A STUDY OF FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIA, 1997-99

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DEEPAKLAL KUJUR

CENTRE FOR RUSSIAN, CENTRAL ASIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
INDIA
2000

जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110 067

Centre for Russian, Central Asian &
East European Studies
School of International Studies

21 July, 2000

CERTIFICATE

Certified that the Dissertation entitled **A Study of Foreign Policy of Russia, 1997-1999**, submitted by **Mr. Deepaklal Kujur** is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of this University. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University, or any other University and is his own work.

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

PROF. SHAMS-UD-DIN
(Chairperson)

PROF. ZAFAR IMAM
(Supervisor)

GRAM : JAYENU TEL : 6107676, 6167557 TELEX : 031-73167 JNU IN FAX : 91-011-6865886

to my parents

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Preface

This is a study of foreign policy of Russia during 1997-99. This period under review, in many ways can be called Primakov years of Russian Foreign Policy as Primakov broadly speaking in-charge of it first as a Foreign Minister and then as a Prime Minister. Acting Prime Minister Putin came on the scene at end of the millennium as well as end of the Yeltsin era. Hence it is an important period for our study of Russia's foreign policy. This study is divided in five chapters. In the first chapter entitled 'Background: Origin and Development of Russian Foreign Policy'. We have reviewed with the formative phase of Russian Foreign Policy 1991-96.

In the second chapter titled 'Russia's Policy Towards the USA and the West, 1997-99' dealing with the relationship with the USA and Western Europe. We have examined the ebb and flow of this relationship, though a basis for good relations remains.

In the third chapter titled 'Russia and Asia, 1997-99', deals with foreign policy considering the Asian countries especially India, China, Japan and Iran, and how a balance between East and West was marked in it.

In my fourth chapter titled 'Relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Countries, 1997-99',

we mainly evaluate the development of relationship with Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as turning into a multilateral security umbrella.

Our study closes with an overall view of Russian Foreign Policy during 1997-99.

This study is based on both primary and secondary source materials emanating from Moscow and elsewhere.

I hope my effort in presenting this study has been successful although I take the responsibility of any failing.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my Supervisor, Prof. Zafar Imam for his help and guidance. I also praise for his kind cooperation.

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Deepaklal Kujur

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING 1991-96

To understand the intricacies of foreign policy of Russia during the period of our study, 1997-99 it is logical to look quickly at its background.

Background and Origin

According to some scholars the date of Russian Foreign Policy begins with its declaration of independence and sovereignty of Russia in 1990, when Russia was a part of the constituent of the USSR. However, at that stage Russia was certainly not fully a recognised state by International Community up till 25 December 1991, before the collapse of Soviet Union. Therefore, we take that date as the beginning of the Foreign Policy of Russia.[1]

The break-up of the USSR also created a number of other problems for Russia. The most pressing of these had been that of the large Russian speaking population residing in new neighbouring states, to whom Russia had extended guarantees of protection. Some 25 million Russians spread throughout all the successor states, the potential for the conflict was manifested, involving outright

[1] Webber, Mark, "The Emergence of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation", Communist and Post-Communist Studies (Los Angeles), vol.26, no.3, September 1993, pp.243-264.

hostilities in Moldova and simmering disputes with the Baltic states and with Ukraine over largely Russian –populated Crimea.

At the same time,Russian economy was in a bad shape. Russia needed foreign assistance for its economic restructuring. During the Gorbachev period many of the central foreign policy pursuits had an economic rationale. Nuclear and conventional disarmament allied to reductions in military expenditure after 1988 were part of a long-term goal of reducing the unsustainable demands of a military budget. This concern with economic objectives continued by Russia. In some respects this had been linked to developments in the security sphere, in that Russia's improving relationship with NATO had permitted projected conventional and strategic arms procurement to fall considerably during 1992.

It was against such a background that new Russia began to organise and operate its foreign policy. Several dates are of significance in pinpointing the birth of the Russian foreign policy. In June 1990, for example, marked the adoption of a declaration of "State Sovereignty". The government of RSFSR thereafter engaged in a range of ostensible foreign policy activities. Andrei Kozyrev was appointed as the Foreign Minister in October 1990. Prior to August 1991, some success was apparent in the cultivation of

international ties. Declarations of friendship and cooperation were made with Poland (October 1990), Mongolia (February 1991), and Czechoslovakia (May 1991), and a number of agreements were reached with the federal units of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Germany. However, the integrity of Russian "foreign policy" was still not recognised in the absence of formal diplomatic recognition.

The failed coup d'etat of August 1991 changed the balance dramatically in favour of Russia. In the four-month period which followed, the USSR entered a period of dissolution. Efforts promoted by the centre to preserve some form of union structure failed and constituent republics declared their independence.[2] Moreover, Soviet foreign policy institutions were subverted by the Union republics, and the RSFSR's international activities intensified.

The issue of diplomatic recognition, meanwhile, was partly overcome by the formation of the CIS and finally resolved on 25 December 1991, with Gorbachev's resignation as Soviet President and Commander-in-Chief, and the formal end of USSR by the

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[2] Reprinted in C.F. Furtado Jr and A. Scandler, Perestroika in the Soviet Republics Document on National Question (Boulder, West View Press, 1992), pp.325-326.

decision of the Supreme Soviet the following day, which paved the way to Russia's swift and full entry into international community.

Pinpointing December 1991, as the key date in the inception of Russian foreign policy is not, however, to overlook the relevance of the international activities of the RSFSR prior to that date. What is important is that so long as the USSR existed, that republic was not a legitimate foreign policy actor in the eyes of other states and international institutions.

During the seven decades after 1917, the discussion of international affairs in Moscow was confined within the constructing framework of an elaborate structure of ideas concerning Soviet Union's role in the world – as the champion of international progress and proletarian revolution.[3] The crumbling of Soviet Union was accompanied by the collapse of this whole structure of ideas. Shock waves traversed the field of discussion of foreign policy in Russia. A tendency to swing from one extreme to another developed. Yet, there also emerged a clear underlying trend, a flight from what is described as 'ideology' and a pragmatic concern with what writers refer to as the concrete national interests of the new Russian State.

[3] For details of Soviet Foreign Policy, see, Zafar Imam, Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1990, (New Delhi, 1990).

The first phase, which got under way well before 1991 was dominated by a wholesale reaction against traditional Soviet foreign policy doctrine. It had two main aspects. The twist was a rejection of Stalinist militarism and economic isolationism. It culminated in the endorsing of visions of a new, peaceful and increasingly economically integrated world order. This had a dramatic effect on the Soviet Union's international image and they helped to ease Soviet acceptance of the international retreats and climb down of 1990 and 1991.[4]

The second aspect of reaction against the pre-existing Soviet doctrine was the swing towards an almost unconditional Westernism. This became most evident in statements which came from the Russian Foreign Ministry in the first months of foreign policy of Russia that it intended 'to enter the club of the most developed democratic countries; and that it was the lost link with the democratic Northern Hemisphere' and that it was about to 'return to Europe' and so on.[5]

While a minority of conservative minded writers tended to emphasise on military and security means, self described 'realists'

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4 Neil Malcolm, "New Russian Foreign Policy", World Today (London), February 1994,p.329.

5 Ibid.

felt that Russia had no option but to throw its lot with the West whatever the underlying tensions and conflicts of interests. They were not calling for a strategic change in policy, they said, but simply for a more clear-eyed application of it. Criticism of particular aspects of the foreign policy of the new post-communist Russian government was not slow in appearing, however.

This change in the trend of foreign policy however did not mean that Russia had totally broken away from the legacy of the Soviet Union. The foreign policy of Russia continued to be influenced by the legacy of the USSR. Its self-proclaimed status as the legal successor of the Soviet Union binds it to all the international commitments entered into by the former regime, not least in the sphere of nuclear and conventional disarmament and military withdrawal from East-Central Europe. In the areas in which no legal obligation pertained, Russia had the choice of either continuing or forsaking the options pursued, but not necessarily completed, in the latter period of Soviet foreign policy. Consequently, issues like abandonment of Third World allies had been of topical concern to the Russian leaders. Moreover, while Russia had succeeded to the borders of USSR in their entirety, where frontiers had coincided, it inherited a number of unresolved issues.

These included the issue of force deployment near the borders with China and the deadlock with Japan over the Kurile islands.[6]

Development

During 1992, arguments tended to centre around the question of geographical priorities. Critics of the Foreign Ministry argued that far too much attention had been paid to the "far abroad" and not enough to the "near abroad", i.e., to the countries which had emerged from the former Soviet Union. Sergei Stankevich, a senior foreign policy advisor to President Yeltsin declared in March 1992 that Russian policy makers should be focussing on the developing of the crisis in their own backyard. Russia should avoid being drawn into a North-South anti Islamic confrontation in which it would suffer disproportionately because of its location and because of its own substantial Muslim minority population. "It is obvious" he wrote, "that we should seek a new balance appropriate to the present day situation of Russia between Western and Eastern orientations. Meanwhile, the first thing to do is to strengthen our position in the East correcting the evident distortion created by the authors of 'common European home' conception. "Stankevich labelled his new

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6 Mark Webber, "The Emergence of Foreign Policy of Russian Federation", Communist and Post-Communist Studies (Los Angeles), vol.26,no.3 September, 1993, p.252.

policy orientation 'Eurasianism'.[7] This approach has been described as 'demo-patriotism' and is an increasingly influential currently, which is fundamentally Westernist in its attitude but sees a pragmatic need for a more assertive foreign policy.

Despite this dissenting option, Yeltsin and his team were able to act independently at first. In foreign policy Andrei Kozyrev deemed to be almost exclusively emphasising on Russian solidarity with the West. This in fact was an extension of the policy pursued in the last two years of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule. Originally labelled the new political thinking, this proclaimed that the USSR would not challenge but would work in cooperation with the US. It stressed the right of each state to choose its own path of development, called for the de-ideologisation of foreign policy and urged the substitution of ethnical norms and the recognition of mutual security interests for the use of force in international relations.

By April 1992, when the Sixth Congress People's Deputies met, Yeltsin was, however, openly challenged and he was brought to the realisation that political leadership must accommodate the interests and views of the dissenters too. Foreign policy itself became much more coherent in 1993 as the foreign ministry sought

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[7] Neil Malcolm, op. cit., note 2.

to build on a wider domestic policy base. As far as policy towards the West is concerned, the changes have been cautious, a matter of tone and detail, there has been a sharper focus on economic issues. The most striking changes have come in the politically sensitive sphere of policy towards the "near abroad". Already in the summer of 1992, the Deputy Foreign Minister began to work on a new more active strategy and his report argued that Russia must win international recognition for its role as the leading tone in ensuring stability of the former Soviet Union. In February 1993, Yeltsin announced that Russia was going to push for greater integration with the CIS and that it would not neglect its special peace keeping responsibilities.[8] Thus, amid all the confusion and ambiguity what seems to be emerging is a policy shaped as a constantly fought over compromise between pragmatically conceived longer term interests and shorter term interests of influential groups. In other words, the transitory character of the new framework was put in sharp focus with a mix of continuity and change.

The initial three years, 1991-93, of foreign policy of new Russia thus may be seen as in a state of transition. Although traditional ideological goals were discarded, some new totals however appeared to have acquired some permanency and consensus

[8] Ibid., pp.30-31.

among every interest group. A major one of these, was, of course, close and co-operative relationship with the West, particularly the USA. The other was the need for delinking foreign policy with military power and super power ambitions. The main direction of foreign policy appeared to be moving towards Europe and CIS states. However, its role in Asia was yet to be defined. Another major point to be noted was transparency in its making and in its operation. These certainly appeared to be major inputs for the emerging framework of Russian foreign policy during the period under review.

Moreover, the emerging framework had distinct element of continuity from Gorbachev's foreign policy framework. It may even be argued that there was more continuity than change in this respect. In any case, this emerging framework was strongly influenced by a mix of continuity and change, certainly upto 1993, if not later. Yet its transitory character need not be forgotten, as it was linked with the entire gambit of socio-political structure of new Russia, which in itself was in transition. In other words, the issue by the end of 1993 was far from settled. Yet it was flexible enough to adopt practical policies and measures in the area of foreign policy, particularly where crucial Russian interests were involved.

