

THE AFGHAN CRISIS AND THE UNITED NATIONS, 1980-1988

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ABBREVIATIONS

- DPPA : Democratic People's Party of Afghanistan.
- DRA : Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.
- GOAR : General Assembly Official Records.
- GNP : Gross National Product.
- GCC : Gulf Co-operation Council.
- EEC : European Economic Community.
- ICCPR : International Convenaut on Civil and Political Rights.
- PDPA : Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan.
- NATO : North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
- UN : United Nations.
- UNGOMAP : United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan And Pakistan.
- UNHCR : United Nations High Commissions for Refugees.

P R E F A C E

Due to its strategic location Afghanistan assumed the status of a buffer between the Tsarist Russian and the British Indian empires during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After the second world war Afghanistan steered clear of the politics of cold war between USA and USSR. While maintaining its non-aligned character, Afghanistan developed good relations with the neighbouring Soviet Union.

But Afghanistan has been passing through disturbed conditions and instability for about a decade now. The beginning of the Afghan crisis can be traced back to the year 1973 when Mohammad Daud overthrew the monarchy. Communists had supported Daud in the hope of emergence of a democratic Afghanistan. But Daud turned authoritarian, tilted to the West, and became friendly with the Shah of Iran. In the meantime, two factions of Communists-Khalaf and Parcham converged in July 1977 to form a United People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. In April 1978 the PDPA led the "Saur" Revolution and toppled the Daud Government. This was followed immediately by proclamation of Democratic Republic of Afghanistan with Nur Mohammad Tarakki as Chairman of the Afghanistan Revolutionary Council. At this stage there is no evidence

to suggest that Soviet Union was behind the Communist take-over, though it was the first government to accord diplomatic recognition to this government. But soon there occurred a factional struggle between Khalaf and Parcham. In the process Khalaf faction succeeded in driving out key figures in the Parcham faction out of Afghanistan. In September 1978, Amin emerged victorious by taking over as the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and of the Supreme Defence Council. The internal strife between two rival factions of the ruling party and the organised opposition of the landed aristocracy and the Muslim clergy to the radical reforms initiated by the revolutionary government, created an internal crisis in Afghanistan. The crisis was accentuated with the increase in number of Afghans seeking refuge in Iran and Pakistan, where they received arms and training for rebellion against the Afghanistan government. The situation was serious enough to cause domestic instability in Afghanistan. It was under such circumstances that the Soviet Union inducted its troops in Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, consequent upon which Amin was deposed. Babarak Karmal assumed the leadership of the PDPA and the Revolutionary Council.

The Soviet action in Afghanistan lent a new dimension to the geo-political environment in South, South-West and West Asia. Lakhs of Afghan refugees fled to neighbouring countries-Iran and Pakistan, where they received arms and training for rebelling against the Afghan government. Ever since, an unabated insurgency, funded, armed and supported by outside powers USA, Pakistan, Iran and China, has been going on in Afghanistan with fluctuating intensity with the object of overthrowing the Soviet backed Afghan government. With the involvement of several big and small powers directly or indirectly, the Afghan problem contains dangerous portents for peace and security of the region.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 evoked world-wide reaction particularly from USA, Islamic countries and the third world countries. It was the general opinion that the intervention occurred in utter defiance of the basic principles of the UN Charter such as the non-interference in internal affairs of any state, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of any state and non-use of force in international relations. The problem of human rights also came to be associated with the Afghan crisis ,

as lakhs of Afghan refugees had fled to Iran and Pakistan. It was under these circumstances that the Afghanistan question was brought before the UN Security Council on 3 January 1980 and since then the UN has been directly involved in finding a political solution to the problem.

This study seeks to analyse the role of United Nations in negotiated peaceful settlement of the Afghan crisis. It has also studied the response of various UN organs like the Security Council and the General Assembly towards developments in Afghanistan following the Soviet action in 1979. There is a general impression that this international organisation has, by and large, failed to discharge its functions of maintaining peace and security in the world, partly because of the UN Charter does not contain enough provisions so that the UN can acquire necessary coercive force for implementing its decisions and partly because the member states being sovereign are not accountable to the United Nations for their lapses. It is in this context that this study has examined the success or otherwise of the UN peace initiative in Afghanistan, particularly in view of the continuing belligerence of the Afghan rebels who receive arms and aid from the US and Pakistan. For reaching an

objective assessment of the prospects of peace as envisaged in the Geneva accord, the responses of all parties concerned - Afghanistan, Pakistan, USA and USSR towards the UN peace moves has been analysed.

This study covers a period of about eight years i.e. from the year 1980, when the issue of Soviet action in Afghanistan came up for discussion in the United Nations, upto April 1988, when the UN sponsored Geneva accord between Afghanistan and Pakistan was signed. It follows descriptive and historical analytical methodology and is based on primary sources such as UN General Assembly and Security Council debates, documents relating to proximity talks and the Geneva accord, speeches and statements of Afghan, Pak, US and Soviet governments during the period of this study, i.e. 1980 to April 1988. These sources have been supplemented by the study of secondary information gathered from newspapers, journals and books on this issue.

The dissertation is divided in five chapters. The first chapter gives an overview of the political developments in Afghanistan in modern times. In the second chapter the extent and pattern of debates in the United Nations have been evaluated and the resolutions of the

General Assembly and the Security Council have been studied in order to ascertain the motives of the parties involved in the Afghan crisis; and the response of other members of the United Nations to the developments in Afghanistan. The U.N. peace initiative to defuse the Afghan crisis has been discussed in the third chapter. Entire gamut of 12 rounds of talks held at Geneva under the U.N. auspices have been studied here. In the fourth chapter, the Geneva Accord has been analysed. Besides, the prospects of peace following this accord and also the factors responsible for putting the peace process in jeopardy have been critically examined. Main finding of this study have been summed up in the last chapter.

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Usha Prasad

CHAPTER - I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Afghanistan, a land-locked country, is endowed with nearly 3000 years of recorded history. Occupying an area of 655,00 square kilometres, it is situated in the heart of Central Asia.¹ To its north lies the Soviet Union, to its north-east the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China, to the west Iran, to the South Pakistan and to the south-east the Pak-occupied territory of Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus, Afghanistan shares 2,384 kms. long border with the Soviet-Union, 75 kilometres with the People's Republic of China, 120 kilometres with India, 2,180 kilometres with Pakistan and 820 kilometres with Iran. This signifies the strategic location of Afghanistan in the geo-political context of the region.²

Due to its strategic location with its borders touching five nations of different ideologies and systems of government, Afghanistan has assumed the status of a buffer state. In the 19th and early 20th centuries it functioned as a buffer between Tsarist Russia

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1. Perala Ratnam, *Afghanistan's uncertain future*, Tulsi Publishing House, New Delhi, 1981, p. 4.
 2. Yu. V. Gankovsky and others, *Afghanistan, The Embassy of the Republic of Afghanistan Today*, Navyug Publishers, New Delhi, 1982, P. 7.

and the British Indian empire. After the second World War Afghanistan steered clear of the politics of cold war between the USA and the USSR while maintaining for itself a non-aligned character. For a long time, Afghanistan has been maintaining very friendly relations with the neighbouring Soviet Union.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Afghanistan was carved as an independent political entity by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747 when he united various principalities into an organized state. After his death in 1773, Afghanistan witnessed a series internecine feuds for succession to the Afghan throne.

With the ascendance of two rival European powers, Britain and Russia in Asia, Afghanistan gained importance on the world scene in the nineteenth century due to its geographical proximity to both British and Russian empires in Asia. During this period, the Indo-Afghan relations got inextricably mixed up with the Anglo-Russian rivalry. This rivalry was a direct result of the expansion of British and Russian empires from two opposite directions. The Tsars of Russia had gradually pushed their borders for centuries eastward into Siberia and South ward into the Central Asia, while the British conquered more and more of India, extending the area under their control steadily northward. When both these powers were expanding towards Afghanistan, "they inevitably clashed over

which one was to dominate, or annex, this otherwise insignificant state."³ Afghanistan had a crucial strategic position for the British for it could serve as their advance post of Indian frontiers to forestall any attack from Russia and could help promote the British commercial interests in Central Asia. If nothing else, it could act as a buffer state between the two hostile powers, India and Russia. The British saw in the Russian expansion in Central Asia an "imminent peril to the security and tranquillity of Indian Empire."⁴ In fact, the Governor-General of India was closely watching the "events in Afghanistan in order to counter-act the progress of Russian influence there."⁵ To combat the Russian advance in Central Asia, the British Foreign Office designed what came to be known as the "Forward Policy,"⁶ which aimed at securing hegemony in Persia and Afghanistan. Afghanistan was

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3. Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1980, p. 143.
 4. R.C. Majumdar and others, *An Advanced History of India*, Mac Millan and Co., London, 1950, p.p. 751-52.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. Anuradha Sareen, *India and Afghanistan*, Seema Publications, Delhi, 1981, p. 4.

henceforth to be considered as the 'Frontier' of India, and no European nation was to be allowed to carry on any commercial or political activities there or to interfere in its affairs.⁷

The British adopted a strategy either to turn Afghanistan into its virtual colony or to control it through various indirect ways. The British were aware that they would not be able to maintain their stranglehold over India unless they virtually controlled Hindu Kush mountains.⁸ To achieve this object they imposed three wars on Afghanistan between 1838 and 1842, between 1878 and 1880, and in 1919. Though the Afghan army was no match to the British forces, the British army could not stay in Kabul due to guerilla attacks by the irregular Pathan tribesmen.

Both Britain and Russia played many years of intrigues and manoeuvres against one another to secure control over Afghanistan. They finally came to realise that instead of seizing parts of Afghanistan or competing for full control, it would be of mutual benefit by using it as a buffer between them.

7. Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, (Stanford, 1969), p. 96.

8. Kalim Bahadur and others, *Inside Afghanistan*, Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1986, p.p. 11-12.

It was towards the end of the 19th century that the frontiers of Afghanistan were defined and demarcated by several boundary commissions as a result of Anglo-Russian negotiations. Finally, the Anglo-Russian convention was signed in 1907 under which Russia promised to consider Afghanistan as outside her sphere of influence and agreed to conduct relations with Afghanistan through Britain.⁹

Independent Afghanistan

The first World War and the Russian Revolution of 1917 added a new dimension to the Anglo-Afghan relations. Amanullah Khan became Emir and announced that his immediate goal was to free the country from dependence on Britain. The British recognised the independence of Afghanistan in March 1919, after the Soviet Union had signed a friendship treaty on 21 February 1921 with it. This brought a new turn in the political history of the country. King Amanullah made serious efforts to overcome the backwardness of country's economy and the outmoded social system. Amanullah wanted to bring Afghanistan in line with the modern age. But the promulgation of various reform

9. Thomas T Hammond, Red Flag over Afghanistan, West View Press, Colorado (U.S.A.), 1984, p. 6.

measures antagonised the feudal and the conservative sections of the Afghan society. On January 14, 1929, Amanullah Khan abdicated and the new regime, which came to power, annulled all the reforms made by previous government. The situation remained fluid till Nadir Khan was assassinated by an Amanullah supporter in November 1933 thus paving the way for the long rule of Mohammed Zahir Shah. The regime of Zahir Shah is considered to be a peaceful period in the history of Afghanistan.

In September 1953, Mohammad Daoud Khan, a cousin of King Zahir Shah, became the Prime Minister. Daoud followed the policy of pursuing the settlement of Pashtunistan issue which soured the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan imposed a ban on the shipment of Afghani goods across its territory which caused considerable economic hardships to Afghanistan. This problem was overcome only after receiving the Soviet assistance. The signature of a Soviet-Afghan treaty in 1955 further strengthened their mutual relations. Daoud governed the country with a strong hand and did not allow the parliamentary system to work. He introduced some progressive economic measures in the country. He relinquished his office in 1963. The period of Daoud's rule, no doubt,

witnessed some progress in the economic field but it failed to break any new ground on the political front.

The period of 1963 to 1973 in Afghan history has relevance in terms of the political development in the country. During this period, a demand for liberal parliamentarism was raised. In this process a constitution was promulgated in 1964, as a result of which a system of constitutional monarchy was introduced in the country. Under the new constitution elections were held in 1965 and in 1969. The promulgation of Press Law in 1965 made it possible for the progressive papers like Khalq, Parcham and Shula-e-Javed to be published advocating Marxist ideology in Afghanistan. This was a turning point in the political history of Afghanistan.

The End of Monarchy

The stage-back of the former Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud in bloodless coup on 16 July 1973, is another milestone in the political history of Afghanistan. It had two distinctive features. Firstly, the government of King Mohammad Zahir Shah was toppled with the help of the army rather than with the support of the people. The

process of educating people of their civic rights and organising them around the national issues had not taken roots in the country although People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan was formed in 1965. And second, the monarchy was replaced by the establishment of a republican system in Afghanistan. Mohammad Daoud titled himself as the President of the Republic. He accused the monarchical regime of King Zahir Shah of violating the principles of the constitution and depriving the people of Afghanistan of their political rights. During the second term of Mohammad Daoud the political life in Afghanistan took a distinct turn. In fact, the genesis of the present Afghan crisis must be traced right from the ascendancy of Mohammad Daoud in 1973.

After coming to power, Daoud enlisted the support of PDPA, who formed the left wing in the republican regime. In the government formed in August 1973 four ministerial posts were occupied by members and supporters of the PDPA.¹⁰ Daoud made a pledge to carry out "radical reforms in the economic, social and political life of the country". In line with this pledge, the republican government carried through a number of socio-economic measures,

10. Yv V. Gankovsky and others, A History of Afghanistan, op. cit., p. 30.

which affected the daily life of the people. But as time passed by, Daoud began to depart from the programme which he had announced in the beginning.

The initial progressive programme introduced by Daoud had alienated the landlords, the tribal khans, the merchants and the conservative Muslim clergy from the government. In late 1973 two plots to overthrow the republican government were discovered and foiled. In July 1975 there was an armed uprising against the government and its leaders declared their aim to establish an Islamic State.¹¹ After crushing these right wing forces, Daoud announced the "formation of the National Revolution Party", which had a virtual monopoly of political activity by the end of 1976.¹² This in a way, amounted to a de facto ban on all other political parties in the country. It was under these circumstances that the PDPA had to go underground. In January 1977, a new constitution was approved which invested "enormous powers in Daoud as the head of State, Chief Executive, Commander in Chief of the armed forces and leader of the sole political party".¹³ Mohammad

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid, p. 302.

13. M.S. Agwani, The Saur Revolution And After, International Studies, Vol. 19, No., 4, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1980, p.559.

Daoud, who had denounced 1964 constitution as pseudo-democratic, behaved during the second phase of his rule in a totally undemocratic manner. After the unsuccessful coup of July 21, 1975, Daoud changed the course of his foreign policy. He agreed to having a tripartite arrangement of "non-conflicting co-existence" with Iran and Pakistan. In this way, ground was being prepared for "a new type of military alliance among these three countries with America contented to remain in the sidelines".¹⁴ But the regime of Daoud collapsed in 1978 under the weight of the progressive forces in the country.

SAUR REVOLUTION AND AFTER

The Saur Revolution of April 1978 was brought about by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. This party which was founded in 1965, composed of several groups, Khalq (People) group headed by Noor Mohammad Taraki, Parcham (Flag) group headed by Babrak Karmal and Shula-e-Javed (Eternal Flame) group led by Rahim Mahmudi. All of them professed different shades of Marxist ideology. In July 1977, the two most organised and

14. V.D. Chopra, *Inside Afghanistan*, Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1985, p. 16.

15. The word Saur means April. The Saur Revolution, therefore, means a revolution which took place in April.

popular factions, Khalq and Parcham, after abandoning their ideological differences, reunited to oppose Daoud under the banner of PDPA. They engineered a coup on 27th April 1978 against Daoud, who was overthrown with the active participation of armed forces of the country. This change of political power came to be known as Saur Revolution. The Republic of Afghanistan was renamed as the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).

