Russian federation for resolving their security problem under the umbrella of CIS collective security treaty.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, Russia is depending upon the Central Asia's natural resources for improving its economy, which was ravaged by the division of military assets among the CIS. All the Central Asian republics except Turkmenistan, accepted the vital role of Russia in political, economic, and security aspects of this region. Four republicans Presidents urged

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4. *ibid*

5. *ibid*.

6. R.R. Sharma, "State Building in Tajikistan: Problems and Prospects", *Dialogue*, Vol-3, No.4, July-September 2001-2002, p.119.

7. *Ibid*, p.118.

Russia to sign into their joint treaty on combating terrorism, political and religious extremism, transnational organized crime and other threats to stability and security.<sup>8</sup>

No doubt, Russia is the key player in this region, but other actors like China, US along with the regional powers like, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan are playing major roles in this region. But, Russia is still a natural guarantor of security of Central Asian region. In the post-Soviet period, Russia has continuously accelerated the process of reintegrating Central Asian republics both through multilateral and bilateral treaties. While the Treaty on Collective Security provided the security guarantee for the Central Asian republics, its chances for survival and endurance have, however, been greatly enhanced by the series of “bilateral friendship treaties” that Russia has signed with all the Central Asian republics. “These bilateral level arrangements have provided the additional and perhaps real substance to the collective security arrangement”<sup>9</sup>.

Further, the Islamic offensives in August 1999, in southern Kyrgyzstan and Dagestan followed by the war in Chechnya contributed to the Islamic threat compelled Russia to promote military and security cooperation with Central Asian states.<sup>10</sup> The Russian President Vladimir Putin gave a new importance on the relationship with Uzbekistan. In May 2000, Putin’s Uzbekistan visit resulted in signing of bilateral agreements on military and military-technical cooperation, which he described as a strategic partnership. In the

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, p.122.

<sup>9</sup> R.R. Sharma, “Central Asian Security: Changing Dimensions”, In Mahavir Singh, Victor Krassilchchikov (eds), *Eurasian Vision*, Anamika Publishers and Distributors (P) ltd. New Delhi, 2003, p.239.

<sup>10</sup> Devendra Kaushik, “Putin’s Pro-Active policy in Central Asia”, *World Focus*, vol. 25, Number 3, March 2004, pp.4-5.

same year, Russia conducted a military exercise–Commonwealth Shield 2000 in the mountains of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in which forces of the Central Asian republics participated in a rehearsal of anti-terrorist operation. In 2003, President Putin visited to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. During his visit to Tajikistan President Putin told commander of 201<sup>st</sup> motorized infantry division that Moscow would soon strengthen its military presence in Tajikistan in view of the reports about increase in activities of the Taliban and the Al-Qaida structures who are believed to be regrouping. President Putin made a stop over in Samarkand while returning from his visit Malaysia to hold talks with his counterpart Islam Karimov. The two leaders discussed expansion of economic cooperation. Russia also guaranteed help in the manufacturing of IL-76 MF heavy transport aircraft in Tashkent. Russian defence ministry placed an order for two such plains.<sup>11</sup>

During Putin's Presidency Russia's relation with Turkmenistan have witnessed an upsetting. Like the US policy of wooing Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan irrespective of poor human right record, Moscow has also been keen to extend its economic influence Turkmenistan. The two leaders also signed a twenty-five year agreement on Gas supply to Russia involving the Russian natural gas monopoly Gazprom. Russia's stakes in the Central Asian region remain high. Central Asia republics remain a relatively important source of labour for Russia at least in the medium term. There is abundance of site in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan of great strategic significance for Russia. The Baikonor space center in Kazakhstan is the launching site for 70 per cent of Russia's space rockets. Moscow remains committed to a long-term responsibility in the Central Asian

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

region. In April 2003 Russian defence minister Sergei Ivanov stated that Russia would begin recruiting citizens from the CIS to serve in its Army who would be allowed to obtain Russian citizenship after three years of service. Already there is a sizeable number of Central Asians residing in Russia as seasonal workers. Their remittances back home are larger than the US assistance to some of the republics.<sup>12</sup>

The Central Asian security scenario is becoming increasingly complex while the larger republics-Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan-still sees in the present situation opportunity to expand cooperation with all the regional powers and USA, hoping that the US-Russia competition would give way to greater cooperation in advancing regional security threat. This is not the case with the smaller Central Asian republics-Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. There is indication that these republics are re-evaluating their relation with the outside powers. There is concern in Bishkek and Dushanbe that much of the resources promised by the USA would be diverted to Iraq. As socio-economic conditions continue to deteriorate in spite of US participation in this region, parts of Central Asian populace have begun to relate their worsening position to the relationship between the Central Asian regimes and the US. This perception has strengthened Islamic movements.<sup>13</sup>

President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan who had reluctantly signed a military cooperation agreement with Russia in the year 2000 under the shadow of Taliban supported threat of Islamic militants incursion into Ferghana readily embraced the US as a new aligned in early October 2000. By an agreement it gave the US extended use of Khanabad base in the

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

Karshi province, the biggest air based in Central Asia, America became a big player in the new version of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “great game”<sup>14</sup>.