This we can see that foreign policy of Russia was in transition and developed in various stages. The first stage, as we have described about, covered the years 1991-93, was indeed the formative year. It was also during this period Russian Foreign Policy under Foreign Minister Koryrev, pursued a pro-western policy particularly subserving to the USA.[9] After mid 1992 it was slowly realised that new Russia must not forget Asia, as Russia itself lies almost half in Asia. From 1993, efforts were made to readjust between east and west but real breakthrough came on the eve of 2nd presidential election in 1996. In April 1996 Koryrev was dismissed from the post of Foreign Minister and Primakov was appointed in his place. With a background of academic and other interest in the east, Primakov lost to strike a balance in the foreign policy between the east and west. Thus, the Primakov fears of Russian foreign policy began.

However a new issue, the expansion of NATO in Eastern Europe cast a shadow over Russian Foreign Policy. Inspite of his best effort Primakov as Foreign Minister had to pay full attention to his problem and thus he got diverted to the east. "However the trend

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[9] Primakov, Yevgeny, "Global Scene, European Security and NATO Expansion: The Russian Perception", Mainstream, vol.35 no.23,17 May 1997, pp.23-26.

of the development in India, China and Iran continued. Economic and strategic relations, that is to say, arms race was certainly picked up China and followed by India.

Thus the second stage transition of Russian Foreign Policy, covering the year 1997-98, newly characterised by the strained relations between the east and west, on the one hand and on the other, closer economic and strategic relations with China, India and Iran. Russian Foreign policy in CIS also devoted more than its due share of attention to Ukraine and Kazakistan, while its general policy to CIS remained confused and operated in a zigzag way. [10]

"However Russia was not able to disallay impression in CIS, particularly in Central Asia, that it really wanted to dominate over them. Russia's misadventure in Chechenya during 1994-95 also did not help much in this regard."[11]

Suddenly on the eve of the new year 2000 Yeltsin resigned and Vladimir Putin has taken over as active President. Earlier, during much, of the year 1999. Putin had acted as Prime Minister of Russia and virtually was incharge of the nation because of the

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[10] "Foreign Policy", The Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press (Ohio), vol.XLIX, no.32 (1997), p.21.

[11] Malcolm, Neil and Pravda, Alex., "Democratisation and Russian Foreign Policy", International Affairs (London), 72(8), July 96; pp.537-52.

recurrent illness of President Yeltsin. In many cases during 1999, Putin was preoccupied in savage war in Chechenya and paid not much attention to foreign policy.

At the start of the new millennium Yeltsin era had formally ended, yet its aftermaths were felt in foreign policy. Russian foreign policy remained at a stand still with strained relations with USA and European Union, while on the other hand, strategic and economic relations continued to run a steady course in case of China, India and Iran and even near abroad, that is to say CIS countries. It was, however, obvious that given Russia's strong linkages with the West since 1991, such a situation may not last long. Transitory character of Russian foreign policy thus continued in 1997-99 period. Further detail we shall examine in the following pages.

CHAPTER II

POLICY TOWARDS THE USA AND WEST IN 1997-99

Russia and the USA

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 changed the structure of the international system. Throughout the cold war the international system was bipolar. A bipolar system, as contrasted with a multipolar system, is one dominated by two great powers or by two blocks, each led by a great power. Although bipolarity had characterised regions of the world before, e.g. Athens and Sparta in the fifth century B.C., never before had it existed at the global level.

In both Washington and Moscow, a new perception of the other emerged. The two rivals became friends. That the beginning of this change was marked in the Gorbachev period, itself there was liquidated one by one the sources of tension between East and West: in the arms race. In the issues like Afghanistan, Eastern Europe, Germany, Cuba, etc. But Gorbachev was gone before he could himself reap the benefit.

In a brief address to the nation on December 25, 1991, President George Bush declared that "the United States recognises and welcomes the emergence of a free, independent and democratic Russia, led by its courageous President Boris Yeltsin", and the

creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) replacing the Soviet Union.

Relations between the United States and Russia since 1991 have reflected the impact of multiple transitions. The world has been adjusting to the aftermath of a cold war that had defined the previous half a century. Russia itself has been seeking to reconfirm its identify, not only on a post communist, post-Soviet basis, but also on a post-imperial basis, since the country is now roughly confined within borders it has not known since the seventeenth century. Europe has been trying to readjust its economic political, and security relationships as a whole continent rather than one divided by an iron curtain. Finally, the United States, as the surviving superpower, has had the task of determining what role it will play and how it can help to fashion a new world order, even as change in the very elements of national power and the structure of international relations foreshadows the emergence of a new multipolar world.

One of the highest priorities for the Bush administration was to assure maintenance of responsible control over the nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union. The overriding objectives were to prevent the emergence of additional nuclear states, to ensure

the integrity and security of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal, to prevent nuclear weapons from becoming a cause or a resort in any possible conflict among the successor states, and to deny a precedent for other potential new nuclear weapons states.

The first important step was a United States – brokered agreement between Russia, Ukraine, Belraus, and Kazakhstan reached at Lisbon in May 1992. In a "Lisbon protocol' to the United States – Russian strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-I), Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan agreed to assume non-nuclear weapons status and remove all nuclear weapons to Russia. Many questions remained open, however, especially the ownership of the fissionable materials in the warheads and current nuclear status of the other three republics.

In January 1994, the Clinton administration, which had continued and pressed the position taken by its predecessor, succeeded in getting a tripartite agreement between the United States, Russia, and Ukraine on a number of issues that opened the way to the withdrawal of strategic nuclear warheads from Ukraine. Part of the understanding that was not made public was a Ukrainian commitment to complete the transfer of nuclear weapons to Russia within three rather than seven years. In 1994 Belarus, Kazakhstan

and Ukraine acceded to the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states, and ratified the Lisbon Protocol and START-I by the end of the year. All remaining nuclear warheads in the three countries were sent to Russia before the end of 1996, and missiles and silos were being dismantled and destroyed.

From 1991 through 1995, the United States obligated about $ 8.7 billion in assistance to the former Soviet successor states (of which about $4 billion went to Russia), and about $ 11 billion in credits (again about $ 4 billion to Russia). Over these years, there was a deliberate shift in assistance from Russia to the other successor states, in particular Ukraine and America. During the "honeymoon" years of 1992 and 1993, the United States gave about two-thirds of its economic assistance to Russia, and one third to Ukraine and other states, more or less in line with the relative size of the countries populations. By `1995 and 1996 this ratio was reversed, with about one third going to Russia and two-thirds to the others. By this time Ukraine had agreed to give up its nuclear weapons and had belatedly embarked on economic reform, whereas Russian-American frictions had risen and Russia was thought (in 1994 and 1995) to be less dedicated to reform and to a post-imperial nationhood that it had seemed earlier. By early 1997 Ukraine was

not only receiving more United States assistance than Russia, but had become the third largest recipient of US aid. In 1997 the administration had requested an increase of a total of $ 900 million for all the successor states, of which $240 million was earmarked for Russia.

"The START-I Treaty has a duration of 15 years, unless superseded by another agreement. The parties can agree to extend the treaty for successive five-year periods but each party has the right to withdraw from it at any time if it decides that extraordinary extents have jeopardised its supreme interests. According to the Soviet side, START-I would be effective and viable only so long as there was compliance with the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

As a part of the Soviet Republic Belarus had more than 500 strategic and tactical warheads and 81 SS-25 ICBMs in its territory".[1] During Ukrainian president Leonid Kuehama's US visit, he announced on May 16, 1997, at Washington that his country had decided to start eliminating its 46 SS-24 missiles, a measure that would go beyond its obligations under START-I."[2] He further

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1 Arms Conrol Today, (ACT, for short), no.14, p.30.

2 Ibid.

declared: "The end of 1996 marked the second year of its entry into force START-I. The year saw 60 inspections in the field and conclusion on agreements and joint statements at the joint compliance and implementation council (JCIC)".[3] Journalists were told on June 17, 1997 at Geneva, by a US official, that both Russia and the United States were "ahead of schedule" in implementing the treaty.[4]

The Helsinki Summit and After

Jack Mandelson, Deputy Director of the Arms Control Association (ACA) at a panel discussion on March 8, 1996, said, "there were three compelling reasons why Russia would ratify START-II by late 1996 or early 1997. He felt that the ageing strategic forces in Russia needed to be removed in any case and START-II would ensure that the USA would also reduce their force size. Second, though implementation of reduction would be expensive in the short run, it would be cheaper to maintain lower levels of strategic forces in the long run. Finally, it would be better

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[3] For Chronology of JCIC Meetings, See the Arms Control Reporter: A chronicle of Treaties, Negotiations, Proposals, Weapons and Policy, 1997 (Massachusetts: IDDS, 1997), pp.614-A.4-A.5.

[4] Ibid., p.611. B.912. For Chronology of events pertaining to STAT I in 1997 (Upto June 18, 1997), see Ibid., pp.611 B.907-B.912.

to threaten an ongoing process of strategic offensive force reductions against the missile defence debate than to argue against it whole START-II was not in force."[5]

With the advent of 1998, though the treaty has not been ratified by the Duma as yet events of 1997 suggest that the factors responsible for Russian non-ratification of START-I have been taken care of. When Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin met at Helsinki, Finland, on March 20-21, 1997, they reached agreement on a number of arms control issues. Concerning START II, the Presidents agreed to extend by five years the deadline for the elimination of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and as regards START-III, they agreed to start immediately negotiations for an agreement once START-II entered into force. The Presidents also agreed that START-III negotiations would include four basic components: "a limit of 2000-2500 deployed strategic nuclear warheads of each side by the end of the year 2007; measures relating to the transparency of strategic nuclear warheads inventories as well as to the destruction of strategic warheads; conversion of the current START agreements to unlimited duration; and the "deactivation" by

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5 "US Arms Control Policy: Progress and Prospects", Arms Control Today, vol.26, no.2, March 1996, p.9.

the end of 2003 of all strategic nuclear delivery vehicles to be eliminated under START - II".[6]

Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin reaffirmed, in a separate "joint statement concerning the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty",[7] the May 1995 principles for agreement on demarcation between ABM and TMD systems. "They also reached an agreement in principle governing the status of higher-velocity TMD systems under the ABM Treaty. The USA and Russia are permitted, under this "phase Two" Agreement to deploy high velocity TMD systems provided they are not tested against ballistic missile targets with velocities above 5 km per second or ranges that exceed 3,500 km. The agreement does not allow either side to develop test or deploy space-based TMD interceptors or components based on other physical principles that can substitute for such interceptors."[8]

Apart from the arms control agenda, the main focus at the Helsinki Summit was the contentious issue of NATO enlargement. A joint statement issued on Mach 21, declared that "NATO-Russian relationship should provide for consultation, co-ordination and, to

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6 "Joint Statement of the Helsinki Summit", ACT, vol.27,no.1, March 1997, p.19.

7 ACT, n.14, p.30

8 For text, see n.33, p.20.

the maximum extent possible where appropriate, joint decision making and action on security issues of common concern."[9] Under a deal unveiled the same day, Russia agreed to sign a document defining its relationship with NATO despite its continuing opposition to the organisation's enlargement. The country was given an assurance that nuclear weapons would not be stationed in new NATO-member states. Yeltsin dropped his demand that the document should be legally binding and it was instead agreed that it would be "an enduring commitment at the highest political level." [10]

"The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation", better known as the Russia-NATO Founding Act, is a 16-page document. This consists of a preamble and four sections and it was signed on May 27, 1997, at Paris by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the heads of government of all 16 NATO members, after its details were finally agreed earlier, during a meeting between NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, held in Moscow on May 14, 1997.[11]

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9 ACT, n.14, p.30

10 Keesing's Record of World Events, vol.43,no.3, March 1997, p.41569

11 Ibid.

Besides providing for the establishment of a Russia NATO permanent Joint Council to be chaired by the NATO Secretary-General, a Russian representative and on a rotating basis, a representative of one of the NATO member states, to discuss issues of common security interests. Russia agreed in the Act to drop its objection to the eastward expansion of NATO. The Act made clear NATO's right to act independently and that Russia did not have any veto powers over NATO's decisions. Apart from confirming that it had "no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy" nuclear weapons or establish nuclear storage sites on the territory of new members, NATO assured Russia that it would not station permanently "substantial" numbers of conventional forces in "agreed regions of Europe, including central and Eastern Europe".[12] President made a surprise announcement during the signing ceremony that all nuclear warheads from Russian strategic missiles targeted against facilities situated in NATO countries would be stood down. Russian officials subsequently clarified that "standing down" meant non-targeting of missiles and not the dismantlement of missiles.[13]

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12 ACR, n.19, p.402 D.