Birth Agony of a New System

The new government was formed with Noor Mohammad Taraki as the Prime Minister and Babrak Karmal as the Deputy Prime Minister. After the success of the Revolution the PDPA party could not, however, remain united. Right from its foundation in 1965 the party had differences. In this factional fight, Hafizullah Amin, PDPA leader made alliance with Taraki and got Parchamites removed from the positions of power. Karmal was sent to Prague as Ambassador. The Soviets however, tried to persuade Taraki in regaining control of affairs from Amin and to accommodate the Parcham faction in the affairs of Afghanistan. This matter is believed to have been the main theme for discussion at a meeting between Nur Mohammad Taraki and President Leonid Brezhnev held in

Moscow on September 10, 1979.¹⁶ When on September 11, 1979, Taraki returned to Kabul, Amin led a coup, Taraki was removed from office following a shootout at the Presidential Palace on 14 September 1979. Now the Khalq party got further divided into pro-Taraki and pro-Amin factions. Now Amin took over as the Secretary General of the Party and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council. On 15 September Amin dismissed the Ministers of Interior and Foreign Affairs. Soon after, Taraki was officially reported to have died.

It was under these circumstances that on 27 December 1979, Soviet army with 50,000 troops entered into Afghanistan. The Soviet Military contingent came on the request made by the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in conformity with Article 4 of the Treaty of Friendship, co-operation and Good-neighbourliness between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union dated December 5, 1978. It provided that both the sides "should consult each other and take agreed and appropriate measures to ensure security, independence and territorial integrity." 17

16. Dev Morarka, *The Russian Intervention, A Moscow Analysis, Round Table*, London, No. 282, April 1981.

17. Yu. V. Gankovsky and others, *A History of Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 318.

The Soviets even claimed that their action was in accordance with the UN Charter, which states that "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self defences if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security".¹⁸

The overthrow of Amin and the assumption by Babrak Karmal of the leadership of the Party and the Revolutionary Council in December 1979, heralds the beginning of a second stage in the April Revolution. After his coming to power, Babrak Karmal initiated the programme of merging all patriotic, progressive and democratic forces in the country to form a broad based front. The Soviet Union made all possible efforts to encourage the new leadership into enlisting popular support for the revolutionary regime in Kabul. But Babrak Karmal also did not succeed in re-uniting the progressive forces in the country. This became a road block in capturing the advantages of Saur Revolution. After the failure of his campaign of broadening the base of the party, Babrak Karmal was replaced by Najibullah in 1986. Najib, after his coming to power announced the policy of national reconciliation for accomodating other groups in the

18. U N Charter, Chapter VII, Article 51.

government. He succeeded in getting a new constitution adopted, local and parliamentary elections held and a coalition government formed in June 1988.¹⁹ The policy of national reconciliation partly helped in the conclusion of the Geneva Agreement.

The successive changes of government after the Saur Revolution exhibit the nature of internal dynamics of the party which captured power in 1978. The PDPA which worked unitedly for capturing power, did not present a cohesive political force to carry on the programme of restructuring Afghan society after the revolution made a success. The leaders of the party took the unimaginative steps of making a shortcut of transferring power from the feudal class to the working class. Though the goal was right, their means for attaining it were wrong. They, therefore, sought military method to bring revolutionary changes in the Afghan society. Their idea was to seek popular support after the success of revolution by executing socio-economic measures. The groups entrusted with the task of economic and social reforms were political workers recruited from the urban centres

19. D. Kaushik, Soviet Union And The Afghan Question (Mimeo), 1988, p.p. 11-12.

of the country and therefore were devoid of the "experience of the rural conditions".²⁰ This indicates that the party lacked mass base, which resulted in the failure of the execution of revolutionary economic and social programmes and also in the factional fight for the loaves and fishes associated with the positions of power. The political changes were also rooted in the differences over the strategic perception and the personality clash for securing control in the party and the government. The rift had surfaced first in 1967. After the coup of 1973 led by Mohammad Daoud, the Parcham remained soft to the regime in the belief that it was a distinct improvement upon the monarchy. But later Parcham acted in close collaboration with the progressive forces during April Revolution. In the post-revolution period Hafizullah Amin was responsible for creating instability. He first got Parcham removed from the positions of power and subsequently got Taraki removed from the government. According to a Soviet scholar, "Amin's bloody purges, which had weakened the party and the state apparatus discredited progressive ideas in the eyes of the masses, making the interventions offensive easier".²¹ Such a factional fight

20. M.S. Agwani, *op. cit.*, p. 562

21. Boris Petkov, *Afghanistan Today*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1983, p. 14.

only helped in strengthening the forces of counter revolution.

The successive changes in government also created a big refugee problem in the country. The radical socio-economic measures adopted by the revolutionary governments of Afghanistan alienated the powerful mullahs, annoyed the landed aristocracy, created a sizeable armed insurgency against the regime and led to the exodus of people from Afghanistan to Iran and Pakistan. According to Pakistan government, "109,900 refugees poured into Pakistan in the wake of the (Saur) coup. When Taraki was overthrown in September 1978 by Hafizulla Amin, the numbers of refugees reached 193,000. The exodus has continued, and in May 1983 they numbered 2.8 million."²² The Afghan government have outrightly rejected the Pakistani claim over the number of refugees crossing the border of the country. In any case the exodus of such a huge number of refugees into Iran and Pakistan is no longer a deniable fact.

Behind The Russian Move

The Soviet move of sending armed forces created

22. K.S.R. Menon, Pakistan's Foreign Policy: The Afghan Refugee Factor, Strategic Analysis, New Delhi, Vol. VIII, No-4, July 1984, p. 305.

a world wide controversy about the Soviet intentions and the future of the sovereignty of Afghanistan. An Indian diplomat described the event as "unprecedented in the history of our region" which resulted in an "ideological and strategic confrontation" in Afghanistan.²³ To identify the reasons for such a Soviet move in Afghan is not an easy task. There are conflicting evidences and interpretations to the circumstances that led to the Soviet action. However, an objective analysis of various determining factors would help in explaining the Soviet armed action in Afghanistan.

Balance of International Forces

There is a section of opinion believing that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was done to meet the challenge posed by the international forces operating at that time. The new international political environment, particularly the relationship between two super powers since the mid seventies, compelled the Soviet Union to intervene in Afghanistan so that its interests remained intact. It is under these circumstances that the Soviet

23. A.K.Damodaran, Soviet Action in Afghanistan, International Studies, J.N.U., New Delhi, 1980, p. 591.

Union tried to make its presence felt through keeping Afghanistan under its control. Those who believe in this hypothesis put forward a number of evidences in support of it.

Contradiction in American Foreign Policy:- The US policy under Carter of resolving international differences through negotiations failed to convince the Soviet Union of its sincerity of purpose. The Soviet Union, by that time, had made significant advances in modernising their navy and upgrading the ground forces in Europe. The contradictions in the American foreign policy angered the Soviet Union. In such a background, Moscow thought it fit to support revolutionary movements in the under-developed countries. The American vacillation in its foreign dealings and the rise in military power of the Soviet Union encouraged Moscow to exhibit its newly acquired status in the international field. Hence, the Soviet intervened in Afghanistan.

Threat from China:- There was another development in the world politics. The relationship between China and the USA took a new turn towards friendship and understanding. The United States agreed to sale of arms and technology to China. This development changed the strategic environment around the

Soviet Union. The USSR perceived it as a highly dangerous development against its own security. China's improving relations with Pakistan also was considered to be against the interest of the Soviet Union. The new situation emerging around China convinced the Soviets "that China's hostility towards the Soviets would continue unabated." The Chinese activities in Xinjiang and Amin's increasing inclination towards the West confounded the Soviet fears that these might be a strategic problem if not attended in time. Under these circumstances, it is argued that even though China might not have been "the main factor", there appears to be reason to believe that "it significantly influenced the perceptions of the strategic problems confronting the Soviet Union at the end of the 70s".²⁴ The Soviet intervention must have a root in this perception of the regional strategic situation.

Military Balance in the Gulf:- The scenario of the Gulf presented significant changes in the 70s. The fall of Haile Sellasie in 1975, the collapse of Shah of Iran's regime in 1979 and the rise of revolutionary movements in Africa, all these together

24. Maya Chadha, Super Power Rivalry in South West Asia: The Afghan Crisis 1979, India Quarterly, New Delhi. December 1981, p.p. 511-512.

changed the strategic behaviour of the United States and the Soviet Union, so far as the Middle East was concerned. "By 1979, United States policy was not only determined to resist every Soviet move in the Gulf, it had reinforced its military presence there and embarked on one of the greatest peace time programmes of re-armament, in response to what it considered was a growing challenge".²⁵ The exit of Shah was a favourable factor for the Soviet Union. It was Shah who had persuaded Daoud to be more independent of the USSR and helped him to suppress Communists in Afghanistan. It was Shah who was responsible for negotiating a peace settlement on Pushtoonistan issue between Kabul and Pakistan. Moreover, the Soviet Union was aware that America would reinforce arms in the Gulf to fill the vacuum. Under these strategic circumstances, the most "effective way for the Soviets to counter this was to extend its own power into the region". Looking at the balance of power in the Gulf, the relevance of "the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan is only too obvious to need any further elaboration".²⁶

Conquest of the Region

There is another view that the Soviet inter-

25. Ibid, p. 513.

26. Ibid.

vention in Afghanistan in 1979 was motivated by the Russian desire to conquer the region. This line of thinking is based on several presumptions. It is that Soviets harboured a desire of territorial expansion by keeping Afghanistan under control. In support of this view three points have been made. First, the Soviet economic involvement in Afghanistan had gone on increasing since the Saur Revolution. It did not want to forego this advantage. Second, the defence of the social revolution in sovereign country has been a shared responsibility of the Soviet Union. The Soviet intervention is interpreted as a move to defend an established post-revolutionary government in Afghanistan. And third, the rise of fundamentalism in West Asia in general and Iran in particular had frightened Soviet Union about the possibility of religious revivalism in the adjacent parts of the USSR which are predominantly Muslim. The fall of the revolutionary government in Afghanistan and its replacement by religious leaders of the country would have created difficult situation in the Soviet Union. Afghanistan, therefore, was to be kept under control.

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armed intervention in Afghanistan was a calculated move of the Soviet Union to come close to the warm water ports or the blue waters of the Indian Ocean. As the alternative routes are beset with enormous difficulties and have to be traversed long distances, Afghanistan under the Soviet control would serve the purpose. It is pointed out that the Soviet Union has both economic and strategic interests in coming close to the Indian Ocean. A considerable part of the external trade of Soviet Union is carried on through the Indian Ocean. Besides, the potential of Siberian resources and thereby the future of Soviet economic growth, is heavily linked with the sea routes through Indian Ocean. In addition to this, the Indian Ocean is of strategic importance to the Soviet Union, as it has tremendous potential to demonstrate military power in Asia. The US has already established a number of bases in Asia. "With the successful Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Soviet military forces are within 300 miles of the Indian Ocean".²⁷ The American government took a very

27. P. Vasudevan, *The Afghan Crisis and Super-power Strategies*, India Quarterly, New Delhi, December 1980, p.p. 288-289.

serious note of the potential strength of Soviet navy once the Russians acquired major regional port facilities. The Americans, thus, arrived at three grave conclusions. "First, the Persian Gulf was the most likely flash point for confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Secondly, if Moscow took control of Gulf oil, it would destroy NATO and the American-Japanese alliance without recourse of war by the Soviets. Thirdly, Moscow might be tempted to exploit the political turmoil in Iran to change the world balance of Power".²⁸ It was under these perceptions that the American side kept on interpreting the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as an expansionist design to conquer the region.

Internal Dynamics

The most plausible explanation of Soviet intervention must be sought in the internal dynamics of Afghanistan. Though there can not be a single factor in the world politics, there must be a powerful ingredient triggering a political event at a particular time. In this context, the dynamics of events inside Afghanistan surpasses all other arguments while examining the context of Soviet intervention in 1979. There

28. Bhawani Sen Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

is no reasonable basis to establish that the Soviets had a grand plan to physically conquer the country. It is, worthwhile to investigate as to how far the internal situation of Afghanistan was responsible for attracting the Soviet action to meet the prevailing exigencies. For this, the factors responsible for creating internal instability and the forces of external threat must be examined.

The beginning of the Afghan crisis can be traced back to the year 1973 when Mohammad Daoud overthrew the monarchy. Communists had supported Daoud in the hope of emergence of a democratic Afghanistan. But Daoud turned authoritarian, tilted to the west and became friendly with the Shah of Iran. The economy continued to remain stagnant through out with the result that the material living conditions of the people never made any substantial improvement. Besides, religion played an important role in determining the political behaviour of the people. These are the two important parametres that have been responsible for de-establishing any political set up irrespective of the policy measures announced by the successive governments.

During the first phase of his government from

1953 to 1963, Daoud was inclined towards Soviet Union. In quite contrast to this, the following decade from 1963 to 1973 under King Zahir Shah witnessed American, Iranian and Islamic influences. During the second phase of his rule, Daoud who in 1973 proclaimed himself as President after deposing the King, initiated a number of radical reforms which angered the feudal elements and also the conservative Muslims of the country. On the other hand, he promulgated a ban on the progressive groups. This alienated the left wing from him. All these together indicate that the effective political power in Afghanistan all through remained limited to a very small group of the ruling families. The masses, whose economic status and world view never changed, were out of the power game.

After the Saur Revolution two tendencies have been determining the course of events in Afghanistan, first, the factional fight between the Khalq and Parcham groups, and second, the quest for power. Though there has always been a rivalry between Khalq and Parcham, the purge of Parchamite after the success of Revolution deepened the bad blood between them. The successive fall of Taraki and Amin is a product of feud between Khalq and Parcham. In addition, there

has always been a search for personal power even at the cost of ideology. Of Amin, it is said that he was not only a ruthless Marxist but also an opportunist willing to change sides if the price was high enough.²⁹ The post-Saur Revolution period was marked by the internal feuds based on personal desire for power, which kept the regime always internally unstable.

The other disturbing factor working during the period just after Saur-Revolution was the activities of the political groups opposed to the regimes in power. These groups have been kept alive, encouraged and helped by foreign powers like Iran and China in general and Pakistan and America in particular. In 1979, China tried to set up a Muslim Republic of Pamir on the Afghan territory which would not have been foiled had the Afghans and the Russians been not vigilant.³⁰ It is an open secret that Pakistan not only instigated the rebels but also provided arms and money with the object of establishment of the fundamentalist government in Kabul and also for securing the continued and increased supply of American arms and money. After having an overview

29. M. S. Agwani, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

30. Dev Murarka, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

of this it becomes abundantly clear that the developments during 1978-79 in and around Afghanistan were very disturbing. The country was passing through a very difficult time. "Both the internal instability and the external threat-across perhaps the world's most porous border made the Soviet reaction to the situation in Kabul almost inevitable".³¹ The Soviet Union only tried to defend its friendly neighbour from internal subversion and external armed interference, both being the product of the internal crisis in Afghanistan.