In December 2001 the Kyrgyz Parliament agreed to allow the US to set up a military base at Manas International Air Port, some thirty kilometers from the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek. This base is going to have strength of three thousand troops. The US military planners were considering rotating troops in the region every six months, increasing technological support for and conducting training exercises with the central Asian republics. US analysts have predicted a long term military presences in the region detected by the need to prevent a possible comeback of the Taliban and to ensure that the US troops in Central Asia are needed to protect the International Security Assistance Force which has been deployed in Kabul to help the new interim government to maintain peace. President Karimov’s visit to the US in March 2002 resulted in signing of the declaration on strategic partnership between US and the republic of Uzbekistan it took about three months to prepare these documents which as the American sources pointed out to into consideration “almost all the suggestions from the Uzbek side”.<sup>15</sup>

Apart from Russia, China is regarded as the strongest competitor with Russia for influencing Central Asian republics. Bordering directly, China has far fewer limitations than its Middle Eastern rivals. It has larger financial resources than Turkey, Iran and Pakistan and his more compatible with the economies of the Central Asian states which

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<sup>14</sup> Devendra Kaushik, “Central Asia: Changing Geo-political Alignment in the Aftermath of 11 September”, *Dialogue*, Vol-3, No. 4, 2002, pp.44-46.

<sup>15</sup> Devendra Kaushik, “The New Geopolitics of Central Asia: Russia, China and India” in J.K. Ray(ed), *Asia Annual 2000*, Shipra Publications, New Delhi, pp.179-80.

can use its territory to gain access to the Pacific and onto the Far East and South East Asia. Although in the long run China has a big potential for successfully competing with Russia in Central Asia. For the near future Beijing remains among its Muslim peoples—the Kazaks, Kyrgyz and the Uighur-residing in Xinjiang. In the interest of achieving this objective it is pursuing a policy of developing trade and economic relations with its Central Asian neighbours and supports their governments and their relationship with Russia. The Chinese policy in Central Asia has also another objective. Energy consumption and demand for it in China is expected to grow in big way in the next century. Stability in Xinjiang and Central Asia is not just politically desirable but also an essential pre-requisite for China's continued economic growth and modernization. To preserve peace and political stability in the oil rich Xinjiang which is also important and account on the near by location of the Lop Nor nuclear test ground it is important to develop strong ties with Russia by supporting Moscow's interests in Central Asia. In 1990s the Xinjiang area bordering Central Asia became centre of Islamic uprising, which required two lakhs Chinese troops to eliminate it.<sup>16</sup> China, the key player in this region has made bilateral treaties with Central Asian countries. Especially, China-Kazakhstan bilateral treaty indicated the military and economic cooperation between the two countries. This treaty has to deal with the prevalent regional security problems of Central Asian security situation.

Apart from these factors the inter-republican conflict also marred the regional security environment of Central Asia. For example the conflict involving Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan impedes the growth of regional cooperation in Central Asia. The conflict involving

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<sup>16</sup> Devendra Kaushik, *Dialogue*, op.cit.

Uzbek-Kazakh can be rooted to history. Territorial claims, disputes over owning shared water and other mineral resources as well as claims on part of each other to some of the shared historical legacies also hinders the growth of effective regional cooperation in Central Asia.

In that perspective we have to study the bilateral and multilateral regional security organisations. Although, both bilateral and multilateral security mechanisms are able to provide some sort of security to the Central Asian States in the post independent phase, soon after attending some sort of forced independence, the Central Asian republics made substantial efforts to improve the security scenario of their respective republics and to develop bilateral relationships with external actors like Russia, China, USA, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India. Although in the initial years these external actors also took some effective steps in strengthening the bilateral relations with Central Asian republics. However in course of time, Russia, China and the U.S. emerged as important players in strengthening bilateral relations with the Central Asian republics.

Similarly China is situated in the eastern flank of Central Asia. In course of time it emerged as an important player in this region initially. The boundary disputes among three bordering republics of Central Asia and China, which to a great extent strengthened Chinese-Central Asia bilateral engagement. It has also invested a vast amount of resources in Kazakhstan's gas and energy sectors during the visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao in 2003 the Chinese firm CNPC showed its keenness in acquiring oil and gas sectors. Apart from this both China and Central Asian republics have common problems



like Islamic fundamentalism. This is an important factor, which has enhanced the bilateral relationship between China and Central Asian republics.