13 Kessing's Record of World Events, n.37, vol.43,no.5, p.41665.

In 1997 there was renewed talk of a "partnership", but it was harder to realise in the wake of the mockery that NATO enlargement has made of the post-cold war partnership with Russia proclaimed earlier by the Bush and Clinton administrations. That initiative was not easy to square with the conception of an undivided, reunified Europe extending form the Atlantic to the Urals, as celebrated at the Paris Summit of 1990 marking the end of the cold war, and even reaching across the continents from Vancouver to Vladivostok as Clinton and Yeltsin had proclaimed at their first summit in April 1993. The political relationship permitting and once START-II and START-III are implemented, Mendelsohn had suggested that both the USA and Russia could scale down their inventories over the next decade by another 50 percent to around 1000-1250 warheads each. [14]

Gorbachev's successor, Boris Yeltsin, went beyond rapprochement with the United States. He began his administration with a genuine attempt to build a partnership with the United States. Before a joint session of the US Congress on June 17, 1992, Yeltsin reaffirmed his wish to join "the world community".[15] Russia was impelled by its domestic condition to seek outside assistance, and no

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Jack Mandelson, "START II and Beyond", Arms Control Today, vol.26, no.8,, October 1996, p.9.

country was better positioned to aid the new administration than the United State. Yeltsin made the transformation of Russia's economy his number one domestic priority. In the words of Anders Aslund, a Swedish economic adviser to Yeltsin, "when the Soviet Union broke up in December 1991, the Russian economy was in a crisis as complex as it was profound."[16] Foreign help was essential. "In a speech on October 28, 1991, Boris Yeltsin discussed at length and in detail the need for Western assistance and cooperation and he even promised to give the West whatever information it would want to facilitate aid."[17]

"Western support for Yeltsin had an importance beyond economics. It was also important for him politically. Yeltsin understood that he could count on the support of Washington when he confronted domestic reaction. The value of this support became clearly evident during the failed coup of August 1991." And later, during the parliamentary crisis in October 1993, Yeltsin sought and received support from the West.[18]

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16 New York Times, June 18, 1992.

17 Anders Aslnd, How Russia Became a Market Economy (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995),p.41.

18 John Dunlop, The Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.216.

Thus, we can see that beginning of happy state of Russia's relation with USA and West. They, however began to deteriorate by the end of 1996. Three issues wee crucial in determining the downtrend of their relations – one was NATO expansion to east, the other was NATO's policy to Yugoslavia the aeriel bombing of Kosovo, and finally, there was the complicated nature of SALT-II Agreement and US insistence on creating its own Anti Ballistic Missile System (ABM).

We shall take this up one by one in sequence. First we take up the Yugoslav crisis.

Yugoslav Crisis

"At about the same time that the Soviet Union collapsed, Yugoslav state fell apart, precipitating Europe's first major post-cold war conflict. The assertion of independence by Crotia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, two of Yugoslavia's constituent republics, led to bitter fighting between Croats, Serbs, ~~Serbs,~~ and Muslims. The most bitter and prolonged part of the fighting took place in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as each of these three communities fought for control over territory in the newly independent state. The Serbs (who comprised 31.3 percent of the Bosnian population) and Croats (who

were 17.3 percent) opposed a united, independent Bosnian state whose dominant population was Muslim (43.7 percent). The Serbs and Croats wanted instead a loose confederation in which they would be essentially self-governing or free to unite with their brethren in Croatia and Serbia."[19]

Fighting in Bosnia began in the spring of 1992 and continued until a peace agreement brokered by the United States was signed in November 1995. The Bosnian war created a strain in Russia-US negations because the sympathies of the two countries were with different parties to the conflict. Russia was traditionally an ally of Serbia. Historically, Russia had assumed the role or protector of the orthodox Christian Slavs in the Balkans. This feeling of kinship between Russians and Serbs resonated throughout Russian society. The United States found itself sympathetic to the Bosnian Muslims because they were the victims of widespread Serbian atrocities associated with the policy of "ethnic cleansing" (forcible displacement from territories seized by the Serbs). Both Moscow and Washington were constrained in their support for their respective sides.

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[19] Boris Yeltsin, The Struggle for Russia (New York: times Books, 1994),p.262.

"Yeltsin's Yugoslav policy encountered strong conservative opposition at home. Reminiscent of the USSR Supreme Soviet's condemnation of the United Nations vote to use force against Iraq, the Russian Supreme Soviet demanded a moratorium on United Nations sanctions against Yugoslavia. At the forty-eighth General Assembly session, the Assembly voted to expel Yugoslavia. Again, the Russia delegate to the Security Council made no effort to use the power of veto to prevent the expulsions of Yugoslavia from the United Nations."[20] The Yeltsin administration was careful to avoid drifting too far from the mainstream of international opinion on Yugoslavia and Bosnia.

Arms Reduction and Other Issues

However, the course of development of Russo-American relations continued. It was certainly not a small development although there was positive achievements. In September 1998 president Clinton and Yeltsin meet in Moscow in Summit Meeting and decided to exert pressure on India and Pakistan on their arms rivalry.

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[20] Charles G. Boyed, "Making Peace with the Guilty", Foreign Affairs. 74, no.5 (1995), pp.22-28.

The commitment was recorded in a 'joint statement on common security challenges on the threshold of the 21st century'. The statement said Russia and US shared "deep concern over the nuclear tests in South Asia" and reaffirmed their "commitment to close co-ordination in supporting all steps listed in the joint communiqué by the five nuclear powers, as it has been endorsed by the G-8 nation and the Security Council".[21]

The two leaders also reiterated their commitment to achieve the goal of all the countries signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty "in its present form, without any change".

Russia and the US also signed two arms pacts. One committed them to get rid of 50 tonnes of weapons-grade plutonium each from their old nuclear warheads. This amount of plutonium, to be utilised by burning in atomic power stations, represents a quarter of the Russian and half of the US stocks.

Under another accord, the two nations agreed to share data with each other form their early warning stations on launches of

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[21] Rossiiskaia Gazeta, Junl 19, 1992, pp.1-2. As quoted in, Paul Marantz, "Neither adversaries nor partners: Russia and the West Search for a new relationship" International Journal, vol.XLIXI, no.4, Autumn, 1994, p.749.

ballistic missiles and space vehicles around the world to avert an accidental war.

The US also pledged an initial $ 3.1 million to Russia to help and found the conversion of scientists in its closed nuclear research cities to civilian jobs.

The Russian and American leaders also agreed to draw up a START-II nuclear arms cuts accord which would reduce their arsenals to one-fifth of cold war levels. However, Clinton said that the two nations could negotiate the START-III agreement only after the Russian parliament had approved START-II.

Yeltsin and Clinton also pledged to accelerate international negotiation to establish a tough inspection regime of the Biological Weapons Convention and instructed their foreign ministers to develop deeper their cooperation to combat international terrorism around the world. According to Clinton, the two presidents agreed that Iraq must comply fully with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions imposed after the Gulf war, and allow the international weapons inspectors to again pursue their mission without obstruction or delay.

On some international issues discussed at the summit, the two leaders registered differences in their approach. According to Yeltsin, "Russia rejects the use of power methods as a matter of principle. Conflicts of today have no military solutions, be it in Kosovo or around Iraq or Afghanistan or others. Also, we do not accept the NATO centrism idea for the new European security architecture".[22]

However, the relation between the two countries began to deteriorate. In 1998 Prime Minister Primakov shifted from uncritical support for Washington's stand to open challenge of the US policies on such key issues as NATO expansion and Yugoslavia.

"Despite its unprecedented economic weakness, Moscow has refused to recognise Washington's claim to unchallenged supremacy. The expansion of the NATO in Europe is by for the most serious source of tension between the US and Russia. Russia is vehemently against NATO's ambition to play the role of a European and global policeman. Moscow has publicly reiterated its idea of replacing US dominance in world affairs with a multipolar system. It even floated the idea of a Russia-India-China triangle to help

[22] Current History, October 1997, vol.96, no.62, pp.305.

counter the US influence. The situation when the US and NATO appropriate for themselves the right to unilateral use of military force in disregard to UN resolutions is unacceptable to Russia."[23]

When US and British attacked Iraq in December 1998, Moscow briefly recalled ambassadors from Washington and London—an extreme step Russia has not taken since the end of the cold war. When NATO attacked Yugoslavia with air strikes, Moscow suspended its ties with NATO on March 27, 1999. The Russian Prime Minister scrapped his US visit half-way through in protest against the NATO air raids.

"Following the worst banking and financial crisis in Russia in August 1998, Washington decided that the time had come to show Moscow that it could ill-afford to pursue a fiercely independent foreign policy and, at the same time, seek western aid. The White House blocked further International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans and sent the Secretary of State,Madeleine Albright, to Moscow in February 1999 to present the Kremlin with an ultimatum to make major foreign policy changes. Russia was told to stop opposing the air strikes in Iraq, lift its objections to NATO's use of force in

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[23] Summary of World Broad Cast (referred later as SWB), SUW/0590 WF/1, 28 May 1999.

Yugoslavia and discontinue nuclear cooperation with Iran and India."[24]

Moscow was also asked to agree to changes in the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty to enable Washington to deploy a missile defence system over the US against attacks from 'rouge' states. Russia regarded the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of nuclear stability based on mutual vulnerability to missile attacks.

Without further loans from the IMF, "Russia would not be able to repay and restructure $17.5 billion in foreign debt servicing due this year (1999) and would have to be declared a defaulter. To make its case more convincing, Washington slapped sanctions on some Russian organisations accused of helping Iran develop its nuclear and missile programmes, banned three-fourths of Russian steel imports and threatened to cut Russia's quota of international satellite launches".[25]

Thus by the end of 1999 Russia's relations with the USA had considerably strained. Even the new leader-in-charge, Vladimir Putin could not indicate that this trend would reverse soon enough,

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

although both countries continued to regard basic commonality of interests on most global issues.

Russia's Relation with Europe

After the collapse of the USSR, President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Kozyrev considered their efforts to "join the west", as the highest priority of Russian foreign policy, so much so that they made no particular differentiation among the democratic market societies and associated international institutions whose partnership they sought. Like Gorbachev before them, they knocked on many doors, concluding treaties of friendship and cooperation with individual western states, seeking membership for Russia in that most exclusive of Western "clubs", the G-7. They looked for opportunities to cooperate with selective organisations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Paris Club and the London Club as well as the broader financial associations such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (to be succeeded by the World Trade Organisation), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. In the security realm, the Russian parliament quickly ratified various agreements concluded in 1990, together with a charter for a New Europe which emphasised an undivided "greater Europe". Seeking a

Pan-European security framework, Russia became an enthusiastic participant in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which included the United states and Canada as well and most of the states of Europe.

Germany

Throughout the 1990s, the primary advocate in regional forums on behalf first of Soviet and then of Russian integration into Europe has been Helmut Kohl's Germany. As phrased by Germany's ambassador to Russia Bonn's role is "somewhat like that of a defence lawyer for Russia in the construction of the new Europe".[26] Antagonists in two world wars and the cold war, Germany and Russia had come to recognise their mutual stake in preventing conflicts in their neighbourhood that might again cast them in adversarial roles.