SUMMING UP

An analysis of the motives and circumstances behind the Russian intervention in 1979, clearly indicates that Russia got involved mostly for the sake of Afghanistan. From all accounts, it appears plausible to conclude that Russia neither had an expansionist desire nor did it act to combat the US arms penetration in the Gulf. The Soviet intervention was caused largely due to the internal problems in Afghanistan. This view is based on several facts. First, the Soviet Union did not interfere during the first armed uprising in April 1978. There is therefore, no special reason as to why it could have

31. A.K.Damodaran, op. cit., p. 584.

interfered in 1979 when a pro-Moscow government was already in existence. Even an American political analyst has observed that the "Soviet Military personnel may have played an advisory role during the fighting which followed the start of the coup, but if so, they were probably as surprised as everyone else at the rapid flipflop of events".³² Second, it must be either a trap or a misguided judgement that Russia moved so quickly and so powerfully.

This is attested by the fact that the Russian military move in Afghanistan did not open any additional advantage in terms of Soviet security which it never had before. In effect the Soviet armed intervention in a sovereign nation, had a disturbing effect upon the Soviet relations with the countries of the third world in general and the Muslim countries in particular.³³

Third, right from the very beginning the Soviets have been maintaining that its military support to Afghanistan is geared to the specific circumstances and limited in time horizon. To quote an Indian analyst, "the Soviet objective was to prevent Afghanistan

32. Cited in M.S. Agwani, *op. cit.*, p. 571.

33. M.S. Agwani, *op. cit.*, p. 571.

from becoming a hostile base rather than to retain it as a strategically, or as a model socialist states".³⁴ The Soviet Union, all through without any deviation, has been claiming that the Soviet troops would be withdrawn as soon as the foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan is stopped. Mr. Brezhnev is on record having stated that "we will be ready to commence the withdrawal of our troops as soon as all forms of outside interference directed against the government and the people of Afghanistan are fully terminated. Let the US together with the neighbours of Afghanistan guarantee this and then the need of Soviet military assistance will cease to exist".³⁵

And fourth, it is mainly due to the US and Western propoganda that the Soviet action has been projected as almost an invasion on a sovereign nation. In reality, Soviets came on the request from the Afghan government and under the bilateral treaty. In reality, the US desires the continuation of Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, which would legitimise the military activity of the United States

34. D. Kaushik, Soviet Union and the Afghan Question: New perspective (Mimeo), 1988, p. 5.

35. See B. Sen Gupta, The Afghan Syndrome, Vikas Publishing House, Delhi, 1982, p.p. 89-90.

in the Gulf region and also create additional problems for the Soviet Union both on the domestic and external fronts.

An analysis of the circumstances that led to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, brings to the fore two points. First, that the decision was not taken in haste without proper consideration. Second, that an intervention was not a predetermined inevitable consequence of growing Soviet involvement in Afghanistan.³⁶ The Soviet military action in Afghanistan was to ward off the serious threat faced by the Afghan revolution and also to maintain the security of the Soviet Union's southern border. The developments that led to the Geneva agreement, the subsequent withdrawal of Soviet forces and the initiation of dialogue with the Afghan rebels tend to show that the Soviet Union had no territorial designs over Afghanistan. It is in this context that the UN organisation has played a key role in resolving the Afghan crisis by a negotiated settlement between all the contending parties - Afghanistan, Pakistan, USSR and USA.

36. Dev Murarka, op. cit., p. 131.

CHAPTER - II

PEACE KEEPING ROLE OF U.N.

The United Nations was established with a view to maintain international peace and national security. To achieve this end the organisation is authorised to take collective measures to prevent and remove threats to the peace and to suppress acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace and also to bring about the settlement by peaceful means of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace. The principal organs created for attaining this object were the General Assembly, in which all members should be represented, and the Security Council, in which five Permanent Members were given the key position. This object is clearly stated in the opening words of the charter of the United Nations which reads¹: "we the people of United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war have agreed to establish an international organisation to be known as the United Nations".² And since then, all problems, where peace is considered to be disrupted, are referred to this world organisation for discussion and for resolution of the conflict situation.

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1. The Charter of the United Nations referred to hereinafter as Charter.
 2. K. P. Saksena, The United Nations and Collective Security, D. K. Publishing House, Delhi, 1974, P. 391.

The role of the U.N. in restoring peace, wherever and whenever disturbed, is conducted through the provisions of the charter. There are 19 chapters in addition to an opening sentence, in the Charter of the United Nations. All together, these chapters contains 111 articles defining the purpose, composition, role of the United Nations.

For the purposes of this study, chapter VI- 'Specific Settlement of Disputes', and Chapter VII- action with respect to 'Threats to the Peace, Breach of the Peace and Acts of Aggression', are particularly relevant. These two chapters contain the provisions under which the UN takes up the issue and decides about the course of action. In these chapters, there are altogether 19 articles, (Nos. 33 to 51) which deal with the problem of security. In addition to these, there is one more article 2, Section 7 which is also referred in such a situation. This article, which was also referred to in the case of Afghan issue at the U.N. reads as:

"Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or

shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under chapter VII".³

While debating the issue of Afghanistan, Article 51 was also referred. It reads as under:

"Nothing in the present Charter impairs the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in a way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security".⁴

3. Ibid, p. 392.

4. Ibid, p. 406.

It is under these Articles of the Charter that the UN discusses issues relating to the problem of security among the member countries. During the last 42 years, since the UN came into existence, this world body has debated and taken actions on a large number of issues. Its long experience in resolving various security problems, has brought some important features to the fore. Firstly, "the impact of the system i.e. environment on the Organisation has far surpassed the impact of the Organisation on the system".⁵ Second, the Members while seeking approval or otherwise of the United Nations have made this world organisation "the most significant purveyor of international endorsement or otherwise of the legitimacy of the claims and acts of States".⁶ Third, it has become an established procedure of the United Nations "to call sovereign states to explain and justify their conduct or omission or commission before the world forum".⁷ And fourth, the United Nations is not a world government and therefore it has to act "without the necessary coercive force

5. K.P.Saksena, Afghan Conflicts and the UN, International Studies, op. cit., p. 662.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

to implement its decisions.⁸ These experiences of the UN define the broad pattern of the UN role in resolving conflicts. These also determine the range of peace maintaining possibility by this world body.

THE DEBATES IN UNITED NATIONS

Developments in Afghanistan beginning December 1979, which led to military intervention by the Soviet Union evoked world-wide reaction particularly from USA, Islamic countries and the third world countries. It was the general opinion that the intervention occurred in utter defiance of some of the basic principles of the UN charter such as the non-interference in internal affairs of any state, respect for territorial affairs of any state, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of any state and non-use of force in international relations. The problems of human rights also came to be associated with the Afghan crisis and lakhs of Afghan refugees had fled to Iran and Pakistan. It was under these circumstances that the Afghan question was brought to the Security Council in January 1980.

8. Ibid., p. 663.

CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION IN SECURITY COUNCIL

The Afghanistan question was brought by 52 Member States on 3 January 1980,⁹ to the Security Council, as it meets in a continuous session and has the primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security. They called for an urgent meeting of the council to consider the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. This group which included 10 Islamic nations,¹⁰ insisted that the Soviet intervention had destabilised the area and threatened international peace and security. The Security

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9. The signatory States were: Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Portugal, ~~Saint Lucia~~, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Saint Lucia, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela.
10. These are Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Turkey.

Council discussed this issue from 5th to 9th January 1980. The issue was brought before the Council after a week of the Soviet military action in Afghanistan. Two main factors seem to explain the delay in bringing the matter before the Security Council. Firstly, Czecho-Slovakia, a member of the Warsaw Pact, was President of the Security Council upto 31st December 1979, after which France took over. Secondly, U.S. and other Western powers seemed to be more interested in deriving political advantage by launching anti-Soviet progapanda.

During this debate, the United States and other Western powers adopted a "corridor diplomacy" and took a back seat in the formal proceedings allowing the non-aligned countries and others to take the initiative in sponsoring a draft resolution.¹¹

During the debate Members expressed different opinions as to whether the Soviet action was an outside interference or an internal matter of Afghanistan. Participants in the debate, as usual, were divided in their sympathies, either towards the Soviet side or

11. The resolution was sponsored by a group of 6 countries namely- Bangladesh, Jamaica, Nigar, Philipines, Tunisia and Zambia.

against it. In the debate, the representatives of USSR and German Democratic Republic opposed the adoption of the agenda maintaining that the consideration of the events in Afghanistan represented interference in the internal affairs of a Member State.

Altogether Security Council held six meetings between 5 to 9 January 1980. Supporting the Afghan arguments, the USSR saw in the attempts of some States to describe the Soviet presence as a threat to peace and security as a pretext to distract attention of the world opinion from real facts relating to foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.¹² It explained that the Soviet action had become imperative following intervention by the USA and certain other powers including China in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It justified its action which was taken in adherence to the provisions of the Soviet Afghan Treaty of Friendship, Goodneighbourliness and co-operation,¹³ and also in an attempt to preserve peace and stability in that party of the world.¹⁴ The USSR warned that it would not allow Afghanistan "to

12. UN Chronicle, Vol. 17, No. 5, March 1980, p. 9.

13. This treaty was signed in Moscow on 5 December 1978.

14. UN Chronicle, op. cit.

be turned into a beach head for preparation of imperialist aggression against it". However, the Soviet Union assured the Security Council that it would withdraw its armed forces, once the causes responsible for the Soviet action were removed.

Supporting the Soviet view, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Poland, Mongolia and Vietnam held the views that consideration by the Security Council of the situation in Afghanistan was legally unfounded, politically wrong and counter-productive. They believed that Afghanistan had the right to request help from a state with which it had a legally binding treaty and that the temporary presence in Afghanistan of a limited Soviet military contingent did not represent a threat to international peace and security.¹⁵

Among those which stated that Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan had caused instability in the area and threatened international peace and security were Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand,

15. Year Book of the United Nations, New York, 1980, p. 298.

the Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, The United Kingdom, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia. Chile and Somalia added that the real motive for the USSR's aggression was furtherance of its hegemonic policies, and that USSR was trying to reach the Indian Ocean, control all transportation sealanes and seize oil producing areas.¹⁶

Among the countries in the immediate vicinity of Afghanistan, which were not members of the Council, only Pakistan joined the debate. India and Iran did not participate in the discussion. According to Pakistan's representative the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan on "the pretext of protecting Afghanistan from a hypothetical outside interference". Pakistan called for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Soviet armed forces and creation of conditions which would enable the Afghan people to determine their own government without foreign interference. Supporting Pakistan's view, China condemned the "aggression of the USSR, and at the same time, did not accept the justification by the USSR of its intervention in accordance with Soviet-Afghan treaty under

16. Ibid.

Article 51 of the UN Charter.¹⁷ China viewed the Soviet action in Afghanistan as a southward drive for world hegemony. It urged the Security Council to condemn the Soviet aggression in strongest terms, and to demand firmly the withdrawal of all Soviet armed forces from Afghanistan. The United States also condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and accused the USSR of overthrowing the Amin Government and invading Afghanistan under a careful plan. It did not accept the Soviet view that Article 51 of the Charter provided for the right of self defence. It believed that the Soviets had in fact violated the Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, as the USSR was obliged under this treaty to respect Afghanistan's national sovereignty and to refrain from interfering in its internal affairs. The United Kingdom expressed the view that the present situation in Afghanistan constituted a threat to international peace and security and it urged the Security Council to condemn it.¹⁸

In its consideration of the Afghanistan situation, the Security Council heard statements from its

17. U.N. Chronicle, Vol. 17, No. 5, March 1980, p.p. 10-11.

18. Ibid.

Members and 32 other States at their request and without the right to vote. These States belonged to the non-aligned group, Yugoslavia, for example, supported the call of the non-aligned members of Security Council for immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan.¹⁹ Egypt, another important non-aligned participant, urged the Security Council to demand the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and termination of its interference in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan.²⁰

On 7 January 1980, the Security Council considered a draft resolution sponsored by Bangladesh, Jamaica, the Niger, the Philippines, Tunisia and Zambia. The draft resolution would have had the council "re-affirm its conviction that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state was fundamental principle of the Charter, a violation of which on any pretext was contrary to its aims and purposes; deeply deplore the armed intervention in Afghanistan, which was inconsistent with that principle; and affirm that the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political

19. Ibid., p.p. 10-17.

20. Ibid.

independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan had to be fully respected. The council would have called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan in order to enable its people to determine their own form of government and choose their economic, political and social systems free from any outside intervention, coercion or constraint, requested the Secretary-General to report within two weeks on progress in implementing this resolution, and decided to remain seized of the question."²¹

When the draft resolution was put to vote, it was vetoed by the Soviet Union.²² To overcome the deadlock, Philippines and Mexico presented a procedural draft resolution on 9 January 1980. It invoked the provisions of "Uniting for Peace" Resolution.²³ When put to vote, the draft received 12 votes in favour, 2 against (GDR & USSR) and 1 abstention (Zambia).²⁴ Its adoption as resolution 462 (1980) led to the convening of an Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly, to examine the situation in Afghanistan.

21. Year Book of United Nations, 1980, p. 301.

22. The pattern of Voting in the 15 - Member Security Council was, 13 in favour, 2 against (GDR & USSR).

23. This resolution 377A(V) was adopted by General Assembly on 3 November 1950.

24. Year Book of United Nations, 1980. p. 298

Action by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly considered the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security during the sixth emergency Special session held from 10 to 14 January 1980.²⁵ Some seventy four delegates participated in the ensuing debate. Before adoption of the agenda, the Soviet Union and its die-hard supporters²⁶ including ofcourse Afghanistan justified the military action and objected to the discussion of Afghan situation in the council describing it as "infringing the sovereignty of that country through interference in its internal affairs."²⁷

In the General Assembly, Afghanistan expressed strong opposition to inclusion of the question in the agenda repeating the points it made in the Security Council debate: the sanctity of Article 2 (7), "imperialist" interference in domestic affairs which it described as "undeclared war" by China and the United

25. This was the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly. Five such sessions have been convened so far; first from 1 to 10 Nov., 1956 on Suez Canal crisis, after vetoes by France and UK, Second, from 4 to 10 Nov., 1956 on Hungary after veto by USSR. Third, from 8 to 21 Aug., 1958 on Lebanon after veto by the US and the USSR; fourth, from 17 to 19 Sept., 1960 on Congo after veto by the USSR; and fifth from 17 June to 18 Sept., 1967 on the Middle East on request from USSR.

26. These included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Poland, Mongolia, Laos and Vietnam.

27. Year Book of United Nations, 1980, p. 299.

States. The foreign Minister of Afghanistan stated that the discussion of this issue was based on misconception of developments in his country. He emphasized that this was an entirely domestic development and a bilateral issue between Afghanistan and USSR, which in his view "did not constitute any threat to peace and security in the area or in the world at large." The Soviet representative justified his country's action of sending troops of Afghanistan as being necessary to ensure "The survival of the April 1978 revolution" and to safeguard the Southern border of USSR from external danger. He claimed that this "military assistance was compatible with the right of individual and collective self-defence enshrined in the Charter." Hungary and Czechoslovakia expressed the view that no country or international organisation could interfere with bilateral relations. They considered the Soviet action taken in Afghanistan to be justified. The German Democratic Republic felt that demands for cessation of military assistance from the USSR struck at the inalienable right of the Afghan people to decide their own fate, which included choosing the way and means of ensuring the security and independence of their country. Bulgaria regretted

that "aid rendered to Afghanistan was being wrongly interpreted by some as a blow to the principle of non-alignment. Poland charged, external forces had been aiding and abetting an armed rebellion aimed at overthrowing Afghanistan Government. Mongolia and Vietnam too spoke in a similar vein.