Apart from Chinese-Central Asia relationship in recent years U.S.A also has shown its keenness to develop bilateral relationship. Initially its basic objective is to capture oil and gas resources of Central Asian countries but in the after math of 11 September it required the help of Central Asian countries to fight the Taliban forces

Apart from bilateral mechanism Central Asian republics entered into multilateral security mechanism to strengthen security of Central Asia. The most important multilateral forum through which Central Asian countries try to protect and promote their security interests through their participation in commonwealth of independent states. The effectiveness of CIS as a multilateral security forum to ensure security and stability of Central Asia and their interests in promoting the security environment of the CIS states can be gauged from the fact immediately after the 11 September incident. Russia along with other signatories of collective security treaty expressed their willingness to cooperate effectively with international community to resolve then crisis in Afghanistan.<sup>17</sup> Similarly the senior security officials of CIS collective security treaty in their meeting in 19th October 2001 at Dushanbe discussed at length about the security in Central Asia due to 11 September incident. The Tajik President Rahmonov expressed the confidence that the coordinated measures by Russia and Central Asian states will succeed in halting the escalations of tensions in Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> [http: www. Eurasianet.org](http://www.Eurasianet.org), 29 november 2001.

<sup>18</sup> [http.www.Eurasia.net.org](http://www.Eurasia.net.org),10 october 2001.

Another multilateral security forum the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation over the years emerged as an important security mechanism in the heart of Eurasia. The significance of the Shanghai cooperation organisation lies in the fact that it successfully transformed itself into a multilateral security forum although originated basically to solve the border disputes. All the Central Asian countries are the members of SCO (except Turkmenistan). The joining of Uzbekistan in 2001 as a member of SCO reflected the importance of SCO as a mechanism to ensure regional security measures in the vast Eurasian space. The joint military exercise it conducted in Kazakhstan also reflects the keenness of the member states to transfer it into a security organisation. Apart from this, the SCO in recent years is also focusing on improving economic co-operation among the member states. The SCO as an effective mechanism for regional security at the multilateral level can be gauged from the fact that apart from regular meetings of heads of member states, the Prime Ministers meeting as well as Foreign Ministers meeting also taking place annually. The signing of charter in St. Petersburg summit in 2002 reflects the growing desire of member states to ensure security at regional level.

Both the bilateral and multilateral treaties are important to Central Asia. However one serious drawback of regional cooperation among Central Asian states is that the Central Asian regional cooperation suffered largely due to conflict of interest between two important Central Asian states i.e. between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as mentioned above. The border conflicts between these two republics yet to be solved. Similarly, the failure of Central Asian states to provide effective security to Russian minorities soured their relationship with Russia. This factor can be to a large extent applicable to

Kazakhstan. Similarly at the multilateral level one can see such problems like withdrawal of Uzbekistan from Collective security treaty organisation and tendency on part of leadership of Uzbekistan to maintain bilateral relationship with the US at the expense of Russia and China.

In spite of all these above drawbacks, these regional groupings have many advantages also. Because, the common problems can be solved only with the active participation of member states in the regional grouping. In this regard one can say that best guarantor to Central Asian security is the cooperation at multilateral level. In fact this is the best bait for the Central Asian states looking at the present security situation of Central Asia.

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION

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Central Asian region consists of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan covers a vast area in the Eurasian landscape. They cover an area of approximately 4 million square kilometer. Historically, this region has been acting as a transit point for connecting East and West and South to North. The 'Great Silk Rout' connecting Persia and China with the Roman Empire, which was a transit point of trade in the ancient period, passed through this region. However in the present context, as it has been already discussed, the vast natural resources of Central Asian region are attracting the external powers to this region. The sudden demise of Soviet Union left these newly independent republics in the vortex of international politics. The newly independent states, which were regarded as the 'soft underbelly' of Soviet Union, are now under the influence of external powers. The internal problems like fragile economy, unstable political system and insufficient defence capability has made these republics dependent on the bordering states like- Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and China for their own security.

The growth of Islamic radicalism as well as ultra-nationalism is posing a security threat to these Central Asian states. After attaining independence the political elites of Central Asian republics transformed their political system and ruled in an authoritarian manner. In their respective political system there is a very wide gap between the

common people and political elite and there is an absence of viable middle class. Further the chaotic economic situation added fuel to the fire and led to the growth of unemployment, inflation and macro-economic instability. The regional security problems like the border conflicts, drug trafficking, terrorist and secessionist movements within these republics impeded the growth of their development. These republics do not have proper military capability to check the external threats. Although these republics have sufficient natural resources, due to the lack of expertise and proper planning of leaders they are unable to exploit the resources. It is the main reason for their economic backwardness. The security situation is further compounded by the complex state boundaries in Central Asia inherited from the Soviet period. The Central Asian states have large minorities of other ethnic groups of this region as well as a sizable Russian population. The current economic situation in the Central Asian states is also a cause for a concern, as it has been showing few signs of stabilisation.