Chancellor Kohl's first visit to Yeltsin's Russia came in December 1992, at a time when Yeltsin was engaged in a momentous showdown with the Congress of People's Deputies, having been forced to abandon his nomination to Egor Gaidar as premier. The two leaders signed eight agreements, including a

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[26] Ibid.

promise by Germany to give an eight-year respite on repayment of Soviet debts to the former GDR, and a pledge of an additional 550 million marks for construction of housing in Russia for troops withdrawn from Germany. Yeltsin promised to in turn to complete the troop withdrawal four months early (by August 1994), and to provide ten billion roubles in the Russian budget for setting up new "national districts" for the Volga Germans. At the conclusion of his visit, Kohl termed Russia Germany's "major partner in the East".[27]

The state of Russo-German relations was not entirely insulated from the effects of Moscow's invasion of Chechnya. Defence Minister Pavel Grachev was uninvited by his German counterpart to a Munich forum on European security scheduled for 1995.[28]

In 1998, there was a special meeting of the German-Russian cooperation council in which was discussed trade and business. The German entrepreneurs were concerned about the future of German-Russian business. According to the Russian Ministry of Trade, trade

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[27] Leonid Velekhov, Kohl Comes to Yeltsin's Rescue", Nezavisimaia Gazeta, December 18,1992, in CDPSP 44, no.50 (1992), pp.19-20.

[28] Ibid.

turnover between the two countries had fallen from 33.5 billion German Marks to 30.5 billion in a single year.

On 15th October 1999 German Foreign Ministry Joschka Fischer ended his working visit to Russia. He said that a wide range of mattes, including the situation in the North Caucasus, was discussed during the talks which were held "in a serious constructive atmosphere". The discussion focused on "keeping up the positive dynamics of the European economic integration and Russia's gradual involvement in it".[29]

France

Second only to Germany in Russian priorities in Europe was France. French and Russian diplomats fondly recalled the historic Franco-Russian alliance of 1893 and their common struggle against German armies in two world wars. As their Soviet predecessors did from the time of Charles de Gaulle, on occasion Russian leaders had subtly reinforced France's continuing rivalry with Germany, and its resentments of Washington's perceived wish to dominate Western Europe. While Yeltsin's personal relations with President Mitterrand never approached the levels of warmth he exhibited with chancellor

[29] Kommersatn-Daily, January 24, 1995, in CDPSP 47, no.4 (1995), p.28.

Kohl, the personal dimension in diplomacy had loomed larger since the election in 1995 of Jacques Chirac as France's president.

Although French economic aid to Russia did not approach the level of German assistance, France did grant economic credits in 1992, announced during Yeltsin's February visit to Paris. In 1994, the two countries signed agreements on military cooperation – Moscow's first with a West European state – including projects for joint development and production of weaponry, which were intended in part to allow the two countries to compete more effectively with the United States in the arms export market. By the time of Kozyrev's visit to France in November of the same year, a more explicit anti-American tone was being heard. Neither state was speaking approvingly at this point about NATO expansion, and they pointedly discussed possible initiatives with respect to Bosnia and Iraq that would undercut the perceived unilateralism of Washington's approach to these conflict areas. Mitterrand underscored the need not to isolate Moscow but rather to build Europe with Russian participation or as Kozyrev claimed, in stressing that Russia's cooperation with France, Germany, and Britain "will not be a partnership against the U.S. but a partnership with it, but in such a way that Europe's voice is heard

independently, and that Moscow's voice in the European chorus is also sufficiently distinct."[30]

Yeltsin's first direct talks with Chirac, during a stopover on his way to the United Nations in October 1995, again focussed on NATO expansion and Bosnia. According to Russian journalists, they displayed a "proximity of views based on a certain anti-Americanism".[31] During the following year, an exchange of visits by the two prime ministers led to closer relations in the economic and technical spheres. A bilateral commission was set up, a new French credit was granted, and agreement was reached on Russian repayment of Tsarist debts. Further talks between Chirac and Yeltsin in 1997 produced final agreements on questions of debts, clearing the way for Russia's admission to the Paris club of creditor nations.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed a memorandum on 13th October 1999 that orders the Finance Ministry, together with the Foreign Ministry and government debt agent Vneshekonombank, to sign bilateral agreements by 31st March2000 with each member of

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30 Ibid.

31 Aleksander Krausulin, "He came, He saw, He persuaded", Rossiikai Gazeta, November 22, 1994 in CDPSP 46, no.47 (1994), pp.23-24.

the Paris club of creditors regulating Soviet-era debt due in 1998-2000.

The memorandum order the ministries to negotiate a settlement on Russian payments on its inherited Soviet debt due in 1998-2000. If an agreement was reached on restructuring Russia's foreign debt signed with the club on 1st August, 1999, the corresponding bilateral agreements would to be signed by 31st March 2000.

"The memorandum calls for the restructuring of about 8 billion dollars of Soviet debt due in 1998-2000 over a period of 20 years. Under the memorandum, Russia would only pay the Paris club 620 m dollars in interest in 1998-2000, and another 550 m in 2001-2005."[32]

Britain

Britain was a less prominent object of Russian courtship than the two major continental powers of Western Europe. Yeltsin's initial trip to London as Russian President in January 1992 was undertaken with full awareness of the importance to Gorbachev's

[32] Kommersant – Daily, October 24, 1999, in CDPSP 47, no.43 (1999) pp.23-24.

international reputation of Margaret Thatcher's commendation of him in 1984: "one can do business with Mr. Gorbachev". Knowing that foreign visits had been an area of triumph for his predecessor Yeltsin was pleased with his reception. Prime Minster John Major declared that "Yeltsin made a very good impression on me", and the British agreed to increase economic aid to Russia."[33] During a second visit later in the same year, Yeltsin signed a bilateral treaty and an economic agreement, and he was also given the opportunity to address the British parliament.

An exchange of visits between Prime Minister Major and Yeltsin in 1994 generated good atmospherics but very little in the way of bilateral accomplishment. In London, in September, Yeltsin failed to get British backing for his project to expand peacekeeping responsibilities for the OSCE, but on all other issues the two were reportedly in agreement. The more important trip that year, however, was purely ceremonial – Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Russia in October was the first visit by a British monarch since the Bolshevik revolution. "The change of governments in Britain had little effect on the course of Anglo-Russian relations; a visit to Moscow by Prime Minister Blair in October 1997 focussed on economic

[33] Ibid.

relations, with attention being given to the fact that Britain now ranked second to Germany among foreign investors in Russia."[34]

Sweden

"Yeltsin last foreign trip of 1997 was a highly publicised visit to Sweden, notable less for its diplomatic achievements than for several embarrassing mistakes made by the Russian President. At one point, Yeltsin evidently believed he was in Finland; on another occasion, he referred to a "Swidish" oil deal that actually had been concluded with Norway. Blurting out a confusing offer for a unilateral reduction in nuclear arms –later disavowed by his staff – he mistakenly identified Germany and Japan as nuclear powers. In this context, observers were uncertain of the status of a declaration he made in a speech to the Swedish parliament, later confirmed by his defence Minster, which was evidently intended to reassure the Baltic states that their membership in NATO would be unnecessary by promising a 40 percent cut in Russia ground and naval forces along the country's north-western border by 1999. In any event, Yeltsin's strange behaviour was later blamed by his staff on fatigue

[34] Maksim Iusin, "Yeltsin's Visit to London was a complete Success", Izvestia, February 11, 1998, in CDPSP 44, no.4 (1998), pp. 10-11.

and a developing cold, as he was hospitalised upon his return to Russia."[35]

More significant diplomatically and symbolic of the growing differentiation that had accrued in Russian policy toward the West, was trip Yeltsin made a little earlier in the fall of 1997, to a summit meeting of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. The Russian President seemed at pains to underscore the extent to which Russia regarded itself as part of a Europe and that it was increasingly resistant to U.S. domination.

After the election of the new administration President Vladimir Putin, Duma had approved the START – II agreement. However, this action did not deter the USA to bring in the new issue of putting up a national defence system against of Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM). This has been the issue which has led to further deterioration of Russia's relations with the USA; so much so that by the time Yeltsin finally left the scene these remained strained. Relation with Western Europe, however, did not deteriorate as steadily as in the case of the USA.

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[35] The Europa Wolrd Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.11, 1999, pp.2971-2972.

All said and done, commonality of basic interests of Russia, USA and Europe need not be forgotten, rather these may be redefined in coming decades.

CHAPTER III

RUSSIA AND ASIA, 1997-1999

In the preceding pages we have analysed how Russia's relation with USA and the West began to cool off, from 1993 onwards; by the end of 1990's relations with the USA were particularly strained because of a number of factor, we have already taken into account.

It is interesting to note that as relation with USA and the West began to cool off, Russian foreign policy-makers expressed doubts about the total focus of Russian foreign policy on the West. By 1993 Asian countries began to come into the view of Russian foreign policy. Thus a trend or striking balance between East and West gradually gained momentum.

In April 1996, Yevgeny Primakov, an academic turned politician, was appointed Foreign Minister, and he continued through 1997; in early 1998 President Yeltsin promoted him by appointing him as Prime Minister of Russia, a post he continued for about a year. Thus for two years Primakov was incharge of foreign policy and he really brought Asia into Russia's focus by seeking to strike a balance between East and West.[1] In some ways, we can call the years, 1996-1999 as Primakov's years of Russian Foreign Policy,

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1 "Foreign Policy", The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, (Ohio), vol.50, no.17, (19i8), p.22.

keeping in view that President Yeltsin was then having recurrent illness.

After a number of changes in the post of Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin came on the scene towards mid-1999. By that time relation with the West had further restrained while those with East particularly with India, China, Japan and Iran had correspondingly warmed up. By the end of 1999 Putin was chosen to become the next President of Russia but he could not stop this trend, rather he was compelled to continue.[2]

It was obvious right from the beginning of 1992-93 that Russia's interest in Asia was not all embracing. These were confined to Asian states nearer to its borders and these we focussed on economic relations, particularly arms-sale, and certainly not political. We shall now take up relations with Asian countries as per Russia's priority.

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2 "Foreign Policy, The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol.51, no.48 (1999),pp.23-24.

Russia-China Relations (1997-99)

After a long period of aloofness, Russia and China have been showing clear signs of reaching out to one another and establishing a cooperative relationship.

Chinese Premier, Mr. Lipeng visited Russia in December 1996. An outcome was the decision to cooperate closely in science and technology, economy and trade through the establishment of working groups in these areas. Russia agreed to help the Chinese with their nuclear programme by supplying reactors. Military technology exchange was also discussed.[3]

The fifth Sino-Russian summit, the third in some twenty months, was held in Beijing during the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin's three-day visit to China, beginning November 9, 1997.

A historic demarcation treaty along their nearly 4300 Km. long eastern sector of their common border was signed by Yeltsin and China's President Jiang Zemin. The border, from Mongolia to the Tumen river near the sea of Japan, had been a bone of contention since the 17th century and saw some bloody armed clashes as

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[3] Dev Murarka, "Russia and China: A Hollow Alliance", Economic and Political Weekly (Mumbai), August 2, 1997, p.1955.

ally. With the emergence of independent Central Asian Republics, Russian and Indian borders have fallen further apart. India did not impinge on the immediate concerns of New Russia. Besides the West, the countries directly bordering on it occupied greater Russian attention. It was a period of uncertainty in Indo-Russia Relations.

A Russian Foreign Ministry Publication on the "concept of Russian Federation's Foreign Policy in January 1993 put Russia's priorities in this order: (1) The CIS (2) Arms Control and international security. (3) Economic Reform. (4) The United States. (5) Europe. (6) The Asia-Pacific Region. (7) West and South Asia (8) The Near East. (9) Africa (10) Latin America."[8]

"In fact, low priority accorded to India in Russian policy was reciprocated by India also. India tried to adjust to the post-Soviet World reality. In mid-1991, the Narsimha Rao government accelerated the process of liberalising the economy by removing controls. It sought International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank loans, and accepted some of the IMF-Bank conditionalities and opened up the economy to foreign investment. Both Washington and New Delhi made conciliatory gestures to each other. They sought

[8] Cited in Amita Inder Singh, "India's Relations with Russia and Central Asia", International Affairs (RIIA), vol.71, no.1, January 1995, p.72.

new areas of cooperation. Greater attention was also given to mending fences with Beijing."[9]

In a reversal of cold war roles, Washington was making up with New Delhi. US arms supply to Pakistan was stopped in 1990 in view of the latter's nuclear programme and ambition. On the other hand, Moscow appeared to be improving ties with Pakistan. In November 1991, just before the Soviet collapse, Moscow for the first time voted in the UNO for a Pakistan-sponsored proposal for creating a nuclear-free zone in South Asia, much to the consternation of New Delhi.