The arguments advanced by Soviet Union and its supporters against the inclusion of the Afghanistan issue in the agenda for discussion by the General Assembly, were effectively countered by the majority of nations. The lead role was played by the Islamic and non-aligned nations and USA, China and West European Countries. A majority of representatives participating in the debate regarded the Soviet action as interference in the domestic affairs of another country in violation of international law and against the principles of the Charter. Singapore, Japan, Pakistan and a number of countries called for immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops. All these countries expressed doubts about the freedom of choice exercised by Afghanistan in permitting the entry of Soviet troops.

In his opening remarks, the President of the Assembly, Salim A. Salim, (United Republic of Tanzania),

said that a threat to peace and security in any part of the world had, in one way or the other, a direct bearing on universal peace and security and thus no nation or group of nations could claim immunity from such development. He believed that the preservation of international peace and security could be realized only through respect for the underlying principles of the Organization, including that or respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states, of non-interference in the domestic affairs of states and of allowing all states to determine freely their own future and their destiny.

Finally, after the procedural debate the agenda was adopted. On 12th January 1980, Pakistan introduced on behalf of 24 sponsors²⁸ a draft resolution similar in content as the one vetoed by the Soviet Union in the Security Council. Pakistan described the Soviet military action in Afghanistan as "contravention of the principles of the Charter and violation of the state sovereignty and national independence of Afghanistan".²⁹

28. The 24 sponsors of the draft resolution were- Bahrain, Bangladesh, Colombia, Costa Rica, Egypt, Fiji, Gambia, Honduras, Indonesia, Malaysia, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Thailand, Tunisia, and Uruguay.

29. U.N. Chronicle, op.cit., p. 6.

Expressing concern over the large exodus of Afghan refugees, the Pakistan representative stated that "the presence of foreign troops would deny the inalienable right of the people of Afghanistan to determine their own destiny and order their internal affairs without foreign interference, coercion, or domination".³⁰ Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ecuador, the Federal Republic of Germany, Indonesia, Nepal and Uruguay condemned the USSR's act as interference in a State's internal affairs and called for immediate troop withdrawal. Turkey and Venezuela called for respecting the principle of non-intervention and the tenets of the Charter. Spain, Austria, France and Malaysia felt that the Soviet action had threatened the policy of detente. The United States urged the United Nations to condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. This viewpoint was shared by Egypt, Brazil and Morocco. Democratic Kampuchea, the Gambia and the Philippines expressed concern at the increasing threat posed to international peace and security. According to China, the USSR continued to ignore world opinion by stopping up its war of aggression against Afghanistan. Australia and Saudi Arabia were among

30. Ibid.

those which called for the restoration of the conditions in which the people of Afghanistan could choose their own Government freely and without outside interference. Malaysia, Peru and Portugal made a similar plea. Iran was not only opposed to the Soviet military intervention in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan, but it also emphasised the illegality of the present regime in Afghanistan. Iran, called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Russian military forces from Afghanistan. Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka also strongly opposed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. In contrast to the majority of the non-aligned countries, including Yugoslavia, which called for the withdrawal of soviet troops, India opted to remain neutral. Earlier, it did not participate in the deliberations of the Security Council. In the General Assembly debates, India expressed her opposition to the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country, without pointing the finger on any country. In an indirect reference to the U.S. and Pakistani interference in Afghanistan, India stated that it "could not look with equanimity on the attempts by some outside powers to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, by training, arming and encouraging subversive elements to create disturbances

in Afghanistan.³¹ The Indian representative further said that "the Soviet Government had assured our Government that its troops went to Afghanistan at the request of the Afghanistan Government..... we have been assured that the Soviet troops will be withdrawn when requested to do so by the Afghanistan Government. We have no reason to doubt such assurances, particularly from a friendly country with which we have many ties."³²

India believed that the discussion in the General Assembly was counterproductive as "certain outside powers have enmeshed themselves in the dangerous web of international power play, based on outmoded doctrines of confrontation and that the people of Afghanistan are being treated as pawns in this terrible game". India did not condemn the USSR, nor did it name the outside powers. India was in favour of moderating the conflict: "India's voice has been consistently in favour of moderation.... We shall achieve nothing by confrontationist attitudes or policies."³³ In later sessions, however, India had to say for record, that

31. The U.N. Chronicle., op. cit., p. 108.

32. A/Es-6/PV. 3, p. 7.

33. A/38/PV. 68, p. 14.

it was "uncompromisingly opposed to the presence of
foreign troops on any soil."³⁴

RESOLUTIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

After an intense debate, the draft resolution introduced by Pakistan on behalf of 24 sponsors, out of which 14 were non-aligned states, was adopted by the General Assembly on 14 January 1980 with an overwhelming majority vote of 104 in favour to 18 against and with 18 absentions.³⁵ While deploring the armed intervention in Afghanistan as inconsistent with fundamental

34. Ibid.

35. The Voting on resolution ES-6/2 was as follows:-

(1) The Voting in favour:

Rica, Democratic Kampuchea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, (Federal Republic), Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, and Zaire.

(2) The voting ... against:

Afghanistan, Angola, Bulgaria, Byelorussian SSR, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Grenada, Hungary, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Mozambique, Poland, Ukrainian SSR, USSR, Viet Nam.

Continued....

principles of the Charter, this resolution called for "the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan to enable its people to determine their own form of government and choose their economic, political and social systems free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatever".³⁶ The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to keep Member States and the Security Council promptly and concurrently informed on the progress towards the implementation of this resolution, and also called upon the Security Council to consider ways and means which could assist in its implementation. The main highlight of the resolution has been that all parties concerned were urged to assist in bringing conditions necessary for the voluntary return of Afghanistan refugees to their home. It should be noted that in the resolution neither the USSR was named nor condemned. Perhaps, it was in pursuance of the wish that by not seeking specific condemnation of the USSR, the non-aligned sponsors hoped to persuade the parties to reach

Contd....

35. (3) The abstentions:

Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Congo, Cyprus, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Madagascar, Mali, Nicaragua, Sao Tome and Principe, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia.

36. U.N. Chronicle, March 1980, op. cit., p. 5.

an amicable settlement of the problem. This attitude of restraint continued to guide the U.N. proceedings in subsequent sessions.

The Afghan crisis continued to figure in the subsequent debates of the United Nations General Assembly. On 16 July, 1980, the Secretary General received a request for inclusion in the agenda of the thirty fifth (1980) session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security." The letter was signed by 35 states, majority of which were Islamic. The General Assembly considered the item at its six meetings held from 17 to 20 November 1980. Opening the debate, the Pakistan Foreign Minister introduced a draft resolution sponsored by 42 Islamic and non-aligned countries.

Afghanistan Foreign Minister regretted that, despite his Government's objections and in violation of the Charter, the Assembly had been induced to discuss the "so called situation" in Afghanistan. He reiterated that events since the 1978 Saur revolution were entirely an internal affairs of his country. He emphasised that the Assembly should condemn the

Continuing interference in Afghanistan's internal Affairs by imperialistic, hegemonic, and other reactionary forces. He reiterated that Afghanistan was prepared to seek a political settlement, as evidenced by its comprehensive proposals put forward on 15 May, 1980.³⁷

The Soviet Union pointed out that the Assembly had chosen to ignore the real external dangers to the security of Afghanistan. The die-hard supporters of Soviet Union like Czechoslovakia, G.D.R., Vietnam, Democratic Yemen, Lao, Hungary, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Poland reiterated their criticism of the use of the United Nations forum for interference in the internal affairs of a Member State.

Majority of States expressed grave concern at the continuation of the tense situation in Afghanistan and the surrounding region, calling on that country to settle its problems through peaceful negotiations and on the USSR to withdraw its forces. Concern for the increasing numbers of refugees in Pakistan was also voiced.

Luxembourg, on behalf of the European Economic Community, rejected any solution that would not give the

37. Year Book of the United Nations, 1980, p. 305.

Afghan people the right to choose their own destiny and leaders. This view was shared by Australia, and Sweden. United States and Spain charged that instead of complying with the Assembly's demand for withdrawal, the USSR had increased the strength of its forces. United Kingdom, Kenya, Japan and China also condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

India, which abstained from voting, advised the participants to observe restraint, rather than apportion blame, and warned that a resolution unacceptable to the countries directly involved could prove counter-productive.

On 20 November 1980, the Assembly adopted the resolution by a recorded vote of 111 in favour, to 22 against with 12 absentions as resolution 35/37. (GA/Res/35/37). While reiterating the principles adopted in the first Resolution, passed in January 1980 the General Assembly, this time asked the U.N. Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, to appoint a special representative to promote a peaceful settlement of the year long crisis which had affected international peace and security.

This resolution, reiterated that preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political

independence and nonaligned character of Afghanistan was essential for a peaceful solution of the problem. It reaffirmed the Afghan people's right to determine their own form of government and their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind, and called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. The Assembly also called on all parties concerned to work for the urgent achievement of a political solution and creation of conditions enabling the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour, and appealed to all states and national and international organizations to extend humanitarian aid to the refugees, in coordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to alleviate their hardship. The Assembly expressed appreciation of the Secretary General's efforts in the search for a solution to the problem.

The matter came up for discussion of the General Assembly again in 1981. On November 18, 1981 the General Assembly adopted a resolution on Afghanistan by a recorded vote of 116 in favour to 23 against with 12 absentions. The draft sponsored by 45 states,

was again introduced by Pakistan. It once more called for immediate withdrawal of foreign troops and reaffirmed the Afghan People's right to determine their own form of government. It requested the Secretary-General to continue efforts for a political solution.³⁸

During the debate Afghanistan, the Socialist countries of Eastern Europe and others opposed the Assembly resolution and called for a negotiated political solution and guarantee of non-intervention in the country's internal affairs.

Pakistan repeated its old arguments. It stated that Kabul authorities wanted to secure legitimacy for their regime. Iran proposed a scheme envisaging national elections for an Afghan Parliament that would write an Islamic constitution; it said details could be negotiated among the Afghan mujahideen, Pakistan, Iran and the USSR as soon as the USSR agreed to recognize Afghan rights and to withdraw its forces.

A number of speakers, which included representatives of USA, Canada, China, FRG, France, Nepal etc. criticized the USSR for maintaining troops in Afghanistan since December 1979 and called for their prompt

38. Ibid, p. 304.

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withdrawal.

Those speaking in support of Afghanistan's position - the socialist States of Eastern Europe, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia and Viet Nam - declared that the Assembly's 1980 resolution had not only failed to bring a political settlement closer, but had rendered such a settlement between Afghanistan and its neighbours more difficult. They emphasized the need to ensure complete cessation of armed or any other form of interference in that country's internal affairs before a political solution could be brought about. They endorsed the proposals for a political settlement made by Afghanistan in May 1980 and August 1981.

The USSR called for a political settlement which would create conditions for the withdrawal of Soviet troops; the sooner agreements that ruled out interference in Afghan affairs were reached and implemented, the earlier the withdrawal of Soviet troops would be initiated and completed. Also urging negotiations to create the conditions for withdrawal, the German Democratic Republic said it would be turning the problem upside-down to make the start of negotiations contingent on withdrawal. Poland stressed

the importance of reliable international guarantees that interference in Afghan affairs would cease and not recur. USSR

Notwithstanding the opposition of Afghanistan, USSR and their supporters, the third draft resolution was adopted on November 18, 1981, by the General Assembly by a recorded vote of 116 in favour to 23 against with 12 absentions (GA/Res/36/34).³⁹

In November 1982 the General Assembly once again took up the Afghan problem. Another resolution, which followed the pattern of three earlier resolutions on the subject, was introduced by Pakistan on behalf of 46 sponsor in the General Assembly.

Once again India abstained from voting expressed disappointment that the text, was only marginal different from the 1981 resolution and emphasized only one element of a comprehensive solution. India felt that such a selective approach made it unacceptable to some of the parties and hardly strengthened the Secretary - General's hand in the exercise of his good offices.

39. Ibid., 1981, p. 233.

The fourth draft resolution was adopted on November 29, 1982 by a recorded vote of 114 in favour to 21 against with 13 absentions (GA/Res/37/37). It followed the pattern of the previous three resolutions adopted by the Assembly since January 1980.

As it was decided in November 1982, the General Assembly again took up for discussion in November 1983 the situation in Afghanistan. Another resolution, identical in content to the earlier four resolutions, was adopted on November 23, 1983 by a recorded vote of 116 in favour to 20 against with 17 abstentions (GA/Res/38/29). It repeated the call for immediate withdrawal of "foreign troops" from Afghanistan and urged the parties concerned to work for a political solution of the Afghan problem.

As in the past, Afghanistan and the Socialist States objected to including the so-called question of Afghanistan in the Assembly's agenda, describing violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

On 15 November 1984, the General Assembly took up the issue again and adopted by a recorded vote of 119 in favour, to 20 against with 18 abstentions (GA/Res/39/13), reiterating its call for the "immediate

withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan".

For the seventh time, since the Afghan issue came before the General Assembly in January 1980, the matter was brought up for discussion in November 1985. Introducing yet another draft resolution on behalf of 45 Islamic and non-aligned countries Pakistan stated that foreign military forces in Afghanistan threatened South-West Asia's peace and stability and cast a shadow on global security. It felt that there could be a political settlement only through the diplomatic process initiated by the Secretary-General. USA and other European Council members supported the Pakistani contention. India continued its policy of abstention. It asked the international community to work for the evolution of a political settlement based on dialogue between the parties directly involved. The seventh draft resolution was adopted on 13 November 1985, by a recorded vote of 122 in favour, to 19 against with 12 abstentions (GA/Res/40/12). The text of the resolution was the same as in the previous one.

On 5 November 1986 the General Assembly once again adopted the eight resolution by a recorded vote of 122 in favour, to 20 against with 11 abstentions (GA/Res/41/33). Calling for the immediate withdrawal

of the foreign troops from Afghanistan, it further expressed support for the efforts and constructive steps taken by the Secretary-General. On 10 November 1987, the General Assembly adopted the ninth resolution by a recorded vote of 123 in favour to 19 against with 11 abstention (GA/Res/42/15). It was similar to the previous one.

The distinguishing feature of the General Assembly debates from 1980 to 1987 has been that the original content of the first resolution were more or less repeated in all the subsequent resolutions. The tone of debates and the position of the individual Members of the UN General Assembly who took part in the debates, remained almost identical.

The overall assessment is that the United Nations did not take any direct action on Afghan problem because of the negative vote of the Soviet Union in the Security Council. However, there has been one fruitful outcome that it requested the Secretary-General to continue efforts for promoting a political solution to the Afghan problem. With the result, the Geneva round of talks was initiated with full sincerity and vigour by the Secretary-General.