Under such conditions, the imperatives for regional cooperation in Central Asia are commonly recognized. The weak states of Central Asia must resort to cooperation at regional level in the face of preponderantly common threats. Growing economic interdependence and awareness of common transitional problems have reduced the importance of national boundaries and created a demand for international cooperation at the regional level.

At first, the Central Asian republics were engaged in different bilateral and multilateral arrangements with Russia, China and the US, which has already been discussed in the previous chapters. As economically and militarily weak they had no other option than these regional groupings. The security threats like Islamic fundamentalism, cross-border terrorism in places like Ferghana region of Uzbekistan and the Osh region of Kyrgyzstan in 1992 made them to depend upon Russia for military assistance. After the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Russia under the Presidentship of Boris Yeltsin signed a number of bilateral treaties with individual Central Asian republics. It was also eager to cooperate with these states because of its historical and cultural relations with the Central Asian region. The Chechnya problem made the security of Russia quite vulnerable. Because, the separatist elements in Chechnya operating from the Central Asian region. In recent years Russia under the Presidentship of Vladimir Putin is trying to strengthen military and economic cooperation with these republics. Under President Putin Russia reoriented its foreign policy in Central Asia and bilateral military agreements with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. He had emphasized on common platform to fight Islamic extremism and terrorism. In the year 2000 Russia and Central Asia conducted a military exercise in rehearsal of anti terrorist operation.

Apart from Russia, China has been enhancing its influence in the Central Asian region. Due to the weakening of Russia's economy the Central Asian states are tilting towards China for further military and economy assistance. China has also signed a

number of economic and military treaties with individual Central Asian republics to get the hold over the region. The major objective of China in Central Asian region is to secure natural resources and also to contain radical Islamic fundamentalist in its northwest frontier province of Xinjiang bordering Central Asian region it need Central Asian republics cooperation.

Another important external actor having significant strategic stakes in Central Asia is the U.S, which has been trying to strengthen its foothold in this region. The U.S and its multinational companies are entering in the Central Asian region to exploit the natural resources. In this case it is competing with Russian and Chinese multinational companies in the present oil politics. The incidents like September 11 and the U.S war against terrorism led the U.S. to engage in this region. During the war in Afghanistan it stationed its military troops in Central Asian region. Although Russia supported the stance of U.S because of its Chechnya problem, it had fear because of U.S engagement with Central Asian republics. The U.S has made bilateral agreements with Uzbekistan, which has focused on the current security problems along with economic cooperation. Other reason behind the U.S engagement with Central Asian republics is to focus on strengthening its foothold over the Central Asian region and to keep Russia and China at bay.

Apart from bilateral arrangements with external actors, these republics have engaged in multilateral groupings like Commonwealth of Independent States, Central Asian

Economic Forum and Shanghai Cooperation organisation. As it has already been discussed that the CIS is the first multilateral regional grouping, which was formed after the disintegration to resolve the security issues of its signatories. The collective security treaty was signed under CIS to make provisions for giving security from the external and internal threats. But, the growing problems like the advent of Taliban in Afghanistan coupled with Islamic fundamentalism, drug trafficking made the security situation quite vulnerable. So, the Central Asian republics found a common cause for regrouping with the neighbours like Russia and China. In 1996 the meeting of Shanghai five consisting of Russia, China along with three Central Asian republics took place. Although it originated to resolve the border disputes among the member states later on it was transformed into Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with the admission of Uzbekistan. It has envisaged closer cooperation to promote peace, stability and economic development among the six member countries. It is through the balanced participation of the Central Asian republics in this organisation for regional cooperation like the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Central Asian Economic Community and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, they are striving to discover an effective role in the international stage.

At last Central Asian republics have made several bilateral and multilateral treaties to resolve their regional security problems. Both bilateral and multilateral treaties have their own significances. But, multilateral treaties are always in advantage because of its focus on common security problems and common interest. For example the



growing significance of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in the heart of Eurasian space indicates the importance of multilateral regional groupings. The Central Asian republics can resolve their security problems through their participation in these groupings. Last but not the least, this multilateral forum has the task before it to improve the political system of Central Asian states by promoting democratic values and bridging the gap between the political leaders and people. Cooperation at the bilateral level shows the limited objective and narrow interest, but the multilateral treaties like SCO and Collective Security Treaty are important to Central Asia because common problems confronted by the Central Asian states can be resolved only with the active participation of member states in the regional grouping. In this regard, one can say that the best guarantor to Central Asian security is the cooperation at multilateral level. In fact this is the best bait for the Central Asian states from the point of view of the present security situation of Central Asia.

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