"It seemed two different schools of thought existed in Russia at this time regarding the policy towards India. One opinion favoured that the traditional "special" relationship with India should be retained. India should be given priority in the country's policy in South Asia, while at the same time developing good relations with other South Asian countries, including Pakistan. The other school favoured that the epoch of "special" relations with India should be ended. According to this approach, looking at the developments in the region "through Indian spectacles" affected Russia's relations

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[9] Citha D. Maass, "Reorientation of Indian Foreign Policy After the Cold War", Aussen Politik (Hamburg), vol.44, no.1, 1993, pp.38-43.

with other regional actors, above all, Pakistan. The second view was associated with the Russian Foreign Ministry headed by Andrei Kozyrev. The first view was prevalent among the academic community and the parliamentary circles."[10]

The Indian Prime Minister Mr. H.D. Devegowda went on a three-day visit to Moscow in May 1997 with delegations comprising the then external affairs Minister Mr. I.K. Gujral, finance minister Mr. P. Chidambaram, minister for commerce and other senior officials. Several agreements were signed which pertained to avoidance of double taxation, extradition, cooperation and plant quarantine and cooperation in physical culture and sports.

"The two countries also entered into a defence agreement, in which Russia will help India in developing a state-of-the-art integrated *air defence system* (ADS), under the long-term defence cooperation programme till the year 2000. The ADS would be capable of withstanding air and missile strikes similar to the American attack on Iraq during the Gulf War. One of the salient features of the system "would be the integration of indigenous surface-to-air missile, 'Akash', being developed by India, with the

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[10] T. Shaumian, "Russia's Eastern Diplomacy and India", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol.65, no.4, Winter 1992-93, p.490.

top-of-lien Russian anti-missile system 300 PMU-1 which have a clear edge over the American Patriot Missile Systems. Other defence agreement included the Rs. 6,630 crore Sukhoi 30 dal and modernisation of MIG-21 BIS fighter of the IAF. Moreover, a cryogenic engine is to be supplied to India by the year 2000 A.D."[11]

Despite US opposition, Russia will supply two nuclear reactors to India for Kudankulam power project in Tamil Nadu which would have a capacity of 1000 MW each. The entire project is expected to cost between Rs. 16000 crore and Rs. 17000 crore and would take 10 years to complete.

The Indian and Russian sides agreed to elevate their bilateral relations to the level of a 'strategic partnership'—a term implying various dimensions of close bilateral dealings, expansion of overall cooperation in economic and defence fields, identical response to matters of concern to each side and a similarity of outlook on regional and international subjects. India supported the Russian opposition to NATO's expansion. On his part Yetlsin reiterated the view that India and Pakistan should resolve their problems on a bilateral level under the guidelines of the 1972 Shimla Pact.

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[11] Ibid.

In October 1997, India's Union Home Minister at the time, Indrajit Gupta, and the visiting Russian Deputy Prime Minister and internal affairs Minister Mr. A.S. Kulikov, signed a protocol for mutual cooperation for combating organised crime and drug trafficking and transborder terrorism that pose serious problems to both countries.

The protocol provides for regular exchange of information between the two countries regarding illegal activities of the organised criminal groups and their connections with other international criminal groups. It also envisages regular exchange of experts to facilitate establishment of professional ties between the specialised police training institutions of both the countries. The two countries would undertake to coordinate actions to identify and combat the activities of criminal and terrorist groups. The two sides also agreed to take steps for creating greater regional and international consensus for a regime against organised crime, narco-terrorism and transborder terrorism.[12]

The then Russian Prime Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, was on a two-day visit to India on December 20-21, 1997. During the visit India and Russia signed seven agreements to cement further their

[12] The Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press, (Ohio) vol.30, no.16 (1998), pp.22-23..

long-term economic and strategic ties. A key document on long-term military cooperation till 2010 A.D. was also signed. India's desire to emerge as Russia's partner in the production of defence equipment rather than being only a buyer has been well documented in the agreement.

Not much movement in Indo-Russian relations were noted during the first few months of 1998 mainly due to political instability in India. However, when in May 1998 India followed by Pakistan exploded nuclear devices, Russia also reacted strongly. It condemned the nuclear explosion. However, unlike the USA and the West of its criticisms were not strident. For instance, it opposed sanctions and rejected US sponsored sanctions on India and Pakistan.[13]

Later, Russia and India had reaffirmed their commitment to develop defence ties on the basis of a long-term cooperation programme, notwithstanding the Indian nuclear tests. A regular meeting of the joint working group on military technical cooperation, the apex body to take policy decision on bilateral defence ties, was held in Moscow in June and then in July 1998 and it finalised a 10 years defence cooperation programme between

[13] See Zafar Imam, "Rusia's Response to Nuclearisation of India" (A Published Paper,1999).

Russia and India, to be signed during a proposed visit by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin, to Delhi in December 1998.[14]

The visit by the India delegation to Russia was a conclusive proof that the Indian nuclear testing had not led to any slowdown in bilateral ties with Russia. Shortly after the tests, the two sides had held a high level meeting of the scientists involved in the Integrated Long-Term Programme of Scientific Cooperation (ILTP). The defence talks in Moscow in June 1998 stand out in this list of bilateral contacts as by far the most important. The Russian side confirmed its commitment to stable, predictable and long-term cooperation in the defence sphere. The new 10-year cooperation plan, which will supersede the current 6 years programme expiring in 2000, will shift emphasis from buyer-seller relations to technology transfer and joint development of new defence hardware in view of India's decision to increase the indigenous component in its arsenal.[15]

The 10-years programme covers a wide range of military hardware for the air force, the navy and ground forces. It includes some ongoing projects, such as the upgrading of India's MIG-21

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[14] Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press, (Ohio) vol.50, no.17, 1998.

[15] Ibid.

fighter planes, joint development of the long-strike SU-30 MKI jets and transfer of technology for their manufacture in India, acquisition of the 10th Kio-Class submarine and three frigates.

According to Russian defence sources, the programme also identifies new areas of cooperation. Apart form the air defence project, it includes such options as the overhauling and rearming of the Gorshkov aircraft carrier, the upgrading of the T-72 tanks or purchase of the advanced missile-firing T-90 tank, acquisition of self propelled Msta 13 guns, air borne early warning systems attack helicopters KA-30 and a possible purchase of the new MIG – AT trainer jet.

India is the first and only country so far to have a long-term military cooperation programme with Russia that would last till the end of the century. The value of the programme is estimated at between $8 and $10 billion. The agreement covers supply of military hardware to India, technical collaboration, exchange of specialists and experts, besides army-to-army ties.

On June 21, 1998, India and Russia signed a $2.5 billion deal to set up a nuclear power station in Koodankulam in Tirunelveli district in Tamil Nadu. The agreement was signed in New Delhi by the visiting Russian atomic energy ministry, Mr. Yevgeny Adamov,

and the Atomic Energy Commission Chairman, Dr. R. Chidambaram.

Under the agreement, Russia will be supplying its most advanced 1,000 MW nuclear power plants the VVER-392 type to India. The two nuclear power plants are the larger and most modern third generation pressurised water reactors (PWR) of the Soviet design. VVER is an acronym for Soviet design water cooled, water-moderated energy reactor.[16]

An agreement was signed on March 22, 1999, between Russia and India during the visit of the Russian defence minister, Marshal Igov Sergeyev to New Delhi. As a part of the agreement, Russia will train specialists from maintaining some of the advanced equipment which it plan to transfer to New Delhi.

The Indian Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh, visited Moscow in May 1999 after a tour of former Soviet Central Asia. He met and held talks with top Russian officials including Russia's special envoy for Yugoslavia and former Prime Minster, Mr. Viktor Chernomyrdin and the Secretary of the policy-making Security

[16] Ibid.

Council, Vladimir Putin, who was also head of the Federal Security Service (former KGB).[17]

The opening day of the talks was dominated by the Balkan conflict. Jaswant Singh stressed a strong convergence of views of India and Russia on the Balkan crisis and reiterated New Delhi's readiness to interact closely with Russia and like minded countries in working for a negotiated solution under UN auspices which would uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.

Economic Protocol

India and the Russian Federation agreed on July 29, 1999 to utilise the rupee-rouble debt funds for investment in projects in India. The countries also decided in principle to expand bilateral cooperation to the filed of civil aviation as well and this could result in the two countries collaborating in the manufacture of light and medium-sized passenger aircraft.

The outline of the future bilateral cooperation was contained in a "protocol" signed by the two countries in New Delhi.

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[17] SWB, SU./3600/B9, May 1999, p.9.

The Union Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, signed protocol on behalf of India while the visiting first deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Dr. Viktor Krishtenko, signed it on behalf of his country.[18]

The year 1999 thus ended on a happy note for Russo-Indian relations. The change of guard at Kremlin December 1999 appeared not to disturb their course of further development.

Russia-Japan Relations (1997-1999)

The Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto ended the age-old cold war policy of Tokyo towards Moscow. In July 1997 he prudently announced without giving up the claim to the Islands occupied by the erstwhile Soviet Union at the end of World War II, that "there can be no solution on the basis of one side winning and the other side losing".[19]

With Russia occupying four islands which Tokyo calls the Northern Territories in the Northern Pacific, the two countries were bogged down in a cold war. During the cold war, Japan under US pressure, subscribed to Washington's view that the four-islands

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[18] Banks, Arther S. and Muller Thomas E., Political Hand Book of the World:1999 (CSA Publications Binghamton University, New York, 2000), pp.761-763.

[19] SWB, SU/360013/9, July 1997, p.9.

dispute must remain a pestering sore. In return, Ikinawa was returned to the Japanese administration 27 years after the end of the war. Japan's Tanaka administration insisted on taking back all four islands whereupon Leonid Brezhnev angrily withdrew a Russian offer to return two of them.

Hashimoto's public announcement was timed soon after the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and is certainly meant to draw Yeltisn closer to the East. Top Russian officials, including the foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, had long admitted that Russia was keen on becoming part of the fastest growing region.

In April 1998, an informal two-day summit was held at Kawana, Japan, between Boris Yeltsin and Ryutaro Hashimoto. At the Summit, the two leaders agreed on a proposal to formally end world war II hostilities by signing a peace treaty by the year 2000.

Japan also conditionally agreed to a peace treaty but implicitly linked its acceptance to the inclusion of the future ownership of all four disputed islands to its satisfaction. A Japanese draft may form the basis for such a treaty. The then Prime Minister of Japan also initiated a new proposal which might be the core of a new pact that is likely to be described as a treaty of friendship and cooperation

that embraces Moscow's need for Japanese economic assistance and investments and gives Japan hope to regain incremental possession of four disputed islands presently under Russian control.[20]

The two leaders agreed that the treaty "should contain a solution to the question of the attribution (ownership) of the four islands on the basis of a paragraph two of the Tokyo Declaration". This was a reference to the 1993 document between Yeltsin and the former Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, which for the first time named the four islands. It also suggested that Japan would not begin negotiation on the premise of a 1956 document that suggested that only two islands would be returned to Japan.

The Japanese strategy has been to encourage all forms of economic, commercial and even military cooperation with Russia except where the disputed islands are concerned. On the islands, the Japanese approach has been to foster people to people, consular and cultural contact while so far as economic matters are concerned Japan has retained the initiative. Hashimoto for instance, offered to supply diesel generations to help mitigate the power shortage situation but refused to respond favourably to a Russian request for investing in creating a fisheries processing plant on the isles,

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[20] SWB, SU/3500B/8 April 1998, p.8.

together with related infrastructure such as roads, harbours, ware houses, freezing facilities etc.