CHAPTER - III

UN PEACE INITIATIVE

From the very beginning, when the Afghan situation came to be discussed by the United Nations in January 1980, this international body observed restraint and did neither name nor condemn USSR directly, leaving scope for a political settlement of the crisis in future. In fact, the second resolution of the U.N. General Assembly dated 20 November 1980 appreciated the efforts made by the Secretary General in finding a solution to the problem. It authorised him to appoint a special representative with a view to promoting a negotiated political solution. This position was reiterated by the General Assembly in all its subsequent resolutions. This shows that the Member States were conscious of the fact that a negotiated political settlement alone could ease tension and bring peace in and around Afghanistan. They reposed confidence in the Secretary General and authorised him to continue the talks hammering out a comprehensive political solution to the Afghan problem. With the result, indirect talks, known as "proximity talks" were initiated between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the two contending parties confronting on Afghan issue. In June 1982 at Geneva, the conference venue of international politics.¹ Their original positions had been so

1. P.B. Sinha - Geneva Talks on the Afghan Problem, Strategic Analysis, New Delhi, Vol. VI, No. 6, September 1982, p. 337.

rigid that any reconciliation between them appeared to be impossible. In view of such hostile postures of the parties concerned, a wayout for a search of a meaningful modus operandi for talks between them was very difficult. It was, however, due to the patient and sustained efforts of the UN Special Representative, that several rounds of talks at Geneva culminated in an accord in April 1988. There were three fundamental differences in their approach to the problem. First, what was the Afghan problem; second, how the Afghan crisis came into being and third, when was it created. Pakistan and its supporters have been insisting that the problem was created by the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. Afghanistan and its supporters, on the other hand, held that the developments of December 1979 were not the cause but the effect of the problem. In fact, the problem, according to them, has been the foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan in which Pakistan was playing the main role.

Pakistan laid down the following four principles for any resolution of the Afghan problem:

- (1) Withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan;

- (2) The return of Afghan refugees to their homes "in safety and honour";
- (3) The "restoration" of Afghanistan's non-aligned status; and
- (4) The right of the Afghan people to decide their own form of government without outside intervention.²

Pakistan demanded an "Unconditional, total and complete" withdrawal of Soviet troops as a prerequisite to any effort of negotiation for resolving the Afghan problem.³ Pakistan was not prepared to recognise the government of Babrak Karmal and therefore would not deal with it so long as the Soviet troops remain stationed in Afghanistan. Iran, too, adopted the identical stand to that of Pakistan.

Afghanistan being a sovereign nation and having friendship treaty with the USSR, regarded the question of Soviet military presence as its own internal affair. As such, it considered that no other country had any right for any say in this

2. Ibid, p. 337.

3. Ibid, P. 338.

matter and that it was a matter solely between Kabul and Moscow. Afghanistan, however, expressed its willingness bilateral discussions with Pakistan and Iran so that intervention in Afghanistan from their side was stopped and a mechanism of international guarantees, which would ensure that such foreign intervention did not recur, was evolved.

Diplomatic Moves

Soon after the U.N. General Assembly passed the resolution on January 14, 1980, serious diplomatic moves were initiated by the European Council members to resolve the Afghan crisis. The Foreign Ministers of the nine European Community countries, in a meeting held on February 19, 1980 in Rome approved a proposal of the neutralization of Afghanistan under international guarantees in return for the Soviet withdrawal.⁴ This neutralization plan was sponsored by Lord Carrington, the British Commonwealth Secretary and also the President of EEC, Council of Ministers. Lord Carrington's proposal provided for (a) the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan; (b) a declaration by Afghanistan of its neutrality and

4. Keesing's contemporary Archives. Vol. XXVI; London, August, 1980, p. 30381.

nonalignment; and (c) the recognition of this neutrality by surrounding countries, who would give an undertaking not to interfere in the internal affairs.⁵ The proposal had the potential of a negotiating settlement to resolve the crisis. But there was a glaring lacuna in it. The government of Afghanistan was not included as a primary negotiating partner, presumably because the western governments had refused to recognise this government as the legitimate representative of the Afghan people. The proposal, was, therefore rejected on this ground by USSR. Nevertheless, the European Council did not give it up rather it persisted in its efforts, now bringing it in the form of another proposal which was put forth in mid-1981. The new proposal was more comprehensive. It provided for a two-stage international conference, (each stage framing part of an integrated negotiation process) for resolving the problem. The purpose of stage one⁶ was "to work out an international arrangement designed to bring about the cessation of external intervention" in future.⁷ The purpose of stage two of the conference

5. K. Subrahmanya, *The Afghan Problem: Prospects for Negotiated settlement, Strategic Analysis*, New Delhi, July 1987, p. 47.

6. Stage one of the proposed conference was to include the five permanent members of the UN, Pakistan, Iran and India as well as the Secretary General of the UN, and the Secretary General of the Islamic-conference or their respective representatives.

7. *The Asian Recorder*, Vol. XXVII, No. 33, New Delhi, p. 16167.

was to reach an understanding on the implementation of arrangements worked out in stage one, and on "all other matters to assure Afghanistan's future as an independent and non-aligned state".⁸

This revised proposal was also rejected by DRA and USSR, both of whom expressed serious doubts on the integrity of some of the members making the proposal and also on the contents of the proposal. It was pointed out that some of the European Council members themselves were active participants in encouraging the insurgency activities in Afghanistan. Moreover, the first of the two proposals sought to ignore the increasing role of the US in the crisis. President Karmal called it a plan worked out "behind Afghanistan's back". This he maintained on the ground that while the proposal recognised the US and the role of Islamic conference in the settlement of the problem, it excluded the participation of the DRA. It was pointed out that the EEC proposal seeking the participation of the "representatives of the Afghan people" during the second stage was designed to not only involve the PDPA government but also the insurgent

8. Ibid.

groups in the negotiations.⁹ This meant that EEC wanted to give a dominant voice to the insurgents of Afghanistan in the event of a Soviet withdrawal, which was detrimental to the Soviet security interests. Although the second proposal had the general support of the Islamic Conference, the United States, the People's Republic of China and 10 members of the European community, it was not accepted by the Afghan Government and by the Soviet Union as a basis for negotiations on the Afghan question. The rejection was done on the ground that the settlement had direct bearing on DRA, which was not recognised at all.

Iran which had earlier refused to have any talks with the DRA regime also came out with its own proposal in November 1981. The Iranian proposal contemplated (1) "the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and their replacement by a joint peace-keeping force comprising Pakistani and Iranian troops, as well as the troops of an unspecified third country", and (2) replacement of the Afghanistan government by "a council of 30 clergymen of the Moslem world". The Iranian proposal was supported by

9. Keesing's Archives, Vol. XXXVII, London, June 1982, p. 31142.

10. Ibid., p. 31545.

Pakistan but was rejected by at least three of the Mujahideen groups, Afghan Government and the USSR. They maintained that the Iranian proposal hardly offered any basis for a possible negotiated settlement.

Afghan Proposals for Peace

The first initiative for peaceful solution of the problem was formally announced by the PDPA regime in April 1980. The Afghan govt. proposed talks with the Iranian and Pakistan govts. to discuss questions pertaining to the normalisation of bilateral relations, without any preconditions. It also proposed to negotiate on lowering the level of military spending and reducing armaments and hostile propaganda. Subsequently, a revised version of the proposal, which had the backing of USSR was announced on May 14, 1980. The objective of the proposal was "to search for a political settlement to ensure the complete termination of aggressive actions against Afghanistan, of subversive activities and all other forms of interference from outside in its internal affairs, to eliminate tension in the area and overcome differences by peaceful means and by

negotiations".¹¹ The Afghan govt. promised to hold bilateral negotiations with Iran, and Pakistan for drawing up bilateral agreements on normalization of relations with its two Muslim neighbours. Afghanistan proposed that the agreement among parties should provide for (i) mutual respect for national sovereignty; (ii) the development of relationship on the basis of good neighbourliness and non-interference; and (iii) an undertaking of discharging responsibility not to permit armed activities from the territory of one country against the other. Besides, the Afghan govt. considered the guarantees from USA and USSR, as part of the bilateral agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and, Afghanistan and Iran.¹² These guarantor countries were expected to respect Afghanistan's bilateral agreements with Iran and Pakistan. The Afghan proposal stated: "The cessation and guaranteed non-recurrence of

11. Quoted by K. Subramanya from "Afghanistan wants Peace - Proposals of DRA for normalisation of situation around Afghanistan" (Published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DRA Government, Kabul, 1982). p. 419.

12. The Asian Recorder, 1981, op. cit., p. 15551

unitary invasions and any other forms of interference in internal affairs of Afghanistan would eliminate the reasons which prompted Afghanistan to request the USSR to send the above mentioned contingent to the territory".¹³ The content and the spirit of Afghan proposal made it clear that the withdrawal of the Soviet troops would be executed only after agreements were reached regarding non-interference by the parties under agreement. In other words, the parties behind the interference in Afghanistan must accept this basic commitment. The publication of the Afghan proposals on 14 May 1980 coincided with the opening in Warsaw of a meeting of Warsaw Pact nations - Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union. -After the meeting, the participants issued a statement which among other things stressed the need for a political settlement of the Afghanistan situation with guarantees for the termination of external interference to facilitate the withdrawal of Soviet troops.¹⁴

13. Ibid.

14. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, op. cit., p. 30384.

The proposal made by Afghanistan on May 14, 1980 and repeated in August 24, 1981 could not make any headway, since both Pakistan and Iran, which did not recognise the government of DRA refused to hold any talks with the Afghan govt. on the settlement of Afghan problem. Iran took the stand that it would not participate in any talks with Afghanistan government without the participation of insurgent groups. So, the peace initiative of Afghanistan failed to lure Iran and Pakistan into direct talks. But in the meanwhile, Javier Perez de Cuellar, the personal envoy of U N Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, started a series of separate talks in Pakistan and Kabul, with the aim of opening a dialogue between the contending parties to bring out an agreed solution to the problem.

Shuttle Diplomacy

The efforts made at the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations in January 1980 failed to project any hope of finding an immediate solution to the Afghan problem. But it was recognised that most effective solution to the impasse lay in bringing the parties around a negotiation table. The

U N efforts, particularly those of its Secretary General and special representative in this regard were indeed creditable. The role of U N in bringing the contending parties together for talks was crucial, as both refused to recognise the DRA. They were not prepared to sit down for talks with Afghan government. A Special representative, J.P. de Cuellar, was appointed by the U N Secretary General on 11 February 1981, to seek negotiations over political settlement of Afghanistan, in terms of the second resolution of the General Assembly. The irreconcilable situation was normalized only through the mediation efforts made by the U N representative, who shuttled between Kabul, Islamabad and Tehran. Afghanistan, which had hitherto insisted that the U N should have only an observer status in any talks involving Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan, now relented. Perez de Cuellar reported to Waldheim on 12 August 1981, that the Pakistan and Afghan Governments were ready to meet in trilateral talks, with the U N as a third party. It was also reported that Afghanistan and Pakistan had tentatively agreed on a four point agenda for the subsequent

negotiations. These were; the removal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, pledges of non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, international guarantee of non-interference and the return of Afghan refugees to their homes.¹⁵

The negotiations for settlement of the Afghan problem remained held up because of Pakistan's stand. Pakistan while agreeing in principle to discuss the issue at an international level under U N auspices, reiterated that the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan territory and the restoration of Afghanistan's non-aligned status should precede any negotiated settlement. In February 1982, Diego Cordovez, an Under Secretary General of the U N, was appointed as the U N Special representative for Afghanistan after Perez de Cueller had become the U N Secretary General.

As already stated, during mid-1981, serious attempts were made to hold discussions on the Afghan problem between the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. In fact, on August 24, 1981, the Afghan Government issued a statement accepting the

15. Keesing Contemporary Archives, Vol. XXVII, October 23, 1981, London, p. 31143.

principle of trilateral discussions between the three countries involved in Afghan question. It also accepted the active participation of the United Nations in the negotiation talks. Between August 4 and August 10, 1981 Sr. Javier Paraz de Cuellar, the personal envoy of Dr. Waldheim, held a series of separate talks in Karachi (Pakistan) with Mr. Agha Shahi, the Pakistan Minister of Foreign Affairs, and in Kabul (Afghanistan) with members of the Afghan Government. In these discussions his sole aim was to open dialogue between them which would lead to the ultimate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Despite the Afghan proposals of August 24, 1981, and despite the efforts of the United Nations to initiate discussions, there was no clear indication that Pakistan, Iran or the Soviet Union would alter their basic stand on the Afghan issue in any substantial manner. The change in the Afghan position was regarded as only a minor modification of its statement for May 14, 1980.¹⁶ Under such circumstances the mediation efforts of the new UN representative provides the only ray of hope of breaking the deadlock on the Afghan crisis, which was accentuating

16. Ibid, p. 31143.

with the passage of time.

In spite of the statement in the process of negotiations the United Nations continued its efforts to bring out a political settlement of Afghan situation and a withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. On April 22, 1982, it was announced at UN Headquarters in New York that Afghanistan and Pakistan would hold close-proximity talks at Geneva in June 1982 with the aim of resolving the crisis in South-West Asia and bringing about the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.¹⁷ This was how the shuttle diplomacy succeeded in making Pakistan and Afghanistan agree to start negotiations under UN auspices. Since then the talks were conducted through Diego Cordovez, UN under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs - as the Special envoy of the UN Secretary - General, who met each of the involved parties, including also the Soviet leadership, in turn in an effort to establish a basis for more direct and substantial talks. After these preliminary discussions Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to hold proximity talks in Geneva with Cordovez as the mediator. Iran did not agree for direct talks. However, it accepted the UN mediation effort and agreed

17. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, 1982, New Delhi, p. 16619.

to be kept informed of the talks through its Ambassador in Geneva. The important aspect of the talks was that Pakistan, while agreeing for the talks, did not insist on the Soviet withdrawal of troops as a precondition. At the same time, it did not insist on the participation of Iran in the talks. Similarly, the Government of Afghanistan also agreed to participate in the talks without insisting that Pakistan must recognise the DRA, though it made one condition that the talks would be held under the good offices of the emissary of the Secretary - General and that they could not be linked at all with the resolutions of the UN, which Afghanistan had rejected".¹⁸

The Geneva Talks

(a) The First Round, June 1982: The First round of proximity talks was held in Geneva between June 16 and 24, 1982 involving Shah Dost Mohammad, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, and his Pakistani counterpart Yaqub Khan. The discussions conducted by UN aimed at reaching a compromise settlement of the problem. The inter related elements of comprehensive settlement as agreed at Geneva were:-

- Withdrawal of foreign troops,

18. P.B. Sinha: The Afghan Problems, W.L.D.S.A. Journal, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Oct - Dec. 1983, ND, p. 124.

- guarantees of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of the States in the region; and
- Arrangement for return of refugees to their home.

During the discussions Iran did not participate but was kept informed through a representative in Geneva.¹⁹ These talks provided a framework for further discussion. Besides Pakistan and Afghanistan had made important concessions. Careful consideration was also given to modalities and timing of a consultative mechanism that to be set in motion to consult refugees in order to ascertain the voluntary character of their returns.²⁰

(b) The Second Round - (April 1983) :-

The Second round of indirect talks between the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan took place in Geneva on April 11-22, 1983. Like the first round, this time also Iran did not participate in the discussions but its representative in Geneva was kept informed about the progress in talks. This time representatives of

19. Asian Recorders, Vol. XXVIII, No. 22, 1982, New Delhi, p. 16619.

20. P.B. Sinha, op. cit., 128.

Afghan refugees were allowed to be present outside the conference hall although no formal consultations were made with them. Soviet advisers, too, were available for consultations on this occasion. According to reports, both Afghanistan and Pakistan set down non-interference in each other's internal affairs as a pre-condition for any agreement. Pakistani sources disclosed that the talks resulted in identifying time-bound areas for negotiations on which both Pakistan and Afghanistan held divergent position.²¹ At this round of talks which was held in "a very constructive atmosphere", a draft text of the comprehensive political settlement of the problem prepared by Mr. Cordovez, was discussed. The talks were adjourned on April 22, till mid-June to enable the Pakistani and Afghan delegations to consult their governments on the issues specified in the draft text.

(c) The Third Round (June 1983) :-

As decided earlier, another round of talks was held in Geneva between June 12-24, 1983. The talks were conducted by the UN negotiator who met separately and alternately with delegations from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The draft agreement discussed in this round was based on four main points:

21. Ibid.

- (1) Withdrawal of the estimated 105,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan;
- (2) Cessation of aid to the guerrillas;
- (3) Repatriation of refugees; and
- (4) International guarantees that the settlement will be observed.²²

However, talks failed to make any major progress on the significant issues which were passed on to the fourth round of talks to be held in 1984.²³

In the third week of June, Mr. Georgi A. Arbatov, Director of the Soviet Union's institute on U S A and Canada, said in a speech in Geneva that U S S R was ready to pull its troops out as soon as sufficient guarantees were obtained from Pakistan. Meanwhile, in Moscow, on June 10, Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, offered to let United Nations observers check if Afghan rebels operated from Pakistani territory. Yakub Khan said that the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the formation of non-aligned government acceptable to Afghanistan people and the return of refugees should form part of any comprehensive settlement that was

22. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXX, No. 40, 1984, New Delhi, p. 17961.

23. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. XXXIX, July, 1983, London, p. 32252.

worked out at Geneva talks.²⁴

At the end of these three rounds of talks an acceptable agreement was reached on three of the four diplomatic 'instruments' dealing with the principles of non-interference and non-intervention, the declaration of international guarantees and the basis for the voluntary return of the refugees. However, there was little progress on the fourth instrument of the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan.²⁵ The time frame suggested by Afghanistan for the withdrawal of the Soviet forces was four years. This was not accepted by either Pakistan or the U.S. During these talks, Afghanistan and Pakistan finalised the discussion on the question of international guarantees and agreed to invite the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. to act as guarantor of the future agreement.²⁶

(d) The Fourth Round (August 1984):- The talks began in Geneva on August 24-30, 1984 in the

24. Ibid.

25. K. Subrahmanya, The Afghanistan problem: prospects for Negotiated settlement, Strategic Analysis, New Delhi, July 1987, P. 417.

26. Ibid.

shadow of Pakistani accusation of air and artillery attacks across its border by Afghanistan. According to U.N. Under Secretary-General, Mr. Cordovez, although both sides seemed determined to make progress in the talks, there was tremendous distrust between them.²⁷

The talks were stalled, however, by the Soviet Union's refusal to specify a timetable for the withdrawal of its troops and by Afghanistan's insistence on guarantees of the cessation of foreign assistance to guerrilla organisation.

(e) Fifth Round (June, 1985):- The fifth round of proximity talks took place during June 20-25, 1985.²⁸ The talks, which started in an atmosphere of optimism, sought to focus for the first time on an elaborate set of draft agreements prepared by Mr. Cordovez. The four main points at issue were: (1) obtaining withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; (2) Achieving non-interference and non-intervention in Afghanistan's internal affairs; (3) Securing guarantees of non-interference and non-intervention; and (4) Implementing the return of refugees to Afghanistan.

27. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXX, No. 40, 1984, New Delhi, p. 17961.

28. Agreements on Political Settlement Relating to Afghanistan, Geneva, April 14, 1988, p. 11.

The talks aimed at breaking a two-year dead-lock on the implementation of the four-point UN settlement plan that envisaged the withdrawal of an estimated 1,15,000 Soviet troops from Afghanistan, return of about 5 million Afghan refugees from Pakistan and Iran and international guarantees of security for Afghanistan.²⁹ The contending parties agreed to meet again in August.

(f) Sixth Round (August 1985):- The sixth round of talks began from Aug. 27-30, 1985 between Afghanistan and Pakistan. At the conclusion of the talks, the UN representative Mr. Diego Cordovez disclosed that the US and the Soviet Union had been asked formally to guarantee a United Nations peace plan for the Afghan conflict and both had expressed support. This step had been taken after Afghanistan and Pakistan had agreed during the UN sponsored talks in June to ask the super-power to act as guarantors.

Mr. Cordovez summarised the progress made on the draft agreement during the Geneva talks as under:-

29. Asian Recorder, op.cit, P. 18431.

- (1) agreement on non-intervention and non-interference virtually completed;
- (2) agreement on international guarantors for a settlement was also completed;
- (3) agreement on repatriation of more than three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan was almost completed; and
- (4) finding a way to address the question on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was under discussion.³⁰

Pakistan insisted for setting up a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, which remained a major obstacle. Pakistan, however, admitted that both the Soviet Union and USA had "strongly and unambiguously" supported the Geneva process.³¹

(g) The Seventh Round (December 1985):-

Mr. Cordovez held parallel talks in Geneva with Mr. Dost and with the Pakistani Foreign Minister Lt. Gen. Sahibzada Yaqub Khan on December 16-19, 1985.³²

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30. Ibid, P. 18587
 31. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXXI, No. 45, 1985, New Delhi, p. 18587
 32. Agreement on Political Settlement relating Afghanistan, Geneva, 14 April, 1988.

During these meetings, Mr. Dost was reported to have informally presented Mr. Cordovez with a timetable for a withdrawal of all Soviet troops within a year. But Afghanistan declared that a formal submission of the time-table for the consideration of the Pakistani negotiator would not be made until they agreed to direct talks.³³

By now a draft agreement had been drawn up for three of the four (instruments) or parts of a final accord, non-interference in Afghan affairs; international peace guarantees; and the return of Afghan refugees. But the Pakistani and Afghan negotiators continued to differ on the inter-relationship of these issues with the actual withdrawal of foreign Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Also, there was another basic disagreement, which was as to whether the talks should be continued in an indirect form as favoured by Pakistan, or conducted directly, as demanded by Afghanistan.³⁴ Several aspects of the issue; were finalised during the eight round of talks in May 1986.

33. Keesing Contemporary Archives, Vol. XXXII, December 1986, London, p. 34820.

34. The Times of India, New Delhi, December, 21, 1985.

(h) The Eighth Round, (May 1986):- The Eighth Round of the Geneva 'proximity' talks resumed on May 5, but adjourned on May 23, 1986 after 3 weeks of what negotiators termed a 'marathon effort' to conclude an agreement. The two sides were still sharply divided over the question of a time table for troops withdrawal. The May session was designed to hammer out a settlement of the Afghan problem, including the question of withdrawal of Soviet forces. The text of the first three instruments, relating to the principles of non-interference, the declaration of international guarantees, and the basis for the voluntary return of refugees was settled during the negotiations last year. The Fourth instrument contained crucial provisions linking the terms of the troops withdrawal with simultaneous enforcement of non-interference across international borders. But no agreement was reached on two vital aspects relating to the time for the withdrawal of the Soviet forces and its relation to the enforcement of non-interference across international borders and the procedure for verifying the implementation of the package settlement once it was under way. It was also reported that the talks considered the possibility of forming an international commission to oversee the implementation of the relevant part of the package settlement.³⁵

35. Lawrence Lifschultz; Afghanistan Edging Closer, Economic and Political Weekly; Vol. XXI, No. 23 New Delhi, 1986, P. 1001.

Pakistan and the US called for a six month time frame, whereas the Soviets suggested eighteen months. Soviet Union made it clear through two public statements during the Geneva negotiations that it was prepared to set a schedule for withdrawal. The discussions in eighth round of talks were exclusively focussed on the issue of troop - withdrawal, but inconclusively.

(i) The Ninth Round (August 1986):-

The Ninth round of UN sponsored informal talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General's special envoy Diego Cordovez was held in Geneva on July 31 and was adjourned on August 8, 1986, Cordovez acted as a mediator between the Pakistan and Afghanistan foreign Ministers as Pakistan still did not recognise the legitimacy of the Kabul government. However, after four years of intermittent talks, a breakthrough appeared near in the Afghanistan conflict.³⁶

During this period, significant political changes took place in Afghanistan, which had a direct bearing on the efforts of settlement of the problem. Major General Najibullah had now replaced

36. Larry Jagan, Afghanistan: Summit Surprise, Economic and political weekly, Vol. XXI, No. 34, New Delhi, August 23, 1986, p. 1493.

President Karmal, with whom Pakistan was not willing to deal. Hence, politically this step was intended to create a better atmosphere for the final stage of negotiations.³⁷ The Soviet Union also announced that a time table was ready for the phased withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan.³⁸ Further, Najibullah's leadership initiated national reconciliation moves and started inducting moderate groups with Afghanistan into the Revolutionary council. He was also prepared to discuss Afghanistan's future with insurgent leaders in a neutral country.

It was in the background of these developments, that the ninth round of proximity talks was held with the hope to bring about a final settlement of the problem. However, the differences with regard to the timeframe continued to persist, because Soviet Union supported the 18 months offer of Afghanistan for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. But Pakistan demanded three to four months for the withdrawal.³⁹

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37. K. Subrahmanya, The Afghanistan problem: prospects for negotiated settlement, strategic analysis, New Delhi, July '86, p. 423.
38. "Soviet view of contemporary World", Excerpts from the political speech of CPSU General Secretary to the 27th Congress, in Secular Democracy (March 1986), p. 52.
39. Dawn Overseas weekly, March 12, and 19, 1987, Lahore.

(j) The Tenth Round (February 1987) :-

The next round of talks resumed on February 25, 1987 at Geneva with both Pakistan and Afghanistan promising the UN mediator that they would consider time-table for withdrawing Soviet troops from Afghanistan. It was hoped to bring about a final settlement of the problem. The talks were adjourned on March 9, 1987.

In early 1987 several developments took place in Afghanistan. Najibullah government initiated a policy of national reconciliation, offered amnesty to the guerrillas, proposed to form a coalition government and announced cease-fire from January 15.

It was in this context that this round of proximity talks began in February and resumed once again on March 11. The main achievement of this round had been to narrow the gap in the difference over the time-frame of Soviet troop withdrawal proposals made by the two sides. Cordovez stated that the gap in their demands was down to one year. Agreements had already been reached on three instruments, but these were all vitally linked to the Soviet pull-out. As long as that remained unresolved, others were equally in abeyance.

In this round of talks, the departure of the Soviet troops involved a mutually acceptable time table and also three related questions like; the cessation of assistance to the Mujahadeen assistance, the future shape of the Kabul government, and the nature of the troops withdrawal. The Russians were reported to have offered withdrawal in phases, from individual regions starting from the south. Another significant development by the end of this round coincided with the announcement by USA of stepping up its supply of anti-aircraft stinger missile to the Mujahideen rebels.⁴⁰

(k) The Eleventh Round (September, 1987):-

The next round of talks was held in Geneva between September 7-11-1987. Afghan delegation expressed readiness to undertake all necessary measures to ensure success of the talks and to achieve a fair political settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan. It was concluded that the precise dates of the withdrawal would be decided during the coming round of consultations in Geneva.⁴¹

40. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXXIII, No. 15 and No. 17, 1987, New Delhi, pp. 19399, 19423.

41. Ibid, p.19667.

(1) The twelfth Round (March, 1988) :-

The UN sponsored peace talks entered on March 2, 1988 a crucial phase with all sides pledging to seek a rapid conclusion of the peace process. The talks ended on April, 8, 1988. The Soviet leader, Gorbachov had already announced on February 8, 1988 that his country would withdraw half of its troops from Afghanistan in the first three months, after the withdrawal begins on May 15, 1988.

The new round started with the UN mediator, Mr. Diego Cordovez, shuttling between the two delegations seated in separate rooms of the Palais des Nations, the UN office in Geneva. This format had been retained since the talks started in 1982 because Pakistan did not recognise the Kabul Government.

The first session of talks failed to produce an agreement. Pakistan insisted for the formation of a interim government to replace the present Kabul regime and to be simultaneous with the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. But Afghanistan, however, made important concessions to permit an agreement on a nine-month time-frame for the Soviet troops withdrawal. The USA also modified its demand from a total end of Soviet assistance to a one year cessation,

to begin at the start of the nine-month Soviet troops withdrawal period.⁴²

The UN sponsored talks on Afghanistan resumed on March 28, 1988. Both Soviet Union and the United States backed by Pakistan were bent on having a regime in Kabul favourably disposed to the protecting superpower.⁴³ Pakistan's Chief negotiator stated that the question of 'symmetry' - simultaneous cessation of Soviet military assistance to Kabul government. and the US assistance to the Muslim guerillas - was the last unresolved issue. Pakistan believed that the question of a "symmetrical" cut of assistance by the two sides to their respective allies could be resolved only after the two guarantors settled the issue. As against this, Soviet Union maintained that the current proximity talks could conclude without US guarantees as the region was not connected with that country. The Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze described the US condition of symmetry on arms supplies to Afghanistan as an interference in USSR's relationship

42. Asian Recorder, 1988, op. cit., pp. 19955, 19967.

42. Indian Express, Afghan accord in Jeopardy, September 5, 1988, New Delhi.

with the neighbouring country.⁴⁴ Meanwhile the US, Pakistani, Afghan and the Soviet officials held hectic rounds of talks to end the deadlock on the issue of 'symmetry'. In any case, Soviet Union was keen to see an early end to its military involvement in Afghanistan, as it was a heavy drain on its economy. In the context of Gorbachov's Policy of 'perestroika' and 'glasnost' the Soviet military involvement in a neighbouring country was a great political liability.

The settlement to the vexed Afghan problem seemed imminent on early April 1988, when both the Soviet and Pakistani leaders declared that all obstacles to signing an accord had been removed. The Soviet leader, Gorboacev and the Afghan President Najibullah, issued a joint statement on 7 April, 1988 from Tashkent stating that the way for the conclusion of the Geneva agreements had been cleared. The Pakistan President, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq also sounded an optimistic note in Islamabad stating that the US and the issue of symmetry in respect of arms supply. Addressing a joint session of Parliament on 7 April,

44. Indian Express, April 1, 1988,
New Delhi.

President Zia said, " a miracle of the 20th century was about to happen." The Geneva accord, comprising four instruments that relate to non-interference and non-intervention in Afghanistan, return of Afghan refugees, the USA and USSR acting as guarantors for the smooth implementation of the accord and nine-month time frame for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan; was finally signed in April 14, 1988 by the contending parties, Afghanistan, Pakistan Soviet Union and United States. The accord represented a major stride in the efforts to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The Geneva negotiations beginning from 16 June 1982 and ending on 14 April 1988 spanning over a period of six years, faced difficulties at every stage. Whereas some obstacles were inherent in the nature of the problem, some were the result of the irreconcilable stands of the contending parties. Though an early understanding had been reached on the first three instruments, there was continued disagreement on the issue of withdrawal of Soviet troops. The time frame was the main hurdle. Initially, Afghanistan proposed a time-frame of 4 years for the complete withdrawal. Finally, a nine month time frame was agreed upon by the Afghan side, which was accepted to Pakistan and the US. The status of the boundaries

between Afghanistan and Pakistan also became a hurdle in the negotiation process. As is well known, the Durand Line, has been an irritant in the bilateral relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The differences on the question of international boundary have deep historical connotations between the two countries. This problem, however, was overcome by adopting a language in the final agreement which would avoid the mention of conflicting positions by the parties concerned. The problem relating to the formation of interim Afghan government remained a matter of intense controversy during the Geneva talks. This ultimately was resolved when Pakistan conceded the point that its discussion would infringe upon the right of a sovereign state. Finally, the mechanism of control and verification was also discussed during the Geneva talks. It was finally agreed upon that the United Nations Good Offices Mission would be entrusted with the task of supervision.