Japan feels Moscow has been delaying initiatives for creating the right climate for receiving foreign investment and claims there has been little movement in furthering the so-called Hashimoto-Hyeltsin plan drawn up in Krasnoyarsk in November 1997. This six-point plan, catering for more trade, investments in energy projects, transport and training of Russian executives, nuclear cooperation etc. has now added cooperation in space to the list. The purpose behind the plan and indeed the entire strategy behind the Hashimoto-Yeltsin approach is to foster an environment in both countries that might facilitate territorial cessions and more Japanese investments.

Elements of the following are believed to have influenced the Russia-Japan settlement: the Soviet-German agreement of 1990, the Sino-Russian agreement of 1997; the British-Argentine approach on the Falklands-Malvinas; Yeltsin's decade long views on the Russia-Japan relationship; a Sino - Portuguese agreement on Macao; Japan's need for huge amounts of oil and gas and Russia's need for huge amounts of money.[21]

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[21] Ibid.

The 20-year 1990 "Soviet-Germany Treaty" on Good Neighbourliness, partnership and cooperation" may have striking similarities with the Russia-Japan treaty being envisaged.

Russia-Iran Relations (1997-99)

Soviet relations with Iran during the 1980s were not nearly as cordial as those with Turkey, but there may be greater potential for long-term future cooperation between Moscow and Teheran. Russia continued to seek increased trade with Iran, but a worsening economy limited Teheran's attractiveness as a customer. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Oleg Davydov, visiting Iran late in 1995, said that the main difficulties in Russo-Iranian trade were not political, but were related to problems of payments that followed the 1992 decision to settle accounts only in freely convertible currency. Total trade volume had dropped 29 percent in 1994, to $520 million, and Iran's overdue debt to Russia had climbed to $582 million. Nevertheless, Davydov predicted later in the year that the total volume of Russian exports to Iran could reach $5 billion in another decade.

Russia's interest in participating in Iranian energy projects caused another dispute with the United States in the fall of 1997. A joint French-Malaysian-Russian project for developing Iranian gas

fields threatened to trigger US sanctions against the participating companies, apparently jeopardising a plan by the Russian participant (Gazprom) to raise investment capital on the US market. In December 1997, Gazprom announced that it had withdrawn from these financing plans but not from the proposed deal with Iran.

Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov continued the Russian effort to strengthen ties with Iran. Visiting Tehran in December 1996, he declared that relations between the two were "developing along an ascending curve", in part because of Iran's assistance in arranging a cease-fire in Tajikistan. These signs of cooperation on regional problems continued into 1997, as the two countries collaborated on their policies toward the Taliban in Afghanistan, and as Russia sought Iran's help in pressurising Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan to cooperate with Moscow in the exploitation of the considerable petroleum resources in the Caspian Sea. But whether the relationship could remain relatively trouble free was in doubt. Given Iran's expressed interest in acquiring additional arms (T-80 tanks, S-300 air defence missile systems, and Mg-20 fighter attack planned) that would likely upset the regional balance in the Persian Gulf and greatly alarm the United States.[22]

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[22] Asia Times,June 27, 1997, p.4.

In September 1997, the US government took very seriously that Russia was supplying missile technology to Iran. Primakov hastily denied the reports, and Yeltsin added a blanket pledge that, while limited arms sales would continue, there would be no deliveries to Iran of missiles or missile technology. Pressed again on the subject the following month by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, the Russian foreign minister reportedly cited his prior intelligence background as the basis for assuring the Israelis that Iran would not have nuclear weapons or the means to deliver them any time within the next decade. As for the prospect of unauthorised "leakage", Primakov added "that he personally had promoted the adoption of measures to prevent specialists with access to missile and nuclear secrets from having contacts with Iran.[23] As the subject continued to be pressed by the US government in 1998, Primakov acknowledged that some "brain drain" had occurred, but that it was simply not in Russia's interests to assist its neighbour in acquiring long-range missiles.

Thus we can see that by the turn of the century Russia had realised that it had important stakes in Asia, particularly in neighbouring Asian countries like India, China, Japan and Iran.

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[23] Kommersant-Daily, October 28, 1997, p.2.

However, it should be noted that the relationship with the West had not been diluted at the cost of its turn to the East. Russia's basic policy of courting the USA and the West remains, although its style may have changed. This pattern puts in sharp focus that Russia's foreign policy has been in transition, certainly during the years of our review.

CHAPTER IV

RELATIONS WITH COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS) COUNTRIES, 1997-99

As Russia began to move towards its Eurasian orientations, it also turned nearer home the "near abroad", as the members of CIS were called. By the beginning of 1997, Russia's relation with CIS members had already went through ups and downs, and experienced successes and failures. These experiences were novel for Russia, so its policy towards CIS kept on unfolding, indeed it was in a flux.

"After the dissolution of the USSR, in December 1991, Russia's most immediate foreign policy concerns were with the other former Soviet Republics".[1] The CIS came as an organisation whose birth was accidental, while its future remained as uncertain as it did at its birth. Those who founded CIS really wanted a different type of the Union. Eleven former Soviet Republics are now joined with Russia in the Commonwealth of Independent States,* while some, like Russia constituted the core of the "near abroad".

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1 The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.II, 1999, p.2971.

* The majority of the other republics wanted some form of affiliation with Russia and the CIS was expanded on December 25, 1991 with signing in Alma-Ata of a protocol admitting Kazakhastan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Of the fifteen Union republics, only the Baltic states and Georgia chose not to join. Within Azerbaijan and Moldova choose not to join. Within Azerbaijan and Moldova strong domestic opposition to the Commonwealth prevented their national parliaments from ratifying their membership. Azerbaijan withdrew from the CIS in October 1992.

The CIS appears to be an instrument of Russian foreign policy in two ways. It seems, first of all, that it is a means of co-ordination of policies among its members. It is also a mechanism for asserting Russian hegemony over other eleven states. Both methods have been adopted simultaneously. Initially, prominence was given to the former, while with the passage of time, the latter had become an important feature of Russian policy. According to the text of the original CIS agreement, the members agreed to co-ordinate foreign policy activities. They specifically committed themselves to creating a "common military strategic space" under a joint commander, including a unified control over nuclear weapons. That commitment, along with an agreement to create a "common economic space" [2], was abandoned within two years. The CIS is unique, among many existing international organisations. It is neither a political alliance nor an economic community, though its activities have elements of both. It is a loose federation with no independent powers of governance. There is, of course, provision for central institutions-principally a councils of Heads of State and Council of Heads of Government—but these councils lack authority to impose CIS decisions on any member. President Nursultan Nazarbaev of

[2] The text of the CIS agreement is in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press (CDPSP) 43, no.49 (1992), pp.10-11.

Kazakhastan, one of the most ardent supporters of integration, complained in 1994 that of 452 agreements signed within the CIS framework, most were never implemented.

After casting a quick glance over the genesis of CIS, we now turn to Russia's relations with each CIS member during the period of our study.

Kazakhstan

The Russian President, Boris Yeltsin and his Kazakhstan counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbayev, signed a landmark accord on July 6, 1998 in Moscow on dividing up the northern sector of the oil-rich Caspian Sea. The deal should enable both sides to cash in on the development of the rich oil reserves lying beneath the world's largest inland sea, estimated at some 13-15 billion tonnes.

Later, Iran and Turkmenistan voiced objection to the agreement between Russia and Kazakhstan. In a joint communiqué, Iran and Turkmenistan "stressed the irreversible principle of unanimity by the five littoral states on all decisions regarding the legal status of the Caspian sea". The statement, issued in Teheran at the end of a visit by Turkmen President, Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, also said the Caspian sea should have a single legal status and any division of its resources should "give equal shares to all five states

and ensure the fair exploitation of its resources". The two countries also said that until new accords on the Caspian sea were reached, old agreements signed by Iran and the Soviet Union were still valid.[3]

Russia's conflict with Kazakhstan on the proton was resolved on July 14, 1999, after the Russian deputy premier, Ilia Klebanov, rushed to the Kazakh capital Astana and held an emergency meeting with the President, Nursultan Nazabayev.

Kazakhstan agreed to allow the Russian cargo spacecraft "progress" to take off from Baikonur cosmodrome on July 18, 1999 to make urgent food, water and oxygen deliveries to the cosmonauts in the space laboratory, Mir, flying in orbit. With this Kazakhstan lifted the ban on the flight of Russian rockets and spacecraft from its territory (except the proton boosters). As compensation, it is receiving $5 million from Russia.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan has the smallest and most homogenous population in Central Asia – about 75 percent being Turkmen. Despite enormous reserves of oil and natural gas and a productive

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[3] Rubinstein, Alvin Z. "Russia: In Search of a New Role", World Affairs, April-June, 1997, pp.67.

but expensive mono-agricultural based on cotton, it is under developed and one of the poorest countries in the region. Geographic location accounts for its importance – as a land bridge between Iran and the outside world on the one hand and Central Asia on the other.[4]

On 17th December, 1999 there was an agreement between the Gazprom, Russian giant gas concern, and the government of Turkmenistan on deliveries of 20 billion cubic meters of natural gas to the markets of Russia and the Commonwealth in 2000. They signed agreement on establishment of the long-term partnership, which takes into account a mutual benefit and a strategic interest of these friendly states.[5]

The Russian Premier stressed the need to have a wider intergovernmental dialogue, which is based on the recognition of and respect for the sovereignty and a neutral status of Turkmenistan. During the conversation they agreed that "they must demonstrate the effectiveness of interaction between the two countries possessing fuel resources, and create on atmosphere of confidence and mutual

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4 The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.II, 1998, p.2842.

5 "Foreign Policy", The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press (Ohio), vol.51, no.48 (1999), pp.23-24.

understanding between Russia and Turkmenistan for their large-scale cooperation.

Tajikistan

"The economic crisis in Russia is also having an impact on Tajik-Russian economic relations, which are showing a tendency to fall. According to statistics in 1998 Tajikistan's foreign trade turnover with the Russian Federation was 16 percent down on 1997. In 1998 export-import operations totalling 149,978,700 dollars were accomplished with Russia, experts amounted to 47,815,100 dollars and imports to 102,163,600 dollars. Let us recall that in 1997 there figures reached 66,361,400 and 121,104,300 dollars in 1997".[6]

"Russia is convinced that there is no alternative to the peace accords that Tajikistan's government and the opposition signed in Moscow in 1997. The accords ended a four-year civil war in Tajikistan.[7] Russia, as one of guarantors of the general agreement on the establishment of peace and national accord in Tajikistan, is convinced that there is no alternative to the Moscow agreement" that was the signed on 27th June 1997.[8]

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6 SWB, SUW/0575 WF/3, vol.II, 12 Feb. 1999, p.3.

7 SWB, SU/3575 B/17, vol.II, 1 July 1999, p.17.

8 Ibid.

Much has been done over the past two years. The progress of the implementation of the agreement has confirmed the crucial significance of this document. The National Reconciliation Commission has been set up and is actively working, headed by the leader of United Tajik opposition (UTO).[9]

"More than 20 representatives of the opposition have been introduced into the composition of the government. Practically, all Tajik refugees have returned from Afghanistan. The relocation of the opposition's armed formations from Afghanistan has been finished".[10]

However, one cannot but be worried by the recent increasingly frequent attempts of part of the leadership of the UTO the present ultimatums to the government, including on issues that were not envisaged in the text of the Moscow Agreement.

Rakhmanin had said only full compliance with the Moscow Agreement "can become a reliable guarantee of achieving a comprehensive settlement and help stabilise the situation in Tajikistan. The entire history of the peace process in Tajikistan convincingly proves that its progress is possible only through the

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9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

search for compromises, mutually acceptable solutions precluding any kinds of ultimatums and forcible pressure".[11]

"However, in 1996 and 1997 Russia hosted several rounds of the UN sponsored negotiations for a political settlement in Tajikistan, which culminated in the signing of peace agreement in Moscow, in June 1997".[12]

"In April 1998, Russia and Tajikistan signed an agreement on the establishment of a Russian military base in Tajikistan; in the same month nine major bilateral agreements were signed, including a Treaty of Alliance and Cooperation".[13]

"In July 1998, while heavy fighting occurred close to Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan, the frontier was reinforced by Russian troops".[14]

In 1999, the Mykolayiv Alumina Plant (MAP) would supply 450,000 tonnes of alumina and another 500,000 tonnes to the Tajik Aluminium Plant, according to a source in the MAP Management. Both contracts provide for the tolling system of payment whereby customer-supplied raw materials are brought into another country for

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[11] Ibid.