CHAPTER - IV

GENEVA ACCORD

The accord, signed in the Palace of Nations at Geneva, between Pakistan and Afghanistan with the Soviet Union and United States standing guarantee, on 14 April 1988 marked a momentous occasion in the diplomatic history of our time. It is a land-mark since it re-established the legitimate role of the United Nations in resolving conflict situations. It is a land-mark because the Afghan crisis has been a sore point between Moscow and Washington, poisoning the global atmosphere. But more than that, it is land-mark since it ushered a new era in the life of Afghanistan, which, for a decade, had been reeling under bloody civil war exacting heavy toll of human and material wealth of the Afghan society. The UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who presided over the signing ceremony, aptly remarked on the occasion that the "documents which have been just signed represent a major stride in the effort to bring peace to Afghanistan and a sure reprieve for its people".¹

The accord is a result of the arduous work done by the U N representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez for 6 years to bring the contending parties at the negotiating table and

1. See Hindu, 15 April 1988.

to get their contradictory stands reconciled to an agreed peace-package to end the 8 year long undeclared war in Afghanistan. The long-awaited accord, reached after six years of tough bargaining, was signed by the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Zain Noorani, the Afghan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Wakil, the U S Secretary of State Mr. George Shultz and the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze. The 36 page Geneva agreement in English, Russian, Urdu and Pashtu, comprises four accords and a memorandum of understanding: These are, in fact, the instruments to blunt the hostilities among the parties concerned and to provide mechanisms for the normalisation of relations among them. These instruments have certain features which ought to be understood for examining the merits and limitations of the Geneva agreement.

The first instrument of the Accord is the bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan covering promises by the two of non-interference and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. The two parties undertook;

- a) to respect the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, national unity, security and non-alignment of the other,
- b) to refrain from threat or use of force in any form whatsoever so as not to violate the boundaries of

each other, to disrupt the political, social or economic order of the other,

- c) to ensure that its territory is not used in any manner which would violate the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and national unity of the other,
- d) to refrain from armed intervention, subversion, and military occupation,
- e) to prevent within its territory the training, equipping, financing and recruitment of mercenaries of whatever origin for the purpose of hostile activities against the other, and
- f) to abstain from any defamatory campaign or hostile propaganda.

Another instrument signed only by Afghanistan and Pakistan provided for the orderly return to their homeland of the estimated three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Kabul pledged to take steps to ensure the refugees' "return in freedom", their free choice of domicile, their right to work and adequate living conditions, their freedom of religion and their "right to participate on an equal basis in the civic affairs of the republic of Afghanistan". Pakistan

also agreed to provide " within its possibilities" all necessary assistance to the repatriation process, which was to be assisted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The accord however, made no mention of the estimated two million refugees in Iran.

A separate instrument dealing with the "Declaration on International Guarantees" was signed by Mr. Shultz and Mr. Shevardnadze. Both the super powers involved in the Afghan issue expressed support to the negotiated political settlement concluded between Afghanistan and Pakistan to normalize relations. Both the United States and the Soviet Union undertook to refrain from any form of interference in the Afghan and Pakistani affairs and to respect the commitments contained in the bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan "on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention".²

The fourth instrument was signed by the Foreign Ministers of all the four contending parties - Afghanistan, Pakistan, USA and USSR. It concerned the Soviet troop withdrawal and tied the agreements together. While recounting

2. Agreement on Political Settlement relating Afghanistan, Geneva 14 April, 1988, p. 10.

the process of proximity talks at Geneva and the efforts made by the U N representative, Mr. Cordovez for thrashing out a comprehensive political settlement of the Afghan crisis, this agreement underlined the principles of international law on which the said accord was to be based. There are two important elements in this instrument. First, the most intricate aspect of the whole issue related to the question of time frame for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This accord provided for a phased withdrawal of the Soviet troops, to be started on 15 May, 1988. The Soviet Union agreed to withdraw half of its estimated troops from Afghanistan by 15 August, 1988 and the phased withdrawal of all troops was to be completed within nine months.³ The four signatories of the accord also agreed not to interfere and intervene "in any form" in the affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan. On the issue of violations of the Geneva Accord, the four parties agreed that "prompt and satisfactory solutions would be worked out by Afghan and Pakistani representatives. It also provided that a Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations would lend his good offices to the Parties if and when any problem arose.

3. Ibid. , p. 10.

The modalities and logistic arrangements for the work of the U.N. Representative, and the personnel were outlined in the Memorandum of understanding, appended to the fourth accord. It was stated that a senior U N military officer as Deputy to the U N Representative, who would be stationed in the area, as head of two small headquarter: units, one in Kabul and other in Islamabad, each comprising five military officers and a small civilian staff. These two units would form the inspection teams to investigate and check on any violations of the accord.

The Geneva Agreement, has set in motion the process of an early settlement of the Afghan crisis. The Accords have now become obligations for the parties concerned to implement them faithfully in the same spirit in which these have been agreed upon. There are three distinct reasons as to why the Geneva Accords must be honoured. First, the agreement has been reached with the full consent of the parties concerned. The negotiating governments have exercised their sovereign rights in agreeing to the provisions of the Accords. It is, therefore, their obligation to honour them in full without any reservations. Second, the provisions as incorporated in the agreements are in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations charter relating to the settlement of disputes and the restoration of peace. And third, the

settlement arrived at is a result of the six years of arduous efforts made by the United Nations representative dealing with the Afghanistan problem. The Geneva Accord, which was enforced on May 15, 1988, acquired a legal status of international validity. The Agreement has introduced a positive factor in the Afghanistan situation and shown the way of finding peaceful solutions for similar complex regional conflicts elsewhere. It has also established the effectiveness of the United Nations in discharging its peace-keeping role. The accord is evidently the best that could be achieved in the circumstances. It represents a compromise between obstinately held positions of the four signatories - Afghanistan, Pakistan, USA and USSR. But like all compromisers, it contains flaws and loopholes. Its success depends upon the sincerity of the parties concerned.

ACCORD UNDER STRAIN

There are three main flaws in the Geneva accord; (i) it has been rejected by the Afghan rebels, (ii) both USA and USSR have not stopped providing arms aid to their respective sides in the nine-year conflict, (iii) notwithstanding its undertaking not to interfere and intervene in any form, Pakistan has not stopped acting as a conduit for

arms to the Mujahideen inside Afghanistan and also not abandoned the plan of having a Mujahideen led Islamic government in Afghanistan.

(i) Military Support

The two sides directly involved in the civil war in Afghanistan, the Afghan government and the rebellious Mujahideens, continue to be provided military support by the two super powers, the Soviet Union and the United States respectively. The Soviet withdrawal of half of its troops from Afghanistan has not softened the attitude of Afghan rebels towards the Najibullah government. The rebels have convinced themselves that the Soviet troops are returning home only because their continued stay in Afghanistan had become unbearable in face of the determined resistance put by them. They, therefore, wish to maintain the tempo of armed resistance against the government of Afghanistan. Kabul is under constant rocket attack and large number of civilians have lost their lives. Kalat, Kandahar, Girish, Kumar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Belgan and other towns have also been under constant rebel attacks.

4. S. Mukherjee, Evolution of Polity in Afghanistan During the last Decade, (mimeo) 1988, p.12.

There are definite forces at work for the continuance of armed-rebellion against the government of Afghanistan. These include, the conviction of Mujahideens that Najibullah government shall necessarily fall; and the vested interest of Pakistan in keeping the disturbances alive in Afghanistan. There are two obvious reasons as to why Pakistan gains by the flow of arms to Mujahideen and the armed resistance against the Najibullah government. First, the flow of arms and other materials to the refugees are directly beneficial to Pakistan, partly because it serves as an effective ground for securing international assistance. Pakistan got \$ 3.2 billion package followed by a \$ 4.02 billion arms and economic aid from US in addition to "increasing political and economic support" from the oil rich Arab countries.⁵ And second, the Islamic government of Pakistan led by late General Zia wanted that a progressive PDPA government should be replaced by a client regime under the leaders like Gulbadin Hikmatyar, who would strive for establishing an Islamic State.⁶ Under these circumstances it is obvious that it is not the vagueness of the terms of the Geneva Accords but the vile

5. Kalim Bahadur, Geneva Accords: Problems and Prospects, (Mimeo), 1988, p. 8.

6. Dilip Mukherjee, Stalemate in Afghanistan: Zia proteges cannot win, The Times of India, New Delhi, 6 September, 1988.

intention of Pakistan which is in the centre of instigating rebels to keep the problem alive.

The Pakistani support to the rebels is covered by the vagueness of the Agreements. Under the terms agreed upon in the accord both Afghanistan and Pakistan have committed not to interfere in the affairs of each other, implying that there would be no "encouragement or support of rebellious or secessionist activities , under any pretext whatsoever"? This, however, does not outline a framework for the complete suspension of civil disturbances in Afghanistan. Nor is there any agreement between the USSR and the US on ending military support to their allies in Afghanistan.

An important factor responsible for the continuation of most rebellious activities is the U.S. support. In the beginning of the Accord, the US goal was to get Soviets out of Afghanistan which would simultaneously mean "that the Kabul Government would automatically fall once the Soviets announced they were withdrawing".⁸ But this did not happen. The US, therefore, has been maintaining

7. Text of Geneva Accords, Agreement on Principles of Mutual Relations, Article II, Section 7.

8. Afghan Accord in Jeopardy, Indian Express, New Delhi, 5 September, 1988.

the flow of arms to the rebels even after the Accord to which it remains a signatory. Under the Geneva declaration the two super powers undertook to invariably refrain from any form of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.⁹ Now, the United States claims that, under a separate understanding, it would continue to provide arms and ammunition to the Afghan guerillas as long as the Soviet Union continues to supply military assistance to the Government of Afghanistan. The US spokesman has gone to the extent of claiming that by continuing assistance to the Mujahideens the US is not "in violation of the terms of the Geneva Accords".¹⁰ The Americans claim that they made it clear to the Soviet Union that their role as a guarantor of the Geneva Accords is conditional on the acceptance of this "positive symmetry".¹¹

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9. Geneva Accords, Text, Declaration on International Guarantees, Times of India, New Delhi, 15 April, 1988.
 10. Reported in the Times of India, New Delhi, 15 June, 1988.
 11. "Positive Symmetry" is interpreted as US rights to supply arms to the Afghan guerillas as long as the Soviets give arms to the Kabul Government.

(ii) Ceasefire And Mujahideen

Another weakness of the Geneva Accord is the absence of any deterrent provision to check the rebellious activities of the Mujahideens. Though the Accords contain numerous provisions for non-interference and non-intervention in one another's affairs, including a commitment by both sides to refrain from supporting rebellious or secessionist activities against the other, it does not provide for a cease-fire accord between various guerilla forces and the Afghan government.¹² Since Mujahideens were not a direct party at the negotiation table and a signatory in the agreement, they never accepted the Accord and always claimed to operate as a resistance force against the Afghan regime.

An analysis of the character and strategy of Mujahideens is necessary to assess the implication of this part of Geneva Accords. In the post-Accord development, Hikmatyar emerged as an important contender and a potential leader of Mujahideen. Even late President Zia always considered him as the maker of future Afghanistan and Pakistan's most reliable ally and protege. It is he who has been allowed by Pakistan "to corner most of the American supplied money and weapons, which Hikmatyar then

12. Editorials on File, Arkansas Gazette, Little Rock, AR, April 17, 1988.

tried to use for beefing up a provisional government proclaimed by Peshawar-based alliance, and for buying up support for himself withing Afghanistan."¹³ Hikmatyar was propped up because it was hoped that he would capture Kabul in due course. In fact, Hikmatyar had claimed on April 26, after the formation of provisional government in Peshawar, that he would "move into Afghanistan in the near future and rapidly take over the whole country because the Mujahideen already controlled 90 per cent of it."¹⁴

But the reality of Hikmatyar's position is different. He has been facing hostility from other groups of the Peshawar - based seven - party alliance. In fact, the moderates, i.e. at least three of the seven warring groups, are "royalists who would accept Zahir Shah as a new leader, at least on an interim basis".¹⁵ They are thus totally opposed to Hikmatyar. In addition to these groups of Mujahideen, other than Hibz-e-Islami, the local commanders, who have local power base in the country and have been

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13. Pran Chopra, The Afghan Stalemate: Alternative to Anarchy, The Indian Express, New Delhi, 15 October, 1988.
 14. Pran Chopra, Question Mark Over Afghanistan, The Indian Express, New Delhi, 15 May, 1988.
 15. Shekar Gupta, A Dramatic Break through, India Today, 30 April, 1988.

fighting from within, are not prepared to accept the leadership of Mujahideen. Under the circumstances, therefore, the rebels operating from Pakistan do not represent the aspirations of a major section of Afghan population.

Three things follow from an analysis of status and operation of Mujahideen. First, there are various irreconcilable groups, which are interested in capturing political power rather than bringing peace to Afghanistan. The seven groups claiming themselves as members of the alliance have neither been elected by people nor do they command a striking popularity in the country. Second, the strength of Mujahideen lies in the arms supplied to them. In the absence of arms, their effectiveness is insignificant. The current political and military dominance of the seven groups is largely due to the exclusive military, financial and political support they receive from Pakistan, the United States and Saudi Arabia.¹⁶ And third, the main grievance claimed by the Mujahideens have been the policy of Soviet intervention adopted after Saur Revolution and the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Since this scenario has undergone a change, the Mujahideens have shown no change in their attitude, indicating thereby that their aim is not peace but to capture power. Under

16. Anwar-ul-Haq Ahady, Prospects for peace in Afghanistan, Janata, 17 April, 1988.

these circumstances, one can only say that it is not the failure of the Geneva Accord to accommodate Mujahideen as a signatory and get a ceasefire assurance from them. But the political ambition of Hikmatyar and the Mujahideen which is the stumbling block in the restoration of peace even after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

(iii) The Form of Government

The issue regarding the form of government after Geneva Accord, is a major obstacle in normalising the situation in Afghanistan. The most intricate aspect of U N negotiation had been to reconcile the opposite camps; Afghanistan and the Soviet stand, on the one hand, to link the withdrawal of Soviet troops with the stability of Afghan government and the U S and Pakistan stand, on the other, to link the unconditional withdrawal of Soviet forces irrespective of the change of political regime in Kabul. It must be the skill of U N negotiator to narrow down the hard position of both sides; Soviet and Afghan position to agree to a coalition government and U S and Pakistan position to give up the demand for immediate change of Afghan government.

The Geneva round of talks did not come to an agreement because of Pakistan's insistence for a change in the Afghan government. Pakistan continued to insist on the

formation of an interim government before the Soviets began their pullout. After the Accord, Pakistan has been encouraging Mujahideen to press for a change in the government. Though Mujahideen have been aspiring for a complete victory and therefore are unwilling to form any coalition with PDPA, their strength and enthusiasm have substantially been eroded by the death of President Zia.

On the other side President Najibullah has been making conciliatory gestures to accommodate Mujahideen and other adversaries. By adopting the policy of "national reconciliation", Najibullah has sought to broaden the base of Afghan government. This policy is quite opposed to the coercive tactics adopted by Nur Mohammed Taraki, Hafizullah Amin and Babrak Karmal. President Najib has several times reiterated his commitment to promote political pluralism and encourage a free press. He has even offered to give the PDPA a minority position in a coalition government and has given concrete assurances of support to the private sector, both national and foreign.¹⁷ For achieving these ends, Najib government acted on several fronts to appease the local commanders and the seven-party-Peshawar-alliance.