[12] The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications 18 Bredford Square), vol.II, 1999, p.3407.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

processing and the end products returns to the owner of the raw materials. MAP has not so far signed any direct contracts with the Krasnoyarsk and Sayansk aluminium plants. The latter was MAP's major partner in 1998.

In 1998, MAP produced 1,064,00 tonnes of alumina with MAP's annual capacity reaching 1.2 tonnes.[15]

At a joint sitting of the boards in Dushande today, the Tajik and Russian interior ministries issued an appropriate instruction to set up working groups which will jointly fight against organised crime, terrorism and illegal trade in weapons and drugs, journalists learnt after the sitting from Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo, who is in Dushande on a two-day working visit.

The Russian minister stressed the importance of cooperation in combating terrorism and organised crime. He said that Tajikistan became the third country after Belarus and Georgia where such joint sittings had taken place to deal with practical issues.[16]

Uzbekistan

"The three countries of the erstwhile Soviet-Union--- Russian, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan—agreed to jointly fight the growing

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[15] SWB, SUW/0577 WF/1, 26 Feb. 1999, p.1.

[16] SWB, SU/3608 B/15, vol.II, 9 August 1999, p.15.

Islamic terrorism and extremism in Central Asia. The agreement was announced at the end of talks in Moscow in May 1998 between the Russian President, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, and his Uzbek counterpart, Mr. Islam Karimov. The Tajik President, Mr. Imomali Rakhmonov, had given his consent to the Russian and Uzbek leaders. The three nation alliance would be known by the name 'Troika'."[17]

The Troika alliance was announced just four days after armed clashes in the capital of Tajikistan between the government and Islamic opposition forces. Analysts believed that Troika would have a military and economic rather than a political thrust. Uzbekistan's prime interest in this agreement was to seek military assistance from Russia to counter the continuing fighting in Afghanistan and the instability in Tajikistan which is destabilising the situation in Uzbekistan's Fergana Valley populated mostly by Tajicks. Moreover, Russia had announced its plan to sign a 10 year economic treaty with Uzbekistan in early October 1998"[18].

"The Russian defence minister, Marshal Igor Sergeyer, was sent as a special emissary to Tashkent by Mr. Boris Yeltsin, on September 1, 1998 to discuss the emergency situation in Kyrgyzstan.

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[17] SWB, SU/3597 B/6, May 1998.

[18] SWB, SU/3598 B/6, October 1998.

Mr. Sergeyev met the Uzbek president, Mr. Islam Karimov, and the military-political leadership. The meeting became imminent as the commander of Kyrgyzstan's troops as hostages for over a week. Though Uzbekistan has been rendering military assistance to Bishkek in fighting militancy, Russia is obliged to assist any threatened former Soviet Republic under the provisions of the CIS collective security pact. Though Russia declared that sending of Russian troops to Kyrgyzstan was not on the agenda, it agreed to end arms and other military equipment at the request of Bishkek."[19]

On 14th December, 1999 the Russia-Uzbek approved that, the sides will cooperate for the sake of strengthening peace international stability and regional security, raising the efficiency of measures against international terrorism and illegal armed units, and upgrading mechanisms for the settlement of regional conflicts and other crisis that concern their interests.

"Again on 18th November, 1999, the two sides signed two papers: a protocol of the session of the inter-governmental commission on economic cooperation between Russia and the Republic of Uzbekistan and an agreement between the governments

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[19] Ibid.

of Uzbekistan and Russia on cooperation in the field of government communications."[20]

Armenia

The Russian and Armenian defence ministers signed a plan of cooperation between the defence bodies for the year 2000 in Moscow in 23rd November 1999.

"The mutual ties between the Russian and Armenian Defence Ministries conform to the agreement to improve and deeper ties", Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev said after the signing ceremony. "The mutual interests on Armenian territory are requiring a more precise nature of cooperation of the purpose of the military security of our states", he said. "Each new such meeting gives impetus to promoting the combat efficiency of the armed forces for the sake of the two countries" Marshal Sergeya thinks, "Cooperation between the Russian and Armenian defence bodies has under no circumstances been directed at any third country" Igor Sergeyev noted, "Everything to being done solely for the purpose of security and stability in the region, Russia's main objective is stability in the Caucasus region".[21]

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[20] SWB, SU/367 B/6, Nov. 20, 1999.

[21] SWB, SU/353 B/10, Sep. 30, 1999.

On 7th December, 1999 both the prime ministers signed two cooperation agreements. The Russian prime minister voiced thanks to Armenia for supporting Russia's actions' in the North Caucasus, including support at the international level, namely at the OSCE Istanbul summit.

Armenia and Russia always were friendly states, but lately they have become strategic allies. Armenian prime minister Aram Sarkisyan said for his part. Emphasising the normal development of Armenian-Russian military cooperation, Sarkisyan pointed out the need to increase the trade turnover between the two countries, which has fallen by 50 percent. And to achieve this a number of issues need to be resolved.

Following the talks two agreements were signed between the Armenian and Russian governments – "on preservation of the specialisation of enterprises manufacturing military products", and "on production cooperation".[22] The agreements were signed by Russian Minister of Economy, Andrey Shapovalyants and the Armenian Minister of Agriculture, Chairman of the section of the Armenian –Russian inter-governmental commission for economic, scientific and technical cooperation.

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[22] Ibid.

Azerbaijan

"The Astra is the first Russian drilling rig on the Caspian, since everything done in the way of marine oil developments in Soviet days remained Azerbaijan. In order to end up in the Volga delta, the platform had to make the long trip from the Persian Gulf, where it had been operating under the name Marava. It was there, at the beginning of 1997, that the platform was purchased from the Norwegian Service Company by the Luk Oil Rezervist firm, which thus fulfilled the terms of the investment competition for the sale of the 5 percent of Luk Oil shares which had been the collateral."[23]

After that, the finish contractor, Aker Rauma offshore, delivered the platform to one of the Finish parts on the Baltic, where it was cut into sections and transported along the Volga Baltic canal to Astrakhan.

"According to Yevgeniy Reshetnyak, Chief of Lukoil's Marine Deposits Exploration and Development Department, this very complicated scheme for acquiring the platform made it possible to "put this project away" for 75 m dollars, whereas construction of

[23] SWB, SUW/0589 WF/1, 21 May 1999.

an analogous facility "form scratch" would have cost from 100 m to 120 m dollars."[24]

Lukoil won the right to exploit the Severny section, where the Astra will begin exploratory drilling, in a tender at the end of 1997. As far as two years before that, however the company began, as an initiative procedure, geological study of the Russian sector of the Caspian and by now has already spent 70 m dollars on it. As a result, according to the geophysical study, the Russian shelf comes closer to the Azerbaijani and Turkmen shelves, where all the known deposits were opened up during the days of the Soviet Union.

"According to Reshetnyak the total reserves of the Russian sector of the Caspian are estimated at 2 bn tones of hydrocarbons and this, moreover, "is not an optimistic scenario". Of them, Severny accounts for 500-600 tones, including at least 75 percent oil."[25]

According to the project for developing Severny , the plans are to drill four Wildcat wells in it. The drilling of the development as well was begin in the fourth year of the project's realisation and the start of industrial extraction in the fifth year. The plans are to

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

reach a maximum level of 15 tonnes in eight years. The oil was transported along the Caspian pipe line. The state's total revenue from developing the deposit was about 25 bn dollars.

Belarus

"On January 23, 1999, an extraordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia was convened primary in order to adopt a joint budget. Russia contributed just 27% of its share, a circumstance that prevented the Union from implementing its planed programmes including a chemobyl-related project. Belarus proved to be a more disciplined partner, contributing 99% of its share."[26] But that did not save the day. A strange pattern is emerging. The more declarations the two sides sign and the more pronouncements they make on the subject of integration, the fewer their actual accomplishments. In any event, the potential for joint programmes in diminishing. The session of the parliamentary Assembly was asked to consider 1999 expenditures in the amount of 586,132,000 Russian rubles, which is substantially less than last year's budget. Belarus had insisted on a sum of 800 million Russian rubles, but its partner ignored the demand.

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[26] The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.II, 1999, p.2972.

"President Aleksander Lukhashenko, who delivered a lengthy speech at the Parliamentary Assembly Session, took a sharply negative view of the way integration is going and accused Russia of having frustrated various joint programmes. At the same time be swore his true and everlasting love for the Union State and his willingness to move toward unification regardless of the problems that arise."[27]

The Parliamentary Assembly ultimately declined to adopt the union budget. Perhaps the Deputies were swayed by President Lukashenko's arguments and will work for an increase in expenditures for common needs. An organisational plan for Russian-Belarussian integration that was considered envisions a vast number measures. The need to create a single customs space and to standardise tax, civil and economic laws was stressed for the umpteenth time. The idea of introducing a common currency, which was first proposed when Vyacheslav Kebich was Prime Minister of Belarus and brought up again by Lukashenko late last year, will most likely never get off the ground. According to the Belarussian President, that suggested innovation in Particular drew such a howl

[27] Ibid. .

in Russian governmental and financial circles that he was wary of making any more proposals.[28]

The Parliamentary Assembly unanimously adopted a statement on events in Kosovo. And a great deal of attention was devoted to Yugoslavia in general that time. That country is seen as a loyal ally. It was perhaps in order to test or strengthen that friendship that Yugoslavia's leader asked Belarus and Russia to provide military assistance in Yugoslavia's military confrontation with NATO and the US. The Yugoslav leadership was represented at the Parliamentary Assembly Session by Deputy Prime Minister Vojislav Seselj.

"On 26th April, 1999, the government of Russia and Belarus had agreed to cooperate on questions of control over the export of certain materials, equipment, technology and services which may be used in developing and creating mass destruction weapons and missile delivery means, as well as other types of arms and military equipment."[29]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] "Foreign Policy", The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press (Ohio), vol.51, no.48 (1999), pp.23-24.

This was stated in the text of an agreement between the Russian and Belarusian governments on a single procedure for export controls which had reached to the Belarus-Russia Union Executive Committee's apparatus.

"The agreement came into force from this date of signing of 13th April 1999 and will be valid for upto six months from the date when one side informs the other in writing of its intention to withdraw from the agreement."[30]

Georgia

"In April 1997 Georgia hosted a regional conference regarding the possible revival of the historic "silk road", which once connected China to Europe via Central Asia, the Transcacaus region and Turkey. The proposed transportation and telecommunications corridor presented significant political concerns since, among other things, it bypassed Russia, US and EU financing was subsequently pledged for the project, which included eight other countries in addition to Georgia.[31]

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30 Ibid.

31 Political Hand Book of the World 1998, (CSA Publications, Bighamton University, State University of New York).

Georgia appeared to reach an agreement with South Ossetia in March 1997, preserving Georgia's territorial integrity while giving "special powers of self-determination" to the separatist region. A joint commission for economic restruction of South Ossetia was also established for economic restruction of South Ossetia cancelled further negotiations and a final settlement remained in doubt.

"Despite the discomfort of Russia, an informal but growing Azerbaijan-Georgia-Ukraine alliance, the "Union of Three", continued to take form in 1997. The alignment, created in late 1996 as an alternative to reliance on the CIS, is Western-oriented and interested in military cooperation independent of Russia. One of its goals is to export Azerbaijan's Caspian Oil to Europe via Georgia and the Black Sea, completely bypassing Russia. Moldova declared that it shared strategic interests with the Union of Three in a quadrilateral communiqué issued in November 1997, necessitating the coining of a new acronym, GUAM (for Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova)".[32]

"In 1997-98 Russia continued to participate in the search for a resolution of the Abkhaz conflict. Tension between Georgia and Russia increased, however, over the issue of the CIS peace-keepers

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[32] Ibid.

and the partial lifting of economic sanctions against Abkhazia. Furthermore, Georgia criticised its exclusion by Russia and Ukraine from decisions pertaining to the division of the formed Black Sea Fleet. In July 1998, Georgia assumed control of its maritime borders, following the withdrawal of Russian maritime patrols. A 150 km. section of the state land border with Turkey was transferred from Russian to Georgian control.[33]

On 27th September 1999, the Russian and Georgian Interior Ministers, Valdimir Rushaylo and Kakha Targamadze, have been discussing cooperation between the two countries' law-enforcement agencies at the second session of the joint colloquium of the Russian and Georgian Interior Ministers.[34]

"On 2nd November 1990 Russia and Georgia failed to agree on a joint protection plan for the Chechen section of their common border. Chief of the Federal Border Service Konstantin Totskiy told the press that after talks his Georgian counterpart Valeriy Chkheidze the section will be protected solely by Georgian border guards. "We talked to the Georgian side on joint protection, but failed to agree", he said. Chkheidze said Georgia "has sufficient

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[33] The Europa World Year Book 1999, vol.I (Europa Publications Ltd., 1999, United Kingdom).