17. After the Soviet Pull out II, Dileep Padgaonkar, The Times of India, New Delhi, 25 May 1988.

The result, however, has not been encouraging. On the one hand, section of opinion has expressed scepticism about the potential of Najib government. It claims that the Afghan army could not hold out for long after the complete Soviet withdrawal.¹⁸ But, at the sametime, there is other view claiming that the Afghan army is quite capable of safeguarding the country once the Soviet army leaves Afghanistan.¹⁹ It points out that with the 1,00,000 strong Afghan army and the 8,00,000 strong National Father land Front, of which 1,70,000 are members of the PDPA, the Kabul regime can well defend the country by itself and maintain peace in the country.²⁰ In between these two extreme positions, the actual situation of the fate of the future form of government is in balance.

This is a crucial test for the Geneva Accord. The prospect of peace, and thereon the success of Accords, depends upon as to how skillfully the U N negotiators alongwith the signatories handle this difficult task. This, however, cannot be branded as a weakness of the

18. Ajit S. Gopal, Najib's Growing Problem, Indian Express, New Delhi, 30 October, 1988.

19. Fredrik Williams, Afghan Scenario, Indian Express, New Delhi, 13 October, 1988.

20. S.V.Nair, Afghanistan: Perspective for Reconciliation and Peace, Panchsheel Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p. 11.

U N efforts since it cannot provide for the ambitions of the contending parties in Afghanistan.

The developments in Afghanistan after the Geneva accord testify a stalemate. Nevertheless, this is neither a reflection of the short-coming of the framework of the Accord nor any weakness in the United Nations negotiating machinery. On the contrary, it goes to the credit of the UN that it could bring the antagonistic forces around a negotiation table and persuade them to reconcile their contradictory stands for a peaceful settlement. So far Afghanistan and Soviet Union have observed their objections under the Accords:-

- i) The Soviet Union has complied with its August 15 deadline by removing half of their troops from Afghanistan and it stands committed for final withdrawal by 15 February 1989.²¹
- ii) President Najibullah's reconciliatory steps to accommodate various local commanders and Mujahideens

21. Mr. Diego Cordovez stated on 14 June 1988, "The withdrawal has been going on very well----- faster than we expected", Indian Express, 15 June 1988. On 8 November 1988 Mr Fraccois Giuliani, the spokesman for the UN Secretary General, is reported to have stated on the Soviet announcement of suspending the withdrawal of its troops withdrawal. "That is not a violation of Geneva agreement". The Times of India, New Delhi, 9 November 1988.

in the formation of new set up in the government and to re-settle Afghan refugees, have prepared the ground for the formation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan.²²

iii) The Soviet Union and the Afghan Government have accepted the principles of an independent, free, Islamic, democratic and non-aligned Afghanistan.

But the disposition of America-Pakistan-Mujahideen camp leaves much to be desired from the stand point of Geneva Accords . The United States, by unilaterally interpreting the "positive symmetry", has continued the supply of arms to Mujahideen which is against the spirit of Geneva Accord and the interest of peace. Pakistan particularly under Zia regime, exhibited her interest in keeping the Afghan crisis alive , which is a flagrant violation of the Geneva Agreement. Pakistan was also keen to establish a fundamentalist Islamic State in Afghanistan. A provisional Islamic government has also been established on Pakistani soil by the seven-party Afghan resistance alliance. Training centres for Afghan resistance fighters are also stated to have been relocated in Pakistan, for the sake of evading future United Nations inspection, all of which are manned by officers of the Pakistani army. Limited

22. Abdul Rahim Hatif, Afghan's Assessment, Indian Express, New Delhi, 2 October, 1988.

obstacles have been created by Pakistan for UNCOMAF in terms of granting late permission for inspection and delaying facilities to the peace keeping force. Pakistan is reported to have created a special co-ordination committee of the Pakistani military to work alongwith the Afghan resistance.

Our analysis so far suggests that it has been the non-compliance, both in spirit and consent, of Pakistan along with the Mujahideen that the Geneva Accords are not moving in the right direction and in the desired speed. But when we pinpoint Pakistan as a road block in the path of normalisation under the Geneva agreement, it must be recognised "that the issue is not the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the issue is the role of the US and the part which Pakistan wants to play" in the geo-politics of Central Asia."²³

The obstacles apart, it is wise for the contending parties to abide by the Geneva Accords. Its failure may be a doom. Afghanistan is bleeding for long and needs peace now. If the undeclared war is not stopped, there may not be a better opportunity than provided by the framework of Geneva Accord. Prolonged instability and conflict in Afghanistan is likely to spill over into Pakistan and prove

23. C. P. Bhambri, *Imperialism And Afghanistan, in Inside Afghanistan*, Ed. Kalim Bahadur, Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1985, p. 88.

an irresistible magnet for foreign intervention; and the indefinite sojourn of refugees in Pakistan may prove a dangerous destabilising factor.²⁴ Alternative to this, if the Accords fail, Afghanistan may be on the brink of partition between north and south. In that unfortunate event, Pakistan may have to face the pressure of demand for independence of Baluchistan and other areas. The division of Afghanistan will plant fertile seed of partition in Pakistan too.

From all these accounts, it is abundantly clear that Geneva Accords have opened a new horizon on international security and all parties concerned must abide by it. There is therefore, no alternative except to comply strictly and sincerely with the provisions of the Geneva Accords so that a lasting solution to the Afghan crisis can be achieved. This requires that a pressure through world opinion should be built up so that the signatories of Geneva Accords show a positive response towards peace and stability in Afghanistan.

With the resurgence of democracy in Pakistan and the reiteration by the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan,

24. C.S. Jha, Afghanistan After the Accord, The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 22 April, 1988.

Ms Benazir Bhutto, of the principles agreed upon in the Geneva Accord, one would hope that the process of the negotiated political settlement of the Afghan crisis set in motion by the Geneva Accord would soon be culminated successfully.

CHAPTER - FIVE

CONCLUSION

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 evoked world-wide reaction particularly from U.S.A., Islamic countries and the third world countries. It was the general opinion that the intervention occurred in utter defiance of the basic principles of the UN Charter. Such as the non-interference in internal affairs of any state, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of any state and non use of force in international relations. The problem of human rights also came to be associated with the Afghan crisis as lakhs of Afghan refugees had fled to Iran and Pakistan.

The United Nations formally got seized of the Afghan problem in early January 1980 when as many as 52 Member States signed a motion calling for an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council to "examine the situation in Afghanistan and its consequences for peace and international security". During the Security Council debates the United States and others western powers resorted to the "corridor diplomacy" taking a back seat in the formal proceeding and let the Islamic and non-aligned countries to play the lead role in sponsoring the draft resolution. The resolution while deploring the armed intervention in Afghanistan and calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops, did neither name nor condemn Soviet Union directly. Soviet Union and its

Warsaw Pact allies strongly opposed the discussion of the Afghan issue by the UN describing it as a violation of the Charter. When the Soviet Union vetoed the draft resolution introduced in the Security Council, the matter was brought to the UN General Assembly by convening the sixth emergency session under the provisions of "uniting for peace resolution". All the resolutions^{were} passed by the General Assembly. During the General Assembly debates, Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies were arrayed on one side, whereas USA and West European States, China, Islamic countries and non-aligned states rallied on the opposite side, with India taking a neutral position. Though the Islamic countries acted unanimously as a group condemning the Soviet action and calling for immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the non-aligned states failed to take a position as a group. They acted in their individual capacity. But the verdict of the General Assembly went against the Soviet position. More than five-sixths ~~the~~ of the Islamic states and two-thirds of the non-aligned countries other than the traditional opponents of the Soviet Union voted against the Soviet action. So Moscow's support in the third world countries appeared to have been eroded as a result of the developments in Afghanistan.

All the resolutions passed by the General Assembly were mildly worded and did neither name or condemn USSR directly. During the Assembly debates, the overwhelming opinion was in favour of finding a political solution to the Afghan crisis. The Member States not only authorised the UN Secretary General to initiate peace moves to resolve the crisis but also expressed support to the effort made by the UN Secretary General and his special envoy dealing with Afghanistan problem. It was in this background that proximity talks were held at Geneva between the contending parties-Afghanistan and Pakistan, under the aegis of UN special envoy. Iran was also kept informed of the developments. The shuttle diplomacy of the UN special envoy, Deigo Cardovez played a key role in bringing the parties on a table and also reconciling their diametrically opposite views to an agreed package.



The Geneva talks, that spanned over a period of six years (1982-88), were devoted to evolve an agreed framework providing for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, international guarantees of non-interference in Afghanistan and the return of the Afghan refugees to their home-land. Both the super powers, Soviet Union and USA, strongly supported the Geneva process.

As a result of the UN initiative and tireless efforts of its representative, Diego Cordovez, an

accord was signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan at Geneva with both the Super Powers acting as co-guarantors on April 14, 1988. The accord provided for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, beginning with May 15, 1988, return of Afghan refugees and the most vital agreement on the principle of "non-interference and non-intervention" in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The Geneva accord, though not devoid of flaws and loopholes, is the best framework that could be achieved under the circumstances. The signing of accord, and the instruments of peace therein, have helped the UN to regain its lost prestige and effectiveness in dealing with the problem of international peace and security. But the events occurring after the Geneva accord tend to belie the earlier euphoria generated by the Geneva accord over the prospects of peace returning in Afghanistan. Though the Soviets have withdrawn about half of their troops, as was agreed upon under Geneva Agreement, there has been no let up in the attacks of the Afghan rebels or in the US or Pak aid to them. The success of the UN peace initiative in Afghanistan can never be achieved without the sincere cooperation of all the parties concerned-Pakistan, Afghanistan, USA and USSR, in the implementation of the instruments agreed upon by them at Geneva.

Though the Geneva accord has smoothed the rough edges in super power relations to some extent, the normalisation process has not brought peace to Afghanistan. It does not even appear on the anvil. The accord disentangles direct super power intervention but does not reduce the chances of avoiding a civil war.

Though the contracting parties to the accord have agreed that there would be "No interference and intervention in any form" the realities on the ground depict all together a different scenario. The US has publicly committed itself to the supply of arms to the rebels. The pro-Mujahideen lobby in the US has maintained strong pressure on the Reagan administration to take advantage of this opportunity of throwing out the pro-Soviet regime from Kabul. Pakistan had pledged itself to play the role of conduit for arms to Mujahideen. Thus, even before the ink dried on the Accord, it became vulnerable to violations. The Soviets too, to keep their interests in Kabul alive, have continued to supply military aid to PDPA regime in Kabul in their fight against Mujahideen.

The Geneva Accord on Afghanistan signified the victory of all sound and sane forces of peace, justice and progress throughout the world. The full implementation of the provisions of the Accord, pre-supposes the solidarity and support of all the peace forces,

irrespective of political persuasion. However, the accord has been implemented faithfully by Afghanistan and Soviet Union only. The Soviet troops are being withdrawn according to the time frame, but the other parties have not implemented any of their commitments made in the instruments of this Accord. The interference and intervention have not been stopped or reduced, but it has even intensified and expanded.

There appears to be an impending danger that the Geneva instruments for the normalisation of Afghan situation, may not be a success. The central cause of uncertainty about the success of Geneva Accord is the establishment of the form of Government once the Soviet troops vacate Afghanistan. The root of impending failure is the unwillingness of the US administration to cooperate with the USSR in setting up a genuinely neutral and mutually acceptable interim government in Kabul. Such an interim government is eminently needed so that the Afghan people can settle their own future. In the absence of such a government, the country may be dragged to a civil war and chaos, after the withdrawal of the Soviet army. Such an attitude of the American government can be ascribed to certain factors. First, America and Pakistan want to have a government in Kabul amenable to serve their geo-political interests in the region. A pro-Russian government can never be acceptable to them. And second, America wishes to

see the Soviet Union remain engaged in Afghanistan, so that it goes on bleeding there, as happened with the United States in Vietnam. Pakistan was keen to get a fundamentalist Muslim regime established in Kabul. Further more, it is in the material interest of Pakistan that the Afghan crisis continues.

Notwithstanding the peace making efforts of UN, particularly of the UN Secretary General's special envoy, Diego Cordovez who shuttled between Kabul, Islamabad and Moscow and Washington to bridge the gulf between the positions of the contending parties, the success of the Geneva process is largely attributable to the bold initiatives taken by the Soviet leader, Gorbachev. As early as on 28th July 1986, he had in his historic speech at Vladivostok described the Afghan crisis as a "bloody wound" and he expressed his resolution to work for healing it within the shortest possible time. Unmindful of the deadlock over the Geneva talks held in early 1988, Gorbachev in a statement made on 8 February 1988, presented the virtual blueprint for the settlement of the Afghan problem. He made a unilateral offer of starting the withdrawal of Soviet troop from Afghanistan from

15 May 1988. The steps taken by Moscow and Kabul proved of great help to ensure the victory of the Geneva process.

Several factors are responsible for the keen interest exhibited by USSR in the negotiated political settlement of the problem. First, it is unusual for the Soviet Union to station its army in a non-socialist, foreign country for a longer period. Its army in Hungary and Czechoslovakia did not stay for longer time. In Afghanistan it is getting prolonged. Second, President Gorbachev is busy in implementing 'Perestroika' at home requires that its military engagement abroad is minimised. And third, the Soviet Union is keen to find a way out for the world disarmament. The Soviets have made an agreement with the US for dismantling the medium range missiles. For all these reasons, the Soviet Union is eager to implement faithfully the instruments of the Geneva Accord. However, it would not like to leave Afghanistan in a vacuum for the fundamental Muslims to take over the regime there. Moreover, the Soviet Union wants to have a broad based government in Kabul and at the same time not to lose the advantage of the April revolution. It is natural that the DRA would not like the fundamentalists to take over so that they get a major say in shaping the future of Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan government, however, has made enormous accomodation under the scheme of National Reconciliation.

A new Prime Minister Mohammad Hasan Sharq, who is not the member of the PDPA has taken over in Afghanistan. The Soviets have appointed a heavy-weight, Yuli Vorontsov, the Deputy Foreign Minister of USSR, as their Ambassador in Kabul. Another positive development has been the holding of direct talks between the Afghan rebels and the Soviet Union in Saudi Arabia for the first time since 1979. The Mujahedin were represented by the leader of seven rebel groups based in Peshawar, and the Soviet Union by Yuli Vorontsov. The two sides are reported to have reached an understanding on the need to continue the dialogue and on release of Soviet prisoners of war by the Majaheedin.

In spite of the stresses and strains, the effort and success of the United Nations in diffusing tension in Afghanistan and resolving its crisis, stands on its own merits. In the case of Afghanistan, the United Nations has proved its worthwhileness and demonstrated its effectiveness to shoulder the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. The contention, therefore, that the United Nations is only a debating group, does not get vindicated so far

as the Afghan issue is concerned. The success of the United Nations in getting Geneva Accord materialised proves the effectiveness of the world organisation. Since the United Nations can not discipline the super powers because of being a voluntary organisation of independent sovereign states, it cannot have the "teeth" to enforce peace in the world. In case of the Afghan crisis, the UN efforts bore fruits largely due to the bold foreign policy initiative of the Soviet leader Gorbachev who has not only shown his keenness to withdraw the Soviet troops but also to establish a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

It is mainly due to the revised attitude of the Soviet and Kabul governments on the Afghan issue, that a consensus has emerged on the need to withdraw the Soviet troops from Afghanistan in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva accord. This became amply clear on 3 November 1988 when the UN General Assembly passed unanimously a resolution introduced by its President, Dante Caputo of Argentina, which called a comprehensive political settlement and for the establishment of a broad-based government through an intra-Afghan dialogue. That there was no discussion and no voting on the resolution, shows how the world public opinion has arrived at the consensus on such an important issue. And the UN has not played a mean role towards this achievement.

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