[34] SWB, SU/3652 B/11, Sept 1999, p.11.

means and forces to guard its borders". Totskiy and Chkheidze said they agreed to exchange observers on the Cehchen and Abkhaz sections. Chkheidze said such a form of cooperation may be regarded as an element of joint protection.

Totskiy said a group of Russian border guards will soon travel to the Chechen section to check the arrangements there. He said that due to bad weather conditions the section will be virtually closed in two-three weeks.

On 19th November 1999, Russia and Georgia have agreed to hold comprehensive talks on Russia's military bases in the former Soviet Caucasus Republic within a year. Ivanov said Russian military facilities are situated in the territory of a sovereign state, so whether Russian bases will be located in Georgia, will depend on the political will of that country's leadership.

What is to be done is reduce armed forces considering the interests of each other, and on the one hand, it is necessary to set a reasonable timetable according to which the armed forces will change bases.[35]

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[35] SWB, SU/3698 B/16, 22 November, 1999, vol.1, p.16.

The Russian Defence Ministry told Interfax that, no later than 31st December 2000, Moscow will lower the levels of its armaments and military hardware in Georgia to no more than 153 tanks, 241 armoured vehicles, including armoured personnel carriers and armoured fighting vehicles, and 140 artillery systems. The cuts comply with the agreement reached at the Istanbul summit of the organisation for security and cooperation in Europe which discussed among other things, ways of adjusting the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty.

A joint Russian-Georgian statement says that by the same [dead line], Moscow is ready to withdraw or scrap armaments and military hardware located on the Russian military bases in Vizianl and Gudauta (Abkhazia) and at repair enterprises in Tbilisi.

"By 1st July 2001, Russia will disband and remove its military bases from Gudauta and Vaziani. According to the Defence Ministry, Georgia in turn, will give Russia the right to temporarily keep its armaments and military hardware on the Russian Military bases in Batumi and Akhalkalaki.

Moscow and Tbilisi, in 2000, are expected to finish talks on the timetable and the functioning of Russian Military bases in

Batumi and Akhalkalaki, and of the other Russian military facilities in Georgia."[36]

Kyrgyzstan

"As soon as the border troops withdrawal was announced in May 6, 1999 in Kyrgyzstan, the large Russian-speaking population that had lived in the region for ages also found itself facing the choice of whether to pull up stakes or to stay. In Soviet times, 90% of the population of the city of Bishkek was Slavic. Now most of the people living in the city are Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. They moved into the newly vacant apartments and houses after the first mass exodus in the early 1990s."[37]

Kyrgyzstan was facing a crisis with several of its villages near its border with Tajikistan being occupied by gunmen, identified as Islamic militants. These gunmen were reported to have captured some hostages. Unidentified warplanes attacked a village in the southern part of the country towards the end of August 1999. The plans were suspected came from neighbouring Uzbekistan.

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[36] SWB, SU/3700 B/11, vol.1, 24 November 1999, p.11.

[37] Ibid.

Kyrgyzstan officials met their counterparts from Central Asian neighbours Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to discuss how to cope with around 650 guerrillas hiding ,with hostages in the mountainous region.

Central Asia, a vast region the size of Continental Europe and grouping five former Soviet Republics, is a potential hot bed of ethnic tensions. The Kyrgyz crisis and Kyrgzy. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan feared that Uzbekistan, the most populous of the five states with 24 million and under the strong leadership of the President Islam Karimov wanted to become regional leader. Kyrgyzstan had appeared to Russia for weapons and other equipment to fight the gunmen.[38]

Moldova

Moldova is another case of Russian intervention in the "near abroad" to establish control over territory it believes to be within its sphere of influence. The circumstances of this Russian intervention, however, differ from the others in the degree to which Russian forces have been guided by policy from Moscow. Russian military forces in Moldova were not always completely under Moscow's

[38] The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.II, 1999, p.2971-2972.

control, with the result that policy toward the area often had a schizophrenic character."[39]

Ukraine

On 2nd February, 1999, the head of United Energy Systems of Russia, Anatoliy Chubays and Ukrainian Energy Minister Ivan Plachkov signed an agreement "on the main principles of Russian-Ukrainian cooperation in power engineering".[40]

The agreement settled in detail the issue of contemporary Russian-Ukrainian cooperation in power engineering, particularly, regarding the resumption of electrical power supplier to Ukraine, the reconnection of electricity grids between the two countries and the prospects for joint participation in projects of electricity export.

Summing up the talks, Chubays highly evaluated the importance of the agreement for the development of cooperation between Russian and Ukraine in power engineering. He emphasised the agreement with the Ukrainian side on joint participation in the development of electricity export to the west, "We agreed that these

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[39] SWB, SU/3661 B/6, Oct., 9, 1999.

[40] Ibid.

decisions are possible if we are seriously unified and are developing a single strategy for electricity export" Chubays said.

On 8th October, 1999, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin declared that there were no unsolvable problems in relations between Russia an Ukraine. Again he said that he had two tasks to accomplish. "First, we intend to develop relations in the space of the former USSR within the framework of the CIS. The coming meeting of the CIS heads of government has been long planned and thoroughly prepared, the Russian Prime Minister said. He noted that, during the course of the meeting in Yalta the heads of government will consider a number of questions of principle concerning taxation and cooperation of the customs services of the CIS member countries.[41]

"Secondly, Russia attaches great significance to the coming joint session of the governments of Russia and Ukraine. "We hope that our joint work will be constructive and yield constructive results", he said.

He noted that, "there are still many reserves for the government of the Russian Federation to do much for the comports

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[41] "Foreign Policy", The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press (Ohio), vol.51, no.26 (1999), p.17.

in Crimea and for all those who cherish Russian-Ukrainian relations."

Russia-CIS Relation: An Overall View

"The failure of the CIS to create a common military strategic space was paralleled by its inability to forge a common economic space. Politically, the CIS is not a federation, and economically, it is not a common market. Even though until 1991 the former Soviet republics were governed as a unitary state with a command economy, yet as constituent states they have achieved less genuine economic integration than the European Union."[42]

"Expectations of economic cooperations were initially high, because as parts of the Soviet Union the former republics were in fact economically independent. The non-Russian republics were dependent upon Russia for their supplies of energy, particularly oil and gas. Ukraine provided grain and other foodstuffs and rolled ferrous metal. Central Asia supplied cotton for the clothing industries in the Western republics. It made economic sense for the CIS states to agree upon rules to govern the exchange of goods and services among themselves. In addition, at independence the ruble

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[42] The Europa World Year Book (London: Europa Publications Ltd. 18 Bedford Square), vol.II, 1999, p.2971-2972.

was the common unit of currency for each republic. Russia was in the dominant position, because all of the presses for printing rubles were within its domain. If the ruble were to remain a common unit of currency, there would need to be created a central bank and policymaking institutions to maintain a uniform fiscal policy. But these incentives for economic integration were not strong enough to create workable economic institution. In the end, each republic chose to create its own currency."[43]

During the early years of the commonwealth, there were unsuccessful attempts to establish available economic framework for CIS members. Ironically, it was Russia, the strongest proponent of economic integration, which in practice severely undermined the possibilities. President Yeltsin's top domestic priority was radical economic reform, which he introduced in January 1992. According to CIS principles, Russia was obligated to consult with its CIS partners regarding economic policy. Yeltsin did not do so, despite the fact that his policy of price decontrol had ruinous impact on all those states using the ruble for their currency. "Ukraine was outraged. But Russia was not alone in its disregard of its neighbours. Several CIS members placed restrictions on the export

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[43] Ibid.

of goods to the Russian Federation, which in turn led to retaliation by Moscow."[44]

The CIS had also registered conflicting monetary policies of the member states. In 1992 the Russian Central Bank adopted rules governing the settlement of accounts with banks outside Russia which forced Russian enterprises to demand hard-currency payment from buyers in non-Russian republics lacking a positive credit balance with the Central Bank. Non-Russian banks had no control over the amount of rubles in circulation because the presses were in Russia. In this environment, "Russia was often the victim as well as the perpetrator. Inflationary policies pursued by CIS governments had their impact inside Russia."[45]

Russia's unilateral monetary policies created a crisis for the "near abroad" countries on the ruble. In July 1993 the Russian government introduced a currency restriction prohibiting the use of pre-1993 ruble notes in Russia and permitting only Russian citizens and enterprises and foreign visitors to exchange old rubles for new ones. When this reform was introduced, nine of the CIS republics still relied on the ruble. Eventually, each state came to the conclusion

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Political Hand Book of the World 1997, (CSA Publications, Bighamton University, State University of New York), p.165.

that national sovereignty required it to abandon the ruble for its own national currency. Ukraine, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan were among the first to do so."[46]

In early 1997, the CIS Heads of Government yet again approved an overall concept for CIS economic integration. But Russian minister for CIS affairs, Aman Tuleev, admitted that several states would not go along with the concept. The Russian press contemptuously referred to proposals for United CIS trade, labour, transport, customs, and currency systems as being in the CIS tradition of paper creativity. "Nevertheless, it is significant that the pressures for sovereignty and independence among the "near abroad" countries have not entirely extinguished the idea of unity."[47]

At this stage,we attempt at summarising of an overall view of Russia's relation, with each members of CIS. The years 1997-99 were problematic for CIS as well as Russia with pressure mounting up on Russia after expansion of NATO in Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the CIS members particularly, Georgia, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan were afflicted with recurring civil when Russian troops became more active participants for one side or the other. Russia

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46 Political Hand Book of the World 1999, (CSA Publications, Bighamton University, State University of New York).

47 Ibid., 1999.

seriously endeavoured in reasserting its domination over CIS, while CIS members with a few notable exceptions like Kazakhstan showed no desire to respond favourably to such efforts. By the end of the period we do find that Russia had settled down to a bilateral relationship, particularly in defence and security matters, with individual members of CIS under the general umbrella of CIS. This trend is likely to continue under new President Vladimir Putin.

CHAPTER V

AN OVERALL VIEW, 1997-99

Our investigation in preceding pages, has highlighted the simple fact that like all the aspects in Russia, its foreign policy had continued developing but it was in transition. From its total preoccupation and the West in its formative phase, it gradually diluted its interest in with the West and began to look East. This was no easy process for the policy-makers of Russia led by pro-West, Kozyrev. However, the shared experience of dealing with West and playing a role in a changed post cold war situation proved decisive. Russia gradually realised that it is state both in the West and the East. In this realisation its registered a various twists and turns, adopted a zigzag path and during 1997-99 finally seem to strike a balance in its foreign policy between East and the West. Its basic affiliation with the USA and the West, however, remained in spite of strained relations.

This phase of Russian Foreign Policy, beginning in earnest from about mid-1996 onwards can be regarded really as Primakov's years of Russian Foreign Policy. Yet later this trend under other leaders could not be reversed however the fact remains. Russia's priority interest remains USA and the West and the country like India and China the next, CIS countries are not comparable in this priority rating.

All said and done, Russia has managed to find an important place for itself in the committee of nation during a decade or so of its existence. At the same time, it is obvious from our present study that the country is not satisfied today, at the beginning of 21st century, with such a record. By the magic formula of promoting and safeguarding its national interest and by adopting pragmatism its hopes to achieve more in the coming years. It is, however, difficult to have a conclusive view on its success or failure.

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